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SUBMISSIONS

The *SFRAR* Review editors encourage submissions, including essays, review essays that cover several related texts, and interviews. Please send submissions or queries to *both* coeditors. If you would like to review nonfiction or fiction, please contact the respective editor and/or email sfra_review@yahoo.com.

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DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS & UPDATES

I would like to apologize to Richard Bleiler for collapsing his entry into his father's. Please be sure to note that Richard's entry starts right after his father's (Bleiler, E. F.) on page 5 of the 2001 directory.

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Address Changes

I also apologize to all of you who have changed addresses during this past year and I have not notified the organization through the *SFRA Review*. I just realized that this should be an ongoing project.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

WRAPPING UP WITH A SUPER-ISSUE

Shelley Rodrigo Blanchard

Belated Happy New Year!

I hope you all had a fabulous holiday season. Hopefully this super-issue (combined materials from the September/October and November/December issues) will act as a belated holiday gift from *SFRA Review* Editorial group. Although this past year's issues were not exactly timely—among the many unforeseen events of the year, a pulmonary embolism in October was the most significant—we are happy with the materials that did make it out.

The other editors and I are looking forward to a great 2002. Obviously, our major goal is to get the issues back on a regular schedule. We would also like to invite you to help us out by submitting ideas and materials to the *Review*. Feel free to contact Ed McKnight, the new Non-Fiction editor, with ideas or reviews of new non-fiction materials. Phil Snyder, the new Fiction editor, would also like volunteers for fiction reviews. Joan Gordon <jlordon@optonline.net> would appreciate ideas and submissions to the "Theory and Beyond" column. Barb Lucas and I would also love suggestions and submissions to the "Approaching..." series on critical SF texts to teach in the classroom. Finally, feel free to email Barb or I with any questions, suggestions, tips, and corrections about the publication of the *Review*.

I look forward to seeing both new and returning names in the bylines and on the mailing list.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

A NOTE FROM THE NON-FICTION REVIEWS EDITOR

Ed McKnight

This is officially my first issue as non-fiction reviews editor, although all of the real work for this issue—selecting books to be reviewed, requesting them from the publishers, lining up reviewers—was done by my illustrious predecessor, Neil Barron. Nevertheless, I'd like to take this occasion to say a word of thanks to Neil for doing so much to smooth the transition, as well as to our reviewers for all the work they've done going from one editor to another.

One of the most important tasks I have is maintaining and updating the index of our reviewers' various areas of interest, and I would like to ask your assistance in that endeavor. If you are a new member, or if your areas of interest have changed, please e-mail me at emcknight@gardner-webb.edu with a current list of the authors, genres, etc., that should appear beside your name. In addition, if you are aware of a specific work that you feel ought to be considered for review, please contact me at the same address. Thanks!

INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW WITH JACK MCDEVITT

F. Brett Cox

Conducted at the Science Fiction Research Association Annual Conference in Mobile, Alabama, June 1999; updated September 2001.

COX: When you interview a writer, usually you have a choice of either starting at the beginning or starting with what the writer's working on now. In this case we can do both, because you've revised your first novel for another edition. Could you talk a little bit about your revisiting *The Hercules Text*?

MCDEVITT: That's for an edition that's out [August 2000] from Meisha Merlin Press, which is connected with the Science Fiction and Mystery Bookstore in Atlanta. They've done an omnibus edition of *A Talent for War* [McDevitt's

second novel] and *The Hercules Text* under the title *Hello Out There*. *The Hercules Text* was written in 1985, published in 1986. I knew that the technology was long since outdated. Also, there's a cold war that runs through a fairly significant part of the book, and I felt that none of that was relevant anymore and had to go. I went back and threw that out, and I discovered that there was a lot of other stuff that had to go, too. After somewhere in the middle of the book, there's a major divergence and it simply goes in other directions. The second half of it is a new book. The first half's the same.

COX: So this is a significant rewriting. It's not just an updating. It's a complete revision.

MCDEVITT: Yeah, I think that's fair to say. The last few chapters, for example, are completely different from the original version.

COX: Well, you've said that you were dissatisfied with the original ending of the book. There were some external circumstances that affected that.

MCDEVITT: Yeah. I didn't face up to all the implications of the situation that I set up. I've tried to do a better job of it this time. In the first novel, I got away from what amounted to a very difficult situation by simply burying the problem. In the new version, the protagonist really is forced to confront the ramifications of a decision. It's another one of those cases where there is no good decision to be made. Do they open a Pandora's box that has not only great potential for harm but also great potential for making things a lot better for a lot of people? This time, I've tried not to simply bury it.

COX: I remember that when I read the book, I really enjoyed it, but I felt that the ending was kind of rushed—that it was basically a fairly contemplative novel of ideas, but then at the end there's this furious rush of chases and action.

MCDEVITT: All that stuff is gone, and you're absolutely right. I hate to confess to something like this, but I misjudged how much time I'd need to complete the novel. So I agreed to six months, which seemed like a lot of time. The problem was that I hadn't yet written anything longer than probably 6000 words. But I was working in Chicago, and between travel back and forth I was probably working eleven-hour days. I had three kids, two of whom were very active in little league, and that sort of thing, and I discovered I had a lot less time than I expected. I started falling behind schedule immediately and began working morning, noon, and night. I was writing on trains, writing at ball games, writing at lunchtime, and it was touch and go. What that did was to prevent my actually sitting down and considering some of the implications of the situation I'd set up. I saw a fairly simple way to get to a conclusion, which I took, and the book did well. You know the cliché: it was well received, but I was never satisfied with it. It always seemed to me that the situation called for a more thoughtful conclusion than the one I had. So, in the new book, I completely changed that whole business.

COX: Now, that was one of the second line of Ace Science Fiction Specials that Terry Carr was editing in the eighties—the same clutch of novels that also produced such first novels as William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, Kim Stanley Robinson's *The Wild Shore*, and Lucius Shepherd's *Green Eyes*. Are you aware if any of those other writers was working on such a tight deadline?

MCDEVITT: I don't really know, Brett. I've always assumed it was much the same for everybody. It's probably just as well. Given, say, a year, would I have done a better job with it? What is the line about the amount of work always expands to fill the amount of time available and has no effect on the product? To be honest, I would have to say that, at that stage of my career, I would have produced the same book anyhow. I would simply have taken a longer time to do it.

COX: Looking back on the novel now, do you find, as you start re-reading it and thinking about it again, that aside from the structural and content things you

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PLEASE SUBMIT

The editors of the *SFRA Review* would like to revive the approaching series. The first text we would like to approach is Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* (1985). Consider submitting the following materials to the Approaching column:

lesson plans
bibliographies
classroom activities
discussion questions
discussion points
related texts (that you teach with *Brazil*)
etc.

Submit materials to:
<shelley.rb@asu.edu>
Shelley Rodrigo Blanchard

PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITY

Charles Scribner's Sons (now a subsidiary of Gale) has asked me, Richard Bleiler, to serve as the editor of a volume of bio-critical essays devoted to contemporary fantasy and horror writers, which has been loosely defined as writers in English whose careers became active following (about) 1980 or who wrote before 1980 but did substantial work after that date. A full list of these writers is below, along with recommended word counts.

An asterisk (*) by the writer's name means that the writer was profiled in the first volume and should have his or her entry rewritten. I have attempted to contact the original writers and have asked if

needed to revise, it reads okay for you? Were you cringing when you read it? "Oh my God, I wouldn't do that now, I know so much better." Or were you saying, "Hey, this isn't bad!"

MCDEVITT: Both. Both. One of the things that really intrigues me is—when you and I are sitting here talking right now, we're doing first draft. Okay? People talk in first draft. Which tends to be often incoherent, irrational, poor phrasing, that whole business. I've always been convinced that the difference between a professional writer and someone who is still at a stage where he or she is simply trying is, the professional is willing to go back and make enough revisions until he gets it so that it doesn't sound like his voice anymore, you know, this is somebody else who is speaking here. Somebody smarter. I've always said that I can go back to something, even *The Hercules Text*, my first book, and I can find phrases, lines, scenes, where I can sit back and say, "Yeah, that's good. That works. That works real well." It's like with a book reviewer, whose attention tends to be drawn to the things that don't work. So, when I go through something like *The Hercules Text*, I'm more conscious of the things that do not work than I am of the things that do. It's fun to sit back and say, "Oh that's great, that's a great line." But you're more conscious of where things fall down. I found a fair number of redundancies, some lines that I might still do today simply because they read like second draft lines. I simply missed certain things. I discovered with *Hercules* that I had a little bit more of a tendency to write at a more formal level I think than I do now. My style, for whatever reason, has gone from a higher level of formality then to a more journalistic style now. It's like I changed a lot stylistically in largely simplifying sentences, kicking out words. I booted a lot of stuff. I think it's an easier read now than it was.

COX: Maybe we can map a Georgia tradition of revised first novels, because Michael Bishop did the same thing with his first novel, *A Funeral for the Eyes of Fire*, and went back several years later and did a complete revision of it called *Eyes of Fire*. I can't speak authoritatively to that, but maybe there's a paper topic out there somewhere, he said to the graduate student in the audience.

MCDEVITT: You know, in truth somebody asked me about this yesterday. For a student of writing, it would probably be interesting to look at that kind of exercise where you have a writer who has written two separate versions of the same work, separated by a number of years. You couldn't find a better way to see how the writer judges his own work. Of course, with fifteen years you're away from it long enough that you can be a little bit objective. Writers are probably, at least it has always been my sense of it, the worst judges of their own work. I got a call yesterday from *Analog's* reviewer, Tom Easton. I sent him a copy of my most recent book, *Infinity Beach* [Harper Prism, 2000], and he was the first outside person to get a look at the manuscript, at the final version of the book. It's basically a mystery novel. I try to do a fair amount of slight of hand stuff—now you see it now you don't—and he was the first person outside to get a look at the finished version of the book who also did not know what I was trying to do. I was really anxious to see whether or not he was going to spot what was sitting there in plain sight through the whole book, or whether it would come as a surprise. Apparently I did surprise him, and, for me, that was critical.

COX: How many short stories had you published before you wrote *The Hercules Text*?

MCDEVITT: Probably about fifteen.

COX: So you were an experienced writer of short stories at that point. I seem to recall your saying that you in fact sold the first story you ever submitted for publication—a fact that annoys many of us.

MCDEVITT: Yeah, I came a little bit as an innocent to the field. I was away

from science fiction—I was never really a part of science fiction fandom.

COX: But you were a reader.

MCDEVITT: I was an occasional reader. I would read maybe three or four science fiction novels a year. Most of my reading was in other stuff, but I always wanted to be a science fiction writer. I decided that when I was four years old, believe it or not, but somewhere in college I got sidetracked. I remember reading *David Copperfield* when I was about eighteen just before I went to college and I thought, “My God, how can I ever compete with this guy,” not realizing that I never had to compete with Charles Dickens, but it just seemed that the level of writing that I saw in front of me was so much higher than what I was capable of, than what I knew I was capable of, there was no point in it. One of the things I didn’t realize, of course, was that Dickens, in his ordinary conversations, spoke in first draft. I had not yet realized the power of a fourth or fifth draft, what it can really do. But I never really made the effort. I spent twenty-five years thinking that it would be really fun to be a science fiction writer, but not trying.

COX: What happened when you were four to make you want to be a science fiction writer? Was it something you saw?

MCDEVITT: Actually, I was three.

COX: Three!

MCDEVITT: It was 1938. I know that because I know when the movie serial was. I believe I first came to consciousness in a movie theatre in South Philadelphia watching Buck Rogers. Those great little rocket ships, oh yeah. I can remember asking my father whether there were such things as rocket ships and he said no, and I asked how they got pictures of them and he tried to explain to me, and a year later we were coming out of the same theatre. I was now four years old, and we were watching Flash Gordon. I didn’t care about the movies. I went to see Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon, that’s all I cared about. And we came out of the theatre one night with a full moon up over the rooftops and I said, I don’t understand, explain to me again about these rocket ships, how they’ve got little toys and how they do this and that, and my father’s answers were so disappointing. I remember thinking there was one scene in particular where the rocket ship was coming down—they always kind of circled in for a landing. There was this marvelous desolate landscape and I thought, there must be a million stories out in that landscape, and I wanted to get loose out there and see what was there and do the stories.

COX: But when you got older and started reading you didn’t compulsively seek out science fiction. You were just an occasional reader?

MCDEVITT: I read a lot of it when I was a kid. I was talking about it with David [Hartwell] earlier today. And I got started with Edgar Rice Burroughs as a lot of people did, and somewhere I discovered *A Princess of Mars*. I remember being a little reluctant about touching the book because somebody told me they’d read it and described how the hero falls asleep and wakes up on Mars, and it sounded goofy to me. But I tried it anyhow and I got caught up. I read all these marvelous books about these dead canals, books I’d be scared to death to go back and look at now, but they were just great when I was seven, eight years old. Now looking back on it, I don’t think the Burroughs books are science fiction in any real sense. They’re adventure novels set on Mars. But the first science fiction novel that I can remember that really turned me on was Jack Williamson’s *Legion of Space*. I’ll remember all my life this marvelous sequence where they make that first flight to Alpha Centauri and they’re chasing somebody. The details don’t really matter, but the atmosphere has corrosive effects on human biology, on human lungs, so you can’t live long in the atmosphere, you can’t operate. The ship’s in trouble; it crashes into the ocean. The people in the ship get out as it sinks. They’re being chased by a giant sharklike thing. Fortunately, just in time there’s a tree floating up. They

they are interested in redoing their articles. Most of these original writers have been willing to do this, though I have not heard from several, and a few have declined. (Does anybody have Diana Waggoner’s email address?) If you are interested in writing an article on one or more of the writers listed below, please respond directly to me

<Richard.Bleiler@uconn.edu> and let me know as soon as possible.

A few additional points:

- Everybody wants to do the really major writers (King, Rowling, Straub, etc.) Please recognize that these can be done by only one person, and while I shall attempt to give all respondents their choices, this is not going to be possible if people limit themselves to the bestsellers.

- While bio-critical accuracy matters, so too does accuracy in the concluding bibliographies.

- Pay is about 10¢ a word.

- Deadlines are in the first half of next year. (So help me, I cannot be more specific, for I do not yet have a contract and am starting this project on good faith.)

- Please do not waste energy attacking me because I didn’t put writer (x) on the list and instead put on writer (y), whom you just know to be absolutely inferior. The list may be seen as idiomatic, yes, but I’ll be happy to engage in reasoned discourse. Please keep in mind that there just isn’t room for everybody.

- The list below is not private. Please feel free to forward it to people you think might also be interested.

I hope you will be interested in contributing.

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Author gested word count	Sug-
Abbey, Lynn	3500
Ackroyd, Peter	4000
Aickman, Robert*	5000
Clute will update	
Anderson, Poul*	4500
"Andrews, V. C."	2500
Anthony, Piers*	4000
Auster, Paul	3500
Barker, Clive	4500
Barrett, Neal	2500
Beagle, Peter*	4000
Bishop, Michael	3000
Blaylock, James P.	3500
Bloch, Robert*	4500
Bradbury, Ray*	4500
McNelly will update	
Bradley, Marion Z.	4500
Bradfield, Scott	3000
Brite, Poppi Z.	2500
Brooks, Terry	3000
Brust, Steven	2500
Cadigan, Pat	3000
Campbell, Ramsey*	4000
Card, Orson Scott	4500
Carroll, Jonathan	3500
Carter, Angela	3500
Clark, Simon	3500
Constantine, Storm	3000
Cook, Glen	2500
Collins, Nancy	3500
Crowley, John	4000
Davidson, Avram*	4500
Di Filippo, Paul	3000
Disch, Thomas M.	3000
Donaldson, Stephen R.*	4000
Due, Tananarive	2500
Eddings, David	4000
Ellison, Harlan*	4000
Erickson, Steve	3500
Etchison, Dennis	3000
Feist, Raymond	3500
Gaiman, Neil	3000
Garner, Alan*	3500
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Grant, Charles	3000
Gray, Alasdair	3500
Hand, Elizabeth	2500
Helprin, Mark	2500
Herbert, James	3000
Holdstock, Robert	3500
Holt, Tom	2500
Hughart, Barry	2500
Hughes, Rhys	3500
Jones, Diana Wynne	3000
Jordan, Robert	5000
Joyce, Graham	3000
Ketchum, Jack	2000

climb up onto the tree. The shark is circling—it's a kind of a whaleshark. It's circling the tree, and at the far end of the tree there's this big blob of jelly which now begins to slowly roll toward them—it's great stuff! You could not find anything like that in a regular kid's adventure story. My folks wanted me to read Tom Swift. Tom Swift! The guy's minor league stuff, couldn't compare to this.

COX: How old were you when you read the Williamson book?

MCDEVITT: Nine. Ten. Somewhere in there.

COX: Well, the golden age of science fiction is twelve, so you got in there a couple of years early.

MCDEVITT: There was something else too. Right about the time I think I discovered Williamson, I realized that there were science fiction magazines around. The magazines that caught my attention at the time were the big pulps. *Startling Stories* and *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in particular. By then, it's about 1947. I guess I'm twelve now.

COX: But you had read the Williamson book in book form?

MCDEVITT: I'm not really sure. I can't remember. I have the impression I read it in a magazine, but I did at some point read it in book form.

COX: And you sought out other magazines.

MCDEVITT: Yeah, that's right. Somewhere back there *Galaxy Magazine* also showed up. I discovered *Astounding*, but I guess to my eternal shame I did not like *Astounding* as much as I did *Startling* and *Thrilling Wonder*. They were more like my kind of stuff. They had the babes. You know, thirteen years old. I used to have to hide them, get them in a bag because I suspected my mother would take them away from me if she found them.

COX: Well, the quality of those magazines may not have been up to a consistent level with *Astounding*, but I think they published a wider variety of kinds of stories and other stuff that was more deeply weird, and occasionally better, than what you'd find in *Astounding*.

MCDEVITT: They had Arthur C. Clarke, among others, and I can remember reading them, literally devouring them cover to cover. These were my stories for the rocking chair out on the concrete outside the house—you know, kind of sit out there and read the latest issue of *Startling*. That was just a marvelous experience. There's an English instructor at LaSalle College whom I ran into years later who said he couldn't understand how somebody out of South Philadelphia would take off in the direction I went in. He said it must have been something in the water down there that year.

COX: But then you sort of got away from that. You led an adult life and were doing things, and you really didn't make a serious effort at writing until somewhat later than people historically have entered the field.

MCDEVITT: Well, I published my first science fiction story in 1954. I was nineteen. I won the LaSalle College Freshman Short Story Contest, and they published the story in their literary magazine, *Four Quarters*. It was called "A Pound of Cure." It was a great title.

COX: They gave an award to a straight science fiction story?

MCDEVITT: Yes. I was published, and I was really very excited. But somehow I didn't do anything after that for twenty-five years. Well, I did make one effort somewhere in the 1960's. I tried to start a novel, but it bogged down, and again, I decided I had no talent and I wasn't going to bother with it. Again, what I didn't realize was that talent was ninety percent effort. The question is if you're willing to make the effort and put in the time.

COX: Do you have a sense of what it was that finally pushed you to make a really serious effort and just do the heroic initial task of completing a short story and sending it out to somebody?

MCDEVITT: Sure. In 1980, I had become a trainer for U.S. Customs Inspectors, and I was in Brunswick, Georgia. Most of the work I did for the Customs Service in later years was Management Training, but at that time I was training Customs Inspectors. I was training people how to collect duty, and it was just driving me up the wall. It was very mechanical, mundane, tiresome work. It paid well, inordinately well for the kind of work it was, but, you know, I was trapped. I discovered all my life, by the way, the more significant the work I did, the less they paid me. The most useful job I ever had was as an English teacher, and I told a few people yesterday, I had an experience there, when I was English Department Chairman in a district in New Hampshire. When my pay went to ten thousand five hundred dollars, I was, at that time, the highest paid teacher in the system. The local newspaper published an editorial saying, see, we told you that if you didn't look out, eventually, these people's pay was going to go to five figures. Now look where you're going to have to go. It was just incredible. Okay, to answer the question. I was doing this very rote work, and I came home one day and I told my wife, Maureen, that I just didn't think I could stand it anymore. I felt as if my life was getting away from me, and nothing was happening. And she said, well, you've been threatening for years to write a science fiction story, why—this is one of those lines, by the way, that doesn't look good in cold print—she said, in effect, why don't you put up or shut up? Either do it or don't. So, yeah, I tried it, I sat down and I actually wrote a complete story. It was called "The Emerson Effect." Of course, Emerson was the guy who said you can do anything if you believe in yourself. I love Emerson. So, I wrote a story about a postal worker, curiously enough, who was interested in getting a woman and was too shy to do it. And a letter mailed long ago from Ralph Waldo Emerson to somebody else had somehow wound up in a dead letter office, and, disposing of the old stuff, the postal worker comes across the letter. And ultimately it inspires him, and he makes his conquest. We sent it out a couple of times. It came back. The first time we sent it out we sent it to *Amazing*, and it came back with a little note attached that said "Yeah, we really like this, you know, but we're just overstocked." And I said to Maureen, "See, I thought it wasn't gonna work. Let's toss the thing!" and she said, "I don't think they write you notes unless they like the story. That sounds encouraging." I didn't want to have anything more to do with it. I don't take rejection well.

COX: So, you did get a rejection slip. Thank God!

MCDEVITT: Well, actually, Maureen sent it out and it sold. So the first story did sell. It sold to *Twilight Zone*, to Ted Klein.

COX: So, onward and upward.

MCDEVITT: After that, it's the Emersonian thing. Once you discover you can do something, then it becomes a lot easier. It just becomes inordinately easier once you believe in yourself.

COX: I wanted to turn to a little broader question about your overall work. You've written over fifty short stories. You've done eight novels so far. It seems to me that all of your novels and a good many of your short stories really do center on this idea of, not just discovery or revelation, but the effects of discovery and revelation. What's going to happen when something unexpected turns up? In *The Hercules Text* it was first contact, in *A Talent for War* it was a revelation about an important historical figure, in *The Engines of God* and *Ancient Shores*, it was alien artifacts. There's the quest for knowledge in *Eternity Road*, or even the sudden bad news of the comet coming out of nowhere in *Moonfall*. So, I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about that.

MCDEVITT: Well, *Moonfall*, I think, is kind of a departure from what I'd done before. Somebody pointed out to me that, and this is looking at what you said

King, Stephen*	5000
Will update	
Koontz, Dean	5000
Kotzwinkle, William	3500
Kress, Nancy	2500
Kurtz, Katherine	3500
Lackey, Mercedes	3500
Lansdale, Joe R.	3500
le Guin, Ursula K.*	5000
Lee, Tanith*	3500
Leiber, Fritz R.*	4500
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Ligotti, Thomas	2500
Martin, George R. R.	4000
Matheson, Richard*	5000
Neilson will update	
McCaffrey, Anne	5000
McCammon, Robert	3000
McDowell, Ian	2000
McEwan, Ian	3500
McGrath, Patrick	2500
McKillip, Patricia*	3500
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Moorcock, Michael	4500
Newman, Kim	3500
Norton, Andre*	4000
Oates, Joyce Carol	4000
Powers, Tim	3000
Pratchett, Terry	4500
Rice, Ann	5000
Rowling, J. K.	4000
Schow, David	2500
Shea, Michael	3000
Shepard, Lucius	3500
Silverberg, Robert	3500
Simmons, Dan	3000
Stableford, Brian	4000
Straub, Peter	4500
Sucharitkul, Somtow	3000
Tuttle, Lisa	2500
van Sycoc, Sydney J.	3000
Vance, Jack*	4500
Williamson, Chet	2000
Wilson, F. Paul	3000
Wolfe, Gene	5000
Yarbro, Chelsea Quinn	3500
Yolen, Jane	3500
Zelazny, Roger*	4500

CANADIAN SF WRITERS VOLUME ANNOUNCED

A forthcoming item from the Gale Group that will be of interest to many readers is the 251st volume of *The Dictionary of Literary Biography*, entitled *Canadian Science-Fiction and Fantasy Writers*. The Dictionary of Literary Biography is a long-running reference series available both as print volumes and via online

subscription. Among the authors included in this volume are such luminaries as Margaret Atwood, Candas Jane Dorsey, William Gibson, Judith Merril, S. M. Stirling, and A. E. Van Vogt, as well as thirty-two others. Ed McKnight

LEGUIN BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jim Collins, UNC, Wilmington, who joined SFRA last December, has a bibliography in the *Bulletin of Bibliography*, 58:2, June 2001, "The High Points So Far: An Annotated Bibliography of Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *The Dispossessed*." I haven't seen this, but it should be compared with "Approaching Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*," *SFRA Review* 239, April 1999, 5-24, which also has a detailed two-part bibliography of secondary sources.

Neil Barron

REVIEWING JOURNALS

This came across my virtual desk. I suspect the SF magazines are not covered frequently in this source.

Hal Hall

James T. F. Tanner, Editor, AMERICAN PERIODICALS: A JOURNAL OF HISTORY, CRITICISM, AND BIBLIOGRAPHY, University of North Texas, is now seeking articles for Volume 13 (2003), scheduled for publication in October 2003. Deadline for receipt of materials to be considered is 1 April 2003.

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from another point of view, what I tend to write about is things that have gotten lost and that people are now rediscovering. People defined as the part of the universe that thinks. In *The Hercules Text*, we have a species out there that's adrift between the galaxies and that is, in effect, kind of lost. In *A Talent for War*, it's a piece of history that has gotten lost that we rediscover.

COX: It's not just discovery but recovery.

MCDEVITT: Recovery, I think, and I might be able to explain that. I don't know why it happens quite the way it does, but I had an experience that sticks out in my mind and seems to touch on this—for one thing, it kind of matches a little bit what happens in *Eternity Road*. I was a graduate student and was at university in Middletown, Connecticut. We had a classics professor, one of the best instructors I ever had. His name was T. Chadborn Dunham, a character right out of Dickens. He used to have luncheons for the students, he and a couple of the other instructors, and they would bring out the graduate students, and there would be maybe a dozen of us gathered around. I remember one in particular. We were out on the patio, a couple of professors and maybe three or four graduate students, talking about the Renaissance, and the Italian scholars, all these Italian scholars headed for Greece and coming back. They had just discovered the Classical world and they're headed for Greece and they're coming back with these scrolls and the lost plays. "Have you read Sophocles? You ought to read this guy." They're coming back with these plays, and, of course, most of the Greek classical works are lost. I think Sophocles is reported to have written ninety-some plays, and we have, what, ten, eleven, somewhere in there. Anyway, there's one tale they were talking about then which I have since come across in Will and Ariel Durant's *Story of Civilization*, so I guess there's some validity to it. It's the story of an Italian scholar coming back with a whole trunkload of manuscripts of Greek playwrights and historians and all kinds of stuff that he had gotten, and on the way back home, a storm blows up, and the ship goes down, and they lose the manuscripts. He survives the shipwreck and gets back to Italy all right, but they lose the manuscripts. And these guys at lunch are talking about, "My God, what a loss to mankind. Think about what might have been in that batch." But the thing that stuck in my mind was, what happened to the scholar? How do you survive a thing like that? It shows up a lot in my work. When I started writing, I found that I kept writing about things getting lost, and it's as if I'm trying to work something out somehow. Some of my better short stories deal with this. "Cryptic" deals with that, the great discovery that gets lost. Why would anyone hide this? *Eternity Road* eventually became that story. It's got the scholar, it's got the stuff going into the ocean, it's got the lost manuscripts. It's got everything. I didn't realize that at the time. It was later on when somebody pointed out that things were always getting lost that I started thinking about that time on the patio. I thought, my God, I've rewritten that whole thing.

COX: Well, there's also sort of a sub-theme of lost relationships. I confess I can't remember the character, but in *Ancient Shores*, you have the lost love that comes back, and there's an element of that in *Eternity Road*, so it would seem you have a concern for the notion of recovery on any number of levels.

MCDEVITT: Yeah, I think you're right, and I can't explain that. The lost love is maybe the biggest single passion that any of us feels. There are lots of roads not taken, for all of us. And that necessarily involves us in a degree of wistfulness. How things might have turned out had this happened or that happened. Events that seemed inconsequential at the time, but the old passion lingers, and a lifetime has changed.

COX: One thing that sort of goes along with the issue of recovering knowl-

edge and the reactions of people to revelation is, of course, issues of belief and issues of faith and religion, and that seems to be a periodic theme at this conference. We were talking about it Thursday night and we've had individual discussions about that. How do you see that working in your fiction? I also remember thinking when I read *The Hercules Text* how interesting it was to have a Catholic priest as a major sympathetic character in the book.

MCDEVITT: Right. The only one of my books that was ever seriously considered as a potential film was *The Hercules Text*. I was kind of interested in seeing the treatment—I won't name the studio—but the treatment the studio did turned my Catholic priest into a gun toting maniac at the end in order to provide a car chase.

COX: They'll do that. Mary Doria Russell says that she fought with the movie studios about *The Sparrow* because they wanted to have her priest break his vows, and that was completely against what she was trying to portray.

MCDEVITT: I enjoy very much having people confront what they believe in or what they maintain they believe in. It's always very simple to say, "Yes, I believe." We're getting a lot of play now on that young lady out at Columbine High School who looked into the barrel of a gun and said yes, I believe. To be honest, I do not know what I believe about what runs the universe, but I see a thing like that, and there's something that literally grabs me by the throat, a story like that. Those things have an awful lot of power when people actually, in the face of consequences, act out what they believe in. And I guess I've used that because I just very much enjoy dealing with it. The Anglican chaplain in *Moonfall* who refuses to leave during the evacuation when it appears they will not get everybody out. And they got him an early ticket because he's non-essential, but he says, would Jesus jump on a bus and get out of town and leave someone else to die in his place? He cannot do that. To have him either act that way or back off, as some of the others have, is kind of interesting. I've gone back and reworked the priest we're talking about in *The Hercules Text*. He's a little bit different now, and, again, I took the easy way in the original version. He's a priest who's lost his faith, but who refuses to admit it even to himself. When he's finally confronted by it, he sees what's happened. He explains that he's looked too many times into the light years. The stage is just too big, there's too much out there for the sense of the Christian story to be accurate. And when I was doing the second version, I think I realized that was just a little too cute. In the new version, one of the major characters is a psychologist who confronts him about that. "I don't believe it. There's got to be more." Finally, the priest admits what it really has to do with is the fact that we don't see any intervention. People pray and nothing ever seems to happen. People hide in a church to escape the barbarians, and the barbarians burn the place down around them. There never seems to be divine intervention of any kind. I've done that in other books. There certainly is a sequence in *Eternity Road* where the female priest loses her faith because the Goddess doesn't seem to be there, and a child dies in her arms. All the prayers in the world don't do anything, and then the parents want her to explain how come the child is dead. And she just had enough.

COX: Confronting dogma certainly seems to figure in *Eternity Road* and *A Talent for War*: a revelation that forces people to admit that something isn't quite the way they thought it was.

MCDEVITT: You've reminded me of another aspect of this. In my short story that I read here at the conference, "Cruising Through Deuteronomy," one of the characters says, "Truth is over-rated." I'm not sure that's not true. You come down sometimes to where you have to make a choice between the truth and a mythology of some kind that is helpful to get people through their lives, whether it's a religious mythology or whether, as in *A Talent for War*, it's a mythology written



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ECCLESIASTES REVISITED

Not only is there no end to the making of books, but their number is much greater than earlier statistics had suggested. For some years, *Publishers Weekly* had published annual summaries of hardcover, trade paper, and mass market paperback books by subject. These summaries migrated to the hardcover annual, *The Bowker Annual: Library and Book Trade Almanac*. For some years, booksellers and librarians had complained that the figures seriously undercounted the totals. After revising the methodology and drawing on the *Books in Print* database rather than the antiquated *American Book Publishing Record*, Bowker con-

around an historical character who seems to be a George Washington but maybe is something else. And the question surfaces: is the truth necessarily good for us to know, or are we sometimes better off with the mythology? That remains an open question, and I'm not sure what the answer is.

COX: To move to an even more general kind of question, this is something that came up in the interview with Fred Pohl yesterday. You've spent a lot of your life thinking about the future, and here we are right on the edge of the twenty-first century. Now we're suddenly in this future that we were reading about when we were kids. Tell me something that has turned out better than you expected and something that has turned out worse than you expected. Not specifically in your life, but in the world in general.

MCDEVITT: That's an easy one to answer. The Cold War's over. I never believed I would live to see the end of the Soviet Union and the Cold War. I can remember some very, *very* nervous times. I was in the Navy between 1958 and 1962 during the Berlin crisis. I remember riding between Washington D.C. and Philadelphia at the height of the crisis. I was going down the Baltimore-Washington Expressway, and they were doing some construction work there, and I remember thinking—this was how bad it was, you tend to forget this thirty years later—I remember thinking, why are we going to all the trouble building that overpass when the damn thing is going to be rubble, if not next week, then soon? In the middle of 1962, it seemed that nuclear war, all-out war, between us and the Soviet Union was inevitable. That it was not a question of whether it would happen, it was a question of when it would happen. I would never have believed that our political leaders and their political leaders would actually be sane enough to side-step it and get out from under it. Everybody's saying the world is more dangerous now, there are terrorists, blah, blah, blah, but I don't think it's more dangerous. I don't think there's anything more dangerous than those horrible days in the early 1960's when things looked so desperate. John Kennedy can have all the women in the world as far as I'm concerned. He kept me personally from getting blown into atoms. I was watching Khrushchev's son, on C-SPAN, I guess about a year ago, talking about his father. There was some talk about what a tough old man Khrushchev was, but the bottom line was, the guy was at least rational, and you've got to give him that.

COX: I've always felt that the key fact of the Cold War is that the United States consistently got to deal with Russian leaders who were not nuts. I mean, if Castro had been running the Soviet Union, or Mao, or Pol Pot, it might have been a different story. But we got to deal with Khrushchev and his successors, and they were either not nuts and pretty shrewd, or they were utterly ineffectual. Either way, we were able to deal with them.

MCDEVITT: I think the social context helped too, because the Soviet Union was a materialistic power. Consider where we would have been, for example, had it been the Nazis, who had this mystical stuff going on, and who might very well have launched everything, or had it been a fanatical religious state. Fortunately, we were always able to sit down with the Russians and reason through it.

COX: What's turned out worse?

MCDEVITT: What's turned out worse? Well, the immediate thing that comes to my mind is the space program. In the 1950's there was a radio program called *2000+*. It was a science fiction show for kids, more so than some of the others that were on at that time. And all the *2000+* stories that I recall were all about space flight. After 2000, well, 2001, right? We're on our way to Jupiter. So, the space program didn't get off the ground exactly the way I thought it would. I sort of hoped we'd get to Mars, and it hasn't happened yet. I'm now beginning to think that maybe we'll make it. Technological advances overall, though, are not a

negative, but a positive, maybe second only to ending the Cold War.

Especially medical and genetic technology. I have a handicapped child, and I am hopeful. I don't think anything's ever going to be able to be done for her, but I am really hopeful that we are approaching an age where something can be done about birth defects.

COX: It's amazing to think how some things just didn't happen, and other things happened so much more rapidly. We still don't have those robots that Asimov promised, but we can remake ourselves.

MCDEVITT: We don't have the video telephones. We don't have rocket packs. I thought by the end of the century, I'd be zipping around with my own rocketpack. Then I got the notion of, My God, all these drunks out there with these things.

COX: Let me end this on a more personal and domestic note. You mentioned your wife Maureen's influence on getting you to write in the first place. What is your family's attitude toward your work, and especially your wife's? I'm always interested in how writers' spouses view things. My favorite quote on that is from Michael Bishop, who said that when his wife Jeri is asked if she reads science fiction, she says, "No, my husband writes it."

MCDEVITT: I think that's close to my wife's position.

COX: She's not a long time big reader of science fiction?

MCDEVITT: Not science fiction. She reads generally. She's also my in-house editor. Writing is a full-time job. You come home and you spend all night in front of a word processor, a typewriter in earlier times. The weekends are devoted exclusively to writing. My wife and my kids saw relatively little of me. I remember my older son used to refer to me as Lamont Cranston [laughter], and it was true. But I don't think it is possible to do this, if you're married, unless you've got a really pliable spouse who's willing to go along with it and encourage it. Writing is such an emotional kind of exercise—if you get tension around the house, if there's resentment of lost time, any of that kind of stuff, you simply can't function. Maureen was really great. I read to the kids in the evening, but she managed them. It was especially difficult because of the handicapped child. Really, she had her hands full for years. Then I would drop a manuscript in front of her and ask her to look at it, and she was quite good at picking out the absurdities. She kept me on a number of occasions from making a fool of myself in public—not all occasions, alas, but she's very good.

COX: And as the absolute last thing, briefly, tell us about your current book.

MCDEVITT: The current book is *Deepsix*, which was released in March 2001 from Eos. It's set in the same universe as *The Engines of God*. Researchers have been looking forward for twenty years to a collision between a gas giant and a terrestrial-sized world in the Maleiva system. During the last few weeks, a research vessel goes out, and a big tourist ship, a starfaring Queen Elizabeth. At the last minute, ten days before Armageddon, the researchers discover ruins on Maleiva III, the terrestrial world. Civilizations are extremely rare, but they have no lander to go down and investigate. The nearest vessel is piloted by Priscilla Hutchins, who is not an archeologist, but who's helped at some of the other-worldly digs. They divert her, she grabs a couple of volunteers and goes down to take a look, as do a couple of tourists from the Queen. But a quake hits at a bad time and both landers are destroyed. No other ship is close enough to help. So the problem becomes: how do you get off a planetary surface when you have no lander?

COX: Thank you, Jack.

MCDEVITT: My pleasure.



cluded that its critics had been right, big time. The 1997 figures were revised in the 1998 annual, with similar totals evident in the later annuals. In summary, totals almost doubled, from roughly 60,000 titles to twice that, of which about 10% is fiction (11,808 titles in 1999, the latest year available). These totals, unlike earlier figures, don't distinguish between original books and reprints/reissues (the last is much more important in paperbacks). Think about what 120,000 books per year means: *fourteen books every hour*. The authority for fantastic fiction in English is *Locus*, whose February issue provides both critical and statistical summaries for US books (and magazines), with a shorter summary about April summarizing British books. For 2000, *Locus* counted 1027 originals and 900 reprints in the US; for the UK, it was 281 originals and 436 reprints (plus 106 first UK editions of books published earlier in the US, Canada, or Australia). *Locus* lists the nonfiction it sees (the figures shown include nonfiction) but doesn't attempt to acquire many of the books listed in Recent and Forthcoming Titles listings, some of which are esoteric indeed. Almost all nonfiction is original (quite distinct from saying it displays originality) and probably totals close to 200 books yearly, from academic to popular, of which we review about half (the better half, one hopes). Add several dozen theses and an unknown number of non-English nonfiction works. A pocket universe, perhaps, but with considerable variety and interest.

Neil Barron

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS SOLICITS PROPOSALS

Wesleyan University Press will launch its Early Classics of Science Fiction this fall with two Verne titles. *Invasion of the Sea*, 1907, will be translated for the first time by Edward Baxter with introduction and notes by Arthur B. Evans, editor of the series. *The*

Mysterious Island, the sequel to *20,000 Leagues*, will have the first new unabridged translation since its original publication in 1876. Sidney Kravitz will translate, with introduction and notes by William Butcher. See Wesleyan University Press' distributor Website, www.upne.com, and click on Fall 2001 catalog for more details.

The series will include scholarly editions of classic English-language science fiction and new translations of non-English science fiction, both with critical introductions, notes, and bibliographical materials. Also included will be monographs and other scholarly studies that focus on pre-1940 science fiction. Wesleyan is also soliciting manuscripts, proposals, ideas, and volume editors for potential books. Send suggestions and/or submissions directly to Arthur B.

Evans, Modern Languages Department, EC L-06, DePauw University, Greencastle, IN 46135, fax 765-658-4764, aevans@depauw.edu.

Neil Barron

HALL REFERENCE WEBSITE GETS NEW URL

Hal Hall's invaluable reference index to secondary literature has a new URL: <http://library.tamu.edu/cushing/sffrd.index.htm>. The former URL was <http://access-02.tamu.edu/hhall/>. If you don't know this site, you should. Neil Barron

NEW SF ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Published last June in the US (Carroll & Graf) and UK (Robinson) was George Mann's *The Mammoth Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, about 640 pages, to be reviewed. The July *Locus* reported that John Clute and Dave Langford are negotiating for a third edition of the *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, whose second edition was published in 1993, with later printings incorporating a supplement with additions and corrections. Neil Barron

INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW WITH MAUREEN McHUGH

Sandra Lindow & Michael Levy

Maureen McHugh is the award-winning author of *China Mountain Zhang*, *Half the Day is Night*, *Mission Child*, the recently released *Nekropolis* (which we both strongly recommend if you haven't yet read it), as well as a double handful of superb short stories. She attended the Cleveland SFRA conference in 2000 and is one of the nicest people you'll ever meet. We published an interview with her in *Publishers Weekly* last summer but, due to space constraints, were forced to leave out a lot of worthwhile material. What follows is the entire phone interview (some four times as long as the *PW* piece) with a few e-mailed follow up questions added to flesh out some of McHugh's more interesting points.

LINDOW: Your new novel, *Nekropolis*, is set in a future Morocco and many of the characters actually live in old mausoleums. To what extent does the Nekropolis serve as a central symbol for their lives and relationships?

MC HUGH: I found the old city where people live among death to be really metaphorically rich, and I was very careful never to work out a whole lot. In a sense the people who hire the main character, Hariba, to be their maid are living a life that is distant from the life and death concerns of the people who live in the Nekropolis. They are distanced by comfort, but I have to say that I was very careful just to let that material work.

LINDOW: Sort of on a subconscious level.

MC HUGH: Yes, exactly—for me.

LINDOW: It's often better when it's hinted at and not spelled out. It adds depth to the work.

LEVY: Hariba is a young woman who has been jessed. Can you explain this concept?

MC HUGH: Jesses are the ties around a falcon's leg used by falconers either to hold the animal or tie it to a glove or a saddle horn. I wanted to suggest that somehow this was a process which tied Hariba to whoever owned her. I don't really know how you could alter humans' brains so they are chemically coerced, but I had the idea in the back of my head that Hariba was artificially addicted to her owner. Separation affected her somewhat the same way chemical withdrawal does. This was partly physiological and partly psychological. It's an illegal practice in the book. In most of what we consider the first world or the second world, it's outlawed and only used on animals.

LEVY: Hariba falls in love with Ahkmim, an artificial person or *harmi* created by mixing human and animal genetic material. Can you tell us a little about him?

MC HUGH: Ahkmim is the ideal lover. I read a novel one time about a girl who gets an android who is the perfect lover. As a result she becomes self-actualized. It's a very romantic concept—if we could just find the perfect person who satisfied all our needs. Ahkmim is a person who *must* satisfy other people's needs. It occurred to me if I had someone in my life who had to satisfy all of my needs, I would become tremendously self-absorbed. So Ahkmim started first as a kind of a concept. The more I wrote about him, the more I became interested in the plight of someone who must please everyone around him and how impossible that is.

LINDOW: I noticed in the book almost a refrain where he would ask people what he should do.

MC HUGH: Right.

LINDOW: Because he *has* to do what other people want him to do.

MC HUGH: What do you *want* me to do. What do you want? What do you want? That's the only way that he is ever comfortable by knowing that he is doing exactly what somebody wants. I think actually creating something like that would be very immoral.

LINDOW: It makes him very comfortable in telling lies because a lie is very easy to tell if your compulsion is to be pleasing rather than to be honest.

MC HUGH: Correct. It's his moral obligation to be pleasing.

LEVY: Did we describe him accurately as an artificial person created by mixing human and animal genetic material?

MC HUGH: Correct. He's not a machine. He's a biological intelligence. Mostly human.

LEVY: It reminded me a little of the characters in Joan Slonczewski's books because they are genetically mixed.

MC HUGH: I have read one of Joan's books, but I can't say that I have read enough to claim that I have been influenced. Joan knows so much about biology though, I wish I could claim that.

LINDOW: Brilliant woman.

LINDOW: To what extent is their relationship triggered by the mistreatment Hariba experiences from her first employer's wife? To what extent do you see this relationship as a matter of addiction and codependency?

MC HUGH: When I was writing the central metaphor of the book was drug addiction. Ahkmim is sort of a drug in Hariba's life. She shouldn't establish a relationship with him because it's unhealthy and when she does, it works on her as well as her family sort of the way crack cocaine addiction works on the family. Her family is affected; her friends are affected. It becomes so central to her that she will sacrifice anything for it. To what extent is their relationship triggered by Hariba's mistreatment? Well, of course, Ahkmim has to ask her, "What do you want from me?" and what she wants is somebody to care about her when her employer is treating her badly.

LINDOW: Her needs are very infantile. She doesn't want to get sex from him, she wants cuddling and attention.

MC HUGH: Yes.

LINDOW: She doesn't seem to be entirely a grownup.

MC HUGH: I think his relationship with her is infantilizing. Is that a word? I think his relationship with anybody tends to infantilize them. She's a good girl who has been taught that sex is a trap until you are married. She has met someone who will appear to be a human guy but who will accommodate her fears. She isn't forced in the relationship to compromise and that I think is essentially ...

LINDOW: What makes you an adult?

MC HUGH: Exactly, what makes you an adult.

LINDOW: Hahah! I never thought about it that way before. Cool!

MC HUGH: I think that would be the truly unhealthy thing about having a relationship with somebody who met all your needs. It would not force you to empathize or compromise or to recognize anything outside of yourself.

LEVY: And yet you do a pretty good job of making him into a person, too, and we worry about him. At least I did.

MC HUGH: Yes, there is this tremendous conflict between what he says and what is clear he actually wants or needs. The way that I found it was easiest to see Ahkmim's motivations are in the spaces between people, in the lies he tells, the contradictions between what he tells one person and what he tells another and then, of course, when he finally meets others who are like himself.

LEVY: The protagonists in all of your books seem to be outsiders, people who don't fit well in their societies, do you feel an affinity for such people?

MC HUGH: Science fiction is perpetually about adolescents. Adolescents always feel as if they are outsiders. That's one of the clichés of science fiction. In either a science fiction novel or a historical novel there is the tremendous difficulty of all of the background that the reader needs. Somebody who is inside is less likely to notice the things that the reader needs than somebody who is outside. The fact that I tend to write about outsiders is partially because I feel a tremendous sympathy for people who are marginalized and also because I tend to write in a particular narrative style which is a very, very close point of view. It's hard for me to have the kind of narrator who just comes in and describes things. If I don't have an outside character to describe things, things never get explained—so part of it is just a technical thing.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The 2001 Bulyer-Lytton Fiction Contest results were announced in early July. A legal secretary in Vancouver, BC, was this year's winner for "A small assortment of astonishingly loud brass instruments raced each other lustily to the respective ends of their distinct musical choices as the gates flew open to release a torrent of tawny fur comprised of angry yapping bullets that nipped at Desdemona's ankles, causing her to reflect once again (as blood filled her sneakers and she fought her way through the panicking crowd) that the annual Running of the Pomeranians in Liechtenstein was a stupid idea." Don't much care for the winner? Try the runner-up, by a woman from Seal Beach, California: "The lone monarch butterfly flew flutteringly through the cemetery, dancing on and glancing against headstone after headstone before alighting atop Willie Mitchell's already lowered casket, causing gasps of awe to fly from the open mouths of five or six lingering mourners, until a big shoveful of dirt landed on it and it died." To see many other entries, including those for science fiction and horror; for to [www \[for Wretched Writers Welcome\].sjsu.edu/depts/english/2001.htm](http://www.writerswelcome.sjsu.edu/depts/english/2001.htm).
Neil Barron

ELLISON TIMES TWO

The secondary literature on Harlan Ellison, a very prolific writer, and unusual in that most of his work is short fiction, is sparse. That will be partly remedied in the next few months with two publications. Tim Richmond has compiled *Fingerprints on the Sky: The Authorized Harlan Ellison Bibliography and Reader's Guide*, which Overlook Connection Press, Box 526, Woodstock, GA 30188, will publish about October in a limited edition as well as a trade hardcover and paperback, prices not set. At about 400 pages, it's easily the most detailed Ellison bibliogra-

phy and will effectively substitute for the last dangerous bibliography by Leslie Kay Swigart, which stalled about 1985. Ellen R. Weil and Gary K. Wolfe have written the first full-length study, *Harlan Ellison: The Edge of Forever*, due in 2002 from Ohio State University Press. OSU is where Ellison slugged an instructor for saying he had no talent, an irony that should not be forgotten. Ellison was the subject of a longer-than-average self-interview in the July *Locus*.
Neil Barron

STERLING TO SELECTIVELY DISTRIBUTE GOLLANZ'S SF COLLECTOR'S EDITIONS

Gollancz, the British publisher, has been reprinting trade paperback editions of its SF Collector's Editions, known for their bright yellow covers and generally consistent quality. Sterling Publishing, New York, will selectively distribute this series at \$14.95 each. Due this October are four titles: Fritz Leiber, *The Wanderer* (1964, Hugo); John Sladek, *The Reproductive System* (US: Mechasm), 1968; Robert Silverberg, *Tower of Glass* (1970, Nebula nominee); and Eric Frank Russell, *Wasp*, 1967. They are also distributing some of Gollancz's current science fiction.

SUVIN COPS COVER, REVEALS ALL!

No, he isn't on the cover of your local supermarket tabloid, but on the sedate cover of issue 43 of *Science Fiction: A Review of Speculative Literature* (16:1, 2001). The cover shot is supplemented by one of him from 1943 as an adolescent in wartime Yugoslavia. Darko Suvin (1932-) taught at McGill University, Montreal, from 1968 to his retirement in 1999 and returned to Europe last spring. Van Iken, the editor, assisted by fellow Aussies Russell Blackford and Sylvia Kelso, engaged in an e-mail colloquium last spring (from internal evidence) that provided Suvin an opportunity to

LEVY: Who would you say is the most emotionally balanced character in the book?

MC HUGH: I don't think any of them are tremendously emotionally balanced. I don't know many emotionally balanced people. Maybe Hariba's friend. Ayesha is probably the most emotionally balanced, and she does get sort of dragged into Hariba's problem and it destroys her life. One of the problems of working with somebody in, for example, drug dependency or in some other self-destructive behavior is that sympathy is the way other people get sucked into that behavior. In this way, empathy, humanity, and concern become dangerous emotions for brothers, mothers, fathers, sisters, friends. That's the way drug addiction destroys families.

LINDOW: Mixing artificial intelligence with human genes seems to cause suffering for your characters, is *Nekropolis* a cautionary tale?

MC HUGH: It's really not. I don't think there is anything predictive about the science of the book. The science is actually hand waving to get to the metaphorical center of the book. I've written books in which the science was stronger. This book isn't predictive except I think that we tend to use our scientific advances in things that we market—that go into our marketplace. The things that we buy, like food, and the fact that we are biologically, evolutionally, driven to search for things that have sugar and fat means that our marketplace has learned that to sell more food, they need to pump more sugar and fat into it so that we'll buy more of it. Therefore, we are a nation that is more likely to die of diseases related to over indulgence. If we allow market forces to drive the way we handle things like artificial intelligence or human genetics, we run the risk of gratifying ourselves to our detriment.

LINDOW: It seems like our ability to come up with discoveries outstrips our ability to use them wisely.

MC HUGH: We have a system in place that rewards exploitation. Someone who is successful in the marketplace has found a trigger to exploit. Some of the things are good. Health clubs exploit our anxieties about our health and our life and our looks, and yet health clubs are probably a really good thing because they make it easy for people to get exercise. Not all the things that are market driven are necessarily bad, but the market is amoral. I could go on talking about this, but maybe it would be more appropriate in a conference paper or panel discussion. Where is SFRA next year, by the way?

LEVY: New Lanark, Scotland, where Robert Owen set up one of the world's most successful utopian communities.

MC HUGH: I don't know that I could swing Scotland next year, but I have a paper though on the web-promotion of *AI* by Steven Spielberg which I think is the first really successful new form, whatever we want to call it, on the Web. You know people have tried to do fiction on the web. I'm writing a paper about postmodernism and that particular site.

LEVY: That I'm sure would be something that we'd love to hear at a conference, if not this one then next one in Guelph, Ontario.

MC HUGH: Sean Stewart is the writer for this *AI* site. I don't know what to call it. It's sort of like a game, sort of like a story which is set in the same universe as the movie *AI*, but takes place 50 years later. It's a murder mystery. It's just a phenomenal thing and very different.

LINDOW: You have first hand experience with the Chinese culture you used in your first novel, *China Mountain Zhang*, but where does your feel for Moroccan culture come from?

MC HUGH: I have no feel for Moroccan culture (laughter). The Morocco in *Nekropolis* is purely a construction from my own mind. There's a note in the book apologizing. I had a guide book and a cook book. In fact I resisted giving the place a name for the longest time until it became impossible for me not to give it a name. The necropolis, the cemetery, is actually in Cairo, across the Nile from the city, where I imagine they build above ground because of the Nile flooding, but I'm not sure. And I don't even know very much about that except that there

was a show on PBS. The homeless actually live in the cemetery. Morocco doesn't have above-ground cemeteries.

LEVY: It's a composite.

MC HUGH: Yes.

LEVY: You specifically mention the city of Fez, so I assumed that that's where it was.

MC HUGH: It really isn't Morocco.

LEVY: A couple of weeks ago I was reading Elizabeth Hand's *Waking the Moon*, and she has a specific reference to Dalkeith Palace in Scotland, because a character visits it for some obscure magical reason and my ears perked up because for four months last year we were living in that very palace. I was teaching in the U of W in Scotland program, which leases that palace. So I e-mailed Hand, all excited, but it turned out that she'd just picked a name out of a guidebook.

MC HUGH: Exactly, I'm afraid that's Morocco for me.

LEVY: Well, it worked. It was a very believable place.

MC HUGH: Well, good. There are touches of reality. There are some issues between the Berbers and the Arabs and some of that stuff you can sort of believe. And the descriptions of the food are all accurate because I'm obsessed with food. I just really wanted a place that felt very, very foreign.

LINDOW: Do you see the ending as happy?

MC HUGH: No, but I see the ending as necessary if Hariba is ever going to be happy. In the end, I think, Hariba is forced to start to grow up. I don't want to say more because I want people to read the book.

LEVY: A lot's left unresolved though, do you plan on a sequel or do you just like that open-ended kind of scariness

MC HUGH: To me, the essential issues in the novel are not left unresolved. Her life is left unresolved, but all our lives are left unresolved. You know the old theater saying, every exit is an entrance. No sequels, not now at least, maybe someday, but certainly not now.

LINDOW: A lot of writers do sequels obviously because they can get paid well for them, but twenty years from now when your life is in a different place, Hariba's life might be in a different place as well. You could all of a sudden say, like Le Guin did about the later Earthsea books, "I know what happens now."

MC HUGH: People have asked me that about *China Mountain Zhang*, and for years I kept saying that when I started the book, Zhang and I were the same age; and when I finished it, he was older than I was, so I had to wait to catch up with him. But the truth is I don't know what else I would write. Like Le Guin, in fifteen years I might say, "I know what's going on, I know." I always said that if I would ever write a sequel to *China Mountain Zhang*, it would be called *Zhang goes to Mars*. I don't even know that, but everybody always felt that there were portions of that novel that were sort of loose ends. I like loose ends.

LEVY: I liked *China Mountain Zhang* a lot; it's full of brilliant stuff, but it did to some extent feel like a series of stories, rather than a unified novel. I think you've learned a lot as a writer since you wrote it.

MC HUGH: I have. I have. In fact I've written nothing but straight narrative since then because I felt that there were aspects of *China Mountain Zhang* that I was not in control of. It actually isn't exactly a fix up novel. People often describe it as a fix up novel. By about the fourth chapter, the stories no longer stand alone, but it is the way that I could sort of control the book. I knew how to write short stories. I didn't know how to write a novel, so I would write these chunks. Now I've finally figured out a little bit about how to write a novel, although I don't think I'll ever be all that strong on the aspect of structure we refer to as plot. Presently I'm at work on a novel, the working title is *Coming of Age in America* (laughter). People keep saying, "Isn't that already a book?" and I say, "As if I care?"

LEVY: Is it science fiction or not?

reiterate many of the views he has expressed over the years. He also provides interesting details about his European experiences before, during, and after the war. This piece occupies about half of the issue's sixty-seven pages. Other pieces include an examination of *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, and an interview with Bernard Cohen, author of three novels, one of them loosely linked to science fiction. Five reviews and a caricature of Wells by Dan Ikin (Van's brother), not as good as the David Low caricature on which it is based, complete the issue, which reached me in late July. Subscriptions to #44/45: A\$18 domestic, A\$26 overseas, payable to Van Ikin, English Department, University of Western Australia, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA 6009, whose US agent is Jonathan V. Post, 3225 North Marengo Avenue, Altadena, CA 91001 (Checks payable in US dollars to J.V. Post).

Neil Barron

CULTURAL STUDIES E-JOURNAL DEBUTS

Debuting this fall, *Reconstruction* (www.reconstruction.ws), a peer-reviewed electronic cultural studies journal, will use its Internet location to encourage a maximum of reader participation. Both theoretical and empirical approaches are welcomed from any subject perspective, such as folklore, history, psychology, literature, etc. The deadline for the Fall 2001 issue has passed, but submissions, as attachments in MSWord or HTML, or questions, may be sent any time to submissions@reconstruction.ws. Large files, such as flash movies or essays with many large pictures, should be sent on a zip disk or CD to Submissions, Reconstruction, 104 East Hall, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH 43402. If you'd like to receive the newsletter, send an e-mail to updates@reconstruction.ws with "subscribe" in the subject line.

Neil Barron

WINNERS OF THE 2001 SFRA GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER AN- NOUNCED

The winners of the 2001 SFRA Graduate Student Paper Award, in a tie, are:

Eric Drown for "Riding the Cosmic Express in the Age of Mass Production: Independent Inventors as Pulp Heroes in American SF 1926-1939" and Sha LaBare for "Outline for a Mode Manifesto: Science Fiction, Transhumanism, and Technoscience."

The Award Committee was composed of last year's winner, Sonja Fritzsche, chair Joan Gordon, and Michael Levy, substituting for Nona Vera who was ill. There were several other excellent papers so the decision was a difficult one.

The winners will receive checks for \$100, free one year memberships in the SFRA, and certificates.

Mike Levy

EXTRAPOLATION IS MOVING

Extrapolation will be moving to the University of Texas Brownsville with the Spring 2002 issue.

Donald Hassler will become Executive Editor with Javier Martinez taking over as Editor. Most of the editorial work will continue, at first, to be done in Kent with essentially the same team as before.

Extrapolation now has a Web page that you can look at which gives the basic information. Mack reports that "we are adding to the page all the time. We are adding mainly indexes to past issues now. The only text change that is important to note now is that Javier is not working for his President at the moment but is fulltime in the Department of English at UTB."

Here is the URL: <http://fp.dl.kent.edu/extrap>.

Mack further reports that he is "excited about what we call the

MC HUGH: Yes, it takes place in 2021 and its full of false documents, interviews, newspaper articles, and magazine articles; and its structure is looser than I have been writing in the last few novels.

LINDOW: *Nekropolis* was very tight I thought.

MC HUGH: And it's funny you mentioned Le Guin. In *Always Coming Home* she describes the structure of the village of the people as this sort of spiral figure that curves in and then curls back out again. That to me was the structure of *Nekropolis*. The novel spirals all the way in to that central section of Hariba's mother and then comes all the way back out. It begins with Hariba and ends with Hariba. And the really funny thing about that is that when I was writing the novel, I was so resistant to the idea of putting her mother in because I had planned that the next novel I wrote would be a mother/daughter book. Well, I'm not writing a mother daughter book, so it's okay that I talked about Hariba's mom.

LINDOW: You did such a nice job of differentiating the voices and viewpoints of your various narrators, and I think that was a very important thing because if we just had Hariba's viewpoint it would have been kind of suffocating.

MC HUGH: Yes.

LINDOW: We wouldn't have been able to see quite how screwed up she was. Although you can kind of tell how depressed she is because of her joylessness, her anomie?

MC HUGH: Yes.

LINDOW: Earlier you said that Hariba's jessing affected her a bit like chemical addiction and mentioned having worked with people who have dependency problems. Can you tell us more about your experiences and how they inform your fiction?

MC HUGH: I've never worked with alcoholics, but alcoholism runs in my family, and I did some time in Alanon, the organization for friends and relatives of alcoholics. The cliché is that substance abuse is a family disease and writing *Nekropolis*, that resonated very strongly through my experience of the book. I don't plan my novels out ahead of time. I have a very general sort of map of them, but big huge areas are white space that might as well be inscribed "Here Abide Monsters" the way some ancient maps are supposed to be inscribed. So as I wrote *Nekropolis*, I was astonished at the way the effects of Hariba's obsession with Ahkmim spread through her family and friends, with dreadful consequences. We have a saying in my family, that no good deed goes unpunished, and when dealing with Hariba that's certainly true. That said, I don't think that Hariba is evil, except in the sense that we all are. And I certainly didn't want her to be an unsympathetic character.

LINDOW: On your website you have an essay on depression which asks "Is it Depression or just the human condition?" Sometimes people turn to alcoholism or other forms of addiction to manage their depression. Did Hariba choose to be jessed because she thought she could get away from her emotional problems? To put it another way, we know that she is too some extent running away from an unhappy love relationship. Does she have her current emotional problems because the relationship failed or did the relationship fail because she's depressive?

MC HUGH: Hariba certainly chose to be jessed because she thought it would solve all of her problems. Hariba's choice is sort of the same choice some people make when they enter religious orders (or at least when they think about entering religious orders) or the military. I think Hariba thought that jessing would make her into someone simpler, and that simpler would mean fewer problems. Another version of this is "the geographic curse," the belief that if we just move to California (or wherever) we can start our life over again, simpler and better, without all these messy personal complications.

But I don't think that Hariba's relationship with the boy she was seeing when she was still living at home is that significant in her life. Far more significant in her life is her relationship with her family and, in some odd way, with her brother Fhassin, who she sees as having both betrayed the family and perhaps escaped from it.

Fhassin is, in some ways, Ahkmim's other. The opposite of Ahkmim.

Hariba's family structure is very loosely based on the family of my best friend when I was growing up—very loosely, as their father didn't die young and none of them ended up in prison. They are all very successful people. But the dynamics and alliances of their family really fascinated me because I'm an only child (I have a sister who is seventeen years older than I am, so I grew up, as she did, an only child). They all stayed at home well into their early twenties, and although they fought and seemed very independent from each other, it seemed to me that there was something, some bond, that kept them together.

Her relationship to Ahkmim is certainly related to her loneliness and her isolation. In cutting her ties with her family, she has cast herself adrift. And jessing, of course, complicates that since she has this artificial relationship with her employer, who actually plays almost no part in her day-to-day life. I think having someone like Ahkmim in your life could be very seductive, emotionally.

LEVY: Hariba seems to have difficulty making changes in herself. Cutting her hair at the end seems to be the first conscious change in her life that Hariba makes. Do you see this as signifying a happy ending in the making?

MC HUGH: Hariba is actually always making changes in her life. She gets herself jessed, she runs away. These are conscious choices, although because of the jessing she has to try very hard not to think about running away, even when she is doing it. But yes, cutting her hair is an important one. In some ways it is the same old kind of choice she has made before, the choice to try to simplify her life and to be something else. But in another way, I think it's an attempt to move away from the girl who is in love with the *harni* and only by doing that can she renounce her addiction, in a sense, and get on with building her life. But I don't really understand what is so powerful about her cutting her hair. My editor had difficulty with that too. She had me re-write that ending to try to strengthen it so that while there isn't any explicit equation of "cutting hair = x" there is a sense of emotional closure. I think that there are both positive and negative aspects to her cutting her hair. It's a bit of a ruthless act, since it is cutting off something that connects her to her life in Morocco, and it is an attempt to be modern. I think there is something in it of the idea that young girls have long hair—historically when a woman is old enough to be an adult she pinned her hair up so it didn't hang long and free anymore. And I'm not sure it isn't something of an amputation as well.

But all important transformations involve some loss, don't they?

LINDOW: Okay, Hariba, tends to deal with her depression by making superficial changes in her life. First, she cuts her ties with her family, then she cuts her hair, but it seems like in cutting her hair, she is one step closer to the understanding that depression can be conquered by changing one's own world view.

You say that science fiction is a literature of adolescence. Hariba isn't chronologically a teenager, but she doesn't seem grown up either. Is her culture partially responsible for this? Her family dynamics?

MC HUGH: Hariba feels like a spinster to me, at least until she gets involved with Ahkmim. Culturally, we tend to think that a woman who doesn't have either a family or a career is still a "girl." The term "maid" can also mean a young girl or virgin, a maiden. Women who enter religious orders are usually "sisters," while men who enter the priesthood are "fathers." And her adventure doesn't involve saving the planet, it's about a relationship. Doomed relationships are the province of young people, like Romeo and Juliet.

Of course Hariba is also very self-absorbed. She lies to her family and uses her friends. But that goes back to the addiction model, as well. Addicts behave in ways that seem very immature. I feel as if when the novel opens Hariba feels prematurely aged, and she regresses very quickly as she becomes involved with Ahkmim. But that's just my feeling and readers will probably feel different.

LEVY: You've seen the film *AI*. Do you see similarities between Ahkmim and Spielberg's character Gigolo Joe?

new 'border existence' for the journal; and truly I hope that Javier and I will be able to emphasize more of the para-literary elements in the scholarship as time goes on."

Mike Levy

CLARION WEST ANNOUNCES 2002 INSTRUCTORS

The Clarion West Writers Workshop has announced that instructors for the 2002 session will be Nicola Griffith, Kathleen Alcala, Dan Simmons, Pat Cadigan, Gardner Dozois, and Joe Haldeman.

Clarion West is an intensive six-week summer workshop for writers interested in pursuing professional careers. It focuses primarily on the genres of science fiction, fantasy, horror, and magic realism. Since 1984 Clarion West has provided training and inspiration for some of the field's most respected authors and editors. Next year's workshop will run from June 16 through July 26. Only 17 students will be selected.

Application information is available on the Clarion West website at:

www.sff.net/clarionwest or write to Clarion West, 340 Fifteenth Avenue East, Suite 350, Seattle, WA 98112. All applications must be received (not postmarked) by April 1, 2002. Tuition is \$1400. Applications received by March 1, 2002, will receive a \$100 tuition reduction. Limited scholarships are available. The dormitory costs approximately \$900, not including meals. Living there is strongly recommended. College credit is available for an additional fee.

RECENT AND FORTHCOMING TITLES

* Cavallaro, Dani. *The Gothic Vision: Three Centuries of Horror, Terror, and Fear*. Continuum, March 2002.

Dendle, Peter. *The Zombie Movie Encyclopedia*. McFarland, December 2000.

- * Hellekson, Karen. *The Science Fiction of Cordwainer Smith*. McFarland, Fall 2001.
- * Holland-Toll, Linda J. *As American as Mom, Baseball, and Apple Pie: The Construction of Community in American Horror Fiction*. Bowling Green University Press, January 2002.
- Howarth, Troy. *That Haunted World of Mario Bava*. FAB Books (UK), 2001.
- Hughes, David. *The Greatest Sci-Fi Movies Never Made*. Titan (UK), 2001.
- * Johnson, Tom & Susan D. Cowrie. *The Mummy in Fact, Fiction, and Film*. McFarland, Fall 2001.
- * Kalat, David. *The Strange Case of Dr. Mabuse: A Study of the Twelve Films and Five Novels*. McFarland, Summer 2001.
- * Le Blanc, Michelle and Colin Odell. *Horror Films*. Pocket Essentials/Trafalgar Square, 2001.
- Leggett, Paul. *Terence Fisher: Horror, Myth, and Religion*. McFarland, Fall 2001.
- * Lovecraft, H.P. *The Shadow Out of Time*, ed. by S.T. Joshi and David Schultz. Hippocampus, Fall 2001.
- * Mathis, Arthur E. *The King Arthur Myth in Modern American Fiction and Culture*. McFarland, Fall 2001.
- * McKenna, Erin. *The Task of Utopia: A Pragmatic and Feminist Perspective*. Rowman and Littlefield, January 2002.
- * Mitchell, Charles P. *The Complete H.P. Lovecraft Filmography*. Greenwood, October 2001.
- Mitchell, Charles P. *The Devil on Screen: Feature Films Worldwide, 1913 through 2000*. McFarland, Fall 2001.
- Muir, John Kenneth. *An Analytical Guide to Television's One Step Beyond, 1959-1961*. McFarland, March 2001.

MC HUGH: I have seen the movie, and Gigolo Joe is my favorite character in it. But Gigolo Joe's line of romantic blather is, to me at least, the guy idea of what women want rather than what women would really be interested in. I mean, the thought of actually having sex with Gigolo Joe is kind of scary, isn't it? He isn't exactly warm and caring. His seduction practices, asking a woman if she's ever had a mecha before and then saying charmingly, neither has he, feels like the guy obsession with pick-up lines. The Tourettes like head tic he uses to turn on romantic music is hysterical, but hardly likely to put me in the mood. I'm not saying that no woman ever wanted casual sex, but Erica Jong's "zipless fuck" aside, women tend to want something different from men. Ayesha, Hariba's friend, asks her husband, "Are you in love with me?" and I think that's something that Gigolo Joe has no answer for.

LEVY: What similarities do you see between the protagonists of your four novels? How close are they each to you personally?

MC HUGH: Oh, they are all depressives. Every time I write a novel I set out to write a character who is not depressed because depressed people are passive and boring. And every time, I think, I write another depressive-neurotic. But they are all close to me in some ways. Hard to explain, since the hero of my first novel is a Chinese-American gay man, but there are parts of Zhang that are all me. Particularly his petulance, I think.

LINDOW: Finally, are there any questions you wish we'd asked, but we didn't? Feel free to answer them!

MC HUGH: Okay, ask me about the place of motherhood in the book. Motherhood isn't usually a big issue in science fiction, but for me, the central chapter, the chapter from the point of view of Hariba's mother, is the emotional heart of the book. When I first started *Nekropolis* in the mid-eighties, I was single, and the issue of the book was what happens when you meet the perfect, selfless, self-sacrificing, giving guy. But by the time I wrote it, I had become a parent, in fact a stepparent, and it occurs to me must as I write this, that in some ways, Ahkmim is the stepchild, powerless in the relationship, desperate to please the stranger who has control over him, a stranger who he did not pick. Ahkmim can only engage in a kind of guerilla warfare to get what he wants—he lies to Hariba about his relationship with the other *harni*.

Hariba's mother, who has no name of her own in the book, has been seen in different ways by different readers. Some people hate her and think she's a terrible mother. Some think she's a very good mother, who cuts herself no slack for the choices she's had to make. I don't know. I'm still trying to figure out what a good mother or stepmother is.

LINDOW: Ahkmim as stepchild, hmm, this puts the novel in a different light for me, a kind of sciencefictional fairy tale quest. Hariba, in searching for the secret of happiness, separates from her family and is initiated into the secrets of artificial intelligence by being jessed. But AI is no boon; she does not find happiness and when she returns to her family, she is not a conquering hero but a disgraceful mess. She must go away again. Happily ever after is conditional at best.

LEVY: Thank you very much.

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE ART OF CHESLEY BONESTELL

Neil Barron

Miller, Ron and Frederick C. Durant III. *The Art of Chesley Bonestell*. Sterling Pub, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016-8810, July 2001. 256 p. \$49.95. 1-85585-884-3. Paper Tiger, London. £35. Orders to 800-805-5489.

Chesley Bonestell was born New Year's Day 1888 in San Francisco. Wilbur Wright was then twenty-one; his brother, Orville, seventeen. Robert Goddard, who became the father of modern rocketry, was six. Bonestell's artistic talents

surfaced early, but his father viewed artists unfavorably. They compromised on his studying architecture at Columbia. Much of his early work was done for San Francisco's leading architect, for whom he became chief designer, and many examples of this work fill the earlier pages. He later moved to New York City, later still to London. It was there that he developed his interest in astronomical illustration.

By 1938, at age fifty, Bonestell began work as a matte painter for various motion picture studios, and by the early 1940's, he was solving the special problems of astronomical painting. *Saturn as Seen from Titan*, 1944, one of his most famous paintings (included here) was one of a handful *Life* published in 1944 to wide acclaim. They looked more like color photographs than paintings, such was his skill. When man landed on the moon and unmanned probes took photos of other planets, the reality differed considerably from Bonestell's by then famous paintings, such as his sharp, craggy lunar mountains versus the somewhat dull rounded reality. And sometimes his romantic or artistic impulses trumped his scientific knowledge, such as his depiction of surface water on Mars or a solid surface for Jupiter as late as the 1960's.

In 1949 his most famous single book was published. *The Conquest of Space*, with text by Willy Ley, who'd fled Nazi Germany in 1937. Most (maybe all—I didn't check my copy) of the fifty-eight color illustrations from *Conquest* are reproduced here, along with similar work published in magazines and later in books. By the late 1950's his paintings were being exhibited throughout the country, though rarely in fine art museums then or later. His work was recognized in 1983 with the publication of *Worlds Beyond: The Art of Chesley Bonestell*, a 133-page trade paperback, text by Miller and Durant, with tributes by friends and fans, such as Heinlein, Bova, Niven, and Poul Anderson.

Bonestell retained his interests in painting other subjects and is quoted: "...I did better by Venus than Botticelli did. He put her on an ordinary clamshell. I gave her mother of pearl." He always regarded himself as an illustrator ("the term 'artist' has too many connotations") and pointedly rejected the label "science fiction artist," keeping his 1974 special Hugo in his bathroom. His favorite painting may surprise you. It's an oil on board done about 1957 and reproduced here as a two-page spread about half its 18½ x 24½ inch original size. *The Engulfed Cathedral* is a fantasy based on Debussy's music. The image is pastoral, the technique suggestive of Seurat, and with its unicorn, it wouldn't, I'm sorry to say, be out of place on a generic fantasy novel.

Most of the text, along with many reproductions and photos, is in the first 112 pages. The "gallery" is comprised of paintings with captions, and the quality of the reproductions is excellent. A useful appendix lists most of Bonestell's books, two sources for reproductions, plus a secondary bibliography. A good index concludes the book, which is an outstanding memorial to its subject.

Bonestell will be remembered for his astronomical paintings, whose subjects are far removed from everyday human concerns. In spite (or perhaps because) of their semi-photographic nature, they conceal as much as they reveal, suggesting the unknown at their heart. Their exactness may generate an appeal similar to that of mathematics, of which Bertrand Russell said: "Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture, without appealing to any part of our weaker nature...yet sublimely pure, and capable of a stern perfection such as only the greatest art can show."

* Mulhall, Stephan. *On Film*. Routledge, 2001.

* Nelson, David. *The Secret Life of Puppets*. Harvard University Press, September 2001.

Newman, Kim, ed. *Science Fiction/Horror*. BFI (UK), 2001.

* Ordway, Frederick I. III. *Visions of Spaceflight: Images from the Ordway Collection*. Four Walls Eight Windows, September 2001.

* Petely, Julian and Steve Chibnall. *British Horror Cinema*. Routledge, February 2002.

Pitts, Michael R. *Horror Film Stars*. 3rd Edition. McFarland, Fall 2001.

* Rhodes, Gary D. *White Zombie: Anatomy of a Horror Film*. McFarland, November 2001.

* Richmond, Tim. *Fingerprints on the Sky: The Authorized Harlan Ellison Bibliography and Reader's Guide*. Overlook Connection Press, October 2001.

Sangster, Jimmy. *Insider Hammer: Behind the Scenes at the House of Horror*. Reynolds and Hearn (UK), 2001.

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Stine, Scott Aaron. *The Gorehound's Guide to Splatter Films of the 1960's and 1970's*. McFarland, January 2001.

* Stover, Leon. *Science Fiction from Wells to Heinlein*. McFarland, Fall 2001.

* Valente, Joseph. *Dracula's Crypt: Bram Stoker, Irishness, and the Question of Blood*. University of Illinois, November 2001.

* Verne, Jules. *Invasion of the Sea*, tr. by Edward Baxter, intro and notes by Arthur C. Evans. Wesleyan University Press, Fall 2001. First translation.

* Verne, Jules. *The Mysterious Island*, tr. by Sidney Krantz, ed. by Arthur C. Evans, intro and notes by William Butcher. Wesleyan University Press, Fall 2001.

* Weil, Ellen R. and Gary K. Wolfe. *Harlan Ellison: The Edge of Forever*. Ohio State University Press, early 2002.

*Westfahl, Gary and George Slusser, eds. *Science Fiction, Canonization, Marginalization, and the Academy*. Greenwood, February 2002.

*Westfahl, Gary, George Slusser & Kathleen Church Plummer, eds. *Unearthly Visions: Approaches to Science Fiction and Fantasy Art*. Greenwood, February 2002.

*Wolfreys, Julian. *Victorian Hauntings: Spectrality, Gothic, the Uncanny*. Palgrave, July 2001.

*Denotes a book to be reviewed. Write emcknight@gardnerwebb.edu if you judge yourself qualified to review. Publication dates are tentative and delays are common.

THE ART OF RICHARD POWERS

Neil Barron

Frank, Jane. *The Art of Richard Powers*. London: Paper Tiger, 2001. 128 p. £20. 0-85585-890-8. Distributed by Sterling Publishing Co., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, August 2001. \$29.95. Orders to 800-805-5489.

Richard Powers (1921-1996) was a prolific illustrator and artist. Frank quotes a figure of 1,400 commercial illustrations plus a considerable amount of “fine” art. A chronological checklist of book covers tabulates about half of these, forty-two of which have postage stamp size reproductions (which are not indexed).

Power’s life is profiled by the oldest of his four children, Richard Gid Powers, in an enlightening and balanced chapter. Born and raised in Chicago, Powers attended Jesuit schools, the Art Institute for a year (with a summer at a commercial art academy) and later the University of Illinois Chicago campus. Following World War II service in the Signal Corps film studios (where he craftily traded portraits of fellow soldiers for art equipment), he attended New York’s School for Illustrators, later the New School, then studied landscape and marine painting under Jay Connaway, a member of the National Academy of Art and a strong influence on Powers’ life and art. Powers visited Connaway regularly at his shack on Monhegan Island, Maine, and, while there, received his first important assignment, a 1948 edition of *Gulliver’s Travels*, to which he contributed nine full-page color paintings, twice that number of full-page black and whites, and dozens of smaller sketches. Because he was receiving an increasing number of assignments, he returned with his family to New York in 1950, later moving to Connecticut. He had paintings in a 1950 exhibit at the Met and in MOMA in 1952, with a one-man show at the Rehn Gallery, with which he was associated until the owner’s death in 1978.

The SF specialty publishers of the late 1940’s (Gnome, Shasta, etc.) relied on pulp illustrators like Bok, Cartier, or Finlay. But major publishers like Doubleday and Simon & Schuster, which sold more to libraries than to fans, wanted more “respectable” cover art, not the formula clichés of pulp art. It was also in the early 1950’s that Ian Ballantine commissioned many Powers covers for his new line of original paperbacks aimed at an audience more sophisticated than that for, say, Ace Books. Powers wasn’t a science fiction fan or pulp illustrator; his magazine illustrations were also far fewer than his book work. His influences were both classical painters and the European surrealists, such as Matta, Miro, and especially Yves Tanguy, which was the artist I immediately thought of when I first saw Powers’ work in the early 1950’s.

The abstract, non-representational nature of most of his paintings (and his fine art), which Frank calls abstract surrealism in a valuable 61-page chapter, was well suited to SF and avoided the formula illustration that was and is characteristic of most SF. While spaceships and other hardware are often part of Powers’ work, especially in his earlier years, they are secondary elements in the painting (mostly acrylic), suggestive rather than dominant. His landscapes were not based on nature’s models and were filled with odd or unexpected juxtapositions, often with distorted perspectives, what Frank calls “dream paintings” that are, in Dali’s words, “images of concrete irrationality.” In short, Powers’ work derives more from the imagination than from the intellect, which makes it well suited to more thoughtful SF and more capable of evoking that fabled sense of wonder.

Art directors thought highly of Powers’ work, but fans presumably did not. He was never even nominated for a Hugo or a Chesley, although he was an artist guest of honor at the 1991 Worldcon. I suspect this is because most fans are younger, have relatively little exposure to the European art traditions on which Powers drew, and prefer the conventional icons that stigmatize most SF.

John Clute aptly remarked: “[Powers] never illustrated a story directly, his Ballantine covers—looked at end from end—are an autonomous suite of im-

ages. They tell the dream of science fiction, in their own terms, indelibly.” Vincent Di Fate’s work is quite unlike that of Powers, whom he admired. He concludes his introduction: “[Powers’] paintings did more than just define the strange landscape of the future, they promised there would *be* a future—one filled with wonder and strangeness and, above all, with hope.” Strongly recommended to any library with strength in book illustration and to fans whose tastes transcend the conventional.

NONFICTION REVIEW
EVOLUTION & GROUND ZERO

Neil Barron

Royo, Luis. *Evolution*. Text translated by Robert Legault. NBM, 555 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1202, New York, NY 10018, June 2001. 79 p. \$19.95, trade paper. 1-56163-277-5.

Gambino, Fred. *Ground Zero*. London: Paper Tiger, 2001. 112 p. £20. 1-85585-891-6. Distributed by Sterling Publishing Co., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016, September 2001. \$29.95. Orders to 800-805-5489

Royo is a Spanish illustrator whose fantasy and some SF has appeared on the covers of *Heavy Metal* and on many books, trading cards, portfolios, posters even a tarot deck, all presumably originally published by his Barcelona publisher Norma. This is his sixth book from NBM; his first, *Women*, was published as recently as 1991, making him too recent for Weinberg’s biographical directory or for the recent survey of science fiction illustration by Vincent Di Fate, *Infinite Worlds*.

The source, size, and year of each illustration are shown but not the medium; I’d guess acrylic, but some of those featuring women suggest oils. Some sketches are shown, but most illustrations are finished work. The women exhibit varying stages of undress and often look directly at the viewer with a come-hither gaze. (Royo has also done a series of striptease postcards). They are voluptuous in the Julie Bell/Rowena mold and more than a little generic. Even those in kick-ass poses have none of the menace of Giger’s women. The text by Royo is uninformative, and that by others isn’t much better.

NBM (Nantier Beall Minoustchine) publishes a lot of this type of illustration, plus many graphic novels, much of it what they call Eurotica and Amerotica whose obvious meaning is explicitly shown at www.nbmpublishing.com. Royo is likely to appeal to rather unsophisticated viewers who have a fondness for the female form.

Gambino is a British illustrator who has been active for the past two decades. As fellow Brit illustrator Kim Burns notes, Gambino embraced digital art early and has become very skilled in its use, as most of the reproductions attest (perhaps 10% are acrylic). The sources are British and American books (credited, but without dates), plus a handful for the US Postal Service celebrating the space program (to my surprise, since I assumed nationalist sentiment or administrative law would limit USPS choices to American illustrators/artists).

Although Gambino renders humans capably, and sometimes as the central image, his focus is more on hardware with detailed, intricate surfaces. Like most digital art I’ve seen (I don’t pretend to have seen a lot) it has a sterile perfection much like an architectural rendering or a blueprint. His cities are more detailed than those of Paul (see his panoramic view of Asimov’s *Trantor*), courtesy of sophisticated software, but fractals lack that indefinable personal touch. There’s a bit of humor now and again, as in the cover for the British edition of Sawyer’s *Illegal Alien*. The multiply-fingered blue alien does indeed resemble Kilroy (historical note for younger members: name for a mythical World War II soldier who scrawled “Kilroy Was Here” in the most unlikely places). Several writers—Elizabeth Moon, Brin, and Sawyer—explain why they like his illustrations for their works. My guess is that if you liked *The Matrix* (again, a film I’ve only read about), you’ll like this, which is for pixel buffs but not for the pixelated like me.

NONFICTION REVIEW

WINGS OF TWILIGHT: THE ART OF MICHAEL KALUTA

Walter Albert

Kaluta, Michael. *Wings of Twilight: The Art of Michael Kaluta*. NBM Publishing, 555 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1202, New York, NY 10018, March 2001. 80 p. \$24.95. 1-56163-276-7.

When I first began reading comics again, after a hiatus of decades, I was drawn to the work of three artists: Jim Steranko, Bernie Wrightson, and Michael W. Kaluta. My return to comics in the seventies didn't last long, and I never developed a real affection for any other comic book artists, but I continued to follow the careers of Wrightson and Kaluta. Eventually, I lost track of Wrightson's work and mainly kept up with Kaluta through his book illustrations and limited-edition prints. He seemed to me to be the closest in quality to the illustrators I was collecting, such as Rackham and Harry Clarke, and the most allied to the Symbolist and Decadent artists whose highly decorative style never ceases to excite me.

It's a visual treat to revisit Kaluta's work, but it's regrettable that so many features that could have made this a real introduction to and overview of Kaluta's enormous output are not included. The book features color work and sketches for his Tolkien calendar (which he calls "the best series of pictures I've ever made"), for Prince Valiant cover illustrations, sketches and finished pieces for *Starstruck* and *Metropolis*, miscellaneous magazine and book covers, and limited edition portfolio prints, but, surprisingly, nothing from his breakthrough assignment for *The Shadow* comic book series. All of this is loosely organized in chapters, with no dates, imprecise references to original publication, and only brief and generally uninformative textual comments by the artist. The book is a feast for the eyes but a continuing frustration for the researcher or the reader who wants to know more about Kaluta and his career.

Fortunately, there are publications that will serve some of these purposes. The most important is *Echoes: The Drawings of Michael William Kaluta* (Vanguard, 2000). The illustrated material consists almost exclusively of drawings done in preparation for producing commissioned finished works, and it is accompanied by a fine interview conducted by Dean Motter and an excellent introduction to Kaluta's life and work by Paul Chadwick. There's no checklist of Kaluta's published work, but a preliminary checklist (unfortunately not updated, to my knowledge) was published in *The Michael William Kaluta Treasury* (Glimmer Graphics, 1988). This also features sketchbook drawings with comments by Kaluta. Further reproductions from his sketchbooks were published in *Sketchbook* (Kitchen Sink, 1993), but there are only a few paragraphs of commentary by Kaluta.

Finally, mention has to be made of *The Studio* (Dragon's Dream, 1979), a lavishly illustrated tribute to Jeffrey Jones, Kaluta, Barry Windsor-Smith, and Bernie Wrightson, at a time when the four artists were all beginning important careers and shared a studio in New York City. Kaluta now speaks in *Echoes* with some regret of the time that went into the production of that book. "Whatever forward motion [in the artists' work] was happening was set aside for a year or longer, and some of that progress was never continued."

Kaluta's importance as a fantasy artist and the generous sampling of his color work make *Wings of Twilight* recommendable to large libraries; however, it is of limited use as a research tool, and one can only hope that it will not discourage the publication of a large overdue comprehensive study of Kaluta's work.

NONFICTION REVIEW

**THE FILMS OF JOHN CARPENTER & ORDER IN THE UNIVERSE:
THE FILMS OF JOHN CARPENTER**

Jay McRoy

Muir, John Kenneth. *The Films of John Carpenter*. McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640, June 2000. x + 265 p. \$48.50. 0-7864-0725-5. Orders to 800-253-2187.

Cumbow, Robert C. *Order in the Universe: The Films of John Carpenter*. 2nd Edition. Scarecrow Press, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706-4310, December 2000. xiii + 295 p. \$35. 0-8108-3719-6. Orders to 800-462-6420.

While *Halloween* (1978) and *The Thing* (1982) have long been the objects of study by film theorists like Robin Wood, Carol Clover, and Linda Williams, only recently have scholars explored Carpenter's legacy as a director with a very distinctive and consistent vision. Muir and Cumbow represent two such efforts. Adopting a quasi-auteurist approach, they each

remark upon the films and directors that had the greatest influence upon Carpenter's development as an artist, and both view each film, chronologically both on its own merits and as part of a larger body of work. But this doesn't mean that to read Muir is to understand Cumbow; their books ultimately differ in terms of their critical agendas.

Muir presents Carpenter as an anti-authoritarian "maverick" concerned with articulating a thematics of self-sacrifice and individuality in the face of a potentially totalitarian environment. Following a nearly fifty-page historical overview of Carpenter's film career, Muir provides for a synopsis for each movie followed by a commentary that is, at times, cogent and insightful.

Particularly interesting is his argument that *Halloween*, despite contrary claims, used predominantly non-subjective camera techniques to position Michael Myers as a character who is frightening because his motive and movements evade rationality. His reading of *In the Mouth of Madness* (1992) considers the ways in which the film's structure and content convey Carpenter's unique understanding of the director as "creator" of a fictional universe. The quality and depth of the commentary is sometimes inconsistent, as in his responses to less popular films, such as *Christine* or *Village of the Damned*, which are apologetic in tone, often reading more like generous film reviews than criticism.

Cumbow argues that one can trace a "recognizable stylistic and thematic vision" throughout Carpenter's films. Like Muir, he acknowledges the enormous impact of Howard Hawks. But unlike Muir, Cumbow limits his inquiry to the quest for "order," a central desire not only for the characters in the films but also for Carpenter as a director. Cumbow's narrower scope allows for a more cohesive, if somewhat less ambitious, study of Carpenter's films. His new edition picks up where the first (1990) edition ended, and readers can see how this theme of "order" is manifest in more recent films, including his latest, 1998's *Vampires*. The chapter on *Vampires* is one of the best, as it acquaints readers with what is, according to Cumbow, one of Carpenter's most under-appreciated films, which creatively recycles the various motifs that permeate his earlier work.

Both books contain excellent resources (filmographies, detailed appendixes and indexes, etc.) of value to students and scholars. Plenty of clear, detailed black-and-white photographs allow readers to (re)experience some of the most arresting images captured by the lens of a director whose singular vision is thoroughly explored in both of these studies. If library budgets preclude acquiring both, I'd give a slight edge to Cumbow.

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE MODERN FANTASTIC: THE FILMS OF DAVID CRONENBERG

Matthew Wolf-Meyer

Grany, Michael, ed. *The Modern Fantastic: The Films of David Cronenberg*. Praeger, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-5007, November 2000. 218 p. \$65. 0-275-97058-2; \$24.95, trade paper, 0-275-97059-0. Trowbridge, UK: Flicks Books, 2000.

Cronenberg is a director worthy of extended scholarly discussion, and this collection of seven essays and an interview, mostly by British academics, is welcome. But the assortment is uneven, often too narrowly focused, and includes too few essays of importance to justify reading in its entirety. The variety of approaches is interesting, but the utility of most essays is limited, hardly explaining the film (or films) that the author attempts to unravel, and does little to explain science fiction/horror films of Cronenberg's oeuvre.

Parveen Adams' "Death-Drive," a Lacanian analysis of *Crash* (1996), is the most interesting and well-written essay of those that directly engage Cronenberg's work, of interest to any film scholar. She attempts to unravel the stylistic complexity at the heart of the film. She sees beyond the film, linking Cronenberg's visual manipulations to Luc Besson's earlier work and, by implication, to the works of others.

Also interesting is Andrew Klevan's discussion of *Dead Ringers*, which chides both specific film scholars and film scholarship as a field for its lack of consideration of a variety of filmic elements other than simply narrative. While inflammatory, Klevan's analysis of contemporary scholarship is a vital critical entry, repudiating the other essays. (Klevan's essay precedes the interview, in which Cronenberg also chides scholars for their lack of critical scope.) Grant's introduction spends too much space attempting to find faults in Klevan's argument, but his defense is too much of a protest; and in both his introduction and his own essay, it's quite clear what Klevan is attacking: those too concerned with their own scholastic exercises to engage the text at all, instead building a fortification of "theories" to hide their ignorance.

The interview is more interesting for Cronenberg's concerns about the uses of scholarship than for his biographical revelations. Most of the interview considers critiques of his films, as well as arguing against attempts to understand his work through broad biographical or psychoanalytic means. Cronenberg thus appears to be endorsing the more contemporary theoretical modes of the essays rather than Grant's. Also of interest is Cronenberg's extension of his earlier discussion of his aesthetics and the response of the audience to the grotesque visions in his films, which he attributes more to the audience than to his intent.

Finally, the collection is myopic in its cinematic interests. A number of essays concern *M. Butterfly* (1993) and *Dead Ringers* (1988). *Crash* and *The Fly* (1986) are also widely analyzed, with several essays summarizing identical scenes. *EXistenz* (1999) is largely ignored, as are *The Dead Zone* (1983), *Videodrome* (1982), and *Scanners* (1981), with many of Cronenberg's earlier, more horrific and science fictional works mentioned in passing. The extensive filmography and selected bibliography of Cronenberg criticism and review should prove useful for future studies, which will hopefully learn from the mistakes of this collection.

[Cronenberg speaks in greater detail in Chris Rodley, ed., *Cronenberg on Cronenberg*, Faber, 1992. – Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

**PLANET OF THE APES REVISITED: THE BEHIND THE SCENES
STORY OF THE CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION SAGA**

Russo, Joe, Larry Landsman, and Ed Gross. *Planet of the Apes Revisited: The Behind-the-Scenes Story of the Classic Science Fiction Saga*. Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's, August 2001. xxi + 280 p. + 8 p. unpaginated photos. \$19.95, trade paper. 0-312-25239-0.

Fans of the 1968 sci-fi film classic *Planet of the Apes* and its four sequels (plus two short-lived television shows) will be hard-pressed to find a more comprehensive, authoritative, and entertaining guide to the late producer Arthur P. Jacob's ape empire. With access to Jacob's files, the authors detail the several drafts of each screenplay, chronicle day-to-day shooting schedules, and create an exhaustive behind-the-scenes history of the epic series. During the book's fifteen-year gestation, the authors were able to interview virtually every actor, director, producer, writer, production designer, makeup artist, and composer on each film. (Some of the quotes could have been tightened to avoid repetition.) Even those who are familiar with the series (or saw the 1998 AMC documentary *Behind the Planet of the Apes*) will glean new knowledge from amusing firsthand recollections of Roddy McDowall (who starred in four of the films, as well as the live-action television show) and Natalie Trundy (Jacob's widow, who acted in four of the films). *Apes* star Charlton Heston, who wrote the book's introduction, proves a sharp interviewee and allowed the authors to quote liberally from his daily journals. Likewise, memos from Rod Sterling (who scripted the original film and helped with the television show) are illuminating. Made on ever-decreasing budgets, each film in the series turned a profit and remains enjoyable, both as pop entertainment and for its political, social commentary, and allegorical treatment of race relations (particularly in the violent *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* and its Watts riots reenactments). Rare black-and-white photos throughout, with a sixteen-page color insert. Forecast: Tim Burton's big-budget *Planet of the Apes* remake invades theatres July 27th; its release will provide great publicity for this book.

[Reprinted from *Publishers Weekly* (because no one volunteered to review this). See also the reviews of Eric Greene's *Planet of the Apes as American Myth: Race and Politics in the Films and Television Series*, *SFRAR* 223 (of the original 1996 McFarland edition, *SFRAR* #241 of the Wesleyan University Press reprint, 1999). Greene is not cited in the bibliography of this new book. The 2001 version of the original film by Tim Burton is the subject of *Planet of the Apes: A Newmarket Pictorial Moviebook Including the Screenplay*, which has an introduction by Burton, pictures from the set and the film, quotes from the cast, detailed sketches and drawings from the film and from behind the scenes (Newmarket, August 2001, 176 pages, trade paper, 1-55704-486-4.) –Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

**MYSTERY IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE:
FROM THE RATIONAL TO THE SUPERNATURAL**

Michael Levy

Gavin, Adrienne F. and Christopher Routledge, eds. *Mystery in Children's Literature: from the Rational to the Supernatural*. Palgrave, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010, June 2001. xiii + 228 p. \$65. 0-333-91881-9.

The first thing to note about this collection of fourteen essays by US, UK, and Australian contributors is that it isn't primarily about private detectives, locked rooms, or other icons of the mystery novel. Nancy Drew and Enid Blyton's Famous Five do make a number of appearances, but the editors define the term "mystery" much too broadly for it to be contained in any one genre. Gavin and Routledge claim that this is because they are British, that "in American usage the word [mystery] is often synonymous with detective fiction whereas in British usage it encompasses a wider range of meanings," including, it seems, the supernatural and the fantastic. I'm a bit skeptical about this claim, but in any case, the editors have assembled a valuable selection of essays covering a wide range of genres, individual works, and critical approaches.

Many essays, although excellent, have no connection with the fantastic. Others, however, will interest SFRA members who read children's and young-adult fantasy. Pat Pinsent's "'so great and beautiful that I cannot write them': Religious Mystery and Children's Literature" centers on the ways in which children's writers attempt to evoke a sense of the Holy and has very interesting things to say about C.S. Lewis, Kenneth Grahame, and Ursula Le Guin. Valeria Krips' "Plotting the Past: The Detective as Historian in the Novels of Philippa Pearce" deals intelligently with the importance of memory in Pearce's influential fantasy, *Tom's Midnight Garden*. Perhaps the best essay, Gavin's "Apparition and Apprehension: Supernatural Mystery and Emergent Womanhood," says some absolutely brilliant things about the changing relationship between girl characters and the supernatural in the Brontës and the novels of Margaret Mahy. Clare Bradford's well-done "Possessed by the Beast" discusses the importance of physical transformation from human to animal form in the fantasies of Gilliam Cross and Gilliam Rubinstein. What all the essays mentioned, and several others as well, have in common is the belief that "the Mysterious," loosely defined, plays an important and transformative role in the psychology of the maturing child. By raising questions *about* reality, stories of mystery allow children to question their relationship *with* reality and play with their own sense of identity.

The other essays also have interesting things to say about other fantasy writers, including Diana Wynne Jones, Isabel Carmody, J.K. Rowling, George MacDonald, Susan Cooper, Edward Stratemeyer, Tolkien, Victor Kelleher, Chris Van Allsburg, and R.L. Stine. I found this collection to be quite satisfying, and in spite of its rather steep price, would recommend it to any library with strong holdings in children's literature.

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE READER'S ADVISORY GUIDE TO GENRE FICTION

Neil Barron

Saricks, Joyce G. *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction*. American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611, June 2001. xii + 460 p. \$38, trade paper. 0-8389-0803-9. Orders to 800-545-2433.

The two most common types of assistance offered in public libraries are reference and readers' advisory, which overlap, especially in work with children. Reference work is probably a bit more standardized and straightforward, with the librarian relying on her/her expertise to provide answers or point to reliable sources. Saricks has written about readers' advisory service before, based on her many years at the Downers Grove (Chicago area) Public Library. She emphasizes at the outset that advising readers works best if suggestions, not recommendations, are made: "Recommending places us in the role of expert: Take this book; it is good for you. Suggesting, on the other hand, makes us partners with readers in exploring the various directions they might want to pursue." For example, I might recommend a history of Russia or a biography of Gandhi, but I would only suggest a novel by Silverberg or a space opera by Williamson. Classroom instructors, even with their captive audiences, should keep this principle in mind.

Following her introduction, fifteen genres are each given a chapter, about twenty-five pages, which explains that the structure of each is very similar. The fifteen are adventure, fantasy, gentle reads, historical fiction, horror, literary fiction, mysteries, psychological suspense, romance, romantic suspense, science fiction, suspense, thrillers, westerns, and women's lives and relationships.

SFRA members may be amused at her first sentence of Chapter 12: "Science Fiction is a genre that strikes fear into the hearts of many librarians. If we do not read it, it seems as strange as the beings that populate the pages of its books. And Science Fiction readers often seem an exclusive club, into which it is hard for a nonfan to gain admission." She later notes: "Working with Science Fiction fans is a little different than in other genres. As I mentioned earlier, readers of Science Fiction tend to be among the most knowledgeable and opinionated readers I have encountered. They often have definite ideas about what they like and do not like, and although they may listen politely, they are not usually interested in our suggestions." So much for the open-mindedness that SF allegedly inspires.

Saricks recognizes that definitions of SF are many and includes a chart of six basic characteristics of much SF (other chapters have similar charts). For all genres, she identifies four elements of their appeal: pacing, characterization, story line (plot), and frame. "Benchmark" authors representative of the genre (such as Asimov) should be known to any advisor. She states that Heinlein and Dick are important but don't reach benchmark status, suggesting instead several contemporary authors as likely to have more appeal to today's readers: Connie Willis, Kim Stanley Robinson, and Orson Scott Card.

Much science fiction is argued to have two distinct appeals based on focus. A storyteller focus is plot-centered, with action/adventure prominent. Stories with a philosophical focus are more literary, with an emphasis on ideas and character, and are slower paced. A chart lists science fiction titles that are also examples of the other fourteen genres, e.g., women's lives (Butler, Sargent). A related chart lists suggested authors in other genres: adventure (Clive Cussler), humor (Vonnegut), literary (Anthony Burgess, William Burroughs), women's lives (Atwood, Piercy).

Since few librarians are knowledgeable in more than a few genres, each chapter concludes with a section on reference sources that provide biographical information, plot summaries, subgenres/themes, background information/history, and best books lists. An appendix provides more details about non-genre-specific reference tools, such as the standard Fiction Catalogue, series/sequels listings, and multiple genre guides like *What Do I Read Next?*, a semi-annual guide to nine genres. Saricks suggests an interesting challenge to librarians wishing to expand their knowledge and appreciation of genre fiction. For each of the fifteen genres, she selected five authors (and often specific titles) that should be read. For science fiction, it's Bujold, Card, Robinson, Mary Doria Russell, and Connie Willis. (For literary fiction, it's Isabel Allende, Margaret Atwood, John Irving, Anne Tyler, and John Updike.)

In my very unfavorable review of *Hooked on Horror* (SFRAR 244), a book I regret Saricks recommends, I explained why fiction in public libraries is heavily skewed to works of recent years, plus a core collection of that elastic category called "classics." This guide reflects that limitation: relatively few books mentioned predate 1950, and few "canonical" authors (e.g., Joyce, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Flaubert) are suggested. In her list of works cited, Saricks includes three articles by Thomas J. Roberts from critical literary journals but fails to mention his brilliant and essential analysis of popular fiction, *An Aesthetics of Junk Fiction* (Georgia, 1990), which usefully complements her necessarily far more practical guide.

The other genre chapters I sampled were those with which I had some familiarity and found them, like the SF chapter, practical and sensible, although unavoidably a bit superficial, since so much territory has to be covered. This is an excellent tool for librarians, especially those who have benefited from Saricks' more general ALA guide, *Readers' Advisory Service in the Public Library*. And some of her suggested strategies to arouse interest might, as I suggested, be useful for teachers of genre fiction to use with weakly motivated students.

ANOTHER VEIW

THE READER'S ADVISORY GUIDE TO GENRE FICTION

Sandy Housely

Defining the qualities of a novel that make it appealing to an individual has always seemed elusive at best. Never having worked in a library that had a readers' advisor, I've always stood at the reference desk with a nagging fear that the approaching inquisitor will begin, "What do I read next?" Awareness of this deficiency has pushed me toward library conference programs about this subject, to presentations by Duncan Smith (hoping the passion that led to NoveList [an online advisory service subscribed to by many libraries] might be contagious), and to perusing occasional books on the subject.

Saricks' approach is intriguing for its focus on "a framework that makes understanding the appeal of genre fiction easier" rather than on a prescriptive formula for preparing lists of similar authors. The definition of each of her fifteen genres succeeds in framing a feeling or tone invoked by the genre. For genres I enjoy reading, I was fascinated by her skill in capturing the essence of my enjoyment. "These are novels that play with our minds. They depict the slow but sure discovery that something is dreadfully wrong in this seemingly normal world..." she writes of psychological suspense. Examples used in such discussions combine with the titles labeled as "sure bets" to produce a tantalizing list of possible leads, despite her resistance to a list approach.

From the perspective of a reference librarian at heart and a readers' advisor at best, her hands-on strategies are an invitation to expand personal reading horizons. Her clear presentation can only lessen the librarian's dread and strengthen the ability to respond in a manner that will open the wealth of library collections to readers everywhere.

[The reviewer heads the reference department in the Vista regional branch library of the San Diego county system. –

Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

CYBERPUNK

Jeff Prickman

Butler, Andrew M. *Cyberpunk*. Pocket Essentials, 18 Coleswood Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 1EQ, 2000. 95 p. £3.95, trade paper. 1-903047-28-5. Distributed by Trafalgar Square, Box 257, North Pomfret, VT 05053, \$6.95. Orders to 800-423-4525.

Many critical essays make claims about cyberpunk based solely on Gibson's *Neuromancer*. Butler leaves future critics with no excuse to ignore the many other authors and works in this significant SF subgenre. Perhaps the most useful way to consider Butler is as a mini-encyclopedia, a good start, although by definition, not comprehensive.

Chapter 1 presents an impressive overview of the roots and context of the subgenre, including subsections on film noir and explanations of the term "cyberpunk." Chapter 2 analyzes the work of the two essential authors, Gibson and

Sterling, with the coverage of Gibson being far superior. Gibson's six novels are presented with effective plot and character synopses and with honest assessments of confusing elements, providing an invaluable reference and memory-jogger for critics and casual readers. In contrast, the section on Sterling bogs down in a summary of the Shaper-Mechanist works and omits any mention of the seminal *Islands in the Net* (1988), a key novel both praised and assailed as "grown-up" cyberpunk.

Part of the limitations throughout the guide are the six elements applied to each example. While Butler acknowledges the criticism of cyberpunk as "toys for the boys," he unfortunately uses "The Hero" for all male characters and "The Femme Fatale" for all female characters. The sex-based distinctions often fall apart (as in the entries on *Mona Lisa Overdrive* and *The Diamond Age*). Another huge conceptual problem was the decision to focus Chapter 3, "The Cyberpunk Movement," only on authors included in Sterling's anthology, *Mirrorshades* (1986). While Butler admits that a number of these authors never produced any other significant cyberpunk stories, too much of an already brief book stems from one anthology. This approach does yield a good section on Pat Cadigan and, to some extent, John Shirley, although Butler dismissed his *A Song Called Youth* trilogy.

Fortunately, Chapters 4, "Post-Cyberpunk," and 5, "Cyberpunk—Flavoured Fiction," do an admirable job of presenting other authors and works, including Neal Stephenson, Greg Egan, Shariann Lewitt (but no S.N. Lewitt titles!), and Jack Womack. While readers may quibble over Butler's choices, his selections and to-the-point critiques are praiseworthy. *Cyberpunk* is a partial overview, omitting Walter Jon Williams, author of many solid cyberpunk stories and novels. K.W. Jeter is mentioned as "steampunk," but his *The Glass Hammer* (1985) and *Noir* (1998) are not mentioned, nor are his three *Blade Runner* novels, despite the picture of Roy Batty on the book's cover. Many other authors of cyberpunk, or "flavoured" books, are not discussed. Perhaps Butler judged them not to be part of the "essentials" of cyberpunk.

Despite the omissions, I enthusiastically recommend this succinct survey to anyone even remotely interested in cyberpunk. It's an insightful and extremely affordable starting point into an often misrepresented and oversimplified subgenre. Furthermore, a useful chapter on movies is followed by a reference section that includes an excellent list of critical works and author Websites.

NONFICTION REVIEW

**THE MARTIAN NAMED SMITH: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON
ROBERT A. HEINLEIN'S STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND**

Joe Sanders

Patterson, William H. Jr. and Andrew Thornton. *The Martian Named Smith: Critical Perspectives on Robert A. Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land*. Nitrosyncretic Press, Box 4313, Cirtus Heights, CA 95611, July 2001. xiii + 209 p., \$18, trade paper. 0-9679874-2-3.

To judge from a recent chat on the IFAA listserv, Robert A. Heinlein's critical reputation is at a nadir. Almost all the academics who e-mailed in during a discussion of older SF writers called Heinlein unreadable, despite his continuing popularity, because of his extreme sexism, racism, and general, old fogyism. Apparently, everybody accepts that Heinlein is simply like that—a somewhat ironic notion, considering that much of Heinlein's fiction was an assault on orthodox opinion, "what everybody knows." That's especially true of *Stranger in a Strange Land*. It's an important transitional book for both SF and Heinlein. First, violating everyone's expectations, it attracted a large mundane readership despite being a genuine SF novel. Second, for better or worse, *Stranger* is the story in which Heinlein's characters no longer just discuss issues at length but tirelessly pontificate at each other. Because of what it is and because of Heinlein's importance in SF, the novel deserves more serious study.

Here's one effort, a collaboration by the editor/publisher of *The Heinlein Journal* and one of its contributors. Patterson and Thornton are convinced that Heinlein deserves considerable respect as an artist and thinker. Although they are aware of science fiction's pulp tradition, they classify *Stranger* according to Northrup Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, not as a narrative-bound novel but as a much more flexible form, an anatomy satire. Heinlein's own conscious intent isn't clear. As an Annapolis graduate invalided out of the Navy, Heinlein publicly disdained the importance of his scribbling, usually professing to be just a commercial storyteller. No matter. Whether he deliberately chose an existing literary tradition for *Stranger* or reinvented it because of his purpose in writing, Patterson and Thornton make a strong case that the book works when read this way.

Assuming that *Stranger* isn't a digressive novel, pulled out of shape by frequent lectures, what *is* Heinlein driving at in those acres of talk-talk? That authors are extremely hard on all earlier critics of *Stranger*, but especially on those who find one easy answer to that question. Using Heinlein's own later comments, they point out that no position escapes both verbal contradiction and qualification by action. What the book does, as joyously as an episode of *South Park*, is lambaste our

society's intellectual confusion. Heinlein is not presenting a design for a new waterbrother society, despite what some of his looser-wrapped readers imagined; he's simply saying: "Figure it out for yourself, just don't let yourself be smothered by all the detritus that has been heaped on you." Debunking is an honorable purpose. In other works, Heinlein sometimes adopted one contrarian position so strongly that he needed debunking himself, but Patterson and Thornton are right that *Stranger* is equally savage toward all smug certainties but equally forgiving toward all well-intentioned errors.

The Martian Named Smith is, in short, a thoughtful, convincing study of a writer who deserves more close attention. It seems rather off only in being presented as a supplemental textbook, as if *Stranger* were a massive, enigmatic feature of science fiction courses. I don't know of any such courses. Perhaps, if we looked again at Heinlein's writing, there would be some.

NONFICTION REVIEW

GEORGE ORWELL: HIS ACHIEVEMENT AND LEGACY

Neil Barron

Lázaro, Alberto, ed. *George Orwell: His Achievement and Legacy*. Peter Lang, 275 Seventh Avenue, 28th Floor, New York, NY 10001-6708, 2001. 250 p. \$39.95, trade paper. 0-8204-5337-4.

Assembled here are a dozen papers given at a Madrid conference in May 2000 by Spanish and British contributors. The editor teaches English at the University of Alcalá, Madrid, and wrote *Pensamiento y obra de George Orwell, 1937*.

Several essays not surprisingly, given the conference site, deal with Orwell's writings about his experiences in Spain, most notably *Homage to Catalonia, 1938*, based on his experience as a combatant in the Spanish civil war from late 1936 until he was shot in the throat in May 1937. Victor Gollancz, the owner of Orwell's first publisher, declined to publish his account because it would "harm the fight against fascism," so he went to Fredric Warburg, whose Secker & Warburg published almost all his later works. Orwell's biographer, Michael Sheldon, notes that the 1,500-copy edition had not sold out as late as 1951, and the first American edition was not published until 1952.

Miquel Berga is less concerned with Orwell's historical accuracy than his "narrative strategies" and how his account can be read as a "postmodernist text of metahistory" (the plague of trendy jargon spares few). The editor's own essay, by contrast, is a fascinating and disturbing account of the censorship of the book during the Franco regime. A much-distorted version was published in 1970 in Catalan and Spanish, and tables show the censor's alterations to Orwell's text to pacify the ruling regime (Franco died in 1975). Lázaro pointedly remarks that even today the only complete Spanish edition was published in Argentina (not a bastion of democracy) in 1963, whereas "both the Spanish and Catalan editions still maintain the distortions and mutilations established by the censorship during Franco's regime." Gender and race are prominent elements in two essays on Orwell's account as a colonial administrator in *Burmese Days* (1934).

The second half's essays investigate works by others influenced by Orwell. Zoë Fairbairns provides an interesting account of how and why she wrote her dystopia, *Benefits* (1979), which includes her answers to two questions from the audience. Elizabeth Russell discusses gender politics and historical issues in her analysis of four feminist dystopias: Shelley's *The Last Man* (1826) and Montserrat Julió's *Memòries d'un futur bàrbar* (1975), both written from the viewpoint of the last man on Earth; and Charlotte Haldane's *Man's World* (1926) and Katherine Burdekin's *Swastika Night* (1937), both written during the interwar period. The subjects of other essays include Alasdair Gray's *A History Maker* (1994), Robert Harris' *Fatherland* (1992), Julian Barnes' *England, England* (1998), and Ben Elson's several environmental dystopias.

The literature about Orwell is so large, and still growing, that I hesitate to suggest another acquisition for individuals or libraries. This collection is most useful for its Spanish perspective, especially that of the editor. An index should have been included to supplement the chapter notes. A somewhat more balanced older collection is Jeffrey Meyers, ed., *George Orwell: The Critical Heritage* (1975).

NONFICTION REVIEW

SIMULACRUM AMERICA: THE USA AND THE POPULAR MEDIA

Matthew Wolf-Meyer

Kraus, Elisabeth and Carolin Auer, eds. *Simulacrum America: The USA and the Popular Media*. Camden House, Box 41026, Rochester, NY 14604-4126, 2000. xx + 259 p. \$65. 1-57223-187-6.

Rüdiger Kunow's "Simulacrum as Subtext: Fiction Writing in the Face of Media Representations of American History," the first paper in this collection, seems to have nothing to do with SF (its author might agree) but in fact has *everything* to do with science fiction and its criticism in the near future. Kunow examines the recapitulation of American

history through fiction (Stephen Crane, Nathaniel Hawthorne, E.L. Doctorow) and, in providing a theoretical framework to consider fictional accounts of the past, provides a paradigm by which we can understand future histories. As history makes short work of some SF titles (2001 being a thing of the past, but *2001* having historical implications), considering these fictional futures as they become fictional histories through Kunow's frameworks should prove very interesting.

Baudrillard cited Ballard's work as being the most representative of the simulative properties of SF (in 1981's *Simulacra and Simulation*), but none of the contributors explores Ballard's work or the work of other New Wave authors (Dick, Disch, Delany, etc.) but instead focus their energies on cyberpunk. Of the five essays in the section titles "Simulacra in Science Fiction: Cyberspace, Cyborgs, and Cybernetic Discourse," as essential as Kunow's paper is Louis J. Kerns "Terminal Notions of What We May Become: Synthflesh, Cyberreality, and the Post-Human Body." His essay should be read by all SF scholars, if not all scholars, as he actively explores notions of humanity and identity through a wide variety of popular texts (cinema, comic books, television) and usually updates both Haraway and Baudrillard, interrogating contemporary "cyborg" identity through the lens of SF simulacra posited by Baudrillard.

Of potential interest to most members is "Subverting the Tonto Stereotype in Popular Fiction, Or, Why Indians Say 'Ugh!'" by Diane Krumley. While only implicitly about science fictional matters, she is writing about the Other, the alien, and makes some useful observations on the popularity of minority-written literature for majority readers, permitting them to see themselves as the Other sees them. Science fiction has a similar function by refracting our culture through others, thus giving us a reflection of ourselves otherwise obscured.

The Kunow and Kern essays are indispensable, but I found myself indifferent to the rest. They're not bad: the areas explored are significant, but many are trivial and do little to elucidate their topics. There are better sources for gaining an understanding of Baudrillard's ideas.

ANOTHER VIEW

SIMULACRUM AMERICA: THE USA AND THE POPULAR MEDIA

Larisa Mihalova

This book selects seventeen papers delivered at an international conference held in Graz, Austria, in 1997. As a participant, I had the opportunity to compare my original impressions with the printed papers. Credit should be given to the secretary of the Austrian American Studies Association and her collaborator for their planning of the conference and editing the papers. Their introduction gives a detailed explanation of key concepts in the field (Baudrillard, Lacan, Porush, Stelard, etc.) and explains the structure of this collection.

The papers selected from the eleven workshops were grouped into four sections, one of them "Simulacra in Science Fiction." The participants dissected concrete examples of simulacra to disclose how they work. Scott Bukatman (Stanford) developed in his opening lecture an idea of "morphing" as one leading concept in modern popular art, in which everything is rendered as surface.

Baudrillard's notion, "Simulation is the dominant scheme of the present phase of history governed by this code," permeates the papers. Most authors analyzed the methods of replacing "reality" (always in quotes) by the hyperreality of postmodern art. Only a third of the papers deal directly with SF, but the collection as a whole is stimulating and might be used effectively with graduate students.

[I didn't receive a review copy of this book, and from the comments of the reviewers, I don't think I missed much. "Technology...the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it" is a quote by Max Frisch on the title page of *The Image, or, What Happened to the American Dream*, by the distinguished American historian, Daniel J. Boorstin. This exceptionally astute 1962 book anticipates many of the concerns of the authors of these papers as it explores our arts of self-deception, how we hide reality from ourselves—and it's a lot better written. — Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE QUEST FOR POSTCOLONIAL UTOPIAS: A COMPREHENSIVE INTRODUCTION TO THE UTOPIAN NOVEL IN THE NEW ENGLISH LITERATURE

Philip E. Smith

Pordzik, Ralph. *The Quest for Postcolonial Utopias: A Comprehensive Introduction to the Utopian Novel in the New English Literature*. Peter Lang, 275 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10001-6708, February 2001. vii + 199 p. \$53.95. 0-8204-5193-2. Orders to 800-770-5264.

Ralph Pordzik, who teaches English and American literature at Essen University in Germany, surveys and comparatively analyzes about thirty mainstream utopian and dystopian novels written in English since 1970 in commonwealth countries; a few examples are drawn from India, Nigeria, and Ghana, but most attention is paid to novels from Australia, Canada, and South Africa. Though very few SF writers are even mentioned, the book may be valuable to SFRA members who teach or study utopian fiction ranging beyond SF because, in addition to consideration of novels by several well known writers such as Margaret Atwood, Nadine Gordimer, Peter Carey, Ben Okri, and J.M. Coetzee, Pordzik considers many more novels which do not have wide readership outside of their home countries. He writes cogently when focused on analysis of fiction but occasionally indulges in rhetorical arias of theoryspeak; there are a few awkward moments which could have been avoided by an alert copy-editor. The book is usefully equipped with an index and a bibliography.

After a cursory summary of utopian theory, Pordzik claims authority from Raymond Williams, Wilson Harris, Michel Foucault, Fredric Jameson, and others in order to argue that the novels he surveys, especially those written since the mid-1980's, are postcolonial, postmodern "heterotopias" which break open the confining boundaries characteristic of old-fashioned representational-realist utopias and dystopias in the English literary tradition from More through Huxley and Orwell. So, he claims, the postcolonial novels he discusses show that the generic distinctions among utopias, critical utopias, anti-utopias, and dystopias have been subverted and that these previously approved and dominant (patriarchal, essentialist, nationalist) political-realist narratives have been superseded by heterotopias, which are "mixed and open-ended forms so governed by the radical epistemological skepticism of poststructuralist and deconstructivist discourses." Enlisting some of the theoretical premises of Robert Scholes, Darko Suvin, and Tom Moylan, he rejects arguments which would dissociate postcolonial writing from postmodernist writing. Pordzik contends that contemporary postmodern writers from the English or European settler cultures can be thought of as postcolonial in the same way as writers from indigenous ethnic groups. Crucially, their heterotopian novels are seen to contain the "potentialities of societal transformation." Pordzik's idea of utopian potential is rhetorical rather than political, so he endorses "new or revised rhetorical spaces" and "a future open to different cultural inscriptions" rather than political or social solutions. Therefore, the claims of the writers he considers that "their quest for opportunities not yet intuited or imagined is reflected in their semantic multiplicity as well as the diversity of codes, usages, and perspectives employed by writers to capture the hybridity of their respective societies and to confirm their functions as basic constituents in projecting a utopia of their own."

Pordzik maintains his theoretical focus throughout the book, asserting that these utopian novels unite deconstruction and decolonization into a working partnership; however, the dominant rhetoric of his interpretation occasionally suggests that he has selected his textual evidence to fit the theory. For example, his abbreviated treatments of Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome* demonstrate more about Pordzik's theoretical concerns than they reveal about these complex and interesting novels. However, his analyses are cogent and useful in several comparative discussions of thematically clustered novels, especially his exploration of magical-realist utopias and dystopias. He writes compellingly about "Magical Women," comparing Suniti Namjoshi's *Mothers of Maya Diip*, Rachel McAlpine's *The Limits of Green*, and Fiona Farrell's *The Skinny Louie Book* as novels that get beyond male-female binaries and create a "plurality of discourses" in which "female characters slither provokingly between possible options." A related approach to magical-realist novels comes in the comparative analysis of myth, history, and the anxieties of settler cultures in two dystopian futures, New Zealander John Cranna's *Arena* and South African Mike Nicol's *This Day and Age*.

Pordzik stretches his categories as far as his rhetorical elastic will extend in his chapter comparing several texts under the rubric of "utopographic metafiction." In other words, postcolonial writers have written novels which explore widely different approaches to exorcising the classical utopia based on "reason, technology, and social process: and, in place of reasoned social development, they substitute "inexhaustible creative and spiritual powers." In the end, Pordzik's rhetoric claiming that postcolonial writers create "an entirely new imaginative terrain" rings hollow and becomes merely a mystification begging for the application of some old-fashioned skeptical reason. Nevertheless, the novels he has assembled under this dubious rubric are interesting and potentially valuable additions to reading lists because of their postmodern,

metafictional, parodic, or satirical refiguring of utopian or dystopian elements. In this section, Pordzik usefully and lengthily compares Australian Gerald Murnane's *The Plains*, Samoan Albert Wendt's *Black Rainbow*, Nigerian Ben Okri's *Astonishing the Gods*, and Australian Peter Carey's *The Unusual Life of Tristan Smith*. Alas, his attempt to tuck in several more novels at the end of the chapter is much less successful because his critiques are limited and reductive.

Libraries and scholars with a strong interest in utopian/dystopian fiction and English commonwealth postcolonial writing should consider purchasing this book.

NONFICTION REVIEW

**THE HIDDEN LIBRARY OF TANITH LEE: THEMES AND SUBTEXTS
FROM DIONYSUS TO THE IMMORTAL GENE**

Edra Bogle

Haut, Mavis. *The Hidden Library of Tanith Lee: Themes and Subtexts from Dionysus to the Immortal Gene*. McFarland & Co., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640, May 2001. viii + 216 p. \$32, trade paper. 0-7864-1085-X. Orders to 800-253-2187.

Haut says she "will focus primarily on the many forms that certain basic themes take in [Lee's] work." The thirty-six words that Haut uses to list the themes are mentioned later in regard to individual works but are never again linked. For example, a major interest for Lee is transformation of the individual. An integrated discussion of how this may occur through reincarnation, sex change, personality transfer, or death and revival would help the reader understand what point Lee is making and how such transformation is relevant to our own world. In a concluding interview, Lee says a few of her books were influenced by current events, but most of them express "a deep inner pain at the random horrors of what we call life." Does Lee's fiction help the reader handle this pain? Haut begs the question.

Two chapters show Haut's technique: Chapter 1, the worst, and Chapter 5, the best. The first, covering The Birthgrave series, provides much plot summary and relates the events and characters to a variety of myths, especially those of Oedipus and of the Mother Goddess. Haut has a disconcerting habit of choosing one interpretation of a myth, such as that of Robert Graves, not widely accepted as an authority from many others, and stating it's relevant to Lee's work, with no evidence that Lee knows this source, when other interpretations, such as Levi-Strauss on the Theban cycle, seem just as relevant.

Chapter 5 deals with Lee's SF books: *Drinking Sapphire Wine* (including *Don't Bite the Sun*), *The Silver Metal Lover*, *Electric Forest*, and *Day By Night*. I found this chapter the most satisfactory, with a better balance between plot summary and interpretation. Teenage angst and rebellion against a world controlled by robots in the first book is noted, as is the question about what is really human raised by *The Silver Metal Lover*. The same question of identity is dealt with in *Electric Forest*. *Day By Night* embodies the topic of illusion versus reality. Few of the other chapters make the issues as clear as this one does, but it would have benefited from comparison with other authors' treatment of these themes.

Haut's strength is that she has sorted out the amazing variety of Lee's books very well. The Birthgrave and Vis series are based on traditional epic/myth/romance elements. The Flat Earth sequence shifts to the cruel charm of human/demon interactions. *A Heroine of the World* derives from the Tarot. Lee's science fiction deals with more contemporary issues. *The Secret Books of Paradys* create parallel versions of Paris suitable to the period. Finally, an uncomplicated series, The Blood Opera, mixes Egyptology, medieval alchemy, and modern genetics in a tale of a family that desires to live forever.

Like the journalist who supplies the point of view in part of Lee's *The Book of the Damned*, Haut seems to believe "that non-involvement breeds reliability." Nowhere does she discuss Lee's place in contemporary fantasy writing, rank her work by quality, nor evaluate individual works except, perhaps, implicitly her the amount of space given them. A very uneven study.

[This is the first book-length study of Lee. She was interviewed in Stan Nicholls, *Wordsmiths of Wonder* (1993), Darrell Schweitzer, *Speaking of Horror* (1994), and *Locus*, April 1998. Diana Waggoner examined her work in *Supernatural Fiction Writers: Fantasy and Horror* (1985), edited by E.F. Bleiler. — Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

RAMSEY CAMPBELL AND MODERN HORROR FICTION

Jay McRoy

Joshi, S.T. *Ramsey Campbell and Modern Horror Fiction*. Liverpool University Press, 4 Cambridge Street, Liverpool L69 7ZU, June 2001. x + 180 p. £34.95. 0-85323-765-4; £14.95, trade paper; North American orders to ISBS, 800-944-6190, \$54.95, \$22.95.

Campbell is one of the world's most prolific and talented horror writers, consistently producing nightmarish fictions and high-caliber, ground-breaking anthologies, but little critical attention has been directed toward his increasingly large body of work. Joshi's study will hopefully mark the beginning of a serious evaluation of the many social and psychological themes in Campbell's work, as well as his place within the pantheon of horror's greatest practitioners.

Given that Campbell's work varies from entertaining Lovecraft pastiches to complex suspense novels punctuated by passages gruesome enough to make even veteran readers of horror fiction squirm, it seems only appropriate that this scholarly overview was penned by a critic long recognized both for his studies of Lovecraft and his extensive knowledge of the horror genre. Joshi does a fine job positioning Campbell as an author who not only occupies a crucial space in the "Silver Age" of horror fiction (the last half of the twentieth century) but also embodies a creative and innovative spirit that merits comparison with some of the finest authors of horror's "Golden Age" (Machen, Blackwood, Lovecraft, Poe). Perhaps the finest moments of Joshi's study arise during his insightful analysis of Campbell's structural approach to the horror tale. Specifically, Joshi skillfully examines Campbell's aesthetic use of language, illustrating through carefully selected excerpts how Campbell's writing creates not only suspense, but also a sense of ambiguity that estranges readers from "reality," further heightening the fear evoked within a given passage.

Joshi's analysis also addresses a number of thematic concerns of many Campbell stories and novels. The most important include the impact of class differences and urban decay, and the representation of childhood as a period of both malevolence and innocence. While Joshi nicely demonstrates the pervasiveness of these concerns, his scope doesn't allow for an extensive treatment. This is unfortunate, for several of his observations could each support a book-length study. But Joshi lays an important groundwork and hopefully will encourage further consideration of Campbell's fiction, studies that are long overdue.

[Campbell is one of the subjects of Joshi's *The Modern Weird Tale* (McFarland, 2001), also reviewed in this issue. — Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

STUDENT COMPANION TO EDGAR ALLEN POE

Karem McGuire

Magistrale, Tony. *Student Companion to Edgar Allen Poe*. Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881, April 2001. xv + 139 p. \$29.95. 0-313-30992-2.

This is an effective introduction to Poe's major stories and poems for undergraduates and general readers, the intended audience of the Student Companion to Classic Writers series. After broad overviews of Poe's life and legacy, Magistrale divides Poe's best-known works into chapters on the poetry, the vampiric love stories, the tales of psychological terror, and the detective tales. Each chapter then addresses the main literary elements of the analyzed works, with a concluding section called "Alternative Reading," that addresses a major critical approach, such as feminist, Marxist, or psychoanalytical. These alternative readings concisely explain the approach before applying it to Poe's works so that the undergraduate or general reader will have no difficulty understanding.

Although some of the analyses of the individual works, especially the section of "The Fall of the House of Usher," are overly simplistic, Magistrale obviously wants to keep things accessible to his critically naïve audience. However, he occasionally forgets that naiveté when he makes assertions such as "Poe has become arguably the most influential writer America ever produced," a statement that needs far more substantiation than Magistrale could offer in this short study. Because undergraduate readers of literary criticism often lack the background to evaluate the critic's opinions, Magistrale could have avoided an overgeneralization such as, "Any creative art involves an extension of the artist's nervous system. Presumably, the more nervous the system of the artist, the more intense his or her art," and dubious conclusions such as Robert Louis Stevenson's indebtedness to Poe's "own life and employment of drugs and alcohol in tales such as 'The Black Cat' and 'Ligeia' as a means for producing radical character transformations" in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Certainly, Stevenson needed to look no farther than his own life for the influence of medications and did not need Poe as a mentor.

But these reservations are minor; overall, the companion serves its audience well as it introduces the “fascination mixed with disquietude that was always Poe’s goal in the achievement of his horror art.” The seven-page concluding bibliography is helpfully divided into biocritical studies, reference sources, contemporary reviews, books, and even “parts of books about Edgar Allen Poe.” Recommend to undergraduate libraries and general readers.

[Released last January were four cassettes totaling six hours, remastered from the original Caedmon LP recordings, on which the magisterial Vincent Price and Basil Rathbone read unabridged versions of many of Poe’s most famous tales; *The Edgar Allen Poe Audio Collection*, Caedmon, \$25.95, 0-694-52403-4. – Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE MODERN WEIRD TALE

Neil Barron

Joshi, S.T. *The Modern Weird Tale*. McFarland, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640, March 2001. x + 278 p. \$34.95, trade paper. 0-7864-0986-X. Orders to 800-253-2187.

Joshi is best known for his extensive and intensive analysis and criticism of H.P. Lovecraft, beginning in 1979 with an essay in *Lovecraft Studies*, followed by his first book, the edited group of essays, *H.P. Lovecraft: Four Decades of Criticism* (1980). In 1990 he argued in *The Weird Tale* that Lovecraft was the culmination of a tradition that began with the work of Machen, Dunsany, Blackwood, James, and Bierce, what he calls the “Golden Age” of the horror tale, roughly 1880-1940. Here he extends his analysis as he investigates “those weird writers who are either unavoidable on purely literary grounds or because of their prominence in the field....”

Like his idol, Lovecraft, Joshi is a self-admitted, thoroughgoing snob: “...I can state unequivocally that my principle—hence my canon—is based upon the actual literary merits, as best I can assess them of the works and authors I have read,” a view he admits is elitist and anti-democratic, “but my whole training as a critic leads me to it.” On the next page, he approvingly quotes Lovecraft expressing similar statements in an effort to distance himself from the anthropoid rabble or booboisie so scorned by Menchen. With these views, you might be able to predict his judgments of the writers he selects for examination, especially the dogma that literary merit and popularity *must* be mutually exclusive. Joshi follows Lovecraft in arguing that “even if one wishes to depict the incursion of the weird into the ordinary, the emphasis should be on the weird and not the ordinary,” a view he claims is not “merely a personal prejudice.”

The fourteen writers whose works are discussed in varying detail are grouped into five sections. Some of these analyses have appeared in specialty magazines whose sources are not acknowledged in the notes. Shirley Jackson is the sole representative of “domestic” horror and is judged one of the “two leading writers of weird fiction since Lovecraft” (Ramsey Campbell is the other). I’m pleased that Joshi devoted a full chapter to this underrated writer, whose “world view is... akin to the cheerless and nihilistic misanthropy of Bierce....” which is certainly not how Jackson is viewed by most readers or critics, nor is it likely that this dark strain is why she was a relatively popular writer, much of whose work appeared in popular magazines. Readers who know Jackson only for “The Lottery” will learn a lot.

“The Persistence of Supernaturalism” focuses on four writers. William Peter Blatty, whose *The Exorcist* (1971), “helped usher in the tremendous popularity of the supernatural novel over the next two decades,” was helped greatly by Friedman’s 1973 film. Joshi’s atheism compels him to attack Blatty’s intrusive religious proselytizing, which he thinks undermines whatever other merits the novel may have. “The King’s New Clothes” signals that Joshi has little sympathy for Stephen King. His judgments are entirely predictable given his critical presuppositions. King’s extreme popularity makes him instantly suspect. His introduction dismisses King for his “gargantuan tomes full of hackneyed portrayals of boring people and their boring problems that have nothing to do with the weird phenomenon is enough to make one despair for the future of all weird writing.” While King’s characters may often lack the complexity and subtlety of the best fiction, they are light years ahead of Lovecraft’s obsessive reclusives, with whom few could identify, and what are little more than disposable pawns in Lovecraft’s formula fictions of “cosmic horror.” Predictably, King is not given credit for making *possible* the publications of the books by most of Joshi’s selected writers. The few works by T.E.D. Klein (“urban horror”) are praised as “among the most distinguished in the field of the weird.” Clive Barker’s *The Damnation Game* and a handful of stories are praised, but most of his work is condemned.

“...there seems to be general agreement among critics of the field that [Ramsey Campbell] is the leading weird fictionist of our time,” a view Joshi shares and developed at more length in *Ramsey Campbell and Modern Horror Fiction* (also reviewed in this issue). While Klein’s New York and Barker’s London are central to their stories, “Campbell is the poet of urban squalor and decay.” (He might have added Leiber, whose “Smoke Ghost” and *Our Lady of Darkness* are stellar examples.) Thomas Tyron’s *The Other* (1971) is praised, along with the work of Robert Aickman, Thomas Ligotti, and Robert Bloch, but that of Thomas Harris, Bret Easton Ellis, Peter Straub, and Anne Rice is found wanting.

Joshi's survey of roughly the last half-century of horror fiction in English is shaped by his critical assumptions, which I find far too constrictive. He does not share Orwell's more balanced view, expressed in a 1954 essay: the "existence of good bad literature—the fact that one can be amused or excited or even moved by a book that one's intellect simply refuses to take seriously—is a reminder that art is not the same thing as cerebration." Joshi acknowledges the help of Stefan Dziemianowicz, adding, "...if this book does nothing more than to encourage him to write his own study, I shall be content." He has, and Joshi cites the source, my *Fantasy and Horror* (1999). The chapter "Contemporary Horror Fiction, 1950-1998," devotes twenty-seven two-column pages to a succinct critical and analytical history, followed by a 119-page annotated bibliography of 460 novels, collections, and anthologies. From this you'll get a much better and broader overview of modern horror fiction than from Joshi's far more partial perspective.

NONFICTION REVIEW

TERRY PRATCHETT

Bruce L. Rockwood

Butler, Andrew M. *Terry Pratchett*. Pocket Essentials, 18 Coleswood Road, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 1EQ, 2001. 96 p. £3.99, trade paper. 1-903047-39-0. Distributed by Trafalgar Square, Box 257, North Pomfret, VT 05053, \$6.95. Orders to 800-423-4525.

Butler was co-editor and a contributor to *Terry Pratchett: Guilty of Literature* (reviewed in *SFRAR* 249). This British equivalent of a Cliffs Notes approach to Pratchett's work is a credible job. As a relatively recent fan of Pratchett, I've read all the Discworld series more or less in order, making use of the reference maps Butler describes more for entertainment than for information, and challenging my children to locate Discworld on a National Geographic map of the universe that I posted on the stairwell.

One of the guide's strengths is that it provides an entertaining overview of Pratchett's entire literary career, in particular giving reasons for adults to go in search of those as yet unread "children's books" to fill in the gaps. It also provides a somewhat idiosyncratic synopsis of one's old favorites in the Discworld series, enough to argue with on one level, while appreciating the insights provided—in some cases giving a welcome excuse to reread. One drawback of the book-by-book approach is that it ignores the world-building deep structure that appears to underlie all the Discworld novels, and so underestimates the planning of the series from the very beginning. A comparison to Piers Anthony's Incarnations of Immortality series would be in order, both for plotting over a multi-volume series and for the use of characters such as Death.

Butler's analysis refers to SF and fantasy authors whose works are comparable on a variety of levels to Pratchett's work or "major targets" of his satire: Niven, Tolkien, Peake's *Gormenghast*, Asimov, Douglas Adams, Howard's Conan character, and so forth. The list includes some authors who may be unfamiliar to American readers, such as David Lidge and Malcolm Bradbury's "campus novels." For readers well read in the genre, most of the references will have been apparent on first reading, but they provide a ready reading list for younger readers, and the foundation for further scholarly work on Pratchett and the themes his work raises, including racism, sexism, religious intolerance, authoritarianism, militarism and ethnic conflict, personal ethics, and the appropriate means of regulating crime, to name only a few. Enough is left unsaid about each volume to preclude the use of the volume as a substitute for reading the novels, a virtue perhaps more apparent to teachers than to students.

Having created Discworld as a magical, flat-earth version of our own Earth, Pratchett naturally has an incentive to fill in spaces on the map, much as Baum and his successors fleshed out the map of Oz, and he does so with a flair that keeps the series diverse enough to be interesting, while allowing him to return to familiar haunts, refreshed from adventures "abroad." It's an opportunity one wishes other favorite authors, such as Douglas Adams or Roger Zelazny, would have exploited to a greater degree.

Butler notes Pratchett's use of fairy tale figures, but more than just instances of literary namedropping, I think these are examples of a recurring theme in Discworld, that what we think of as fiction is reality, the metaphorical historical foundation of the "real" world. Or, at least, Pratchett is asking us to reconsider which of the people and events described or suggested are Platonic archetypes, and which are merely shadows on the cave wall. Hogfather may be more "cosmic" than "comic," but good satire often has that effect, and who said the Discworld series should be seen only as comedic fiction—certainly neither Pratchett nor his characters!

Butler has effectively surveyed Pratchett's wide-ranging output in a guide that's well assembled, enjoyable, and well worth the low price. The Web links were active when I tested them. Some references will mystify non-Brits. The guide, current through 2001's *The Thief of Time*, will remain valuable, but given Pratchett's productivity, an updated edition may soon be needed.

NONFICTION REVIEW

URSULA K. LE GUIN

Jim Collins

Tschachler, Heinz. *Ursula K. Le Guin*. English Department, Boise State University, 1910 University Drive, Boise, ID 83725, May 2001. 57 p., stapled. \$5.95 plus \$1.30 (media) or \$3.50 (priority). 0-8843-0147-8.

Tschachler's booklet focuses on the socio-political context of Le Guin's writings and the ways in which her writing responds to this context. He begins with a listing of the ways in which SF writing can be compared to the American West. In addition to the obvious correlations between space opera and horse opera, he notes that idea of the West as an empty wilderness with an endless horizon makes it like outer space. Both the West and the future are deeply rooted in the American national mythology, including the idea of America's manifest destiny.

He divides Le Guin's career into three phases. The first, lasting until 1975, is concerned with journeys through time and space in Earthsea and the Hainish universe. This phase begins her career in the US of the 1960's, with JFK's identification of America as special and responsible, the space program, and the Cold War. Her writings of this period reflect her concern for community.

Le Guin next shifted to settings modeled on the American west coast, a period he refers to as "The Middle Years: Shame for Her Country," noting the sense of failure and rending that followed the deaths of Dr. King and Robert Kennedy. The sections focuses on *Always Coming Home* (1985) and *Searoad* (1991), and also draws heavily on her essays in *Dancing at the Edge of the World* (1989). He points out that in these and later works, Le Guin is concerned with the nature of commitment. Oddly, he makes no reference to her 1987 collection *Buffalo Gals and Other Animal Presences*, which would seem to fit well with the theme of the American West, if not with his political thesis.

In the third phase of Le Guin's career, she returns to the Hainish universe and uses science fiction imagery to explore issues arising from feminist thinking. Tschachler concludes that Le Guin is "quite self-consciously an American writer who unceasingly explores the sacred narrations of the United States." Her return to narratives of the Ekumen in the nineties reflects America's new efforts to define itself. Her "revisionist imperative" challenges the status of the West as open-ended, transforming it into a site of struggle and resistance.

The booklet, #148 in the Boise State University's western writer series, is of some interest to those concerned with the effects of social context on the writing of Le Guin's fiction. Tschachler is sloppy about attributions; for example, he quotes Susan Bassnet on page fourteen and then uses other ideas from her article throughout his second section. His study assumes more knowledge of Le Guin's work than many readers will have and is most valuable for the Le Guin aficionado and for larger libraries.

NONFICTION REVIEW

J.R.R. TOLKIEN: AUTHOR OF THE CENTURY

Christine Cornell

Shippey, Tom. *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century*. Houghton Mifflin, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116-3764, May 2001. xxxv + 347 p. \$26. 0-618-12764-X. HarperCollins, UK, 2000.

Why would anyone name Tolkien the author of the century? When a number of readers' polls so declared, literary critics were quick to express their dismay, but readers were clear on their choice. Tom Shippey's new books examines this diverging response and provides a persuasive explanation for Tolkien's continuing appeal.

Shippey, like Tolkien a scholar of Old English, has taught at Oxford University and has held the chair of English Language and Literature at Leeds University, also like Tolkien. He now holds the Walter J. Ong Chair of Humanities at St. Louis University in St. Louis. Here he builds the case for Tolkien as a serious and deliberate artist concerned with ongoing and current issues: "the origin and nature of evil...; human existence in Middle-earth, without the support of divine Revelation; cultural relativity; and the corruption and continuities of language."

Chapter 1, "The Hobbit: Re-inventing Middle-earth," focuses on the function of the hobbits, particularly Bilbo, as anachronistic characters who bridge the modern world of the reader with the heroic world of Middle-earth. Chapters 2-4 examine *The Lord of the Rings*, including Tolkien's use of narrative "interlace," the theme of evil and its contemporary significance, and the creation of myth. Chapter 5 looks at *The Silmarillion*, and Chapter 6 at Tolkien's shorter works, including "Leaf By Niggle," "The Lost Road," and *Farmer Giles of Ham*. Shippey concludes by placing Tolkien in relationship to other

modern writers and to modernism itself. He looks at critical responses, particular to *The Lord of the Rings*, and at the legacy of Tolkien, crediting him with founding the modern heroic fantasy genre.

For readers familiar with Shippey's earlier study, *The Road to Middle-earth* (1982, 1992), much of the ground covered here is not new. The more sustained reflections on the animosity of critics, while useful, are largely confined to the foreword and afterword, and Shippey doesn't provide the kind of placing of Tolkien within contemporary critical theory which can be found in Partick Curry's *Defending Middle-Earth: Tolkien, Myth, and Modernity* (1997). In addition, Charles Moseley in *J.R.R. Tolkien* (1997) tackles critical responses and provides a useful consideration of genre. With that said, Shippey's new book is a splendid example of a scholarly work that remains accessible to a general audience. Shippey has pared the footnotes, organized the book to follow the progress of the typical reader through Tolkien's works, provided sufficient cross-referencing to make this an easy book to dip into, and limited examples to this truly useful while developing his clearly articulated thesis: Tolkien continues to matter because he was serious and thoughtful about issues and ideas which have mattered to human being in the past and today.

Scholars already owning *The Road to Middle-earth* may not need to purchase this one, but it will be a good addition to academic and non-academic libraries and a book I'll recommend to non-specialists who start out asking for one after viewing *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

[This book is a nominee for the Mythopoeic Scholarship Award for Inklings Studies, given by the Mythopoeic Society. It ranked sixth of seventeen in the *Locus* poll for best nonfiction work, with votes based mostly on the British edition. If you have sturdy ears, consider the boxed 10 CD.13-hour unabridged "performance" of *The Lord of the Rings* from BDD Audio, \$69.95, 0-553-45653-9. —Ed.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

BOOK OF THE DEAD: FRIENDS OF YESTERYEAR, FICTIONEERS AND OTHERS (MEMORIES OF THE PULP FICTION ERA)

Everett F. Bleiler

Price, E. Hoffman. *Book of the Dead: Friends of Yesteryear, Fioneers and Others (Memories of the Pulp Fiction Era)*, ed. by Peter Ruber. Arkham House, Box 546, Sauk City, WI 58583, July 2001. xxii + 423 p. + 24 p. unpaginated photos. \$32.95. 0-87054-179-X.

For those without roots in the pulp era of the 1930's and 1940's, Edgar Hoffman Price (1898-1988) was a fairly prolific pulp writer who contributed to *Weird Tales*, *Argosy*, *Adventure*, the various "spicy" magazines, and other "books." His most typical story was a sort of Middle Eastern/historical adventure tale often derivative from H. Bedford Jones or Harold Lamb. As a fiction writer, he was not important in any sense of the word.

Where Price has come to be important is as a memory. He was the only man to have met the major personalities of the early supernatural complex—H.P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, Farnsworth Wright, Seabury Quinn, Edmond Hamilton, Henry Kuttner, C.L. Moore, and Jack Williamson, as well as general pulp writers. From detailed diaries and a full memory he wrote down his reminiscences, a couple of which have been printed in edited form in memorable collections and fanzines, but most of which have been generally unavailable. As this collection demonstrates, he was a very fine observer, with a good eye for detail, excellent insight into personality, appreciation of quirks and foibles, and a wonderful narrative gift. In many cases, his sketches contain unique material. (He contributed nineteen sketches, plus four other memoirs, and two essays by others profile Price.)

As a result, with this book you will probably come as close to meeting these long-dead pioneers as you ever will. You will work in the *Weird Tales* office of Seabury Quinn, ride with Robert E. Howard through the post oak area of Texas, wander through New Orleans with H.P. Lovecraft, drink with Clark Ashton Smith, see nature with August Derleth in Sauk City, and experience many other lost life situations. Price did not write formal biography, but you will catch the personality of his friends as you can nowhere else.

There are unusual appreciations that testify to Price's genius for friendship. Take Otis Adelbert Kline, another forgotten early pulp writer. On reading his truly bad writing, I always had the feeling that this was a highly intelligent, versatile man who filled a market need and never attended to the good work that he might have done. Price reinforces this estimation. Or Edmond Hamilton. It is a commonplace that in his last years he began to write fiction much superior to the space operas and gimmick stories of his early days. Yet I never realized the depth of his intelligence and profundity until this book.

Then there is Price himself. A strange split personality. A man fascinated by and immersed in the exotic, yet a hard-bitten professional who calculated every survival move during the Depression. A bon vivant, amateur Orientalist, expert on Oriental carpets, astrologer, gourmet, souse, esteemer of Oriental whorehouses, uninhibited, opinionated sounder-off—all

the marks of a shiftless Bohemian? But no. There was another Price. A tough man who survived the chickenshit of West Point to graduate, became a successful professional photographer when the pulps died, and was a keen analytical realist in the writing world. There is the jolly Price of earlier years who cheerfully drove thousands of miles in this old model-A Ford to visit writer friends, and the aged Price, an occasionally intolerant man who felt left out and resented being considered a member of the Lovecraft circle. He was obviously somewhat embittered that people sought him out not for his own sake, but for his memories of other writers.

For decades, Price's manuscript has been known to exist as a tantalizing presence, and for a long time, it seemed that it would never be printed. It is now available, edited by Peter Ruber, in a fine edition, with an introduction by Jack Williamson, a 35-page bibliography by Virgil Utter, and a three-page index. My only real criticisms are that an occasional note might have been added for obscure points and that more of Price's own photographs could have been included. He was an excellent portrait photographer as his shots of Robert E. Howard and Clark Ashton Smith show. Highly recommended if one has an interest in this area.

NONFICTION REVIEW

HONG KONG INVADED! A '97 NIGHTMARE

Jeff Prickman

Bickley, Gillian. *Hong Kong Invaded! A '97 Nightmare*. Hong Kong University Press, 14/F Hing Wai Centre, 7 Tin Wan Praya Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong, Spring 2001. xxi + 303 p. US\$26.95 + \$5.50 (surface) or \$9 (air), trade paper. 962-209-526-7.

"I have it but have not read it yet" is the handwritten statement of a Hong Kong colonial officer in reference to "The Back Door," the short story on which this book is based. The officer's statement appears on one of the many original documents reproduced here. The anonymous author recounts a successful 1897 invasion of British-ruled Hong Kong by Russia and France, providing details of the various battles of an attack that caught the "degenerate and emasculated" British colonists by surprise. The story is told in the form of a letter written ten years *after* the invasion to ex-resident Reginald Brooks, a letter not discovered until Brooks' death in 1916. Are you with me so far?

An actual Hong Kong newspaper *The China Mail* published the story in 1897, then reissued it as a pamphlet. Bickley argues that "The Back Door" connects to past and future events surrounding the island and its vulnerable southern portion, especially the tactics used by the Japanese to invade in 1941. She sure convinces me: the 49-page short story has 654 endnotes, a mere snippet of the book's seventy total pages of endnotes! She's exhaustive in her analysis and must be commended for the depth of her research. Included are maps, information about ships, pictures of volunteer and regiment troops, and even a twelve-page timeline of the short story's plot.

Less persuasive is Bickley's argument that this rather tedious tale merits inclusion as a key example of "future war fiction" (much less SF as the publisher claims). I would recommend *Hong Kong Invaded!* only to readers who love Hong Kong history or military strategy minutiae.

NONFICTION REVIEW

COMICS & IDEOLOGY

Matthew Wolf-Meyer

McAllister, Matthew, Edward Sewell, and Ian Gordon, eds. *Comics & Ideology*. New York: Peter Lang, 2001. \$29.95, 303 pgs, index. ISBN 0-8204-5249-1.

Excluding the introduction, *Comics & Ideology* includes eleven rather different essays, which is to say that the only unifying themes in the various contributions, as the reader might expect, are "comics" and "ideology." Unfortunately, both have such varied definitions that although they are used with great frequency in the collection, they are often referring to vastly different things. "Comics" include everything from Japanese magna to syndicated American newspaper strips to traditional superhero comics. Similarly, "ideology" refers to gender politics, race and ethnicity, nationalism, and nostalgia, as well as more traditional political belief systems. As such, it is rather difficult to recommend the book: there is no great concentration of any one mode of scholarship to attract any scholar with specific interests, and with there being so few limitations on the types of texts considered, it would be rather difficult to use the whole text in any unifying way (i.e., teaching a course, or even general research). At most, *Comics & Ideology* may offer potential readers one or two essays of interest, but this will be entirely dependant upon the individual. For my purposes (and I assume for the majority of potential readers), *Comics & Ideology* offers

three (or five if *Judge Dredd* and superheroes in *The Nam* can be considered) useful essays on American superhero comics, concentrating, respectively, on Wonder Woman, Superman, and gay characters in mainstream comics.

“The Tyranny of the Melting Pot Metaphor” by Matthew J. Smith is a rather interesting approach to Wonder Woman and her place in the DC universe: unlike Superman who is quickly homogenized in Smallville, Kansas, Wonder Woman’s entire career has been spent in an attempt to slowly acculturate herself to the United States. While Smith wanders from time to time (falling into the inevitable discussion of Wonder Woman and bondage), the article is interesting and the utility of it is apparent: Wonder Woman is the every-immigrant, slowly becoming American through the adoption of cultural practices, and Smith provides an ample framework to understand similar conversions in comic books as well as aliens from more traditional science fiction.

One of the most important pieces of comic book criticism is Umberto Eco’s “The Myth of Superman” which Ian Gordon updates in his “Nostalgia, Myth, and Ideology: Visions of Superman at the End of the ‘American Century’.” The basic argument is that Superman must constantly be reinvented in order to appeal to new readers (or viewers of the cinematic or television adaptations, as is the case with most of Gordon’s contribution), and Gordon does a good job of updating Eco’s argument, appealing to the more commercially recognized screen versions of the Man of Steel.

Morris E. Franklin’s “Coming Out in Comics Books” is the most interesting piece in the collection, largely due to his methodological procedure: eschewing the typical literary analysis of the text itself, Franklin consults the letter columns in comics to analyze reader reaction to coming out narratives. And while the selective editorial practices that limit the letters that are included in such letter columns prohibit full understanding of reader reaction, Franklin does provide a useful model for scholars interested in more anthropological analysis of comic books and their fans.

Finally, the studies of *Judge Dredd* comics and superhero appearances in Marvel Comics’ *The Nam* are rather interesting – both deal explicitly with politics, and as such are more at the heart of *Comics & Ideology* than the majority of the other contributions. Unfortunately though, their political contribution isn’t enough to demand owning this collection for political scholars, nor is their loose relation to superheroes enough for those interested in tight- and cape-wearing men and women. Overall, *Comics & Ideology* has decent pieces, but as a collection it fails to coalesce into a clear academic statement.

NONFICTION REVIEW

The Josh Kirby Discworld® Portfolio

Bruce & Susan Rockwood

The Josh Kirby Discworld® Portfolio. Paper Tiger, imprint of Collins & Brown Limited, London House, Great Eastern Wharf, Parkgate Road, London SW11 4NQ www.papertiger.co.uk. Distributed in the U.S. and Canada by Sterling Publishing Co., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10016, U.S.A. ISBN 1 85585 895 9 First Published by Dragon’s World in 1993. Text by Nigel Suckling, 1993. US \$19.95. Can. \$29.95. UK £12.99.

The Josh Kirby Discworld® Portfolio is aptly named, since Josh Kirby has been responsible for the visual depiction of Discworld since the first paperback publication of *The Colour of Magic*. In fact, Terry Pratchett is here quoted as saying, “I didn’t know what the Discworld trolls looked like until Josh drew them,” and, “I only invented the Discworld. Josh Kirby created it.” Andrew Butler, author of *The Pocket Essentials Terry Pratchett* (2001), when speaking at the panel “An Octarine Shade of Humor: Terry Pratchett’s Discworld,” at The Millennium Philcon, the 59th World Science Fiction Convention (8/30-9/3/01), reports that the author and illustrator never met until Kirby had done his first several book covers, and that Kirby continued to illustrate the book jackets (at Pratchett’s request) when Pratchett changed publishers, a story confirmed here and one for which we can be only grateful.

First collected in 1993, this lovely publication of twenty-eight plates includes many of the early Discworld covers, illustrations for several earlier novels, and a smattering of original artwork for the illustrated edition of *Eric*. Fans will find the 9 x 12" page size ideal for viewing the colorful and busy works, which reward closer inspection with apt portrayals of the frenetic pace of Discworld life and the barely contained voluptuousness of the maidens Kirby frequently depicts. It’s a Hollywood convention that Kirby has adopted whole-heartedly in Discworld (except, of course, for the witches, whom he prefers to make crones for some unfathomable reason).

This glossy paperback, with finely rendered colors, in a reasonably priced edition, is a no-brainer for Pratchett and Kirby fans. Two suggestions: a sequel bringing us jacket illustrations for more recent books is certainly in order, and Pratchett should insist that the American publisher offer the original artwork in the U.S. edition.

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE UTOPIAN IMAGINATION

Albert I. Berger

Susan M. Matarese, *American Foreign Policy and the Utopian Imagination* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), ISBN 1-55849-289-5, 109 pp. + illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index.

This book attempts to illuminate the way Americans have thought about the role their country ought to play in world affairs by scrutinizing works of utopian fiction produced in the last years of the 19th century. It is in no way a literary study. Matarese's fundamental axiom is that policy makers bring a pre-conceived "national image"—"a relatively coherent, emotionally charged, and conceptually interlocking set of ideas that give order to a people's vision of the world and the place of their country within it"—to their work. Since utopian literature is concerned explicitly with the depiction of a good life and social order, she argues, it "provides a remarkable window through which the contours of the American national image can be discerned." That is an admirable and useful approach, I think, but Professor Matarese's work may not entirely satisfy either those of us who study SF or those of us interested in exploring the making of foreign policy.

Professor Matarese's methodology is simple enough. She examines 212 items of utopian literature (most of them fiction) listed in two reference works: Lyman Sargent's *British and American Utopian Literature 1516-1985* and Carol Kessler's "Bibliography of Utopian Fiction by United States Women 1836-1988." From that sample, she extracts two great "visions" that appear in their plot lines: the National Greatness of the United States and the Redemption of the World by the United States. She argues that each of these visions is characterized by the appearance of three sub-themes: "National Greatness" subsumes "Introversion" (a national sense of self-involvement), and belief in the "Uniqueness" and "Moral Superiority of the United States;" the United States may redeem the world either as a "Moral Exemplar," an "Active Crusader," or as a "Benevolent Superpower."

She uses her first chapter to set up her thesis regarding the relationship between national images, foreign policy, and utopian literature. She explicates visions and sub-themes in chapters two and three, accounts for the sources of the national image they comprise in a fourth, and uses her analysis to criticize the formulation of American foreign policy as arrogant and over-idealistic in the fifth. The whole thing, including an appendix tabulating her classification scheme by theme, comes in at a concise (if rather dry) 109 pages. Extensive notes, which include sometimes-lengthy arguments germane to the thesis along with references, and twenty pages of bibliography, complete the package.

One's first impression is that Matarese's catalogue of smug and arrogant national attitudes towards the rest of the world is but a systematic explication of the blindingly obvious. On the other hand, one asks: obvious to whom? Systematic analysis of the political ideas embedded in SF has often been in short supply, and political scientists have too frequently ignored the historical and intellectual roots of foreign policymaking. The American public and (more than occasionally) its leaders have supported policies rooted in precisely the kind of national images Matarese describes; so a reminder of what those images imply is useful—and timely too, as Matarese's concluding chapter notes quite explicitly (I'll refer doubters to P. J. O'Rourke's "satire" in the August 25, 2001 *Atlantic Monthly*).

There remains much, and perhaps too much, left out of this brief treatment, for two reasons it seems.

First, Matarese (a political scientist) uses a methodology that seems (at least to me, an historian) to be insufficiently historical. For example, I am not as sure as she is that John Winthrop, who, in 1630, described what the Puritans wanted to build in Massachusetts as "a city on a hill," and Ronald Reagan, who applied the same description to the United States in 1980, would have agreed that they had the same thing in mind. Their concepts were, clearly, not antithetical, but the subtle variations introduced over the course of 400 years' worth of modernization and revolution do make a difference.

Second, Matarese traces the sources of American national images through a series of historical interpretations that seems terribly incomplete; she ignores almost all the cultural, intellectual, and foreign policy history written in the last generation. That does not make her wrong, of course. Nevertheless, she relies upon a body of scholarship that emphasized consensus, upon writers who did not pay much attention to the divisions and sources of conflict among Americans. She chose a sample of utopian fiction created in the last twelve years of the nineteenth century; she selected the period because utopian authors were especially active, because the works were notably didactic, because the times were markedly turbulent, and because these years saw considerable American expansionism abroad. Yet, somehow, she never quite connects these four factors to each other.

These may be only disciplinary quibbles. As a political scientist, Matarese seeks out generalized patterns of thought and behavior. Historians (like this reviewer) should be cognizant of factors that are more distinctive; they should be more sensitive to the influences of time and change. Its limitations notwithstanding, this book provides useful insights into the way Americans did, and still do, make their foreign policy.

NONFICTION REVIEW

**DYSTOPIAN FICTION EAST AND WEST:
UNIVERSE OF TERROR AND TRIAL**

Arthur O. Lewis

Gottlieb, Erika. *Dystopian Fiction East and West: Universe of Terror and Trial*. McGill-Queens UP: Montreal & Kingston, August, 2001. 323p. Cloth ISBN 0-7735-2179-8, \$75.00. Paper ISBN 0-7735-2206-9, \$19.95.

This book is a major study in the field of utopian/dystopian studies, as well as an excellent introduction to an important aspect of recent East European political and literary activity. The opening words of the Introduction set both the theme and the tone of the discussion: "If the central drama of the age of faith was the conflict between salvation and damnation by deity, in our secular modern age this drama has been transposed to a conflict between humanity's salvation or damnation by society in the historical arena. In the modern scenario salvation is represented by just society chosen by an enlightened people; damnation, by an unjust society, a degraded mob ruled by a power-crazed elite" (3). Dystopia in the West expresses the fear of coming totalitarianism; in the East, the fact that it has arrived. It is thus totalitarianism that leads to production of dystopian works. Most of the book examines the differences between Western dystopias and those from the Eastern bloc, with special attention to changes following the demise of various totalitarian regimes in that area.

Each chapter follows the same basic methodology: a brief general statement about the works to be considered is followed by discussion of each in turn, beginning with summary of the plot sufficient to support the critical ideas then proposed. Each work is placed in political, economic, and philosophical context. Arguments from other studies (e.g., Booker, Clowes, Hillegas, Kateb, Morson, Stites, Suvin) are, as appropriate, both refuted and used in support of the author's point of view. The cumulative effect of this common approach is to clarify and strengthen the book's thesis. This study leads to better understanding of those Eastern works about which we already had some knowledge and to a real sense of the milieu of which they are a part and enhances our understanding of twentieth-century utopia/dystopia writing in general.

The choice of *Brave New World*, *Nineteen Eighty-four*, *Player Piano*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and *We* to represent the West is unarguable. The Eastern dystopias take up more space than the Western, and rightly so because most Western readers are relatively unfamiliar with them. Although nearly two dozen works are discussed in some detail, Victor Serge's *Conquered City* (1932; trans. 1978), Andrei Platonov's *The Foundation Pit* (1930; trans. 1973), Abram Tertz Sinyavski's *The Trial Begins* (1960; trans. 1982), Alexander Zinoviev's *The Radiant Future* (1978; trans. 1980), and Vassily Aksonov's *The Island of Crimea* (1981; trans. 1983), all of which have been translated into English, offer a window into the dystopian criticism of the Eastern totalitarian society.

A special strength of the book is the emphasis on dystopian fiction as portraying a society where justice miscarries through the power of the rulers and the state's rigid system of laws so that dissidents will always lose any trial they may be caught up in. Where utopias always strive for social justice, the sooner the better, dystopias define social justice as only that condition which totally supports the State and the powers that be. The author draws special attention to the importance of trials and the loss—indeed, sacrifice—of children in making this a successful strategy for maintaining the totalitarian state.

Although it is a scholarly study with copious footnotes, the style is clear and easily readable. An excellent bibliography and detailed index are useful additions to the text. This is good scholarship because it offers a clear, well-defined examination of texts and draws sustainable conclusions from them. It is significant scholarship because it offers insight into what has been happening in Soviet and Eastern bloc society over the past eighty years. It is the kind of study that utopian/dystopian scholars—and others—will want to keep on their shelves for many years to come.

NONFICTION REVIEW

**SURPRISED BY C. S. LEWIS, GEORGE MACDONALD, AND DANTE:
AN ARRAY OF ORIGINAL DISCOVERIES**

Richard C. West

Lindskoog, Kathryn. *Surprised by C. S. Lewis, George MacDonald, and Dante: An Array of Original Discoveries*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 2001. 221 p. Index. Cloth. \$35.00. ISBN 0-86544-728-9.

These twenty-three essays, conveniently gathered from several different journals and small press publications, are mostly short and follow E. M. Forster's famous dictum "only connect." The justification of the first word in the title (aside from playing on the title of Lewis's spiritual autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*) is in finding connections beyond the obvious among some combination of the three authors, with occasional brief relations to others (such as Frances Hodgson

Burnett, Willa Cather, Lewis Carroll, D. H. Lawrence, Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers, and John Updike). MacDonald scholars will perhaps be most interested in the discussion of *Sir Gibbie* (a novel recently reissued in a new edition by Lindskoog), a good bit about his influence on Lewis, and a capsule chronology of his friendship with Mark Twain. Danteists will find reference to some of Lewis's comments on a great poet he loved (and could read in the original), while the longest piece in this collection teases out various small points throughout the *Commedia*. But Lewis is the figure primarily considered, again mostly mined for small points: those I found of particular interest deal with his "anti-anti-Semitism," the possible influence of a Sikh mystic called Sadhu Sundar Singh, and a useful paraphrase of some of his advice on writing. Their Christianity deeply informs the work of all three authors, and Lindskoog's commentary will have greatest appeal to those sympathetic to this worldview. While it is convenient to have these fugitive pieces collected in one place, many of them make similar points, so there is a good deal of repetition when they are read close together. This book is not a necessary purchase for any but a completist aficionado of one of the authors, but it is sprightly written, and worthwhile.

NONFICTION REVIEW
PAINTED WORLDS
 Walter Albert

Warren, Jim. *Painted Worlds*. Paper Tiger, 2001. 112pp. ISBN 1 85585 894 0 (hb); ISBN 1 85585 908 4 (pb). \$29.95 (hc). US and Canadian distribution by Sterling Publishing Co., 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Jim Warren, a self-taught artist, won his first award in 1975, first place at the Westwood Art Show, which he describes as, at that time, the second largest event of its kind in the country. In his successful career as an illustrator that followed, Warren illustrated the covers of some 200 books, none of which (as he confesses) he ever read, needing to know "only a few descriptive pages from the editors, to paint the one picture that would represent the whole book." In the early 1990s, he returned to his "fine-art roots," with his paintings featured by the Wyland Gallery Chain and widely disseminated as greeting cards and puzzles as well as limited-edition canvas prints.

It seems somewhat churlish to criticize this highly successful career, but while the paintings that the artist seems most proud of in the most recent phase of his career are technically proficient, they appear to have found their natural home in commercial art chain galleries. His early orientation as a Surrealist (influenced by Dali and Magritte) found him rejected by the "orthodox" galleries, who told him that "Surrealism doesn't sell. Do clowns. Clowns sell." The result of this rejection was that he "ended up" as primarily an illustrator with a favorable reputation for his paperback covers. Many of these—like the 1989 illustration for his favorite cover, Daw's *Alien Pregnant by Elvis*, an anthology edited by Esther Friesner and Martin H. Greenberg—exhibit an impish humor that is most engaging. And a 1990 painting of Hitchcock concealing a puckish yawn as birds fly out of his exploding skull is almost worth the price of the book.

However, along with Surrealism, he cites Norman Rockwell as an important influence, and this aspect of his work seems to have been most evident in the last decade. Even though some of the paintings (such as "Living on the Edge," 1993) combine Surrealism and Rockwell's sentimental realism with some success, more often the obsession with marine landscapes, stampeding horses, and nude women and mermaids frolicking on foamy seas lead him into paintings that flirt, at times disastrously, with Romantic kitsch.

Somehow, many of the current paintings resemble the paintings for record jackets that had a brief afterlife as posters in college dormitories in the 1960s and '70s, with the offbeat humor that characterizes Warren's best work replaced by a dreamy romanticism that is already dated.

NONFICTION REVIEW
FRIGHTENING FICTION
 Michael Levy

Reynolds, Kimberley, Geraldine Brennan and Kevin McCarron. *Frightening Fiction*. Continuum, 370 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1700, New York, NY 10017, 2001. 134p. \$29.95. ISBN 0-8264-5310-4. Orders to 800-561-7704.

This highly serviceable collection of essays is the latest volume in Continuum's Contemporary Classics of Children's Literature series. The introduction, by Kimberley Reynolds, begins by surveying a wide range of critical opinions on why we love horror fiction, citing such big guns as Nina Auerbach, Rosemary Jackson, Julia Kristeva, and Helen Cixous. Reynolds then goes on to argue that there is an essential difference between much Young Adult horror fiction and genre work for adults by writers like Stephen King. She suggests that, unlike adult horror fiction, "far from delighting in the attractions of misfits and outsiders, adolescent horror is concerned with instilling a desire to belong to recognized social groups, teaching readers

how to behave in ways which will make them acceptable rather than monstrous.” Reynolds closes her essay by examining specifically why girls, who make up the bulk of the YA readership for horror, are interested in the genre, centering her examination on the *X-Files* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

In Chapter 1, Kevin McCarron applies Reynolds’s ideas to the enormously popular British YA Point Horror series with the bulk of his essay devoted to two writers well known to American readers, R. L. Stine and Caroline B. Cooney. McCarron makes the interesting point that although the Point Horror novels frequently center on ghosts and other supernatural manifestations, “paradoxically, the primary concern of such texts is to persuade the adolescent reader that death does not exist.” Surveying a wide range of novels from the series, he persuasively demonstrates that virtually all the deaths that do occur are accidents. Death from natural causes and elderly or sick people at the point of death play no role in these novels. The world of death is invariably distanced from the teen reader. In Chapter 2, McCarron moves on to the work of Robert Westall, discussing such classics as *The Machine Gunners*, *Blitzcat*, and the author’s fine science-fiction/horror novel *Urn Burial*. He concludes that Westall’s message is very different from that of the Point Horror books, centering on “the inability of rationalism to thoroughly explain a mysterious universe and perhaps most importantly, the inevitability, and appropriateness of old age and death.”

In a final chapter, Geraldine Brennan discusses the work of David Almond, Philip Gross and Lesley Howarth. Almond, one of the most highly regarded of the new British fantasy writers, is the author of the award-winning novels as *Skellig*, *Kit’s Wilderness*, and *Heaven Eyes*. Although he is not a traditional horror writer, he does seem to be virtually obsessed with the concept of death, and particularly death due to illness and old age. Almond also shares with Gross and Howarth an interest in games; in fact, the chapter’s title, taken from *Kit’s Wilderness*, is “The Game Called Death.” Brennan notes that all three authors “have, to some extent, employed games, rituals and diversions as ways in which their characters can tackle fear of death, loss, or displacement, build their identities and preserve them intact, and, in some cases, influence others for their own ends.” I’ve written extensively on David Almond’s work, but Brennan’s perceptive essay showed me that I still have a lot to learn about these books.

Just about the only real criticism I have of the volume concerns its connection to the series title, Contemporary Classics. If one assumes that the term “classic” means something more than merely “popular,” then approximately half of the material covered in this volume, most notably the essays centered on genre theory, R.L. Stine, and the Point Horror series, has little if anything to do with books that can be legitimately defined as Contemporary Classics. It is, of course, entirely legitimate to study mediocre but intensely popular work because such fiction can often tell us more about reading tastes and genre conventions than can the truly memorable but less genre-bound fiction of writers like Robert Westall and David Almond. Still, I find that the juxtaposition of the word “classic” and the name R. L. Stine (given top-billing on the book cover) makes me uncomfortable because it is misleading. This caveat aside, *Frightening Fiction* is a solid introduction to the world of Young Adult horror fiction.

NONFICTION REVIEW

A DREAMER AND A VISIONARY / H.P. LOVECRAFT IN HIS TIME

A. Langley Searles

Joshi, S.T.: *A Dreamer and a Visionary / H.P. Lovecraft in His Time*. Liverpool University Press, 4 Cambridge St., Liverpool L69 7ZU, England, 2001. x + 422 p. £ (hardbound) 085323 9363; £ (paperback) 085323 946 0.

Cursory appraisal of this volume suggests it is merely an abridgement of the author’s earlier biography, *H.P. Lovecraft: A Life* (1997). Its chapter titles (themselves quotations from or paraphrases of Lovecraft’s writings) are the same, as is the material they cover. Comparisons of the texts, moreover, show extensive duplication. One’s first thought is that *A Dreamer and a Visionary* needs only brief mention. But closer examination shows that a longer review is indeed warranted.

In the past few years additional information concerning Lovecraft has accumulated. We now know more about his lineage and those who shared his life, for example, than we did even a half-decade ago. Appropriate selections from this information have been incorporated into the text. The latter has also been reviewed in its entirety, prior to publication, by other researchers in the area, notably Kenneth Faig, Jr. (to whom, incidentally, the book has deservedly been dedicated), and it has clearly benefited from this further attention.

The second reason for writing about it is at once surprising and seminal. I find that the very process of abridgement has had a profound and unexpected effect: the resulting increased emphasis on narrative at the expense of background has radically altered the reader’s perception of Joshi’s subject. Clearing out the verbal underbrush transforms Howard Lovecraft from a sometimes wooden oddball into a clearly perceivable, full-dimensional human being. You can now better appreciate the breadth of his mind and feel the invigorating tang of his personality. Truly, less has become more.

The bottom line here is that one comes away from *A Dreamer and a Visionary* with those mixed feelings about its subject that arise only about someone you feel you know well—at once sympathy for his trials, pleasure in his good fortune,

and a strong urge to kick him in the pants for occasional exasperating behavior. This is surely the hallmark for a successful biography.

It is fascinating to read how Lovecraft matured (later than most people), how some of his opinions evolved with new knowledge, how others persisted stubbornly in spite of it. One is also led to realize the extent to which he worked out personal problems through writing fiction and how his merging into their protagonists became journeys of self-discovery. In areas such as these, Joshi becomes more a dispassionate raconteur than a passionate advocate, and I think this change in stance helps his cause rather than harms it.

A corollary to feeling that one knows Howard Lovecraft well is recognizing that there are puzzling gaps in his life and thinking that have yet to be filled. Let me cite just one out of several that crossed my mind when reading this book. During the last two decades of his life, the most widely known poet in America was probably Edna St. Vincent Millay. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1923; her reading tours around the country were immensely popular; and her books sold in the tens of thousands, even during the Great Depression. Her work was praised by such fastidious readers as Thomas Hardy and A. E. Housman; Edmund Wilson characterized her as “one of the only poets writing in English in our time who have attained to anything like the stature of great literary figures.” Further, she habitually used traditional forms (which Lovecraft preferred) and always communicated her thoughts clearly and vividly (the very thing he criticized Imagists such as Amy Lowell for *not* doing). How could someone supposedly so alive to what was going on in the field of poetry *not* have encountered her work? Or, encountering it, failed to express an opinion about it? Yet I have never found a single mention of Millay in all of Lovecraft’s writings (A comparable instance is his silence—or ignorance—regarding another outstanding New England poet, Edward Arlington Robinson.).

I do have a few minor faults to find in Joshi’s biography. While I agree it shouldn’t be unduly burdened with references, there are occasions when the importance of the subject-matter mandates their use (such as on pages 79, 98, and especially 181-182). I also spotted a few solecisms (or are they misprints?), like “cycle” for “circle” (page 103, twice) and the misplacement of the word “only” when introducing incomplete quotations (pages 179 and 390).

But these should not trouble those seeking either information or pleasure; *A Dreamer and a Visionary* is a sound and reliable work. Although it can be enjoyed by all readers, I particularly recommend it to those for whom H. P. Lovecraft is a recent taste and source of curiosity; it will get them off on just the right start.

FICTION REVIEW

MAELSTROM

Michael Levy

Watts, Peter. *Maelstrom*. New York: Tor, 2001. 416 pages, cloth, \$25.95. ISBN0-312-87806-0.

Peter Watts’s *Starfish* was one of the best first novels of 1999, and its sequel, *Maelstrom*, is just as good. Set in a polluted, energy-starved near-future world, *Starfish* concerned the strange goings on in and around a geothermal power station located at Channer Vent deep beneath the Pacific Ocean. The corporation that owned Beebe Station had specifically chosen a crew made up of psychopaths, child molesters, and abuse survivors. The idea was that only people whose entire lives had been lived under stressful conditions could survive for extended periods of time in the cold, dark world of the ocean floor. Moreover, the rifters, as the crew were called, had been radically altered in both mind and body. Among other things, they’d been made into high-tech amphibians, capable of living under water indefinitely without outside help. Their emotional peculiarities and a fairly high level of interpersonal violence notwithstanding, the rifters did keep Beebe Station functioning despite the cold, the dark, and periodic attacks by gigantic and mysterious deep-sea fish found only near Channer Vent. Things began to go horribly wrong, however, when it became clear that the vent was also home to an enormously ancient and deadly microorganism. The very presence of Beebe Station, it seemed, had accidentally loosed that organism upon the world. *Starfish* ended with a blast as the Station’s corporate masters tried to solve the problem with a preemptive nuclear strike.

Now, in *Maelstrom*, we discover that the bomb has failed in its mission. The microorganism, dubbed Behemoth, not only survives, but has continued to spread across the Pacific, mostly to California and the Pacific Northwest. Worse still, one of the crew of Beebe Station, a rifter named Lenie Clarke, has also survived the blast. Deeply disturbed and hallucinating freely, she is slowly making her way east across the United States and Canada, spreading Behemoth as she goes and not caring that she does so. Despite the fact that Clarke’s actions could lead to the end of the world, she becomes something of a folk hero to the downtrodden. Further complicating government and corporate attempts to find her, she unwittingly picks up an unexpected ally, a rogue computer program that’s loose on the net.

Maelstrom is in many ways a typical early twenty-first century science-fiction novel: mind and body modification, anti-corporate paranoia, horrific environmental possibilities, killer memes, rogue computer programs, borderline-psychotic anti-heroes, and other latter-day cyberpunk tropes are much in evidence. The novel also calls to mind the work of John Barnes,

particularly his very dark 1995 novel *Kaleidoscope Century*. What makes *Maelstrom* stand out, however, is the expertise that Watts brings to the book due to his training as a marine biologist and environmentalist. The novel even concludes with a detailed discussion of each of the biological and other scientific theories presented, as well as a bibliography full of references to articles published in *Nature*, *Science*, and elsewhere. I very much enjoyed *Maelstrom*, and would strongly recommend it to anyone who likes well-done, biologically-based hard science fiction. Readers new to Watts's work, however, should probably read *Starfish* first. They might also wish to visit his rather spectacular website, www.rifters.com.

FICTION REVIEW

HAMMERFALL

Ritch Calvin

Cherryh, C. J. *Hammerfall*. New York: EOS, 2001. 390 pages, cloth. \$23.95. ISBN 0-06-105260-4

Although nearly all of C. J. Cherryh's science fiction has been constructed within the future history of the Union-Alliance universe, this new novel leaves behind the mri, the han, the kif, and the Company Wars. Instead, it is the first novel of a new series, *The Gene Wars*, and takes place entirely on an unnamed planet, among what appear to be humans, and introduces an alien species—albeit entirely unseen—the *ondat*. Despite these differences, the novel nevertheless bears many of the characteristic trademarks of a Cherryh novel: the short terse prose, the hard-nosed characters, the life-and-death drama, the influence of technology on our lives, received cultural sexual mores, and the alienation of individual human beings from one and other, let alone from *alien* species.

The plot of the novel concerns an ordinary man who unwittingly gets caught up in a global, and even interstellar, intrigue. Marak Trin Tain has been turned over by his father to the dread queen/god-on-earth “the Ila,” because he hears voices and is considered “mad” or “tainted.” Because he and his father had waged a long-term, though fruitless, battle against the Ila, she is intrigued by this particular madman, and offers him a deal: she'll protect his mother and sister if he'll go east and discover the answer to the voices that the mad hear. He agrees. However, he refuses the royal escort and takes, in their stead, a motley band of madmen and desert dwellers through a hostile environment where water is the most valued commodity (one of the many nods to *Dune*). En route, Marak takes two wives, Hati Makri an'i Geran and Norit. The sexual mores of this world are by no means uniform: such an arrangement would scandalize the members of the Hata tribe, though it is customary among the Geran tribe. Marak, however, disregards custom and follows both his heart and circumstance. The trio form a well-functioning unit. Although Marak is the titular head of the family and of the caravan, Hati and Norit demand full participation in decisions and actions, and he often asserts that they are as capable and knowledgeable as he.

Cherryh has represented a variety of interpersonal and sexual relationships throughout her body of work—though nearly all of them are heterosexual, from the utter dominance of Morgaine to the matriarchy of the Chanur books to the cruel sexual fantasies and games of Ariadne Emory (*Cyteen*). In *Hammerfall*, the males in relationships tend to be the dominant forces, the agents who go out into the world. Consider, for example, Marak's advice to someone learning to ride: “You've made love. [. . .] You were a wife. Follow him” (55). However, Cherryh balances that with her representation of the Marak/Hati/Norit triad, who are all active agents in the survival of the world, and with the two ruler-figures, the Ila and Luz.

The Ila is the ruler of the holy city, Oburan, where a great many myths have arisen around her, primarily that she descended on the planet, that she made all life possible, and that she is immortal. In some senses, all of these things are true, but they simultaneously demonstrate Clarke's adage that any technology sufficiently advanced will appear as magic. Some 500+ years earlier, the Ila had been part of an outward expansion but was forced to settle on the planet. Through genetic engineering, the Ila used certain native lifeforms, namely the vermin, to spread her “nanocoles” or “makers” (another nod to *Dune*) throughout the biosphere and render the planet suitable for life. However, in the meantime, an alien species, the *ondat*, has become angered by this meddling and has vowed to annihilate her lifeforms. In an effort to intercede, Ian and Luz have also descended to the planet and, for the past thirty years, have been spreading other, competing nanocoles, which the *ondat* accept. In this strand of the narrative we see both how these technological changes, which the population cannot comprehend, have taken on religious significance and an entire cosmology has developed.

Cherryh also introduces (as she does in *Cyteen*, *40,000 in Gehenna*, and others) the question of genetic manipulation. In this case, the Ila has genetically manipulated an entire biosphere, which makes life possible for humans, but also secures her tyrannical position of power. Luz, on the other hand, unleashes her own genetic manipulations, which compete with and defeat the Ila's nanocoles. Marak is in no position to be able to decide which of the two warring factions are telling the truth, nor which one is ethically or morally right. And since the readers' information derives largely from Marak, neither are we. Nevertheless, we can question genetic manipulation and its consequences. In the end, though, as in her other novels, Cherryh seems to be suggesting that, megalomania aside, such technological interventions are positive, and perhaps even necessary.

This book has many of the characteristics of a Cherryh novel, but perhaps because the scope is so small, it seems to plod. So little happens, so few factions are involved, so few species appear, that the narrative focuses almost entirely on the thought processes of Marak, an individual who, despite being in the center of everything, is in a position of knowing very little. Because we readers depend on him for our information and understanding, it gets doled out to us in very small packets of information. While Cherryh's interstellar novels tend to be as fast-paced as the action in them, this novel's pace reflects its own plotline—a long, slow, tedious trek through the desert. Nevertheless, Cherryh thematically raises her usual compelling questions. Sequel to follow.

FICTION REVIEW

BRITISH FUTURE FICTION 1700-1914

Alan Sandison

Clarke, I.F. ed. *British Future Fiction 1700-1914*. 8 vols, Pickering & Chatto, London 2001. ISBN 1 85196 617 X. Price £550.

In his elegant and perceptive preface to the second edition of *A Crystal Age*, W.H. Hudson has a number of things to say which should accompany us as a *vade mecum* when we journey through I.F. Clarke's immensely useful and thought-provoking collection of texts that constitute his history of British future fiction from 1700 to 1914. Most memorable of these is his observation that "[o]ur mental atmosphere surrounds and shuts us in like our own skins; no one can boast that he has broken out of that prison." The tales of the future selected for this collection amply demonstrate the truth of the dictum, though few of the others show Hudson's balanced perspective on past, present, and future. The selected texts make it clear just how much these narratives arise out of their own time, either consciously as an expression of their age's preoccupations or as the unwitting betrayal of such interests. As Clarke says in his introduction in Volume One, "the tale of the future can always obtain maximum effect whenever it taps into contemporary expectations." At this point he is briefly talking about Sebastien Mercier's phenomenally successful *L'An 2440* published in 1771, which is itself an expression of the major dogmas of the Enlightenment and which uses as an epigraph Leibnitz's oft-quoted remark, "The present is big with the future," but does not include the rest of the sentence: "...the future can be read from the past; and the distant reveals itself in the near."

Exactly why the tale of the future should have suddenly blossomed when it did is in itself an absorbing question. Clarke makes the interesting suggestion that the pamphleteer Richard Tickell built greater than he knew when, in the middle of the American War of Independence, he published his imaginary Parliamentary debate on the war which he set in November 1778. There Edmund Burke, *inter alia*, holds forth splendidly on the stupidity and mistakes of the British which have resulted in "that stupendous fabric of American Empire that now engrosses the attention, and claims the wonder of mankind." So popular was the pamphlet that it had run through four editions by the end of the first week of publication, suggesting that future-thinking had entered the realm of general discussion.

The first major British tale of the future had, however, come out a good deal earlier, in 1763. Very clearly it is a product of its era, shot through with deep anxiety about the security of Britain in the virtually incessant jockeying for primacy amongst the major European powers which had gone on throughout the century, precipitating three major wars. The last of these ended in the year of the book's publication, so we should not be surprised to find that *The Reign of George the Sixth 1900-1925* is dominated by concerns about the National Debt, which had ballooned to enormous proportions, and with the need to fix the map of Europe once and for all. This it does by ensuring that George VI, the ideal patriot king, unites Britain and France under his crown, having repelled threats from all other quarters. Nonetheless, the author's portrayal of the future State is, in fact, remarkably *un* imaginative. He anticipates none of the new technologies that were already being fashioned, extols the virtues of the patriot king on the eve of the French Revolution, and continues to assume the subservience of the American Colonies two years before the Stamp Act. Clarke is right to start with this tale, though, for it clearly reflects the limited expectations of the old order when, as he says, it was still possible to assume that the social systems, small populations, and rudimentary technologies of 1763 would continue unchanged into the twentieth century.

It is a big leap from *The Reign of George VI* to Bulwer Lytton's *The Coming Race*, the other text in Volume One. In between had come the Industrial Revolution, Charles Darwin, and Empire. There had also been a claim made in the Sorbonne in 1828 that was to resound through Europe and America. In his lectures on civilization, the French statesman and historian, Francois Guizot, boldly asserted that "[t]he idea of progress, of development, appears to me to be the fundamental idea contained in the word civilization." In the subterranean world of the Vril-ya, Bulwer Lytton appears to liberate some of the future aspirations of Victorian society, both moral and technological, flagging some sort of faith in progress. His projections have considerable imaginative verve—there are "aerial boats" and robots so "ingenious and pliant to the operations of vril, that they actually seem gifted with reason." At the same time there is more than a whiff of the contemporary Arts and Crafts movement in his description of agricultural implements: "...their love of utility leads them to beautify its tools, and quickens their imagination in a way unknown to themselves." More importantly, the doubt and uncertainty which make themselves

heard throughout the narrative are altogether characteristic of the age. The ending reflects classic Victorian *angst*: loneliness and foreboding, and future projections, which seem to contain much more of a threat than a promise.

Bulwer Lytton offers qualified approval for the idea of progress, but he is also uneasy about what might come in its train. William Delisle Hay has absolutely no qualms, and the inclusion of *Three Hundred Years Hence* in this anthology furnishes us with a usefully extreme version of such enthusiasm. Hay provides a catalogue of prototypes - from, it would appear, the combine harvester to the jet engine to demonstrate the benefits of progress; but his professorial narrator does not balk at extending the idea to include the extermination of the yellow races and the black in the interests of world harmony. Hay takes no care to distance himself from this soulless pedant and does nothing to diminish the brutal self-confidence which, in the imperial spirit of the age, permeates the tale.

Bulwer Lytton's unspoken fear that the idea of progress might be leading humankind to disaster rather than salvation is taken much further in William Grove's *The Wreck of the World* (1889). Prior to "the great disaster of 1948," which he is about to relate, Groves' narrator—an engineer—describes the wholehearted devotion lavished on the idea of progress, particularly in America where the tale is set: "The one virtue that may be said to have characterised the twentieth century and to have redeemed it from utter worthlessness was a devotion to the cause of progress." However, it is the setting up of altars to this idol that brings disaster in the form of self-replicating machines which not only have a life of their own and a mind but a killer instinct as well. One can't help wishing that Groves had hit on a more felicitous choice of machine than a locomotive to embody his idea: their careering around the countryside apparently independent of rails does not lead to a ready suspension of disbelief. But his tale is, of course, really a paean to advances in steam technology.

The Wreck of the World has clearly been chosen to demonstrate one kind of reaction against the deification of the idea of progress. Another kind is represented by W.H. Hudson's *A Crystal Age*, which reasserts the pastoral ideal over the machine-age in an attempt to return humankind to nature. *A Crystal Age* is among the better-written tales in Clarke's anthology. Unusually in this genre, Hudson allows a distance—even an ironic distance—to develop between his narrator and his author. Smith, consequently, becomes less of a mouthpiece and more of a character, even, on occasion, revealing—oh, rare commodity—a sense of humor. Falling in love with Arcadia as he does, Smith none the less is human enough to confess a certain nostalgia for "he streaky rasher from the dear remembered pig."

Jules Verne, Professor Clarke writes, was a man who knew how to interest readers by the artful way he turned technology into fiction. Neither William Delisle Hay nor William Groves shows a similar skill, unfortunately, but with Louis Tracy matters are very different. In *An American Emperor* he succeeds in creating a rambunctious adventure story, which incorporates some awe-inspiring technological achievements, but, more importantly, it is the only tale I know of which centrally involves capital as a crucial agent in the realization of future fantasies. The immensely rich Vansittart sets out to use his wealth to irrigate the Sahara as a step in his plan to become Emperor of France (an improbable precondition to his marrying the woman of his choice). His method is explicitly to turn France into a limited liability company. Potential enemies find themselves confronted by the same weaponry: when Prussia menaces a revitalized France, Vansittart administers "a severe rattling to the Prussian Bourse" and the Kaiser backs down. *An American Emperor* is a long, rather complicated romance, but the tale is told with a dash and a financial *nous* which suggests a Dumas with a seat on the Federal Reserve.

Clarke's method throughout this collection is to demonstrate how major political, social, technological, and military issues become grist to the mill for those who seek to advance their cause (or simply to express their hopes and fears) by prophesying the future. Inevitably this leads him to the women's rights movement, and *British Future Fiction* brings together a particularly useful number of exemplary texts. These range from Walter Besant's highly ambiguous "comedy," *The Revolt of Man*, describing the revolution which brought to an end absolute rule by emancipated women and their return to dutiful subservience. One can only speculate as to which quarter contributed the heartiest laughter at this "comedy." *Star of the Morning* is a passionate advocacy of women's empowerment—sometimes alarmingly so: "Power!", cries Karyl 'Is it not given to the individual who dares to command and wield it?'" At times Karyl is exalted to a near-Messianic role, and one can't help feeling that she comes down a peg or two when she marries the Prince of Wales (all to further the cause, of course). In *The Sex Triumphant*, A.C.Fox-Davies reflects a much more militant stage in the battle for women's suffrage with the result that the tale has a liveliness and a dramatic force which some of the others lack. Though obviously of its age, it is highly imaginative in its use of weaponry—once again, through an adroit manipulation of an unsympathetic law, revealing the power of money to bring the opposition to heel. One might also add that it is far from squeamish: the Member of Parliament who insisted that his gender conferred on man the sole right to govern is kidnapped and castrated—though humanely, of course, with an anesthetic.

Compared with some of the scenes in *The Sex Triumphant*, Volume Six, "The Next Great War," may seem mild. This is a field in which Professor Clarke's important contribution has already been widely recognized, so that his selection of works is what one would expect. Having them grouped here, however, will greatly facilitate the work of other scholars, making it that much easier to compare the strengths and weaknesses of the genre. Many of these stories suffer from the tyranny of the single idea: England is woefully under-prepared; her people are degenerate; materialism is rampant; patriotism at a discount. Often

they are little more than a lobby for re-armament. William Francis Butler's *The Invasion of England* is a particularly sententious work, morally and literarily (It is remarkable how many of these writers of the future choose a style which is quite extraordinarily pompous *and archaic*). But quite a number of these tales rise above the constraints of their propagandist genre. The most influential of them all, Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking*, succeeds because it deserves to. Though sharing the harsh views of the majority towards the neglect of the country's defenses, Chesney is much more restrained, and from this restraint comes a certain tension in his narrative which holds the reader. He tells his tale of invasion with economy and a concentration on the salient detail, which distinguishes it from others in this category, yet conveys a real sense of time, place, and the human cost of war. In *The New Centurion* James Eastwick is cavalier about his story-line but redeems himself because of his well-organized and extremely knowledgeable account of likely developments in weaponry projected for the Royal Navy. His book is sub-titled "A Tale of Automatic War," and unlike a number of the Generals-turned-author, he is not only aware of the value of heavy machine-guns but clearly anticipates a time when armaments of this kind will be computer (or at least electronically) controlled. Eastwick doesn't subscribe to the widespread belief -frequently reiterated in these texts—that every advance in military technology was a step toward world peace.

From 1905 the tally of future-war stories—British, French, German—rose steadily: twelve in 1906, nineteen in 1907 and twenty in 1909; and over time Germany succeeded France as the enemy. Such surges were often the direct response to international crises, but one event that had an extraordinary impact on many British military writers (and re-directed their apprehensions) had happened much earlier. This was the Battle of Sedan in 1870 when the apparently invincible French army was surrounded by the Prussians and annihilated. R.W.Cole who, in *The Death Trap*, tells a powerful invasion-story (albeit at an exhausting pitch), shows himself preoccupied with Sedan ("A brilliant dawn heralded the day following the Sedan of the British army."). It was also clearly at the forefront of Lloyd Williams' mind when he wrote *The Great Raid*.

The last volume has been given the title "The End of the World," and it is appropriate for it amplifies a doomsday note, which has been, to varying degrees, audible through many nineteenth-century exemplars of future fiction. Terminal disgust at humanity's irredeemable corruption reverberates through *The Doom of the Great City* by William Delisle Hay (who gets a second chance I do not think he altogether deserves): "You could not contemplate the Londoners of those days without a feeling of disgust and loathing springing up within you..." And R.H. Benson in *The Lord of the World* depicts the cataclysmic consequences of the relentless pursuit of material and technical progress in a secularized world. Self-oriented and self-deceived but hungering for something to exalt them, the citizenry invest the antichrist with plenipotentiary powers. The story charts a development that always brings to mind George Orwell's insistence on the importance of remembering that Marx's famous remark about religion being the opium of the people was preceded by the sentence, "Religion is the cry of the soul in a soulless world."

The Lord of the World is a somber (and immensely long) work which makes one all the more grateful for the inclusion of John Davidson's splendid spoof *The Salvation of Nature*. It is good to have a choice between ecotourism (even if it does get out of hand) and the Day of Judgment!

British Future Fiction 1700-1914 once again places scholars working in the field under a debt to Professor Clarke, furnishing them with a veritable quarry of easily accessible construction materials. With few exceptions, all these texts are intrinsically interesting, and all, without exception, have a contribution to make in helping us to understand the development of the tale of the future. The General Introduction offers an invaluable and comprehensive account of the apprehensions and the expectations which underlie the sudden efflorescence of future fiction; while the shorter introduction to each of the twenty-two individual tales contextualizes them with the depth of learning and breadth of reading one has come to expect from the author of *The Pattern of Expectation* and *Voices Prophesying War*.

FICTION REVIEW

THE TEMPLE AND THE CROWN

Kurtz, Katherine, and Harris, Deborah Turner. *The Temple and the Crown*. New York: Warner Books, 2001. 542 pages, paper, \$6.99. ISBN 0446608548

The Temple and the Crown is a sequel to Kurtz's and Harris's *The Temple and the Stone* that narrates the Scottish history of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce. The narrative of *The Temple and the Crown* chronicles the literal war between the British and Scottish and the spiritual war between the Templar Knights and the Knights of the Black Swan.

They thoroughly enhance the history of the British and Scottish conflict with bits of Celtic mythology, hermeticism, and occultism. The Temple series walks a line somewhere between fantasy and historical fiction that includes aspects of both while not relying on either genre exclusively. *The Temple and the Crown* narrates the conflict between the British and Scottish over who will rule Scotland. Robert the Bruce declares Scottish independence after being crowned in *The Temple and the Stone*. *The*

Temple and the Crown picks up the narrative with the British invasion of southern Scotland to bring it back under British control.

In the meantime, the Templar Knights, having been driven out of their holdings in the Middle East, begin to look upon Scotland as a potential new base of operations for their esoteric goals of championing the forces of light and good against the demonic forces of dark and evil. They continue their aid to Robert (the Templars helped him be crowned in the first Temple volume) in hope of making a new headquarters in Scotland. The Templar's enemy, a band of magicians called the Knights of the Black Swan, who practice the black arts, attempts to keep the Templars from establishing a hold in Scotland by aiding the British invasion. They also try to force the Pope to destroy the Templar Order.

Those who are expecting either a historical novel or a fantasy will be disappointed, but if one allows for a nexus between historical fiction, fantasy, and the action/thriller, all of the novels the authors write together are enjoyable and entertaining. The best comparison to make sense of the unusual genre of the Temple series is that of Kurtz's and Harris's other series, *The Adept*, which is also set primarily in Scotland, but in the present. The four Adept books narrate a series of encounters between the forces of light and darkness. The hero is a doctor of noble Scottish blood who is an adept, a man capable of bending aspects of the invisible world to his will. He is a member of a secret organization whose purpose is to fight those who want to turn the earth over to be ruled by dark forces. Both series use the myths that developed at the edges of Christian history about occult practices related to hermeticism, gnosticism, and folk magic as a background to spin out a cosmology in which the both good and evil forces from the invisible world act on the material world. Out of this cosmology come Harris's and Kurtz's novels.

A note of caution: *The Temple and the Crown* is oddly fast-paced, considering that the authors are careful about maintaining accurate travel times since their setting is in the age of the sail. While some of the characters' journeys take years to complete, they express a modern sense of urgency and an almost global sense of networking that feels contemporary. If there is a flaw with the genre these authors create, it is that their characters are too in touch with different parts of the world. While they make a point of explaining how news can be years old for the travelers, they possess a sense of connection to the rest of the world that seems unlikely, even for a multi-national organization such as the Knights Templar. The characters' modern sense of being connected to something beyond the nation or the Catholic Church creates some of the tension and suspense in the novels, and without that they would drag; but this means that the series requires a different kind of suspension of disbelief than fantasy or historical fiction, because *The Temple and the Crown* takes the methods of the first and the setting of the second and combines them with the narrative structure of the action/thriller. The combination makes for some unusually knowing characters. Of course, that sort of knowing, more than others, is one definition given to sorcerers or mages. *The Temple and the Crown* is a bit of a strange fruit, but like pluots (a hybrid of plums and apricots), worth trying.

FICTION REVIEW

PERDIDO STREET STATION

Javier Martinez

Miéville, China. *Perdido Street Station*. New York: Ballantine Del Rey, 2001. 710 pages, paper, \$18.00. 0-345-44302-0

China Miéville's sprawling and elaborate *Perdido Street Station* introduces readers to a decaying city, New Crobuzon, and a cast of bohemian characters: Issac, a scientist and inventor; his lover Lin, a Kepri female (whose body is that of a human woman but whose head resembles a giant beetle); the maimed Yagharek, a member of the secretive, winged Garuda; and a strong supporting cast of characters, including a multidimensional giant spider, an ambassador from Hell, and the terrible slake moths whose murderous rampages hold the city in fear. This complex novel cannot be summarized easily. In a nutshell, the story moves along two main intertwining plot lines and several subplots. The primary plot line revolves around Issac, whom Yagharek has contracted in order to help him fly again. During the course of his research, Issac unknowingly nurses a slake moth in pupae form, setting off a chain of disastrous events. A second plot line concerns Lin, who has been contracted by and later becomes the prisoner of Mr. Motley, an underworld narcotics kingpin who harvests the hallucinogenic excreta of mature slake moths and who mistakenly believes Issac to be muscling in on his territory. When the slake moth in Issac's care escapes and liberates its fellows, Issac is forced to try to stop them with Lin's fate in the balance. Additional plot lines help fill in the action.

As the novel is set in motion, the reader encounters elements of traditional science fiction (extraterrestrials, alien landscapes, artificial intelligences, weather machines) and elements of fantasy and horror (pre-industrial and medieval cultural signifiers, spell-casting, and even vampires). This jumble of tropes has prompted recent arguments as to whether the book is science fiction or fantasy, steampunk or gothic horror. But as useful as these conversations may be, they seem to miss the novel's most important subject, namely, its meditation on the nature of hybrid culture. *Perdido Street Station* collapses the distinction between generic conventions, forcing the reader to move beyond assigning neat and parceled definitions. At this point in the development of speculative fiction, where writers have a hodgepodge of conventions to play with and shape, the novel

asks us to analyze not the specifics of these individual components, but to understand what it means for them to work together. In the words of Mr. Motley, the novel's villain:

This is what makes the world, Ms. Lin. I believe this to be the fundamental dynamic. Transition: The point where one thing becomes another. It is what makes you, the city, the world, what they are. And that is the theme I'm interested in. The zone where the disparate become part of the whole. The hybrid zone. (41)

This "hybrid zone" is fundamental to the development of speculative fiction in the new century. No author in recent memory seems to investigate this terrain with as much intellectual rigor as does Miéville. His novel touches on gender, sexuality, and class even as it discusses the uses and abuses of technology and political power.

Perhaps what is most striking about the novel is that it is a wonderful example of the act of world-building with a third-world landscape as its springboard. The novel is at its most elegant when it captures the dynamic tension of non-western landscapes: the pockets of technology and innovation within the larger fabric of a decaying infrastructure, the everyday cultural slippage that occurs when many different communities come into contact, the taboo sexuality that crosses ethnic and class lines. These concerns are the thematic meat of the novel and situate Miéville's phantasmagoria in the very real present.

While some may be put off by its somber tones, *Perdido Street Station* has much to offer the careful reader. *Locus* reports that Miéville is working on a follow-up novel set in the same city, although not a direct sequel, tentatively titled *The Scar*. It should be interesting to see how Miéville develops the themes and ideas at work in *Perdido Street Station*, already a significant step forward from his very effective first novel, the Gaimanesque urban fantasy *King Rat*. As a university instructor, I see myself using *Perdido Street Station* in a course on the contemporary novel, on literary and cultural criticism, and certainly in a course on speculative fiction. My only reservation here is that its size may limit the novel's usage to the graduate classroom.

Perdido Street Station may come to represent a major contribution to the field and itself functions neatly as a hybrid narrative employing the formulaic conventions of speculative fiction from the 20th century even as it looks forward to the issues which will come to define the 21st.

FICTION REVIEW

**THE CITY AND THE STARS AND THE SANDS OF MARS
THE GHOST FROM THE GRAND BANKS AND THE DEEP RANGE
THE FOUNTAIN OF PARADISE**

Bruce A. Beatie

Arthur C. Clarke. *The City and the Stars and The Sands of Mars. The Ghost from the Grand Banks and The Deep Range. The Fountains of Paradise*. All three volumes with new introductions by the author. New York, NY: Warner Books, 2001 (Aspect Science Fiction).

Warner Books' Aspect Science Fiction series has begun (I speak hopefully) the republication of the work of Arthur C. Clarke, each volume with brief new introductions by Clarke. Of the five novels published in these three volumes, three are early works that have been, I believe, wrongly neglected. Robin C. Reid had noted recently that, of all Clarke's work, "*Childhood's End* and *2001* ... have received the most critical attention" (*Arthur C. Clarke: A Critical Companion*, 1997, page 27), and her own detailed analyses of Clarke's works begins, symptomatically, with *Rendezvous with Rama* (1973).

The earliest in terms of its origins of the novels reissued here is *The City and the Stars* (Gnome Press, 1953), an expansion of the novella *Against the Fall of Night* (first published in the November 1948 issue of *Starling Stories*) which, as Clarke tells us in the "Preface" to its 1956 first edition that is included here, "was begun in 1937 and, after four or five drafts, was completed in 1946" (3). This Stapledonian picture of our earth a billion years in the future, and of young Alvin's quest to reunite the long-parted urban and rural ghettos of Earth's surviving population, remains delightfully rich in texture, wonderfully readable, and virtually undated. Its implicit stress on the necessity of breaking down "them vs. us" barriers is remarkably relevant in a post-September 11 world. Clarke expresses in his new introduction to this edition his "great satisfaction" that both versions of the story have "been continuously in print" since their first book publication, but only this reissue makes the statement true; according to Amazon.com, the most recent prior editions of both are out of print, though still widely available in bookstores.

The City and the Stars is here paired with *The Sands of Mars*, originally published in 1951, which Clarke has "a special fondness for, as it was my first full-length novel" (285). This story of SF novelist Walter Gibson's trip to Mars on the first passenger ship (presumably some time in the 1980s—the novel talks about events of the 60s and 70s as the fairly recent past) is, as an example of classic "hard" SF, a radical contrast to its highly imaginative book-mate. It holds up to rereading somewhat less well than *The City and the Stars*, especially when compared with the detailed realism of recent Mars novels by Ben Bova and

Kim Stanley Robinson—but when compared to Heinlein’s *Red Planet*, published only two years earlier, it is remarkably realistic; Squeaky, its roundish baby Martian found by Gibson, seems modeled on Willis in Heinlein’s novel. Though the interplanetary spaceship envisioned by Clarke (two spheres at opposite ends of a long tube) prefigures by 15 years the spaceship of *2001*, it is startling to find Gibson, in space between Earth and Mars, using a typewriter and carbon paper. Clarke’s new “Introduction” (the longest in these three volumes) discusses developments in the exploration of Mars since the book’s original publication.

The third of Clarke’s older works in this series is *The Deep Range* (originally a short story in Frederick Pohl’s 1954 anthology, *Star Science Fiction Stories*; expanded and published as a book by Harcourt Brace in 1957), here paired logically with Clarke’s more recent undersea novel, *The Ghost from the Grand Banks*. For a reader today, Clarke’s story of some twenty years in the life of Walter Franklin, an astronaut who, as a result of hours cast adrift in a space suit, has acquired pathological agoraphobia and is retrained as a whale warden in the undersea farms of the south Pacific, may grate on 21st-century sensibilities with its focus (for 17 of its 25 chapters) on the breeding of whales for slaughter—but it ends with the conversion of Franklin, now director of the Bureau of Whales, to the views of the Mahanayake Thero, the leader of renascent world Buddhism (and by birth a Scotsman). The words of the Mahanayake Thero that Franklin remembers on the novel’s last page as he looks to the task of reshaping a meat-dependent world are probably an expression of Clarke’s own beliefs: when man finally meets alien species among the stars, “the treatment man receives from his superiors may well depend upon the way he has behaved toward the other creatures of his own world” (488). Clarke devotes much of his new introduction to the songs of the humpback whales; it seems odd that he fails to mention Scott Carpenter, the astronaut-turned-aquanaut who recently published two “techno-thrillers” (1991, 1994).

The Ghost of the Grand Banks (published in 1990, and the most recent of the novels reprinted in this series) is the only one of these novels that I had not read before. When it appeared, I dismissed it as “just another ‘raising the *Titanic*’ book”—but reading it now I’ve discovered that, if anything, it is a “bury the *Titanic*” book, and more than just that. Its forty-four chapters follow the story-lines of a number of interrelated main characters and, as Clarke’s original “Sources and Acknowledgments” and “Appendix” sections make clear, it is almost as much about Mandelbrot sets and their implications as about the *Titanic*. One of its characters, the undersea salvage expert Jason Bradley, links in a number of ways to Martin Franklin of *The Deep Range*—probably one of the reasons for joining these two books in a single volume. The novel’s “Epilogue: The Deep of Time” refers again, if briefly, to Clarke’s favorite theme (since *Childhood’s End*) of humanity’s departure from the earth—here not as a mass mind, but in “the worldships of the Exodus fleet” (221). Clarke’s new introduction to this work, less than half a page, seems perfunctory and uninformative.

The only novel to be published thus far by itself in this series is *The Fountains of Paradise* (1979)—incidentally, the last novel listed in Samuelson’s bibliography, which badly needs to be brought up to date; a quick search of the Ohiolink libraries database shows more than thirty new books published by Clarke since 1979, including seventeen novels. *The Fountains of Paradise*, Clarke’s story of engineer Vannevar Morgan’s quest to build a space elevator whose terrestrial base is a mountain on “Tapróbanë” (to mark the pronunciation Clarke emphasizes, of the old name for Sri Lanka, Clarke’s home for many years now), is doubtless the most familiar to current readers of the novels reissued here. In the context of these five novels, it is interesting that the Mahanayake Thero (a different holder of that office) is again a significant character. The “benevolent aliens” theme introduced by Clarke in *Childhood’s End* (see my 1989 article in *Extrapolation*) is somewhat gratuitously repeated here; the “Starglider” chapters, describing the brief passage through the solar system of a Rama-like (but communicative) interstellar survey ship, seem unconnected with the main action of the novel. They provide, however, a basis for the “Epilogue: Kalidasa’s Triumph,” in which the alien Starholmers visit an earth abandoned in the face of an ice age—in the company of human children who seem to have become a new species. Clarke’s new introduction discusses mainly developments since 1979 in the technology of space elevators.

These three volumes are nicely produced, well-bound in trade paperback format with attractive cover illustrations. I found almost no typos, although the texts were obviously re-edited—“re-set,” one would have said once upon a time, but I doubt that typesetting in the traditional sense takes place any more. It is to be hoped that Warner will continue this series of reissues, and that Clarke’s new introductions will be more informative than the one for *Ghosts*.

FICTION REVIEW

THE PESHAWAR LANCERS

David Mead

Stirling, S.M. *The Peshawar Lancers*. ROC Books: New York, January 2002. 421 pp. \$23.95, hc. [Reviewed in uncorrected page proofs]

Anyone who has read, and therefore loved, Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* will delight in S.M. Stirling's latest alternate-history adventure, *The Peshawar Lancers*, which is set in a world where fragments of a great asteroid fell across the northern hemisphere in 1878, creating catastrophic climatic effects world-wide (four years of a sort of "nuclear winter") and destroying most of North America. Directed by PM Benjamin Disraeli, the English who survive The Fall and the dreadful starvation that follows flee to India, where the British Raj establishes itself as a central power in a vastly changed world. By 2025, the narrative present, civilization has reestablished itself, albeit much changed, across most of the globe. In this world, the "great game" in which Kipling's Kimball O'Hara plays – for dominance of the Indian sub-continent – still goes on, with the Satan-worshipping Russians doing everything they can to prevent the "Angrezi Raj" from finding a way to detect and prevent another massive asteroid Fall.

Like Kipling's Kim O'Hara, Stirling's finely-drawn hero, Captain Athelstane King of the Peshawar Lancers, must make his way across much of India, from the Khyber Pass to Bombay, dodging Afghan assassins and thwarting Kali-worshipping Thugs employed by Count Ignatieff, a truly wicked Russian who has foreseen that King will play an important part in saving the world – if he is allowed to live. Unlike Kim, a boy whose acquaintance was limited, King is joined in his adventures by his sister Cassandra – an astronomer from Oxford, now relocated to the Vale of Kashmir, His Royal Highness Prince Charles and Her Royal Highness Princess Sita, King John, and a host of other very interesting, neatly drawn characters.

I found *The Peshawar Lancers* terrific fun and I am glad to recommend it strongly, particularly to anyone fond of Kipling. Even if you aren't, this story offers an energetic action-adventure plot in a well-researched and persuasively drawn alternate world. This isn't the first of a trilogy and the plot is resolved quite satisfactorily. But there is room for Stirling to tell us more about this world and these people. I really hope he will.

Postscript: if you want to see a slightly different "take" on Kiplingesque adventure, read Tim Powers' most recent fantasy, *Declare*. It too explores "the Great Game" played by the British and Russians in the Middle-East, and it too features a major character named Kim.

FICTION REVIEW

STRANGE DAYS: FABULOUS JOURNEYS WITH GARDNER DOZOIS

Steven H. Silver

Dozois, Gardner. *Strange Days: Fabulous Journeys with Gardner Dozois*. Framingham, MA: NESFA, 2001. 539 pages, hardcover, ISBN 1-886778-26-4.

Gardner Dozois may be best known as the multiple Hugo-winning editor of *Asimov's*, but before he took over the helm of *Asimov's* from Shawna McCarthy in 1986, Dozois had published more than forty stories. Even after he began editing, Dozois has written stories, although at a much slower pace, publishing only nine stories since 1986. It is difficult to say that this diminished output has been a loss to science fiction, because, while Dozois's stories are quite well written and interesting, his contributions and achievements as an editor overshadow anything he has done as an author.

Strange Days: Fabulous Journeys with Gardner Dozois, edited by Tim Szczesuil and Ann Broomhead for NESFA Press, celebrates Dozois the author while relegating the more public Dozois the editor to the background. The only non-fiction piece Dozois contributed to the collection is a lengthy travelogue of the trip he made to England and Scotland in the weeks preceding the 1995 Worldcon in Glasgow. The bulk of the collection is taken up by the text of twenty-two stories which range from the 1973 story "The Last Days of July" to the Nebula-nominated "A Knight of Ghost and Shadows," which was originally published as recently as 1999.

About a third of the 51 stories Dozois has published have been collaborations, many of which have been reprinted in *Strange Days*. The collection also contains introductions written by numerous authors whose work has appeared in Dozois-edited works over the past several years. Rather than discuss the specific stories in detail, most of these introductions, by authors such as Connie Willis, Joe Haldeman and Robert Silverberg, tell stories about Dozois which provide a well-rounded look at the individual. It is in these vignettes, more than in the stories, that Dozois fully comes to life.

The stories themselves are strong examples of Dozois's ability as a writer as well as an editor. Even early stories which could seem dated, such as "Snow Job" (1985), appear fresh. Other stories demonstrate that Dozois has been strongly

influenced by authors who have come before him. Two of the stories in particular, “The Gods of Mars” and “The Clowns,” are reminiscent of the techniques and themes in Ray Bradbury’s stories. “Solace” is, in many ways, a darker version of Philip K. Dick’s virtual reality story “We Can Remember It For You Wholesale.”

Dozois is also able to capture several different moods in his stories. “The Mayan Variation,” although a somewhat telegraphed baseball story, manages to mix situational humor with horror as the story unfolds to its ultimate conclusion. “Flash Point” captures the voice of New Englanders who have their own insular concerns without seeming to patronize them.

The collection ends with a story even longer than the opening travelogue. “Strangers” is Dozois’s Hugo-nominated story which was later expanded to a Nebula-nominated novel. Not exactly a first contact story, “Strangers” follows Farber on his adventures off Earth after humans have been contacted by a superior race which wallows in its superiority. Given John W. Campbell’s legendary insistence of human’s superiority, it is rather ironic that Campbell’s editorial successor in terms of field domination has a story which so clearly reverses his dictum.

Strange Days is an excellent introduction to a side of Gardner Dozois which is rarely seen. Most of the stories in the book were published before he became the editor of *Asimov’s*.

FICTION REVIEW
APPLESEED
 Richard D. Erlich

Clute, John. *Appleseed*. New York: Tor Books, 2002. xv + 337 pp. US\$25.95/CAN\$35.95 [from Orbit in the UK: £14.99] (cloth). ISBN: 0-765-30378-7. Advance uncorrected proofs reviewed.

Under an e-mail address and physical work location, an important SF critic writing on the Amazon.com.UK web site says that *Appleseed* is “a complex space opera in a simultaneously expanding and dying, multi-species universe,” adding, “and for once ‘opera’ isn’t a euphemism.” I’ll start with *Appleseed* as space opera.

Appleseed is space opera the way Samuel R. Delany, Iain M. Banks, et al. write space opera: as philosophical, avant-garde literature. For me, though, “opera” is not euphemistic but mildly insulting. I grew up Chicagoan, and “Form follows function”—period. Exuberance is fine, but, generally, I prefer clean lines, clarity, restraint; operas, generally, don’t *do* restraint. Any work with the sentence “Such floccinaucinihilipilification clambakes!” as the second appearance of “floccinaucinihilipilification” is not restrained (304; ch. 11). Any text with a speech on how homo sapiens fucked, which he described as a sounding of Eden on the part of members of a species for whom Eden, which may be defined as the Garden of Uttered Names, was forever unattainable: because the barking of the human sensorium kept the Names from being heard. Fucking, therefore, was profoundly quixotic; because Eden could never be reached. For a homo sapiens, female or male, to fuck with eyes open—to experience on rare occasions a whisper of the Uttered Names, that only faded again, almost instantly, into desert silence—was the highest form of chivalry. In a universe of the utmost cruelty to mortal homo sapiens, fucking was an act of *arete*, and of great joy. (239; ch. 9) is not restrained. Arguably, *Appleseed* needs to be brought down with a tranquilizer dart and sent off to de-tox with a stern warning against mixing LSD, David Lindsay, D. H. Lawrence, New Wave, and amphetamines.

But if part of the point of *Appleseed* is an attack on Classical tastes such as mine, then “operatic” excesses in form do follow the text’s function. If *Appleseed* is opulent attack-prose, it may be read as romantic space opera in the mode of Satire. Following Dustin Griffin (*Satire: A Reintroduction*), I see in *Appleseed* both *satura* and *Satyr* co-opting space opera. Following Northrop Frye (*Anatomy of Criticism*), we can see *Appleseed*’s satire moving, as Satire does, toward fantasy, Myth, the phantasmagoric. Following Dennis Miller (*The Rants*) we can see in *Appleseed* the familiar satiric combination of learned language and smart-ass raunch: “high astounding terms” complemented and undercut with the occasional “fuck” and frequent, “Okey dokey.”

If the idea is transgressing boundaries (*Satyr* as man and goat) and multiplying complexities (*lanx satura* as overflowed dish, the Cornucopia), *Appleseed* succeeds brilliantly. The main protagonist in *Appleseed* is Nathaniel “Stinky” Freer, captain of an AI spaceship and merchant-adventurer and, it turns out, a savior. The other flesh protagonists are Johnny Appleseed, Ferocity Monthly-Niece, and Mamselle Cuning Earth Link. *Appleseed* is set some 3000 years into our future, so Johnny is a very well- and mysteriously-preserved character, and Ferocity—Freer’s once and future lover—is usually dead. Mamselle Earth Link is “the Mother,” “The Predecessor Queen,” perhaps The Triple Goddess incarnate (322, 328; ch 13). The more-or-less flesh characters have AI allies (“Made Minds”) and, in their midst, a Made-Mind enemy agent.

The antagonists are a plague of plaque: “Entropy made visible” in one formulation (287; ch. 11), less figuratively, plaque as in the brain-destroying plaque of Alzheimer’s Disease. The material antagonists are the Harpe forces of Opsophagos—“Eater of Dainties”—and Insort Geront and the Care Consortia: corporations gone galactic and rogue. These corporations spread plaque, which destroys cybernetic data and threatens biological brains, “untuning the universe” (145; ch. 5). The

antagonists also represent God, seen not as some newfangled dying-and-rising deity offering his body to be eaten but an old-fashioned god who wants flesh, data, and worlds to eat (287-88; ch. 11). The upshot of the plot of *Appleseed* may be

Come, let us march against the powers of heaven

And set black streamers in the firmament

To signify the slaughter of the gods. (Christopher Marlowe, *2 Tamburlaine* 5.3.48-50)

Or, in Clute's sentence ending the novel, "The War Against God dates from this moment," with the protagonists surviving the preliminary round and, for now, "saving the universe" (161, 218, 290).

There are also plaque-eating "lenses" and Mamselle's son Arturus Quondam, undeveloped here but available for sequels (ch. 3, 100-07; ch. 11, 308).

What I admire most in *Appleseed* is its dealing with human bodies, and how it handles "the human/machine interface," the Mind/body split, and other divisions into categories. Westerners are deeply ambivalent about flesh. Even in William Gibson's *Neuromancer* series, where human flesh and love are good, what caught readers' imaginations was the disembodied freedom of cyberspace, the augmenting of flesh with prostheses, and digital characters like Dixie Flatline. Clute gives us "conclave space," near-magical augmentation vastly increasing human speed and agility, and various "marriages" between and among flesh and machine and AI (ch. 2, 69; ch. 10). Made Minds are characters in *Appleseed* as much as the Minds of Iain M. Banks, or HAL in *2001*. Still, even when Freer becomes the often-born FreeLance and beyond human, *Appleseed* has him "a mortal homo sapiens" and continues to value human flesh down to our stench and sexuality (ch. 10, 256; ch. 13, 330-32). Closely related, *Appleseed* valorizes Earth Link: "only connect"-ing with the world, and with all intelligences (villains excepted). Such valued flesh opposes the puritan God who condemns pleasure and flesh; transgressions of categories—including organic and machine, life and death—opposes the God who creates by separating.

Clute throws all this together, creating a galactic-size *lanx satura*, a Satyr-satire connecting goatish man to organic machines, and embedding all in an injured but living universe.

Read a few pages before buying *Appleseed*; the book is excessive, mildly priapic, and not for all tastes. But for serious students of contemporary fiction, *Appleseed* is required reading.

FICTION REVIEW

DOGGED PERSISTENCE

Warren G. Rochelle

Anderson, Kevin. *Dogged Persistence*. Urbana, Illinois: Golden Gryphon Press, 2001. 303 pages, cloth, \$25.95. ISBN 1-930846-03-7

Kevin Anderson's name seems to be just about everywhere in science fiction and fantasy genre circles these days. Since his first professional sale, the short story, "Final Performance," back in 1985, to *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*, his career has been meteoric and prolific. A Nebula Award nominee, Anderson is also a *New York Times* best-selling author. Since 1994, twenty-seven of his novels have appeared on national best-selling lists and in 1998, he signed the largest science fiction contract in publishing history for three prequels to Frank Herbert's *Dune*. Kristine Kathryn Rusch, in her laudatory intro to the collection, describes Anderson appropriately, as "one of the most driven people [she has] ever met" (ix). He is, as she puts it, a "writer who writes," who, by the age of eighteen, had published over a hundred short stories and had gotten "paid for all of them" (xi). He is a writer, according to Rusch, who cares so much for his art that "[he is willing] to do anything for [it]"—especially work very hard at it (xiii).

Anderson's range is as versatile and as wide as he is prolific: original novels and short stories, shared universe stories, and collaborative stories—all of which are represented in this collection. Equally as varied are the science fiction themes and motifs—such as cloning, alternate timelines and time travel, nanotechnology—Anderson explores in his collection, an exploration that is made the more powerful through the parallel exploration of the human condition. To be able to clone a human being, to replicate a genetic copy, is not an unfamiliar science fiction motif, but Anderson gives it a new twist in "Fondest of Memories." What if the person controlling the cloning also has the power to replicate and edit the memories of the clone? The dead can be brought back, and with sufficient input, can be a recreation of what was lost. But, if the memories can be edited, chosen, deleted, controlled—what then? How much of love is selfishness? Is a memory truth or perception, or in the case of Erica's husband, a way to reorder his personal world to his liking, his needs, his wants?

Alternate timelines are as familiar a motif as cloning, but again Anderson provides a different perspective in his two Alternitech stories, "Music Played on the Strings of Time," and "Tide Pools." The ability to hop to adjacent time lines becomes commercially exploitable. Songs never composed and recorded in one world can be found in another, retrieved, and sold here.

What would be the price for a new Jimi Hendrix? Another Beatles album? For Alternitech, this is big business, and yet for Jeremy Cardiff, hunting for such songs, highly personal, when he finds a song an alternate self wrote for a former lover, from a failed relationship in which Cardiff chose career over the woman. The alternate self's song was a smash hit, an inspired song—what was Cardiff missing here for such success? The discovery changes his life. The second Alternitech story, “Tide Pools,” is perhaps the more compelling: the hunt for cures for diseases not yet discovered here. AIDS? Cancer? But, what of the “orphan diseases”? These are “often fatal illnesses that are perfectly treatable . . . but because these diseases affect so few people, the pharmaceutical companies do not find it cost-effective to manufacture the necessary medications that will save peoples’ lives, nor will the insurance companies cover the treatment” (21). But, if your spouse has one of these diseases . . .

The title story, “Dogged Persistence,” originally published in *F&SF*, uses nanotechnology as its device, but it is really a story of a family caught up in the fight of powerful industries and corporations to protect themselves against any form of progress that can cost them money. So what if nanotechnology can prolong life indefinitely? Its use would restructure society and undoubtedly wreak havoc in the medical/health industry. But that this is really the story of one man and his invention and how it affects his family, sending them into a life on the run, makes it a tale of greed and love and survival and yes, dogged persistence. (This story formed the genesis of Anderson’s internationally best-selling novel, *Antibodies*.)

One of my favorites in this collection is Anderson’s venture in the fairy tale, with “The Old Man and the Cherry Tree,” a touching narrative of an old man, a gardener in a Japanese monastery, who talked to trees and loved one in particular, so much so that he sacrificed himself that the tree would live. “Sea Dreams” is another as compelling, a story of love between two friends, the persistence of dreams, and the compelling nature of love itself. Anderson is known, of course, for his ‘shared writing,’ collaborative stories and shared universe tales. This collection offers the reader the first ever *Dune* short story, “A Whisper of Caladan Seas,” co-written with Brian Herbert. “Prisoner of War” is a sequel to Harlan Ellison’s *Outer Limits* teleplay, “Soldier.” The story, “Drum Beats,” a tale of what happens when a traveling rock drummer meets African sorcery, is co-written with Neil Peart, “the drummer and lyricist for the rock group, Rush” (286).

These are human stories, albeit in the future or an alternate timeline, or in a fairytale universe, or next door, the troubled present—of love gone wrong (or right), sickness, sacrifice, friendship, family, loss, and grief. I found those that Anderson wrote alone, and in his own universes, the stronger and the more compelling tales—perhaps because they give him more room to play and explore the story, to present his vision. I would be interested in more of Anderson’s efforts with the fairy tale or myth, such as “The Old Man and the Cherry Tree,” which was particularly compelling, and had just the right tone and feel of a fairy tale.

Overall, this is a strong first collection, demonstrating clearly Anderson’s talent and range as a writer. This collection also is a testament to the short story and its versatility and its possibilities, and the importance of small presses such as Golden Gryphon. As Anderson is a star of American science fiction in the 1990’s and now the early 2000’s, this collection deserves attention.

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