

#256
Jan.-Feb. 2002

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Fiction Reviews:

Philip Snyder

The *SFRAReview* (ISSN 1068-395X) is published six times a year by the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA) and distributed to SFRA members. Individual issues are not for sale; however, starting with issue #256, all issues will be published to SFRA's website no less than two months after paper publication. For information about the SFRA and its benefits, see the description at the back of this issue. For a membership application, contact SFRA Treasurer Dave Mead or get one from the SFRA website: <www.sfra.org>.

SUBMISSIONS

The *SFRAReview* 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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Editorial Policy

Last year, the SFRA Executive Board decided to post full issues of the SFRA Review on the WorldWide Web. Starting with this issue, we will be posting the SFRA Review in PDF format no less than two months after mailing. Past, present, and future reviewers, we greatly value your work and hope you will continue to review for the newsletter. Therefore please recognize that any materials now submitted to the editorial staff of the SFRA Review will be published to the web in the future. We also will be going through the 2000 and 2001 issues of the reviews to select some work to post on the web. If you have any questions or concerns about past, present, or future work, please feel free to contact Shelley Rodrigo Blanchard at shelley.rb@asu.edu.

Looking For...

The SFRA's Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service, initiated in 1995, is looking for nominations for 2002.

The award is presented for: "outstanding service activities—promotion of SF teaching and study, editing, reviewing, editorial writing, publishing, organizing meetings, mentoring [and] leadership in SF/fantasy organizations (such as SFRA World SF, etc.) and so forth. Scholarly achievements (books, essays) will be considered as secondary for the purposes of selection."

—From *SFRA Review*, 219:21 (September/October 1995)

Recipients of the Clareson Award have been Frederik Pohl (1996); James Gunn (1997); Elizabeth Anne Hull (1998); David G. Hartwell (1999); Arthur O. Lewis (2000); and Donald (Mack) Hassler (2001).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mike Levy

It's mid-February as I write this, but the temperature is 48 degrees F. and it's raining. This is pretty strange weather for Northern Wisconsin, almost like something out of David Brin's *Earth*, George Turner's *The Sea and Summer* or some other novel predicting global warming. It feels like spring is in the air, although I know that it could easily be 15 degrees below zero F. next week, and I'm getting itchy to go to my two favorite conferences, ICFA in late March and SFRA in late June. ICFA, as always, will be in Ft. Lauderdale. This year the theme is Children's and YA Fantasy and I'm serving as ad hoc Division Chair for that section of the conference. This being the *SFRA Review*, it might seem strange that I'm going on about what has sometimes been thought of as our chief rival in the arena of academic SF, but I don't see it that way. It seems to me that any real differences or acrimony between the two organizations should largely have been relegated by this time to the dust heap of history; today the IFA and the SFRA complement each other nicely and have a significant membership overlap. Perhaps it's time for both organizations to start thinking about increasing their connections even further. How? I don't know. Joint publishing ventures, perhaps, or maybe joint memberships. Mostly, I must admit, I'm just thinking out loud, but I do find both organizations to be very worthwhile.

Turning to this year's SFRA conference, it really should be something special and I hope you'll have a chance to attend. I particularly look forward to spending time with our British and European members who are rarely able to make it to conferences in the United States. Besides a superb guest list—Paul McAuley, Pat Cadigan, Ken MacLeod, and Joan Slonczewski, who has become a sort of unofficial and much appreciated permanent guest (and there are rumors that Iain Banks sightings may be a possibility)—the site of the conference, New Lanark, Scotland is something special. Some of you have heard me go on about the beauties of New Lanark at what might seem excessive length, but what can I say? I fell in love with the place two years ago when I taught in Edinburgh for a semester. It's hard to imagine a finer place for a scholarly SF conference than the newly restored site of Robert Owen's great utopian experiment. Located in the valley of the River Clyde just west of Glasgow and less than an hour away from Edinburgh (one of Europe's most beautiful cities), New Lanark is a absolute jewel.

Anyway, I've got my plane tickets and hotel reservations all set for both conferences. My paper for ICFA is almost done (Hans Christian Andersen's influence on contemporary YA fantasy) and I'm well into my SFRA paper (Theosophy, Madame Blavatsky, and A. Merritt). I look forward to seeing you in Ft. Lauderdale and, even more so, in New Lanark, Scotland.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

INTRODUCING

Phillip Snyder

If you are an SFRA member with an interest in reading and writing about new fiction for the *Review*, perhaps it's time we got better acquainted.

For those who haven't yet met me, either in person or online, I'm the Fiction Reviews Editor of the journal you're now holding. My original training was in Victorian studies, in which field I took a Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota with a thesis on Dickens. (Hey, stranger things have happened; one of my classmates there was our president, Mike Levy, who did his doctoral work in Elizabethan and Jacobean literature.) I've taught in Minnesota and in Texas (at a college next door to our treasurer, Dave Mead), and am currently an associate professor of English at Monroe Community College, in Rochester, New York

(where I share the science fiction course with my colleague, fellow SFRA member Carolyn Wendell).

Despite my early and continuing exposure to such SF luminaries as these, I'm a relative latecomer to our organization. I made my debut with a paper at the 2000 conference in Cleveland, began writing book reviews for this journal shortly thereafter, and have been for almost a year now the fiction review editor.

Which is where *you* come in.

Reviewing fiction for us is a fairly straightforward process. Several publishers send me books on a regular basis, and others respond to direct requests. Once I have a collection of titles available for review, I begin casting about for reviewers. In some cases, I'll invite a particular reviewer to have a look at a particular book because—well, because I occasionally like to play matchmaker. More often, however, I will simply post the titles on our listserv, and try to put books together with reviewers as requests come in. Then I mail you the books, you send me the reviews — our guidelines for reviewers are posted on our website — and our members get treated to thoughtful considerations of interesting new fiction.

If you would like to be a part of this enterprise, I'd be pleased to take your questions, requests, and reviews at <psnyder@monroec.edu>. Thank you for your interest, and I look forward to hearing from you!

SFRA BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: ANNUAL CONFERENCE CALL

Submitted By: Wendy Bousfield

The business meeting of the SFRA Executive Board, via conference call, was called to order on February 3rd, 2002, at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time. In attendance were Michael Levy (President), Alan Elms (Immediate Past President), Peter Brigg (Vice President), Wendy Bousfield (Secretary and Recorder), David Mead (Treasurer), Shelley Rodrigo Blanchard (Coeditor, *SFRA Review*), Barbara Lucas (Coeditor, *SFRA Review*), and Peter Sands (Webmaster). Members of current SFRA committees were announced. Nominations for the Executive Board will shortly be solicited. Among the topics of discussion were (1) ways to increase SFRA membership, (2) uses for SFRA's healthy treasury balance, (3) future SFRA conferences, and (4) SFRA's publications program.

SFRA Committees include the Graduate Paper Award Committee (Joan Gordon, chair; Eric Drown; and Sha LaBare); the Claeson Award Committee (Carolyn Wendell, chair; Wendy Bousfield, and Carol Stevens); the Mary Kay Bray Award Committee (Karen Hellekson, Susan Stratton, and Michael Levy); the Pioneer Award Committee (Phil Snyder, chair; Javier Martinez, and Shelley Rodrigo-Blanchard). The Pilgrim Award Committee (Elizabeth S. Davidson, chair; Adam Frische; and John Clute) has selected Mike Ashley as recipient. This year, for the first time, the winner has been announced before the conference.

Via the SFRA List and *SFRA Review*, Past President, Alan Elms, will shortly call for nominations for President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If possible, two people will run for each position. Overseas SFRA members are encouraged to run for any SFRA office except for Treasurer.

Since the technological aspects of culture are a hot topic in academia, universities might be expected to support the study of science fiction. SFRA, however, has only 260 dues-paying members, many of whom are retired or near retirement. We discussed strengthening ties with other organizations, like IAFA, who may also be losing membership. As Vice President, Peter Brigg's major concern is membership recruitment. He will mail recruitment letters to former SFRA members, IAFA members, and persons who have published articles in *Extrapolation*, *Science Fiction Studies*, and *Extrapolation*.

Treasurer David Mead reported that last year SFRA made \$9,4000 than it spent and that we have \$24,000 in savings. Among the suggested uses of SFRA funds were helping graduate student, new, and international members giving

Member update:

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Corrections:

Alice Claeson noted that Tom Claeson was SFRA President from 1971-1976. 1971-1978 was printed in the 2001 directory.

Recent and Forthcoming Titles (March 10, 2002)

Abbott, Edwin.A. [introduction and notes by Ian Stewart] *The Annotated Flatland*. Perseus, February 2002.

Boon, Kevin Alexander, ed. *At Millennium's End: New Essays on the Work of Kurt Vonnegut*. SUNY, 2002.

Brigg, Peter. *The Span of Mainstream and Science Fiction: A Critical Study of a New Literary Genre*. McFarland, 2002.

Chance, Jane. *Lord of the Rings: The Mythology of Power, Revised Edition*. University Press of Kentucky, 2001.

Coren, Michael. *J.R.R. Tolkien: The Man Who Created The Lord of the Rings*. Bantam, 2001.

Ellis, Kate Ferguson. *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology*. University of Illinois Press, December, 2001.

Glassy, Mark C. *The Biology of Science Fiction Cinema*. McFarland, 2001.

Hills, Matthew. *Fan Cultures*. Routledge, 2002.

Holte, James Craig *The Fantastic Vampire: Studies in the Children of the Night*. Greenwood, 2002.

Hunt, Peter, & Millicent Lenz. *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. Continuum, 2001.

Jones, E. Michael. *Monsters from the Id: The Rise of Horror in Fiction*

and Film. Spence Publishing, 2001.

Kitchin, Rob & James Kneale. *Lost in Space: Geographies of Science Fiction*. Continuum, 2002.

Larbalestier, Justine. *The Battle of the Sexes in Science Fiction*. Wesleyan, June 2002.

Martin, Philip, ed. *The Writer's Guide to Fantasy Literature: From Dragon's Lair to Hero's Quest*. Kalmbach, 2002.

Mead, David G. *An Encyclopedia of Jack Vance, 20th Century Science Fiction Writer*. Edwin Mellen Press, 2001.

Moores, Phil, ed. *Alasdair Gray: Critical Appreciations and a Bibliography*. British Library, December 2001.

Rickels, Laurence A. *The Vampire Lectures*. University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

Sayer, Karen and John Moore. *Science Fiction, Critical Frontiers*. St. Martin's Press, 2002.

Schmidt, Stanley. *Which Way to the Future?* Tor, December 2001.

Stephensen-Payne, Phil. *John Wyndham: Creator of the Cosy Catastrophe*. Chris Drumm, 2002.

Yanarella, Ernest J. *The Grass, The Plow, and the Skyline: Contemporary Science Fiction and the Ecological Imagination*. Brown Walker Press, 2001.

CFPs

Reconstruction

<<http://www.reconstruction.ws>> is currently soliciting articles, review essays, reviews, and multimedia/hypertext projects for its Summer 2002 special issue, "Auto/bio/geography: Considering Space and Identity." The focus of this issue is the various overlaps between life and its locale, the study of which has become increasingly central to contemporary culture studies through the works of Henri Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, Edward Soja, and Mike Davis (to name only a few). Submissions must be received by

papers to attend conferences. We will provide an honorarium, or other type of compensation, to the *SFRA Review* editors.

The Board received updates on SFRA 2002 and SFRA 2003 and discussed possible locations for future conferences. Farah Mendlesohn reports that registrations have picked up and that the SFRA 2002 (New Lanark, Scotland) conference should be well attended. Peter Brigg reported on possible activities and guests of honor for SFRA 2003 in Guelph, Ontario.

We debated the advantages and disadvantages of holding future SFRA conferences 1) at remote areas versus major airport hubs and 2) a permanent site versus changing locations. We also discussed combining SFRA with the conference of another organization. Michael Levy will solicit input from SFRA members on their conference preferences.

SFRA has an interest in the editorship of *Extrapolation* and is directly responsible for the *SFRA Review*. The University of Texas—Brownsville is the new home of *Extrapolation*. Donald M. Hassler (Kent State) is Executive Editor. Javier Martinez is Editor.

The Board was unanimous in praising Shelley Rodrigo Blanchard and Barb Lucas for the quality and appearance of the *Review*. Changes in production have reduced costs. With the assistance of Webmaster Peter Sands, the editors will begin posting materials from the *Review* to the SFRA website. The *Review* editors will announce in the January/February issue that SFRA reserves the right to post any materials published in the *Review* to the web.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

SFRA BUSINESS

PROPOSED BUDGET 2002

Dave Mead

Projected: 4-Feb-02

INCOME

Dues (includes Sub's)		22600.00
Airmail cost	16 @ \$15	240.00
Bray Award Gift		100.00
Refund from Conventions		0.00
Royalties Received		1000.00
Scholar Support Gifts		500.00
Encumbered Pilgrim/Pioneer Funds		1584.31
Pilgrim Book Sales		45.00
Travel Grants, from Reserve		416.69
Interest Income		350.00
Total Income		26836.00

EXPENSE

Trophy Expenses	50.00
Student Paper Awards	100.00
Pilgrim and Pioneer Expenses	1000.00
Conference Support	2000.00
Editors Honoraria	300.00
Office Expenses	500.00
Licenses and Permits	5.00
NY Review of SF Sub's	2200.00
Extrapolation Sub's	3800.00
Foundation Sub's	2500.00
SF Studies Sub's	4000.00
Pilgrim and Pioneer Book Costs	0.00
SFRA Review and Directory Costs	5800.00
WEB address fee	0.00

Royalties Paid to Contributors	650.00
Tax Preparation Fee	200.00
Bray Award Encumbered for 2002	100.00
Refunds	0.00
Scholar Support Cost	600.00
Special Board Authorized Travel Grants	2000.00
Executive Board Meeting	1000.00
Miscellaneous	31.00
Total Expense	26836.00

SFRA AWARDS

PILGRIM: 2001

In 2000 the SFRA gave a well-deserved Pilgrim Award to bibliographer and data base creator extraordinaire Hal Hall. Following the award ceremony at our annual conference in Cleveland, we asked Hal to submit his acceptance speech to the SFRA Review for publication. Unfortunately, the Review was at that time going through a change in editorial hands and the speech somehow never made it from one editor to the next. We would like to apologize for this oversight and correct it. Here is Hal Hall's 2000 Pilgrim Award speech.

Mike Levy

The Pilgrim Award frequently has honored people who have produced original, striking critical opinions. It also has recognized the vital work of people who have made the existing body of information and opinions accessible for sf scholars. Without awareness of what others already have discovered, each of us would begin new projects in ignorant solitude. But tracking down scattered essays and reviews in fantastic literature is extremely difficult. This year's Pilgrim has long been one of the most important bibliographers of science fiction.

He was born in 1941 in Waco, Texas, to a central Texas blackland farmer and a schoolteacher. After majoring in biology at the University of Texas and receiving a Masters of Library Science degree from North Texas State, he entered the library profession. Since 1970, he's been a librarian at Texas A&M University.

In 1971, he began publishing the annual *Science Fiction Book Review Index*. Several of these annuals, plus additional information, were gathered into a hardcover volume published by Gale Research. Two more hardcover culminations have been published, along with the annuals for the 1985-90 period—a total of almost 68,000 citations to reviews of more than 30,000 books.

A second major project of this year's Pilgrim winner has been to index the secondary literature, books and magazines, devoted to fantastic literature. The work began in 1967 on 3x5 cards. A preliminary index appeared in microfiche in 1980, was expanded in the last book review index, and expanded again into the two-volume *Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Index, 1878-1985*, published in 1987, which cited about 19,000 books, articles, interviews, and other material. With this much information, the project obviously has become impractical to continue on index cards or in expensive hardcover omnibus volumes. Fortunately, the Pilgrim award winner has been named to the Texas A&M Library Irene B. Hoadley Professorship for the 2000-01, an award that provides funding and support for his project to move the *Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Index* to the internet in a searchable form, and to update the index through material published through the year 2000. The database currently contains almost 50,000 items. Particularly valuable is the indexing of hundreds of fanzines published since the 1940s, which rarely have been indexed by anyone else.

He has annotated the magazines of and about science fiction for several editions of the standard guide, *Magazine for Libraries*, and contributed the chapters on magazines and on private and library collections to the 1987 edition of Neil Barron's *Anatomy of Wonder*. An SFRA member since 1970, he has served

June 17th to be considered for publication on July 15th. *Reconstruction* is an innovative culture studies journal dedicated to fostering an intellectual community composed of scholars and their audience, granting them all the opportunity and ability to share thoughts and opinions on the most important and influential work in contemporary interdisciplinary studies.

Because we are committed to maintaining a regular publishing schedule (January, May, September), we are always accepting submissions for upcoming issues, and can promise a prompt reply.

Submissions are encouraged from a variety of perspectives, including, but not limited to: geography, cultural studies, folklore, architecture, history, sociology, psychology, communications, music, political science, semiotics, theology, art history, queer theory, literature, criminology, urban planning, gender studies, etc. Both theoretical and empirical approaches are welcomed. In matters of citation, it is assumed that the proper MLA format will be followed. Other citation formats are acceptable in respect to the disciplinary concerns of the author.

All submissions and submission queries should be written care of submissions@reconstruction.ws.

Large files, such as Flash movies or essays with many large pictures, should be sent on a zip disk or CD-R to:

Submissions
Reconstruction
104 East Hall
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43402

Science Fiction: Articulations of Post-Identity (4/1/02; MMLA, 11/8/02-11/10/02)

"Science Fiction: Articulations of Post-Identity"
Essays on film, literature, and theory are welcome in a session that

seeks to stake a claim for science fiction as a genre well suited for studying and even sighting the future of identities-racial, ethnic, gendered, alien, artificial or otherwise. Particularly in its interrogation of these different markers of identity, SF, whether in literature or media serves to suggest and to help understand what it may mean to be post-human. 500 word abstracts to Isiah Lavender, III, Dept. of English, the University of Iowa, 308 EPB, Iowa City, IA 52242, ilavende@blue.weeg.uiowa.edu.

'The Reception of H.G. Wells in Europe': An International Conference at the University of Leipzig, Germany, 12-14 July 2002

As part of the 'Athlone Critical Traditions Series: The Reception of British Authors in Europe', published by Continuum Books (New York and London), this conference invites papers on H.G. Wells's reception in Europe. Presentations on all aspects of Wells's reception are encouraged, including papers dealing with the translations of his work, his critical reception, his influence on European science fiction and film, his political impact and his influence on technological and scientific changes in modern life. Speakers will include: Prof. Patrick Parrinder (Reading), Prof. George Slusser (California-Riverside), Prof. Elmar Schenkel (Leipzig), Prof. Maria Teresa Chialant (Naples), Prof. Danièle Chatelain (Redlands), Prof. José Manuel Mota (Coimbra), Dr Roger Cockrell (Exeter) and Dr John S. Partington (Reading).

For further details please contact Dr John S. Partington, 14 St Annes Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 7PA J_S_Partington@hotmail.com.

Femspec

An interdisciplinary feminist journal dedicated to critical and creative works in the realms of SF,

on the editorial board of *Extrapolation* since 1975, co-editing (with Bev Friend) the *SFRA Newsletter*, 1974-5, and served as book review editor from August 1974 through December 1976.

These are a few of the highlights of the career of this year's Pilgrim, who has produced a body of work for which all serious scholars will long be in his debt. In addition, the awards committee noted how this year's Pilgrim has not pursued his major projects in splendid solitude. Instead, he goes out of his way to share information. Anyone who has participated in the SFRA listserv has seen inquires by people who desperately need a story's title, more examples of fiction using a particular theme, clues to what's been said about some writer. Shortly after such a query, one frequently finds a concise, authoritative reply to this year's winner of the Science Fiction Research Association's Pilgrim Award: Hal Hall.

Pilgrim Award Committee, 2001

Joe Sanders, Chair

Neil Barron

Elizabeth Davidson

SFRA AWARDS

THOUGHTS RANDOM AND MISCELLANEOUS, FROM THE EYE OF AN INDEXER

Hal W. Hall

The first order of business today is a heartfelt Thank You, to SFRA, and to the Awards Committee. Standing in the shadow of the giants in the field who have preceded me in accepting the Pilgrim Award is indeed a humbling experience.

I cannot stand at this podium, before this organization, accepting this award, without paying tribute to Tom Clareson. Tom was friend, mentor, and supporter during the early years of my bibliographic efforts. Without his encouragement and advice, my indexing work might have died in infancy. Tom was not my only supporter and cheerleader. Rob Reginald, P. Schuyler Miller, Neil Barron, Jim Gunn, Dave Samuelson and a number of others in our field offered advice and encouragement that sustained my efforts through times bright and dark. To all of them, I extend another Thank You.

I recently indexed an article titled "Why I Do What I Do." Since most of you view indexing and bibliography with a jaundiced eye, I borrowed that idea. When I wrote a piece for *Extrapolation* in 1973, I quoted the following: "It takes an inspired idiot to be an indexer." In 1967, when I started indexing, I didn't know that quote – it is probably a good thing.

SO: Why Do I Do What I Do? Because a student came to a reference desk in the piney woods of East Texas in 1967, to read a book review on any Asimov book, and we could not find one. Because P. Schuyler Miller said "A Book Review Index is a good idea!" Because I had not found that quote! In the fall of 1968, I did a prototype book review index, printed 20 copies, and did a "cold mailing" to "big names" in science fiction. Several replied, among them Miller. That item was Science Fiction Book Review Index No. 0; I know of two surviving copies! Thus began Science Fiction Book Review Index, which survived through 21 annual volumes and three cumulations, but is no longer active.

About 1979, I started indexing history and criticism seriously. By 1980, I had about 4000 items in my card file. (Remember Index Cards?) About that time, I did an analysis of the other subject access tools – Clareson's and Tymn's – and found that I had about 1200 more items than those sources, so I pressed on. At that time, I also publicly estimated I had less than 50% of the directly applicable material indexed. Neil Barron challenged that assertion – until the index hit the 40,000 mark, and he quit arguing.

The indexes have evolved from typewriters, to punched cards, to computer-output microfiche, to database programs. Along with the databases came a truly magical program written by Bill Contento which created a book complete with running headers and page numbers.

Now, as some of you have seen, I am moving the index to a searchable version on the world-wide web, titled *Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Database*. (<http://access-co2.tamu.edu/hhall/>) The scope is broad, but focuses primarily on science fiction and fantasy. There are significant entries on utopian literature, on horror literature, and on gothic literature, but those areas are not pursued with the vigor of science fiction and fantasy.

It is not a completely satisfactory move: The long evolution from typed cards to an online database involved many compromises. Some stylistic niceties could not transfer – italics and bold face to set off titles. Diacritics are not standardized. Style of entry changed over 25 years. What seemed a good idea in 1970 proved to be a choice that needed correcting – form of name entry, and capitalization, especially.

The index now contains over 51,000 items, and still is only 50% complete.

It can be searched in several different ways: Author, Title, Imprint (or source), and Subject. The search screens were designed to give the user enough options to allow a variety of searches (or a simplified “Quick Search”). Like all databases, the user can put in the time to learn the unique characteristics and functionalities of the tool to increase the success of their searches. It should be as near as your desktop, or at least your local library.

I might note that I had decided to stop indexing, when it became apparent that a printed index was no longer a viable publishing option. I could not resist the opportunity to apply for the Hoadley Professorship at the Texas A&M University Library, to move the index to the web. The options of the web give the index a new lease on life, perhaps. Growth can occur – I have over 3,000 items I can add. If the community of scholars chooses to suggest new items with the online forms provided, I have no doubt thousands more can be added.

Improvements – especially in the subject terms – can now be made in ways not previously possible. As scholars use the database, it is my hope they will suggest additional subject terms for items, suggest changes, and identify needed corrections.

For the future, I am looking at the possibility of moving my Book Review Indexes to the web in searchable form. In capsule form, that is the history of the development of these bibliographies.

* * *

I have watched SFRA grow and develop for most of its history, and I have heard and read the ideas and dreams of its members. Perhaps an “instant replay” of some of those dreams might be informative as SFRA moves into a new millenium. In some “alternate history” of SFRA, perhaps these dreams have already been fulfilled.

Let’s drift back in time to 1975, and consider the words of Damon Knight (in his Pilgrim Acceptance Speech):

“The quality of the essays I have read varies widely, but one thing that strikes me forcibly about them as a body of work, and that is their choice of subject seems haphazard at best; I see no evidence that the academic critics are relating their work to any historical schema. In a young discipline, this is not surprising, but I would like to propose to you that the time has come for the academic critics of science fiction to organize their inquiry.”

Knight went on to suggest both a schema and lines of inquiry. Contemporary scholars and editors might do well to read the rest of his comments, and, perhaps, adopt them.

Knight’s hypothesis that scholarship clusters around a few modern authors (and topics, now), remains valid, at least from my perspective as

fantasy, magical realism, surrealism, and other supernatural genres

FEMSPEC ISSUE: 3.1

Criticism:

Dorian Cirrone: Millennial Mothers: Reproduction, Race, and Ethnicity in Feminist Dystopian Fiction

Theresa Crater: The Resurrection of Morgan le Fey: Fallen Woman to Triple Goddess

Robin Murray: Terri Windlings The Wood Wife: A Space For Complementary Subjects

Susan Stratton: Intersubjectivity and Difference in Feminist Ecotopias

Gina Wisker: Women’s Horror as Erotic Transgression

Historical Documents:

Richard A. Lupoff on Clare Winger Harris and The Fifth Dimension

Clare Winger Harris: Excerpts from The Fifth Dimension

Submissions:

Please submit four copies on which your name, address and contact points do appear so that the submission can be read blind. Your submission should be accompanied by a separate covering title page that includes authors name, title, genre, address, phone, Fax and email. Any submission that does not come with sufficient copies will not be sent through the review process at our expense. For more info, see <http://www.csuohio.edu/femspec/>.

Send submissions to

FEMSPEC

Caddo Gap Press

3145 Geary Boulevard,

PMB275,

San Francisco, CA 94118.

an indexer, as does his observation about the quality of papers. These are concerns that we, as academic scholars, need to hear, and they remain with us. In a recent listserv message, one scholar noted “there’s too much sloppy criticism” and that too many scholars give papers “without any concept that there’s a large body of criticism in existence.”

In *Matrix No. 123*, Andrew Butler made a similar point, citing the poor knowledge of their own field of study so many scholars exhibited, frequently not even knowing the three key scholarly journals. Butler went on to note: “We need to map SF rather than take random samples.” Note the similarity to Damon Knight’s proposal.

E. F. Bleiler, in his Pilgrim Speech, noted an area that needs work when he wrote:

“I am referring to the use of the disciplines of history of science and history of ideas in understanding science fiction. In the older work particularly, to recapture what the author consciously thought he or she was doing – no matter where the analyst goes from this starting point – it is often desirable to consider context, for much science-fiction is a rather trivial superstructure to the science of its day. It has long astonished me that so little work has been done in this field.”

I would submit to you that this association has roles in scholarship that go beyond the current efforts, and that Knight, Butler and Bleiler have given you hints at what those roles might be.

* * *

Perhaps the most significant need in the bibliography of science fiction is that of a motif or theme index. In the May 1960 issue of *Extrapolation*, S. J. Sackett noted that “...a ‘Motif Index to Science Fiction’ would be a valuable aid to future scholars”. Tom Clareson echoed that suggestion many times, and Marshall Tymn was working on the design of a format for such an index just prior to his accident. The need for such access continues to be underscored by current electronic listservs, which feature frequent requests for assistance in identifying items featuring particular themes or motifs. That the online request may not be the best way to find all the resources is underscored by Gary Westfahl’s 1993 *SFRA Review* piece, “Science Fiction: The Unknown Genre.”

One person is prototyping a motif index. E. F. Bleiler has worked on the pre-1960 science fiction, and includes a theme or motif index as one element of his work. In his various books, he has classified some 20,000 books and stories into 30,000 entries by theme or motif. Bleiler cautions users that this is “not intended to be a systematic classification of fantastic motifs...”. It is the only significant theme access to early science fiction, and proves the case that a theme or motif index is a realistic possibility.

Both the SFRA and the IFAFA have published volumes of papers from their conferences. Such publishing is a great service to scholarship. The technical capability to move scholarship in a new direction, that of publishing conference papers directly on the web, is now well established. In the world today, there is little reason to publish twenty conference papers in a hardcover volume, perhaps in an edition of less than 500 copies. The publication of these papers on a web site, in a manner similar to the High Energy Physics papers at Los Alamos, would make them available to the world of scholars in a far more effective way. SFRA could open a new era of scholarly discourse, not only of the papers themselves, but also of a linked interactive dialogue of scholars centered on each paper. And, yes, I do know the arguments about copyright, tenure, and the inflexibility of tenure review committees, and the joy of holding a journal issue in your hands.

In this same vein, Rob Reginald notes: “While other genres and literatures have produced dozens of *festschriften* to honor their esteemed senior colleagues, we have thus far issued none. (Since then, I believe, we have two items that might qualify.)

Reginald also proposed the idea of an *Annual Review of Science Fiction*. Not a yearbook, but an anthology of essays by members on major topics of interest, similar to those produced by Annual Reviews, Inc. and others. The *Locus* annual summaries of publishing, magazines, and motion pictures, and their annual Locus Poll are examples of what could be done. From my web-oriented perspective, the SFRA Web Page is the perfect venue for such an Annual Review concept, perhaps with the appropriate academic apparatus for review and acceptance.)

Development of web-based, inclusive single-author bibliographies and study guides, combining the quality and completeness of the Borgo Press model with the teaching assistance pieces running in the SFRA Review (and the editors deserve great credit for that series!) would be a valuable tool for any scholar and teacher.

Perhaps it is time for SFRA to take the lead in some of these concepts, “to go where no association has gone before,” and create new models of publishing and scholarship. Who better than a “Science Fiction” association to lead the way?

It has been a great meeting. Thank you!

Knight, Damon. “Pilgrim Award Acceptance Speech,” forthcoming.

Butler, Andrew. “Casting the Net: Andrew M. Butler Ponders the Domain of Academic SF,” *Matrix* (BSFA) No. 123: 10. January/February 1997.

- Bleiler, E. F. "Pilgrim Award Acceptance Speech," forthcoming.
- Sackett, S. J. "Motif Index to Science Fiction," *Extrapolation* 1(2): 38. May 1960.
- Westfahl, Gary. "Science Fiction: The Unknown Genre," SFRA Review No. 203: 27-29. January/February 1993.
- Bleiler, Everett F. *The Checklist of Science Fiction and Supernatural Fiction*. Glen Rock, NJ: Firebell Books, 1978.
- *Guide to Supernatural Fiction*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1983.
 - *Science Fiction: The Early Years*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1990.
 - *Science Fiction: The Gernsback Years*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1998.

NONFICTION REVIEW

A YEAR OF LOVECRAFT

Peter Cannon

- Joshi, S. T., ed. *The Ancient Track: The Complete Poetical Works of H. P. Lovecraft*. Night Shade Books, 348 Pierce St., San Francisco, CA 94117, 2001. xvi + 557 p. \$40 1-892389-15-0; \$20, trade paper, -16-9.
- Lovecraft, H. P. S. T. Joshi and David E. Schultz, eds. *The Shadow Out of Time*. Hippocampus Press, P.O. Box 64 1, New York. NY 100 14, 200 1. xx + 443 p. \$15, trade paper, 0-9673215-3-0.
- Lovecraft, H. P. S. T. Joshi, ed. *The Thing on the Doorstep and Other Weird Stories*. Penguin Putnam, 375 Hudson St., New York, NY 100 14, 200 1. xx + 443 p. \$13, trade paper, 0-14-218003-3.
- Joshi, S. T. and David E. Schultz, eds. *An H. P. Lovecraft Encyclopedia*. Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881, 200 1. xx + 339 p. \$70 0-313-31578-7.
- Schweitzer, Darrell, ed. *Discovering H. P. Lovecraft, Revised & Expanded*. Wildside Press, P.O. Box 301, Holicong, PA 18928, 2001. vi + 163 p. \$35 1-58715-471-4; \$17.50, trade paper, -470-6.
- Eddy, Muriel F. and C. M. Eddy, Jr. Jim Dyer, ed. *The Gentleman from Angell Street: Memories of H. P. Lovecraft*. Fenham Publishing, P.O. Box 767, Narragansett, RI 02882, 2001. xii + 65 p. \$9.95, trade paper, 0-9701699-1-4.
- Long, John. *Mountains of Madness: A Scientist's Odyssey in Antarctica*. John Henry Press, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418, 2001. xiv + 252 p. \$24.95, 0-309-07077-5.

Since H. P. Lovecraft's centennial in 1990, a host of books, both scholarly and popular (or typically some combination of the two), have appeared on the 20th-century American master of the weird tale. Recent landmark volumes include S. T. Joshi's monumental biography, *H. P. Lovecraft: A Life* (Necronomicon, 1996); *The Annotated H. P. Lovecraft* (Dell, 1997), edited by S. T. Joshi; a substantial collection of shorter memoirs, *Lovecraft Remembered* (Arkham, 1998), edited by the present writer; *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories*, edited by S. T. Joshi (Penguin, 1999); and *Lord of a Visible World: An Autobiography in Letters* (Ohio U., 2000), edited by S. T. Joshi and David E. Schultz. As the above suggests, independent scholar S. T. Joshi has dominated the field, and the particularly fruitful year of 2001 was no exception.

The year's most important Lovecraft title was *The Ancient Track: The Complete Poetical Works of H. P. Lovecraft*, which supersedes the slim *Collected Poems* (Arkham, 1963). This is in effect the capstone to the series of definitive texts that the indefatigable Joshi edited for Arkham House in the 1980s—the three volumes of fiction and one volume of revision tales—plus the volume of nonfiction, *Miscellaneous Writings* (1995). Joshi has sensibly grouped the poems thematically under such headings as "Juvenilia," "Occasional Verse," "Satire," "Amateur Affairs," and "Politics and Society." The section entitled "Fantasy and Horror" represents only a small portion of the whole, the bulk of which dates to the period early in H.P.L.'s career, between 1914 and 1923, when he was active in amateur journalism. Extensive notes, a chronology, an index of titles, and an index of first lines make this especially useful for scholars. As someone who favored 18th-century heroic couplets and other traditional verse forms, Lovecraft can in no way be considered an original poet, but it is a telling sign of his recognition within the literary mainstream that two of his "Fungi from Yuggoth" sonnets, "The Well" and "Alienation," have been included in the first volume of the Library of America's *American Poetry: The Twentieth Century* (2000).

Lovecraft's great tale of time travel, "The Shadow Out of Time," is now available 65 years after its publication in *Astounding Stories* (June 1936) in a corrected edition, thanks to the surfacing of the original pencil manuscript a few years ago. We can finally read the tale with its proper paragraphing (broken up in its initial magazine appearance), as well as a couple of lines near the start that R. H. Barlow dropped when he prepared the typescript in 1935. In their introduction, editors Joshi and Schultz recount the full story of the tale's composition and publication, and of the eventual rediscovery of the holograph manuscript. They also supply two sets of notes—one of annotations, the other a list of emendations based on a comparison of the various states of the text. This well-designed, affordable volume, which reproduces the cover art from the original *Astounding* appearance, will please both the casual fan and the serious scholar.

The Thing on the Doorstep and Other Weird Stories is the second Lovecraft volume to appear in Penguin's 20th-century classics series. In keeping with this mark of literary respectability, the cover depicts an illustration of Poe's "Raven" by Gustave Dore, not an example of pulp art. As in its predecessor, *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories*, Joshi has ordered the contents by date of composition. As a result one starts with such early minor tales as "The Tomb" and "The Temple" before reaching such major works as the short novels "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward" and "At the Mountains of Madness." Understandably, Joshi has avoided the Arkham trilogy breakdown of best tales (*The Dunwich Horror*), novels (*At the Mountains of Madness*), and lesser tales (*Dagon*), though one has to wonder how far readers new to Lovecraft will get if they begin with the weaker fiction. Again, an impressive section of notes rounds out the book. In due course we can expect Joshi to produce a third and final Penguin volume, to include "The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath" and the rest of the dreamland fantasies largely inspired by Lord Dunsany.

An *H. P. Lovecraft Encyclopedia* amounts to a far more sophisticated version of Philip A. Shreffler's *The Lovecraft Companion* (Greenwood, 1977). Joshi and Schultz provide entries for each work of fiction, including revisions; major essays and poems; Lovecraft's friends and correspondents; and nearly every fictional character, including all the German U-boat sailors named in "The Temple" (mercifully they lump all the Mortises from "The Shunned House" into one entry). In their introduction, the editors make a good case for limiting the book's scope. Missing, for example, are entries for such real-life figures as the Russian painter Nicholas Roerich invoked in "At the Mountains of Madness" or the many eminent Rhode Island colonists who play a role in "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward." To be fair, these are covered in the notes to the Penguin classic editions. No entries exist for Cthulhu, Azathoth, Yog-Sothoth, or any of Lovecraft's other alien gods or monsters, though there is an essay-length entry on the Cthulhu Mythos. Again, this territory has been trod often before. Other longer entries cover such topics as his involvement with amateur journalism, his use of pseudonyms, his travels, and his letter-writing, though not his philosophy. "No separate entry on Lovecraft's philosophical thought is included here, as the topic is too complex for succinct discussion," Joshi and Schultz declare. The high price, drab design, and utilitarian library binding somewhat limit the volume's appeal.

Originally published as *Essays Lovecraftian* (I-K Graphics, 1976) and given a second life as *Discovering H. P. Lovecraft* (Starmont, 1987), this third incarnation from author and editor Darrell Schweitzer contains a number of classic essays by such leading Lovecraft critics as Fritz Leiber, Jr., Dirk W. Mosig, George Wetzell, and Richard L. Tierney. This is a highly readable, less academic compilation than the more substantive *H. P. Lovecraft: Four Decades of Criticism* (Ohio U., 1980), edited by S. T. Joshi, with which there's some overlap. The one new piece, more likely to interest the Mythos fan than the scholar, is Lin Carter's "H. P. Lovecraft: The Books," which originally appeared in the Derleth-edited miscellany, *The Shuttered Room* (Arkham, 1959), and has now been annotated by S. T. Joshi and Robert M. Price. Schweitzer supplies an updated recommended reading list of primary and secondary works, as well as an index. Libraries should take note, however, that the book's text is photocopied, not printed.

Muriel E. Eddy and her husband, C. M. Eddy, Jr., were practically the only adult friends Lovecraft had in his native Providence, R.I. Soon after their meeting in 1923, H.P.L. helped Mr. Eddy write "The Loved Dead" and three other tales that now count as revisions in the Lovecraft canon. Years after Lovecraft's death in 1937, Mrs. Eddy wrote a number of not entirely reliable memoirs that are mostly valuable for their insights into his ill-fated marriage to Sonia Greene. Mrs. Eddy's nephew, Jim Dyer, has collected all the significant writings on the Providence Gentleman by both Eddys, along with a brief reminiscence by his mother, Ruth. The section of photographs, mostly depicting members of the Eddy family, has been reproduced on coated stock, further enhancing the attractiveness of this modest small-press item.

The prize for the most unusual Lovecraft book of the year goes to a scientific memoir, *Mountains of Madness* by John Long, Ph.D. Monash University (Australia) and Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Western Australian Museum (Perth), who made two fossil-hunting trips, in 1988-89 and 1991-92, to Antarctica. Writing in a pleasant, informal style, the author describes what it's really like to be a researcher out in the field in the Transantarctic Mountains. (No, he and his fellow explorers didn't find any frozen Old Ones, just some exciting fish fossils.) Well versed in the literature about Antarctica (quotations from the likes of Scott, Mammon, Mansell, and Lovecraft head each chapter), Long brought along a copy of the Panther paperback edition of *At the Mountains of Madness*. The novel provided important entertainment: "Margaret [one of his three colleagues on the second expedition] cooked a chicken for dinner that night and this was followed by another communal reading from *At the Mountains of Madness*. It seemed that everyone was enjoying the act of reading aloud to the rest of the group, using much theatrical license to accentuate the mysterious and unknown elements of the story." Later he comments, "The fact that we were so isolated and alone ... certainly heightened the thrill of our nightly readings from Lovecraft's masterpiece." One can hardly imagine a finer tribute than this to Lovecraft's power as a writer.

NONFICTION REVIEW

SCIENCE FICTION VISIONS

Steven H. Silver

Morgan, Chris, Stephen Baxter and David A. Hardy. *Hardyware: The Art of David A. Hardy*. Collins & Brown, 2001. 128 pages, \$29.95, hardcover, 1855859173.

Youll, Stephen and Kevin J. Anderson. *Paradox: The Art of Stephen Youll*. Collins & Brown, 2001. 128 pages, \$29.95, hardcover, 1855859165.

Science fiction art describes a broad range of illustrative technique, even when applied to the work of a single artist. Much of this work appears in the form of book covers which may draw the browser's attention in a bookstore, but will not find its way into a person's library unless the book it illustrates manages to capture the reader's attention. Paper Tiger, a British publisher, is working hard to collect examples of artwork which aficionados of the genre can obtain without necessarily buying the books which are illustrated. Two of their more recent collections are *Hardyware: The Art of David A. Hardy* and *Paradox: The Art of Stephen Youll*.

Naturally, the focus of each of these books is the artwork of the artists, but both include notes about the art and some biographical information as well. *Hardyware* is much more complete in this regard than *Paradox*, however it provides a complete history of Hardy's position at the expense of the art it collects. *Paradox*, on the other hand, allows the art to speak for itself.

Youll divides *Paradox* into nine sections. Each of the sections contains several full page reproductions of Youll's artwork, much of which was produced for commercial purposes and illustrated fantasy and science fiction novels. Each painting is accompanied by a brief caption providing the title of the work, the author of the book illustrated, publisher and date, as well as the more technical information of the medium used and size of the original piece of art. Each of the sections, which tend to be thematic, opens with a page of discussion by Youll, not of the art included, but of the inspirations and thoughts behind the subgenre each section illustrates.

Hardyware, on the other hand, tends more towards a chronological organization. The text, by Chris Morgan, forms a much larger percentage of the collection and traces Hardy's career from his earliest illustrations through his most recent work. Despite its prominence, the text still provides a background for Hardy's artwork. Rather than the full page reproductions of *Paradox*, the paintings in *Hardyware* range from full page down to only a couple of inches. More of Hardy's work can be shown, although many of the details are lost.

Both artists include some preliminary sketches so the readers can follow the authors' processes from initial concept to final form. Youll demonstrates the various steps which were needed to create his painting "Wom Planet," which was created for IBM Corporation. He demonstrates an almost collage technique in putting the various elements together. Preceding these pages, he includes preliminary sketches which were used to create some of the book covers.

Hardy includes fewer preliminary sketches, although there are a few. He includes several photographs taken during the creation of "Going Large" at the Novacon 30 SF convention held in 2000, as well as the original photograph of a dilapidated train station which led to "Arctic Moon." Furthermore, Morgan's text, which includes lengthy quotations by Hardy, explains the creative processes which Hardy employs in his artwork.

Both artists demonstrate a wide range of styles, from the cartoonish drawings of Batman by Youll and early comic panels by Hardy to the photorealistic images which Hardy has employed for various advertising campaigns and Youll used for a series of Star Wars covers. Similarly, their subject matter ranges from prehistoric to far future. *Paradox* provides a better look at the finished artwork while *Hardyware* gives a better indication of the effort and technique which goes into creating the final vision.

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE FRANKENSTEIN FILM SOURCEBOOK

Jay McRoy

Picart, Caroline Joan ("Kay") S.; Smoot, Frank; and Blodgett, Jayne, eds. *The Frankenstein Film Sourcebook*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing, 2001. 368 pages, \$90.00, hardcover, 0313313504.

The Frankenstein Film Sourcebook, edited by Caroline Joan ("Kay") S. Picart, Frank Smoot, and Jayne Blodgett, offers perhaps the most thorough and expansive resource for film scholars and horror movie fans interested in cinematic representations of the Frankenstein motif. Unlike Stephen Jones' *The Frankenstein Scrapbook* (1995), Peter Haining's *The*

Frankenstein Omnibus (1994), and Donald F. Glut's *The Frankenstein Catalog* (1984), three relatively recent texts dedicated, at least in part, to providing readers with plot and production information on a wide variety of Frankenstein films, *The Frankenstein Film Sourcebook* provides additional information, like lists of reviews, book-length studies, popular journalism, and scholarly articles. The combination of these features may provide invaluable bibliographic materials both for teachers searching for secondary sources to assist in the creation of syllabi, and for scholars pursuing research interests that touch, even tangentially, upon tropes like the creation of life from lifelessness or the mobilization / (re)integration of "body parts" in film. Indeed, one of the sourcebook's greatest strengths is its generous interpretation of what constitutes either a filmic representation of, or reference to, the Frankenstein theme. In addition to movies in which some variation of the name "Frankenstein" appears in the title, or in which there is an overt depiction of either Frankenstein or his "creation," the book's more than 200 entries include films as varied as the *Alien* series, Ken Russell's *Lisztomania*, and the porn franchise, *Edward Penishands*, which to date has spawned two sequels.

Scattered throughout the text are a handful of brief critical essays, two of which, "The Good, the Evil, and the Damned: Female Monsters, Monstrous Females, and Saintly Child-Monsters in Frankenstein Films" and "The Serpent Swallowing its Tail: The Continuing 'Evolution' of the Frankenstein Filmic Saga," were penned by Picart. While the former of the two essays is simply too short to successfully develop its thesis, the latter, with its significantly more modest goal of providing "a brief sketch of the 'evolution' of Frankenstein films in the horror genre" (141), provides an insightful survey of some of the more prominent shifts in the "continuing re-visualization of the Frankenstein filmic narrative" (142), particularly as it finds representation in the productions of major Western studios. But perhaps the finest critical work in *The Frankenstein Film Sourcebook* is the outstanding forward by Noël Carroll, in which Carroll reads Bill Condon's *Gods and Monsters* (1998) as a complex reinvestigation of / cinematic dialogue with James Whale's Frankenstein films. In his brief but insightful analysis, Carroll reveals some of the still untapped potential contained within the ever-mobile, ever-unfixed bodies emerging from Mary Shelley's "hideous progeny."

Ultimately, though, does this very detailed list of films (and spattering of essays) justify its lofty price tag? Given the book's scope and value as a research tool, it certainly merits a place on the shelves of any university or college library, especially if the school has an active film studies program. However, with Jones, Haining, and Glut's texts already available, the casual Frankenstein fan may wish to consider whether or not this new sourcebook's features justify the cost. When it comes to deciding whether or not to add this text to one's personal collection, it may very well be that only serious scholars of film or the *Frankenstein* narrative need apply.

NONFICTION REVIEW

MAKING THE LIST: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BESTSELLER

Neil Barron

Korda, Michael. *Making the List: A Cultural History of the American Bestseller, 1900-1999*. Barnes & Noble, 122 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011, November 2001. xxviii + 228 p. \$20. 0-7607-2259-4

The term bestseller (or best seller; usage varies) isn't limited to books, having been used for toys, cars and other products for decades, and reflects the increasing use of lists in merchandising generally. Its use for books is about a century old. Korda, a bestselling author himself (five novels, eight nonfiction works), and an executive with Simon & Schuster for 43 years, draws on his long experience in publishing to compile this informal brief survey: his narrative text takes up only 107 pages, with the lists and index occupying the rest. And only the books/authors mentioned in the narrative are indexed, whereas Hackett's histories index all the listed books.

A British magazine, *The Bookman*, began the practice of listing the top-selling fiction in 1895, based on calls to major bookstores in large cities, a practice continued today with little change. Alice Payne Hackett drew on these lists for her standard histories, *Fifty Years of Best Sellers* (1945), *Sixty...* (1955) and *Seventy...* (1967), all long OP, deriving her 1895-1912 lists from *The Bookman* and from *Publishers Weekly* thereafter. PW's lists are probably a bit more accurate than those of the *New York Times Book Review*, which began regular lists in 1942, but the *Times* lists are more widely quoted and prestigious. (Korda cites John Bear's *The #1 New York Times Bestseller* [1992, OP], which profiles the 484 books that led the list from 1942 through mid-1992. This book provides often tascinating statistical information and listings.) Only fiction is listed through 1911, with nonfiction added in 1912, and with the lists increasing from ten to 15 titles each in 1978. Actual sales figures are shown in Hackett's books, but Korda merely lists in rank order, although his narrative includes some sales figures.

Anyone who's looked at bestseller lists over a decade or two will have a strong feeling of déjà vu, since the categories haven't changed much over a century. You can confidently expect to see several books on diet/health, usually based on

spurious evidence, plus a cookbook, self-help/inspirational books, one or two on current affairs/politics, a book by or about a celebrity (a person known for being well-known), and often a biographical or historical study, sometimes even a “serious” one. Humorous books are common. While most bestselling fiction quickly fades, a surprising amount of distinguished work makes such lists and often survives far beyond its initial popularity.

Korda examines the books by decade but admits this is purely for convenience and notes that periods of “cultural development” are in fact more important, e.g., from 1900 to the beginning of WWI, from the postwar period to the stock market crash, etc. His focus on bestsellers—books that sell the most copies in a short time—neglects the equally if not more important category of steady sellers, whose total sales dwarf even the most popular bestsellers. For example, *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) is not listed, although Salinger’s *Franny and Zooey* (1961) and *Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters...* (1963) are. But Hackett’s 1967 tabulation showed total sales as almost five million, just behind *The Wizard of Oz*. Writing in the 1 October 2001 *New Yorker*, Louis Menand’s perceptive essay on *Catcher* claims total sales now exceed 60 million copies (presumably every printed edition in all languages). Reference books like the *World Almanac* and the *Guinness Book of World Records* have sold many millions of copies, but not in a single year. Tolkien’s ring cycle isn’t listed, although *The Silmarillon* topped the 1977 list. Heinlein’s cult favorite, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, isn’t listed but has almost certainly outsold most other 1961 books, probably excluding Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Kotzwinkle’s *E.T.* (1982) sold 700,000 copies, greatly helped by the film, and outsold Michener, Ludlum, Sheldon, Krantz, Jean Auel and Stephen King. A 1983 film tie-in, *Return of the Jedi Storybook*, topped sales, with two King novels and one each by Asimov and McCaffrey in the top 15.

I know of no comprehensive current summary of fantastic fiction bestsellers but would be interested in seeing one. For some years *Locus* has tabulated a list based on sales reported by specialty booksellers and also shows sales in categories (hardcovers, mass market and trade paperbacks, media- and gaming-related) by the major chains and amazon.com, but no actual figures are shown. Fantastic fiction generally has a limited appeal, particularly if marketed to a genre audience. As the figures above suggest, film and TV tie-ins can generate very large sales, but have little else to recommend them. Bestselling books do provide a rough index of attitudes and interests, and the revenue from them keeps the larger publishers solvent, but they have always been an extremely small part of total book production. The regular reading public is a relatively small percentage of the total adult population, but it is large enough to support the publication in the U.S. of about 120,000 titles yearly, of which maybe 15% are reprints and reissues, and whose range is vastly more varied than the limited scope of bestsellers.

NONFICTION REVIEW

SCIENCE FICTION FILM

Joseph Milicia

Telotte, J.P. *Science Fiction Film*. Cambridge UP, 4 W. 20th St., New York, NY 10011. 2001. xiv + 254 pp. 0-521-59647-5. trade paper.

Science Fiction Film is part of a Cambridge Genres in American Cinema series, in the company of volumes devoted to thrillers and musicals among others. It offers a chapter on the challenges of defining the parameters of SF film as a genre; a survey of critical approaches to SF film; an extremely condensed history of SF antecedents, literature and film, from Daedalus to *Dark City*; and four chapters each devoted to an in-depth analysis of an exemplary film. J. P. Telotte, a worthy choice for the project, covers a broader terrain here than in his previous books on cinema robots (*Replications*, 1995) and international films of the post-WWI Machine Age (*A Distant Technology*, 1999).

SF film tends toward hybrid forms (indeed like most film genres), most frequently and conspicuously overlapping with the horror film. After glancing at literary definitions of SF (Hartwell, James and Suvin are quoted), commenting on Bruce Kavin’s problematic distinction between true cinematic SF (which champions knowledge-seeking) and horror (which dreads the unknown), and giving much-deserved praise to Garrett Stewart’s essential essay on the “Videology” of SF film, Telotte devotes much of his chapter—and indeed, much of the remainder of the book—to the theories of Tzvetan Todorov’s *The Fantastic* (English edition 1975), with support from Rosemary Jackson’s 1981 *Fantasy*. He matches Todorov’s three categories of fantasy with three subdivisions of SF: “the marvelous” is applied to movies about alien encounters and space exploration; “the fantastic” covers the impact of science and technology on “society and culture,” as in utopias and dystopias; and “the uncanny” has to do with transformations of the body, “alterations of the self,” as in robot and bio-transformation stories. Of course, many SF films display features of all three categories, as Telotte demonstrates briefly with the 1956 *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, and later in a full chapter on the 1986 *The Fly*. (The other films singled out for extended treatment are *Close Encounters* for “the marvelous,” *THX 1138* for “the fantastic” and *RoboCop* for “the uncanny.”)

Telotte's chapter on SF film criticism is a useful overview, examining five distinct approaches while acknowledging that most contemporary critics straddle one or more fences: humanist, ideological, psychoanalytic, feminist, and postmodernist. Through frankly leaning toward the ideological and postmodernist, Telotte plays fair with each school of thought, including the currently unfashionable Jungian approach. The "Historical Overview" chapter— from Greek myth to the pulps (including comics) and on to cyberpunk, then Meliès to *The Matrix*—is necessarily brief and sketchy, with few films other than *2001* and *Blade Runner* given as much as a separate paragraph. Films more recent than *Starship Troopers* are given only brief mention, but anime and digital special effects do have their own subsections at the end; and what the chapter may lack in originality and depth is made up for by the extended analyses that follow, with particularly enlightening studies of *RoboCop* and *The Fly*.

Science Fiction Film might serve well as a textbook for SF film courses, though Telotte's prose, while always scrupulously thoughtful and not excessively jargon-filled, is quite dry: few will read the book for felicitous turns of phrase. The volume contains 70 b&w illustrations, mostly production stills, more to refresh our memories of the films than to serve as material for analysis. Still, as a compact scholarly study rather than a movie fan's companion or anthology of essays on current academic favorites, the book is without rivals in the current market.

NONFICTION REVIEW

ASCENDING PECULIARITY: EDWARD GOREY ON EDWARD GOREY

Neil Barron

Gorey, Edward. *Ascending Peculiarity: Edward Gorey on Edward Gorey*. ed by Karen Wilkin. Harcourt, 15 E 26th St, New York, NY 10010, October 2001. xxiii + 292 P. \$35 0-15-100504-4.

Wilkin, who co-authored 1966's *The World of Edward Gorey* (the best introduction to its subject), quotes some of Gorey's responses to requests for interviews as "absolutely not" or "Anyway, the facts of my life are so few, tedious, irrelevant to anything else, there is no point in going into them." Yet he granted 70+ interviews here and abroad between 1973 and 1999, of which Wilkin has selected 21, excluding Alexander Theroux's 1973 Esquire interview, expanded for his *The Strange Case of Edward Gorey* (SFRAR 250). The bibliography lists 77 pieces on Gorey, including interviews, endnotes are keyed to the interviews, and the book is well indexed.

The interviews are arranged chronologically, and Wilkin has apparently abridged them to eliminate some duplicated content, although if this is so, omissions aren't shown by ellipses. This gives a multi-faceted picture of Gorey, who answers similar questions in different ways. My Theroux review (it Gorey can anagram his name, so can I) quotes Theroux's amusing but accurate description of Gorey's many varied works.

Gorey's appetite for both high and low culture was boundless, whether it was classical Japanese literature or TV sitcoms, and these interviews provide repeated glimpses of his interests and obsessions, which are remarkably varied. Various reproductions are included from his 90+ books, including his first, *The Unstrung Harp* in 1953 whose central character, Clavius Frederick Earbrass, is a solitary eccentric author, presaging Gorey's life. Several photos grace the text, including a two-page spread of Gorey in a cemetery, surrounded by headstones with not an urn in sight.

If you know Gorey's works, you don't need my recommendation to become familiar with their unique character. If you don't and you have a copy of *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, read Dave Langford's entry. Then sample Gorey's work, which is most easily done by reading one or more of the three omnibus volumes, each assembling a dozen or so of his short books: *Amphigory*, *A. Also*, and *A. Too*.

If you're mystified at Wilkin's title, it's explained in a 1997 interview, in which Gorey describes one of his plays: "at the beginning of my play an object falls from the sky, and throughout there are twelve different versions of what it was, and they're all Surrealist objects that bear no relation to anything at all . . . I just kind of conjured them up out of my subconscious and put them [in order] of ascending peculiarity," an apt if incomplete characterization of Gorey's life.

[FW says the first printing of this book was 50,000 copies. My guess is that this is more copies than Gorey's first 50 books collectively sold in all editions, from 1951 to 1973. See Henry Toledano's authoritative *Goreyography Word Play*, 1996, for all the intricate details.]

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE WAR OF THE WORLDS

Jeff Prickman

Wells, H. G. *The War of the Worlds*. Ed. Leon Stover. Vol. 4 of *The Annotated H. G. Wells*. McFarland & Company, Inc. Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640, 2001. 321 p. \$55 hardcover. Orders to: (800) 253-2187. <www.mcfarlandpub.com>.

The book's subtitle *A Critical Text of the 1898 London First Edition, with an Introduction, Illustrations and Appendices* is long but apt. Stover's "Preface" acknowledges the link between the novel and Orson Welles' infamous 1938 radio broadcast and refreshingly never returns to it. Stover's argument on the book's real significance is persuasive, if a bit trenchant (sometimes amusingly so). An excellent "Editor's Introduction" places *The War of the Worlds* in the context of the history of socialist depictions of Mars, and Wells' political views. Clear connections are made to other works of Wells, particularly the sequel *When The Sleeper Wakes* (1899, Volume 5 of Stover's *Annotated* series), and the novel and film *The Shape of Things to Come* (1933, 1936).

Stover's commentary, offered through footnotes accompanying the text, focuses heavily on the meaning of the invasion and the role of the narrator, with ample reference to other fiction and nonfiction of Wells. Stover convincingly argues that to Wells the Martians provide a brutal, but necessary, cleansing of a hopelessly corrupt and deluded bourgeois populace, implementing "a homeopathic remedy for a society already diseased beyond any other cure" (145fn). Thanks to the Martian invasion, a utopian socialist-autocratic capitalist state, based on the views of Henri SaintSimon, arises 200 years later in *When The Sleeper Wakes*. This "Modern State Octopus" features the *War*-devastated London transformed to "the cleaned-up metropolitan center of a world-state on the Martian model" (117fn). Stover also links the octopus imagery of the Martians to vampires. The Martians "feed" on human blood (205), while their cylinders are "sticking into the skin of our old planet Earth like a poisoned dart" (92).

The most passionate sections of Stover's argument interpret the role of the narrator as a man who pays lip service to many of Wells' beliefs, yet remains a clueless "rabbit" (nice contrast to octopus) who returns to the "everydayism" (254fn) of his former life once the invasion ends, for "the larger meaning of the Martian invasion for the future of humanity is completely lost on him" (214fn). In his "Preface" Stover rejects any view of *War* as an "attack on racism and imperialism" (ix). Instead, he makes a compelling case for the novel as an account of a "benevolent catastrophe" (204fn), the first part of a very personal political wish-fulfillment fantasy of Wells.

Stover acknowledges his work as "an essential companion" to David Y. Hughes' and Harry M. Geduld's *A Critical Edition of 'The War of the Worlds'* (Indiana UP, 1993) (1). (see also *SFRA Review* #253 for Neil Barron's review of Holmsten's and Lubertozzi's *The Complete War of the Worlds*, Sourcebooks, 2001). While the price may be beyond the casual reader, Stover's book is a must for Wells aficionados, academic libraries and anyone interested in a new read of an old classic.

NONFICTION REVIEW

MASTERPIECES: THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE CENTURY

Warren G. Rochelle

Card, Orson Scott, ed. *Masterpieces: The Best Science Fiction of the Century*. New York: Ace Books, 2001. 422 pages, cloth, \$24.95. ISBN 0-441-00864-X

Another anthology. I ask you: just how many anthologies do we need? I have at least nine: *Dangerous Visions, and Again, Dangerous Visions, The Ascent of Wonder: The Evolution of Hard Science Fiction, volume 3 of The Road to Science Fiction, The Norton Book of Science Fiction, The Oxford Book of Science Fiction Stories, Science Fiction Hall of Fame: The Greatest Science Fiction Stories of All Time*, and *The Science Fiction Century*. Make that ten; I am using Minyard's *Decades of Science Fiction* in my science fiction lit course this semester. This doesn't even count the thematic ones, such as *Science Fiction Bestiary, Mind to Mind, Earthmen and Strangers, Not of Woman Born*, and *Christmas Stars*. And with all those, I still made up a course pack—my own anthology, as it were. (I am sure I have a few more, squirreled away somewhere . . .)

So, why do we need another anthology? What does this anthology do that the others don't? According to the blurb in the Science Fiction Book Club's recent catalog, *Masterpieces* "[spans] the spectrum from adventure stories to moral fables to ingenious speculations" and it contains "27 20th-century masterpieces (including 7 award winners) by some of the field's finest writers: Harlan Ellison, Larry Niven, Ursula K. Le Guin, Poul Anderson, Robert Silverberg, Frederik Pohl, Robert Heinlein, and more." Well, don't the others also contain stories—masterpieces—by some of the "field's finest writers"? Aren't

some of the stories the same? Yes, there is fairly general agreement as to who the finest are, but, to my surprise, there was far less overlap that I thought. “Rat” (James Patrick Kelly) is also in Le Guin and Attebery’s *Norton*, but *Masterpieces* and *Modern Classics of Science Fiction* and the *Hall of Fame* have no stories in common. “Repent, Harlequin” (Ellison) is shared with *Decades of Science Fiction* and *Science Fiction Century* and “The Tunnel Under the World” (Pohl) and “Who Can Replace a Man” (Aldiss) is shared with the *Oxford Book of Science Fiction Stories*.

That does leave a goodly number not shared—OK, so maybe I should reconsider whether we need another anthology or not. True, there are familiar classics from the Golden Age, such as “All You Zombies” (Heinlein), “Nine Billion Names of God” (Clarke), and “Dark They were, and Golden-Eyed” (Bradbury)—they can found in many anthologies and author collections. Do they need collecting again? The already mentioned “Harlequin” leads off what Card calls the New Wave, and again, the reader is on familiar ground, with such stories as “Passengers” (Silverberg), and the frequently-anthologized—especially in college and high school texts,” The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” (Le Guin). Card’s third section, the Media Generation, has at least one more “seen” tale, “Bears Discover Fire” (Bisson). It is not that the rest of the stories in *Masterpieces* are by obscure authors—quite the contrary. Sturgeon, Asimov, Blish, R.A. Lafferty, Pohl, George R.R. Martin, Turtledove, and Crowley are among the “masters” included, and there is not one author that I have not heard of.

It looks like I am back to square one—familiar stories and/or authors—so why another anthology? The answer comes, I think, with the editor, and the rationale provided for the choices and the divisions. Here is where there is something new, something that sets any anthology apart from another: the editor. For Card, this collection is a labor of love, love of the stories and love of the genre and the community that nourished it, one that has been, according to Card, scorned by the literati and the American “academic-literary establishment—the community [Card] lovingly calls ‘li-fi,’” as “Bad Art.” As someone of the academy, and yet also with a toehold in the science fiction community, I wonder. I know the academic snobbery against science fiction is real, yet I had a waiting list for my class. Card would answer that these are the fans, the lovers of the good story, who have kept, maintained, and sustained, what he describes as “the most vibrant, most productive, most innovative, and eventually the most accomplished of literary communities” (2). Thus Card regards his anthology as a “treasury. . . [a] collection of jewels,” and not a history of the genre; “not a tome to be studied,” but read (3).

He chose these stories because he loves them, rereads them, and “above all else, these are stories [he] cannot forget” (3). His arrangement: The Golden Age, The New Wave, and The Media Generation, gives the collection a chronological structure that also lets Card discuss how the genre has evolved and grown. That it is to the story that Card returns—because as he says, “Stories change us”—makes this an anthology designed to celebrate the story perhaps more deliberately than others do. This, I think, is one way in which this anthology is set apart. That it is one edited by Card, is the other way. Orson Scott Card’s name, freighted with his reputation, carries weight. The latter alone is enough to make any reader pause and give this book attention.

So, do we need another anthology? Would I buy this one over, say, *Modern Classics of Science Fiction* (which I am thinking of using next term as opposed to Minyard: more contemporary, greater coverage)? Perhaps not, but I do like having access to these stories that Card has put in one place. I would think the decision to buy an anthology, especially if you are a teacher, must also include the course’s focus, any particular theme, or other individual requirements. My course this semester, for example, is race-and-gender intensive (RGI) as well as introduction to the genre. I couldn’t assume I would have a room full of well-read fans; I felt to do the job I had to have an anthology that was more historically focused. My course pack, Minyard, and some of the selected novels reflect the RGI requirement *and* my attempt at historical coverage. Card’s general introduction and especially those of the individual authors, in which he puts the story in the context of an overall career, are valuable and would well serve the SF teacher.

Masterpieces: The Best Science Fiction of the Century can’t, of course, as Card readily admits, include all of the masterpieces of 20th-century science fiction. No anthology can include all stories that fit its particular parameters—even those huge Norton literary anthologies must leave worthy material out. This doesn’t mean I don’t think *Masterpieces* isn’t worth a second or a third look. Get a look at the Table of Contents. Consider your course needs. And be assured the stories in here are good and that you will enjoy reading them.

FICTION REVIEW
THE BLACK CHALICE
 Philip Snyder

Marie Jakober. *The Black Chalice*. New York: Ace, 2002. 460 pages, trade paperback, \$15.00. ISBN 0-441-00896-8.

Discriminating readers have reason to rejoice with the paperback re-publication of Marie Jakober's stellar historical fantasy, *The Black Chalice*. Originally published two years ago by Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy, a Canadian small press, Jakober's fierce and beautiful novel should win legions of new admirers with this attractive new edition from Ace.

Set in 12th century Germany, *The Black Chalice* is a searching examination of the nature of power—of political power, or spiritual power, of the power of personality, and of sexuality, and of magic. At the heart of this examination are four richly complex and thoroughly believable characters. Karelian Brandeis, the Count of Lys, is a survivor of the Crusades, a knight whose religious faith was burned away in the flames and blood of Jerusalem. His lover, Raven, is the witch-queen protectress of an older, pre-Christian German faith grounded in a deep attachment to the physical work, and uncompromisingly opposed to the jealous and all-consuming "Fathergod" of Christendom. Against these two stands the formidable political and military power of Gottfried, the "Golden Duke" of the Reinmark, a charismatic and ambitious figure who, having traced his lineage to Jesus Christ himself, makes a bid for mastery of the Holy Roman Empire, and ultimately, the Christianization of the entire world. Connected to each of these three powerful characters is Paul von Ardiun. At one time a squire to Karelian himself, Paul is a painfully earnest young man and an inveterate hero-worshipper. He is also a homosexual in complete denial, a deeply loyal man who nevertheless betrays his master, a thoroughly peripheral creature who nevertheless finds himself at the very center of world-shaping conflicts. Some thirty years after the principal events of the novel, Paul is an aging monk in an isolated monastery, writing his account of those same events.

But the history he writes grows increasingly multivalent. For though he wishes to write a cautionary Christian tale, his pen has been bewitched to write what he truly remembers. What does he actually remember, though, and what does he only think he remembers? As Raven points out: "Those who eat the world write its histories. . . Some lie knowingly, and some in truth no longer remember what they did, for if they remembered they could not bear to live." More than simply an unreliable narrator, then, Paul becomes one of several vehicles in the novel through which Jakober explores questions about the nature of memory, of history, of reality itself.

This is fantasy in the service of a serious and penetrating vision. *The Black Chalice* is a novel that captures with pitiless accuracy the patriarchal feudalism of medieval Christianity, while offering a sympathetic and original treatment of German paganism; a vivid evocation of militaristic fervor, and a distinctly unromantic history of the middle ages as experienced by women, by the powerless, and by the despised. Here are knights who confess to being merely "[h]ighborn serfs in shining armor, killing each other for our keep, for the hope of a noble marriage or a piece of land." Here is a brutal yet idealistic world where some find that sexual pleasure is perhaps the one escape from violence, while for others—particularly the more "religious" knights in the novel—violence is their one escape from pleasure. And it is a story constructed with intricate, powerful imagery, and an extraordinary sensuousness of detail, rendered in a prose well beyond the reach of most writers of Big Fat Fantasy.

Genre purists, in fact, may be somewhat skeptical of *The Black Chalice*, and inclined to read it more as a species of straight historical novel. But while the book certainly can work on that level, it is ineluctably a fantasy. It has magic, it has witches, and it even has an elf (albeit an elf of myth and awe, not one bit cute.) But even when shapeshifters are abroad in the book, and dead knights are raised to fight again, Jakober's fantasy carries the eerie authority of a tale that feels less like a fiction than like a lost history, a history made emblematic in the Black Chalice of the title, a pagan artifact encompassing "the images of all difference, of all the divine contradictions which made possible the richness of the world."

The Black Chalice is a beautiful book—passionate, fresh, humane, and wise—and deserving of widespread, appreciative attention.

FICTION REVIEW
CHASM CITY
 Dave Mead

Reynolds, Alastair. *Chasm City*. New York: Ace Books, April 2002. \$23. 95 hc. 524 pages. ISBN 0-441-009912-3. Reviewed in uncorrected proofs.

Early in *Revelation Space*, Alastair Reynolds' extraordinary first novel, we meet a contract assassin named Khouri in the midst of a 'Shadowplay Hunt' in Chasm City, the primary city of planet Yellowstone. Khouri, formerly a soldier on the distant war-torn world Sky's Edge, works for an agency run by Tanner Mirabel, also from Sky's Edge. She and Mirabel provide potentially mortal thrills for the jaded immortals of Chasm City, a megalopolis which has been strangely transformed by a terrible alien cybernetic virus called the Melding Plague. When Khouri leaves Chasm City, our brief acquaintance with Yellowstone ends.

In *Chasm City* – which does not appear to be the second part of a trilogy or a part of a tightly plotted sequence of novels but which is set in the same fascinating future created in *Revelation Space* – Reynolds takes us back – to Sky's Edge, Yellowstone, and the events which brought Tanner Mirabel to this extraordinary city. *Revelation Space* was a sprawling, multi-stranded story that required a great deal of patience from the reader; *Chasm City* has a much tighter, character-driven plot whose various strands are clearly and immediately visible. This is Tanner Mirabel's story from beginning to end, although who and what Tanner is changes in fascinating ways.

Mirabel, for all his futurity, is a sort of hard-boiled *noir* detective-avenger, pursuing the man who killed his beloved Gitta before fleeing Sky's Edge for Yellowstone. In his passage through the depths and heights of the sick mean streets of Chasm City's Mulch and Canopy, Mirabel – like most *noir* protagonists – journeys to self-discovery as well as a climactic confrontation with his quarry. Here that process of self-discovery is marvelously complicated by the extraordinary nanotech and biotech with and by which Reynolds' characters live.

This is a fine hard SF adventure novel, with a tight plot and fascinating protagonist. While it is certainly less epic in scope than *Revelation Space*, *Chasm City* integrates its scenic frame, characters and plot in a more accessible package, and might well be read before one tackles its predecessor. Both novels should certainly be read. Alastair Reynolds is the most exciting new writer of hard SF adventure fiction on the contemporary scene.

FICTION REVIEW
TECHNOGENESIS
 Jeff Prickman

Mitchell, Syne. *Technogenesis*. New York: Roc, 2002. 326 pages, paperback, \$6.99. ISBN

Technogenesis is a fitting title for what turns out to be the first book in a series. However, that this is Book One is not clear until well into the story, the main plot of which climaxes around page 274. The last fifty pages prepare us for Book Two. I mention this right away to make clear that this review can only judge the story so far. . .and what I come away with is an author who can clearly write, and write well. But this particular plot mix of intrigue and would-be philosophical musings seems too long for what few events actually occur.

The main character of *Technogenesis* is Jasmine "Jaz" Reese, a "natural" data miner with the ability not only to surf, but also to ferret out information in the Net for her employer, Infotech. The best scenes in the novel occur in the early chapters, where the descriptions of a society of people always online through the "rigs" and "masks" they wear work well. An eerie image of passengers on a bus all "elsewhere" as the disconnected Jaz watches is memorable. The breakdown of Jaz's rig forces her to live without the Net and to become aware of the other disconnected, mostly homeless "feebz."

Mitchell vividly details in these initial chapters just how bonded everybody is with their personal technology—from turning on the overhead lights to sex, everything is either dependent on or enhanced by being linked through one's own data jewelry (reminiscent of devices in works by Eric Brown or Greg Egan).

However, the storyline takes a sharp twist into absurdity when Jaz realizes some entity in the Net is specifically watching her and exerting control over the society. An attempt to convince friends and co-workers of her fears by going on an impromptu mountain climbing trip ends with an avalanche created so the Nation Security Agency, represented by Colonel Frank Herridge, can kidnap Jaz. The tale becomes an X-Files, with evolved yet more or less benevolent Net consciousness names Gestalt kept covered up by the NSA. Jaz is forced to work for the NSA and, after undergoing physical and psychic

training, assigned to infiltrate a group of renegade scientists led by Dr. Orley, who have created their own entity, Symbios. Jaz's partner: good looking hacker bad boy Dixon Tully.

Whenever the overwrought main plot fades a bit, Mitchell offers ample evidence that she is a writer to watch. Scenes involving Jaz's conflicted feelings for Dr. Orley and Dixon are effective. There is also potential in the character of Jaz's mother, Dr. Anita Reese, who "helped define the underlying protocols of the Net" (45). Beyond a token scene towards the end, her only role in *Technogenesis* is as a name to give Jaz instant legitimacy with Dr. Orley. Nonetheless, the personal elements of the tale remind me of Mary Rosenblum's (now Mary Freeman's) ability to add compelling emotional elements to near future settings, including asteroids (*The Stone Garden*, 1994). I look forward to seeing if Mitchell will do the same on the moon, the setting in which she leaves Jaz at the conclusion of *Technogenesis*.

FICTION REVIEW

IMPACT PARAMETER AND OTHER QUANTUM REALITIES

Bruce A. Beatie

Landis, Geoffrey A. *Impact Parameter and Other Quantum Realities*. Urbana, IL: Golden Gryphon Press, 2001. ISBN 1-930846-06-1 (paper)

This collection of 16 stories ranges from Landis's first published story ("Elemental," in *Analog*, December 1984) to his 52nd ("Into the Blue Abyss," *Asimov's*, August 1999). In the introduction to the first section of his 1991 small-press collection (*Myths, Legends, and True History*, Pulphouse Publishing, 1991), Landis wrote: "One thing I guarantee: no two [stories] are alike" (1), and that remains eminently true of this collection. At one extreme, "Elemental" is a story that might have appeared in the old *Unknown*, involving thaumaturgy as a science, while the Hugo-winning "A Walk in the Sun" (*Asimov's*, October 1999) is a classic example of "hard" SF in the tradition of Hal Clement—and, in its account of an astronaut who walks around the moon in order to survive, a kind of miniature version of Landis's first novel, *Mars Crossing* (2000).

One story ("The Singular Habits of Wasps," *Analog*, April 1994) is an excellent Sherlock Holmes pastiche, while "What We Really Do Here at NASA" (*Science Fiction Age*, July 1994) is a comic sketch about public misconceptions that forms an odd parallel to his "True Confessions" (*Analog*, 1989, reprinted in *Myths and Legends*), a story which Landis said "is, for the most part, autobiographical. Don't ask." (*Myths*, 45) The most moving story, for me at least, is "Beneath the Stars of Winter" (*Asimov's*, January 1993), a story of scientists, prisoners in a Siberian *gulag* under Stalin, who continue their research using primitive tools and materials and finally create a portal opening to a livable planet on another star; two of them manage to escape through the portal and, as they do, remember all those who died in the process. It's a story easily equal in its power to Tom Godwin's classic 1954 "The Cold Equations." About its origin Landis notes (339): "In *Gulag Archipelago*, Solzhenitsyn made a brief mention of scientists continuing to do research even after being sent to prison camps in Siberia. I don't know of anything more admirable, more of a perfect example of the indomitable human spirit."

One of the remarkable qualities of Landis's stories (also apparent in *Mars Crossing*) is the strength and excellence of his female characters, from Patricia Mulligan in "A Walk in the Sun," through the all-female crew of an interstellar colony ship in "Across the Darkness" (*Asimov's*, June 1995) and the physicist Jennifer Hawke in "Dark Lady" (*Interzone*, August 1995), to Leah, the half-Japanese child narrator of "Winter Fire" (*Asimov's*, August 1997). Particularly interesting is Leah Hamakawa, a main character in "Ecopoiesis" (*Science Fiction Age*, May 1997), a Mars story in a different future from *Mars Crossing* and the narrator of "Into the Blue Abyss" (*Asimov's*, August 1999), a hard-science story of the exploration of Uranus; she might well be the grown-up Leah of "Winter Fire," though nothing in the backstories of Leah Hamakawa makes that explicit. Landis notes that "'Ecopoiesis' was the first time I'd ever had a story that continued characters from an earlier story. (Tinkerman, Leah, and Tally had earlier appeared in 'Farthest Horizons' [*Science Fiction Age*, May 1996]. ... some day I may end up writing more of their story, and it could become a novel" (334)—and her 1999 reappearance is suggestive.

In the introduction to the third section of *Myths and Legends*, Landis commented that "keeping both science and characters in focus in the technological puzzle story is like playing the oboe while skiing a slalom course: even people who can do both have trouble doing both at once." (86) The stories reprinted here show is prowess in managing that difficult task in stories of all kinds. The volume includes an "Afterword: About the Stories" (330-340) that is unusually interesting.

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