SFRA Review #211, May/June 1994

SFRA REVIEW
ISSN 1068-395X

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SFRA Review is published six times a year by The Science Fiction Research Association, Angel Enterprises, and Golden Lion Enterprises.

Continued on inside back cover.
SFRA Review #211, May/June 1994

BFRA REVIEW

Issue #211, May/June 1994

IN THIS ISSUE:

SFRA INTERNAL AFFAIRS:
President's Message (Mead)
New Members & Changes of Address
1993 SFRA Conference Tentative Schedule (Hull/Friend)
Editorial (Mallett)

GENERAL MISCELLANY:
Forthcoming Books (Mallett)
News & Information (Mallett, etc.)

FEATURES:
Feature Article: "'The Sense of Wonder' is 'A Sense Sublime'" (Robu)
Feature Review: Coover, Robert. Pinocchio in Venice. (Chapman)
"Subject Headings for Genre Fiction" (Klossner)

REVIEWS:

Nonfiction:
Anon. The Disney Poster: The Animated Film Classics from Mickey Mouse to Aladdin. (Klossner)
Hershenson, Bruce. Cartoon Movie Posters. (Klossner)
Levy, Michael. Natalie Babbit. (Heller)

Fiction:
Allen, Roger McBride & Eric Kotani. Supernova. (Stevens)
Anderson, Dana, Charles de Lint & Ray Garton. Café Purgatorium. (Tryforos)
Anderson, Poul. The Time Patrol. (Dudley)
Anthony, Piers. Question Quest. (Riggs)
Attanasio, A. A. Hunting the Ghost Dancer. (Bogstad)
Banks, Iain. The State of the Art. (Bogstad)
Barth, John. The Last Voyage of Somebody the Sailor. (Larrier)
Baudino, Gael. Dragonsword. (Kaveny)
Baudino, Gael. Duel of Dragons. (Kaveny)
Brashaw, Gillian. Horses of Heaven. (Brizzi)
Brennert, Alan. Ma Qui and Other Phantoms. (Sanders)
Brooke, Keith. Expatria. (Morgan)
Brosnan, John. The Fall of the Sky Lords. (Morgan)
Brunner, John. A Maze of Stars. (Sammons)
Brust, Steven. The Phoenix Guards. (Hitt)
SFRA Review #211, May/June 1994

Bujold, Lois McMaster. *Bararray.* (Bogstad)
Cherryh, C. J., editor. *Merovingen Nights 7: Endgame.* (Kaveny)
Claremont, Chris. *Grounded.* (Kaveny)
Cook, Glen. *Red Iron Night.* (Stevens)
Hughes, Zach. *The Omniscience Factor.* (Mallett)
James, L. Dean. *Mojave Wells.* (Mallett)
King, Stephen. *Needful Things.* (Collings)
Lawhead, Stephen R. *The Paradise War.* (Strain)
Lindholm, Megan. *Cloven Hooves.* (Bogstad)
Lumley, Brian. *The House of Cthulu.* (Morgan)
Lumley, Brian. *Necroscope V: Deadspawn.* (Morgan)
Shatner, William. *TekLords.* (Dudley)
Shea, Robert. *Shaman, A Novel.* (Kaveny)
Stackpole, Michael. *Once a Hero: A Novel.* (Strain)
Stevermer, Caroline. *A College of Magics.* (Strain)
Talbott, Hudson. (Spivack)
Waugh, Charles G. & Martin H. Greenberg, eds. *The Mammoth Book of New World Science Fiction: Short Novels of the 1960s.* (Marx)
Wu, William F. *Isaac Asimov's Robots in Time: Emperor.* (Mallett)

Visual:
Hata, Masami & William Hurtz. *Little Nemo: Adventures in Slumberland.* (Klossner)
Melford, George. *The Special Spanish Version of Dracula.* (Klossner)
Nathan-Turner, John. *Doctor Who: The Hartnell Years.* (Klossner)
Nathan-Turner, John. *Doctor Who: The Pertwee Years.* (Klossner)
Nathan-Turner, John. *Doctor Who: The Tom Baker Years.* (Klossner)
Nathan-Turner, John. *Doctor Who: The Troughton Years.* (Klossner)

Miscellaneous:
Thonen, John, ed. *Imagi-Movies.* (Klossner)
Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I regret to tell you that Daryl F. Mallett has resigned as Editor of the SFRA Review. The press of personal matters prevented Daryl from accomplishing the job he wanted to do. He will oversee the production and distribution of issues #208-211, the last of which you are holding in your hands.

We deeply appreciate the effort that Daryl made during the last year, and we are glad that he intends to continue to contribute to the Review.

I am happy to report, however, that Amy Sisson has volunteered to serve as Editor, beginning with issue #212. Amy is an experienced newsletter editor and writer who lives in Grand Forks, North Dakota, as does B. Diane Miller, our nonfiction editor.

Amy is a graduate of Bucknell (B.A. in English and Economics) and earned an M.S. in Space Studies from the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. She has written a correspondence course in Space Studies for UND’s Department of Public Instruction, and edits a newsletter for a group of restaurants in the Grand Forks area. She and Diane are well-acquainted and expect to work together effectively.

Please write to:

Amy Sisson
1850 S. 34th Street, #303
Grand Forks, ND 58201

and do what you can to help her get the new SFRA Review up and running.

The annual meeting of the SFRA is scheduled for July 7-10, 1994 in Arlington Heights, Illinois. I hope you have made your plans to attend; Betty Hull tells me that she, Bev Friend, and a great group of helpers have organized a fine meeting with many excellent panels and activities, and a host of distinguished guest authors. I can tell you that we will honor outstanding Pilgrim and Pioneer Award recipients at the banquet Saturday evening, July 9.

For room reservations at the Woodfield Hilton in Arlington Heights, call 800/344-3434 (or 708/384-2000 if you live in Illinois) before June 10 to get the conference rate of $79/night. Send your conference fee ($115) to Elizabeth Anne Hull; Liberal Arts Division; William Rainey Harper College; Palatine, IL 60067.
I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting.

—Cordially,
David Mead

P.S. Peter Lowentrout, Muriel Becker, and Martha Bartter are the Elections Nominations Committee this year; please let them know if you'd like to run for an office, or if you'd like to nominate someone. Officer Elections will be held in the late summer and early fall.

NEW MEMBERS & ADDRESS CHANGES

New Members:

Address/Status Changes:

Daryl F. Mallett
717 S. Mill Avenue, #87
Tempe, AZ 85281

1983 SFRA CONFERENCE UPDATE

Here is your copy of the preliminary program of main events for SFRA-25. If you are arriving at O'Hare Airport, be sure to request the courtesy car to the hotel, which has changed its name to the Arlington Park Hilton.

Those who want to participate in the optional excursion to Medieval Times Friday evening to see the fine horsemanship and jousting (and dine on a game bird with your fingers) MUST reserve by June 20.

Additional tickets for the Pilgrim/Pioneer Awards Banquet Saturday evening can be purchased at $35 per guest.

Program participants have been asked to bring additional copies of their papers to accommodate conflicts caused by multiple-track programming. We are making arrangements to videotape panel discussions and authors' readings so that those who want to attend paper discussions will be able to obtain copies of these sessions from the Science Fiction Oral History Association. All attendees are invited to bring thirty copies of a current SF syllabus for an exchange of course outlines.

Many novels will be available for those who want to purchase books by the attending authors (and get them autographed).

Alex Eisenstein is assembling a special art show; we'll have a fundraising drawing for a group of books donated by Illinois authors to support our needy international scholars; and we're working on other wonderful surprises.

Please let us know if you have special needs (vegetarian or otherwise restricted banquet meal, wheelchair access, etc.). We want everyone to enjoy the conference fully!

—Elizabeth Anne Hull/Beverly Friend
SFRA CONFERENCE TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Thursday, July 7
Registration, 3:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Opening Session, 7:00 p.m. — Octavia E. Butler, *Parable of the Sower*
Welcome Reception, 8:30 p.m.-11:00 p.m., Hospitality Suite

Friday, July 8 — SESSION ONE 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
1A Authors Reading: James E. Gunn, Sheri Tepper

1B Diana Pharoah Francis, "Social Robotics: Constructing the Ideal Woman from Used Ideological Parts"
Frances D. Louis, "Looking Backward: Focusing on Forgotten Works by and about Women"
Virginia Allen, "A Sense of Injury: Reconstructing Mary Shelley"

1C Elaine Kleiner, "Science Fiction as a Theory of History"
Veronica Hollinger, "Paradigms of Postmodernism in SF"
Brian Attebery, "Science as Metaphor in Hard and Soft SF"

Friday, July 8 — SESSION TWO 10:30 a.m.-Noon
2A PANEL: SF FAN SUBCULTURE
Alex Eisenstein, Beverly Friend, B. Diane Miller, Frederik Pohl, Leah Zeldes Smith

2B ENGLISH SF ISN'T ALL, Elizabeth Anne Hull, Moderator
Bud Foote, "SF in Russia"
Yan Wu, "SF in China"
Johan Heje, "SF in Denmark"

Chris Brincefield, "No Fembots Here: Women of Power in Frank Herbert's *Dune*"
Elizbeth Cummins, "Judith Merril: A Link with the New Wave—Then and Now"

Friday, July 8 — SESSION THREE 1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
3A Authors Reading: Joan Slonczewski, Joan D. Vinge

3B Cathy Peppers, "Dialogic Origins and Alien Identities in Octavia E. Butler's *Xenogenesis*"
Joe Marchesani, "Gender Polarity in Octavia E. Butler's *Xenogenesis* Trilogy"
Francis Louis, "Saving Grace in Octavia E. Butler's *Parable of the Sower* and Sheri Tepper's *A Plague of Angels*"

3C Elizabeth Barette, "Mother Rongue: Invented Language"
Diane Poirier, "Invisible Sight and Silent Speech: A Disc of Absence and Consequence in C. J. Cherryh's Downbelow Station"

Friday, July 8 — SESSION FOUR 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
4A Authors Reading: Lois McMaster Bujold, Jack Williamson

4B Margaret McBride, "Why a Farce?: Sheri Tepper's Use of Trojan Women"
   Donna Revtai, "Sheri Tepper's Feminist Adaptations of Myth and Literary Patterns in Grass"

4C Karen Cerone, "Environmental Dystopia SF: Part of the Solution, Part of the Problem"  
   Sheryl Hamilton, "Recent Feminist Separatist Utopias"  
   Beverly Friend, "Time Travel as a Feminist Didactic in the Works of Octavia E. Butler, Phyllis Eisenstein, Marlys Milheiser, and Connie Willis"

OPTIONAL EXCURSION TO MEDIEVAL TIMES, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 9 — SESSION FIVE 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
5A Teaching SF and SF Anthologies: Brian Attebery, Phyllis Eisenstein, James E. Gunn, John Huntington, Jack Williamson, Gary Wolfe

5B Lynn Williams, "Pamela Sargent's Venus of Dreams: Terraforming Utopia"  
   Sheryl Hamilton, "Feminism in the Era of Cyborgs"  
   Elizabeth Barette, "Chaos in F and SF"

5C Michael Levy, "The Young Adult Science Fiction Novel as Bildungsroman"  
   Lindalee Stuckey, "Children's SF Market: A Historical Overview"  
   Joe Sanders, "Private Psi: Joan D. Vinge's Catspaw"

Saturday, July 9 — SESSION SIX 10:30 a.m.-Noon
6A Breaking Into Writing: Philip José Farmer, Jim Frenkel, Frederik Pohl, Joan Slonczewski, Joan D. Vinge, Gene Wolfe

6B TBA

6C Bob Donahoo, Chuck Etheridge, Donald Lloyd, "Hyper-Reader/Hyper-Writer: Postmodernist Perspectives on SF"  
   Milton Wolf, Respondent

Saturday, July 9 — SESSION SEVEN 1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
7A Judy Kerman, "Issues in the Aesthetics of Hypertext"

7B Joan Gordon, "Gene Wolfe's Mobius Fictions: Peeling Away the Veils of Maya"
Editorial

Please consider this editorial my official resignation as SFRA Review Editor after the publication of #211 (May/June 1994), this issue you're reading now.

I took on the job of SFRA Review Editor with lots of hopes and dreams, some of which I accomplished. One of my goals was to take what previous SFRA editors had accomplished and build upon it to create an even better organ of the SFRA. Regardless of how certain members of the organization feel about the editorial content, I am of the mind that at least the production quality has improved immensely, turning SFRA into a fine-looking magazine.

Due to the personal upheavals in my life, including a divorce, new job, and relocation, as well as the apathy of the general membership (with the exception of some very few members, to whom I extend heartfelt thanks), I find that, while I am able to do everything...I can't do everything by myself. With the removal of Neil Barron and Michael Klossner, the inability of those who offered to step in, and the busy schedules of those who wanted to assist, I
was forced to rely on the able assistance of friends and colleagues who were not even SFRA members. But I find that I am unable to serve the best interests of SFRA or of my own career by continuing to bumble along alone as Editor.

Plus with the recent sales in my professional fiction-writing career, I feel that my talents could best serve my own career by concentrating on fiction, and best serve the interests of SFRA by helping new Editor Amy Sisson as Associate Editor, continuing to provide information, reviews, and materials for SFRA, but not trying to steer the helm alone. And also to provide the continuing excellence of SFRA Conferences, in the 1995 Conference to be held in either SoCal or Phoenix, Arizona.

I will continue to serve SFRA and remain a member, and hope to do so again in the future, when my life has settled down. Apologies for any inconvenience.

But we go forth, with an outstanding forthcoming conference led by Betty Hull and Beverly Friend and tons of guests, with new projects and members, as we explore the strange new worlds, and interesting old worlds, of SF academe.

A very warm, heartfelt thanks once again to those who helped me in this endeavor:

Gavan McBride Albright; Angel Enterprises; AnimEigo Inc.; Author Services Inc.; Baen Books; Neil Barron; The Borgo Press; Bridge Publications Inc.; Mary A. Charles N. Brown; Burgess; Elizabeth Chater; Chaos Inc.; DAW Books; The Dragon's Lair; The EC; Elfquest; Dale & Liz Gibbons; Golden Lion Enterprises; Ashley Grayson; Hal W. Hall; Mack & Sue Hassler; Linda & Michael Heilpern; Karen Hellekson; Jerry & Debbie Hewett; Highpoint Type & Graphics; Dan Hooker; Gary Kern; Michael Klossner; Lorimar Television; Malibu Comics; Annette, Briana, Jake, Luella, Masuko, Stacie, and William Mallett; Frank McConnell; B. Diane Miller; Michelle Montano; Gladys L. Murphy; Miriam Pace; Roger Palmer; Paramount Pictures; Wendy & Richard Pini; Pocket Books; Michele Riddle; Robert Reginald; Leonard, Theodora & Janice Replogle; Cornel & Joana Robu; Richard Rogers; Furumi Sano; George E. Slusser; Star Trek Books; Shoshona Stocking; Paula M. Strain; Nan Sumski; Russ Tate; Brian Thomsen; TSR Books; Van Volumes Ltd.; Barbra Wallace; Warp Graphics; Will Weisser; Scott Welch; Gary Westfahl; Milton Wolf; and Elsie & Betsy Wollheim; and countless others in many important ways.

I am especially grateful to Clint Zehner, Arthur Loy Holcomb, and David Barber in these last days for uncountable support and encouragement, but most of all to Kimberly J. Baltzer for everything she's been through with me....heartfelt thanks.

Ad astra!

—Daryl F. Mallett
GENERAL MISCELLANY

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Date of publication as shown. (P)=publication confirmed, (R)=reprint. All unconfirmed dates are tentative, delays are common. Most original books have been or will be reviewed in these pages. These books listed here have never been reviewed in SFRAR.

REFERENCE

Flaum, Eric & David Pandy. The Encyclopedia of Mythology.


**History & Criticism**


Asimov, Isaac & Frederik Pohl. *Our Angry Earth.* Tor, Apr 1993 (R).


Costello, Matthew J. How to Write Science Fiction. Paragon House (P).
Cranch, Christopher Pearse. Three Children’s Novels by Christopher Pearse Cranch, edited by Greta D. Little & Joel Myerson. Univ. of Georgia Pr., 1993.
Hanson, Bruce K. The Peter Pan Chronicles: The Nearly 100-Year History of the “Boy Who Wouldn’t Grow Up”. Carol Publishing/Birch Lane, May 1993.
Hasse, Donald. The Reception of Grimm’s Fairy Tales; Responses, Reactions, Revisions. Wayne State Univ. Pr., 1993.
Hawk, Pat. Hawk’s Author’s Pseudonyms for Book Collectors. Pat Hawk, May 1993.


Author Studies


SFRA Review #211, May/June 1994


**FILM & TV & THEATRE**


[Reviewed by Ron G & Jan Wolfe in *The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. For a copy, contact me. —D.F.M.]


16


Salwolke, Scott. *Nicholas Roeg Film by Film*. McFarland, Sum 1993.


**Illustration/Comics**


Anon. *The Pop-Up Mickey Mouse*.

Anon. *The Pop-Up Minnie Mouse*.

Anon. *Wild Cartoon Kingdom No. 2*.


Barks, Carl. *Carl Barks' Library Album #23. WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES.*


Ketcham, Hank. *The Merchant of Dennis the Menace: Hank Ketcham.*


Lee, Stan, Jack Kirby & Dick Ayers. *Avengers Masterworks, Volume 1.*

Lohan, Frank J. *The Drawing Handbook.*


Simmons, Gary. *The Technical Pen.*

Simonson, Walt, Gil Kane & George Perez. *Jurassic Park.*


**Books on Tape, CD, Video**


—Neil Barron & Daryl F. Mallett
NEW8 & INFORMATION

CALLS FOR PAPERS

Alex Eisenstein is working on a book on the art of Ed Emshwiller and is seeking cover paintings and interior art by this SF master, and one-time Dean of Cal-Arts, to photograph for the book. Please pass on names of collectors who might own pieces by this artist.


Authors Sheri S. Tepper and Octavia E. Butler will be special guests. Other authors and editors attending include: Gene Wolfe, Jack Williamson, Joan Vinge, Joan Slonczewski, Frederik Pohl, James Gunn, Philip José Farmer, and Phyllis & Alex Eisenstein. The SFRA's Pilgrim and Pioneer Awards for distinguished contributions to SF and fantasy scholarship will be given during the conference.

Regarding the theme of the conference, directors Elizabeth Anne Hull of William Rainey Harper College and Beverly Friend of Oakton Community College comment: "Science fiction, the literature of change, is also a literature that makes connections among pasts, presents, and many possible futures. SF fragments our present and reassembles it in new ways. Will the center hold? How have writers in this speculative field viewed the components of human experience—individual, family, community, nation, world—singly or together?"

The directors welcome papers on any component in this SF "hand." They especially invite papers dealing with the works of the special guests and the other attending authors.

The deadline for paper proposals is March 1, 1994. Two copies of any proposal should be sent to Dr. Hull at the Div. of Liberal Arts; William Rainey Harper College; Palatine, IL 60067.

The advance registration fee for the conference is $115, which includes admission to all sessions, the Saturday night awards banquet, and the SFRA Hospitality Suite. The rate rises to $130 after June 10, 1994. Optional activities include a Friday night excursion to Medieval Times ($30) and a Sunday brunch ($25). Send registration fees to Dr. Hull.

Hotel rooms at the Arlington Park Hilton will be $79 per night during the conference. Reservations must be made prior to June 10th. To make reservations, contact the hotel directly; phone the toll-free number 800/344-3434 from outside Illinois; within Illinois, call 708/384-2000; or write to the Arlington Park Hilton; 3400 W. Euclid; Arlington Heights, IL 60005-1052.
For your information: Founded in 1970, the Science Fiction Research Association is the oldest professional organization for the study of science fiction, fantasy, horror/Gothic, and utopian literature and cinema. The association's goals are to improve classroom teaching, to encourage and assist scholarship, and to evaluate and publicize new books and magazines dealing with fantastic literature and films. The SFRA's members come from many countries and include instructors at all levels, librarians, students, authors, editors, publishers, libraries, and readers with widely varied interests.

For more information, contact Dr. Hull or call her at 708/925-6323.
—Leah Zeldes Smith; William Rainey Harper College

Comics Studies Anthology: Peter Coogan and Solomon Davidoff are planning a book on Maus titled, Here Our Reflections Begin: Commentary and Criticism on (and of) Art Spiegelman's Maus.

Articles and proposals from a wide range of theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary approaches, including previously published material, will be considered for inclusion.

In general, abstracts should be between 200-250 words and articles from 20-30 double-spaced pages, including notes and appendices. Manuscripts may be submitted on paper, through electronic mail (ASCII text), or on computer diskette (Macintosh format, ASCII text, or Microsoft (TM) Word). Please enclose an SASE with all correspondence. Contact Peter Coogan; Comic Art Studies; MSU Libraries; East Lansing, MI 48824-1048; 517/485-8039 (H); 517/353-4858 (B); email cooganpe@student.msu.edu

Peter Coogan & Solomon Davidoff

Midwest Popular Culture Association and the Midwest American Culture Association: The Comic Art & Comics Area of the MPCA/MACA is soliciting papers for presentation at the 21st Annual Conference of the Midwest Popular Culture Association and the Midwest American Culture Association to be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Friday October 7 to Saturday October 8, 1994. Deadline: June 1, 1994; Format: 75-word abstract.

The Comic Art & Comics Area welcomes presentations from all academic disciplines. Submissions from scholars unaffiliated with a college or university, as well as graduate students and undergraduates are encouraged.

Proposal sheets should include all the following information: name, home and work addresses, home and work phone numbers, email address and FAX number if you have these, Presentation Title, 75-word abstract, audio/visual equipment needs, day/time preference. For information or submissions, contact Peter Coogan; Comic Art Studies; MSU Libraries; East Lansing, MI 48824-1048; 517/485-8039 (H); 517/353-4858 (B); email cooganpe@student.msu.edu

For information on other areas, or on the MPCA/MACA, please write: Carl B. Holmberg, Executive Secretary, MPCA/MACA; Popular Culture Dept.; Bowling Green State University; Bowling Green, OH 43403; 419/372-8172.; cholmbe@andy.bgsu.edu

—Peter Coogan

Third Annual Comic Arts Conference: The Third Annual Comic Arts Conference is accepting papers to be presented at a joint meeting of comics scholars and professionals at the Chicago ComiCon on Saturday, July 2, 1994.
Papers may be on any area of comics research including, but not limited to: Comics Scholarship, Teaching Comics and Teaching with Comics, History of the Medium, Creator Biographies, Comics Theory and Aesthetics, Audience Studies/Fan Culture, Industrial/Economic Analysis, Gender Studies, Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*.

Faculty, students, and those outside the university community are encouraged to make submissions. Professionals interested in making slide (or other) presentations and/or serving as respondents for papers are encouraged to make submissions as well. A 50-100 word abstract must be submitted no later than April 1, 1994. Notification of acceptance will be sent on April 10. For citation and bibliography, use a style recognized by your academic discipline. Each completed paper should include a one-paragraph biographical sketch of the author(s). Completed papers should be to the program coordinator by June 3, 1994.

Inquiries, abstracts, articles, and registration forms for this should be sent to Peter Coogan; Comic Art Studies; MSU Libraries; East Lansing, MI 48824-1048; 517/485-8039 (H); 517/353-4858 (B); email cooganpe@student.msu.edu

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**MILLENNIUM'S END AS STORY AND MOTIF?** I am compiling a list (with a view to assembling and editing an anthology) of stories that focus on this century's and this millennium's end (i.e., on the years 1999, 2000, or 2001), such as James Blish's "Turn of a Century" (*Dynamic Science Fiction*, March 1993), or novels in which that topic constitutes a significant motif, such as Robert Silverberg's *The Stochastic Man* (1975). He would be grateful for any title suggestions. If you have any, please write to Dr. David Ketterer; Dept. of English; Concordia University; 1455 de Maisonneuve Boulevard West; Montreal, Quebec, H3G 1M8 CANADA. All correspondents on this subject will be acknowledged in any consequent publication.

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**I am preparing a special issue of *Library Trends* dealing with speculative fiction in the libraries. Topics can be general or specific, targeting cataloging problems, storage facilities, preservation, specific difficulties in this field, lack of information, miscataloging, purchasing & ordering, ILL, or more. Please query or send a prospectus/abstract to me at: Daryl F. Mallett; 11461 Magnolia Avenue #251; Riverside, CA 92505.**

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**THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA GALACTICA:** I've been engaged by Prentice Hall to produce *The Encyclopaedia Galactica*, a reference work consisting of three cross-referenced volumes called *The Encyclopaedia Galactica, Fantasia*, and *Horrifica*. The project survived a change of staff at the publisher as a number of irreconcilable creative differences between myself and my ex-collaborator, Michael Kurland. Each volume will feature the following articles/appendices:
1. Biographical profiles of authors, artists, and editors.

2. Bibliographies of all the author's fiction books (giving publication dates & awards received) listed in series/alpha order, plus up to five nonfiction books or articles as well as produced screenplays and for tv series experience (including animations). Noteworthy stories will be covered within each biography. Forthcoming books will be listed as well as works in progress.

3. Ephemera—board and computer games, etc.

4. Films Reviews—About 100 per volume.

5. Professional and fan organizations and awards.

6. Photos by Christine Valada, who is responsible for the "Wall of Fame" shown at WorldCons.

7. Publishing—small presses, prozines, fanzines, Science Fiction Book Club, series (e.g., Ace Science Fiction Specials, Ballantine Adult Fantasy, Forgotten Fantasy).

8. Signature Pieces (see article on same).

9. Topics—Articles on everything from Space Travel to The Living Dead to Arthurian Fantasy.

Signature Pieces: Some of the field's finest writers were invited to contribute. The result: these original articles:


I'm looking for other professional writers and researchers interested in contributing author profiles and/or specific theme entries of one paragraph to 2,500 words. Please write to me at 8740 Penfield Avenue; Northridge, CA 91324-3224 for rates, guidelines, and master list. You can also send e-mail via any of these on-line services: AOL (LydiaM); CompuServe (70720,604); and GEnie (LMarano1).

—Lydia Marano

**COMIC BOOKS AND LIBRARIES:** For the journal *Popular Culture in Libraries*. Anyone interested in writing articles examining any aspects of comic books or related materials (comic strips, big-little books, etc.) in relation to libraries,
should contact issue editors: Doug Highsmith; University Library Reference;
California State University, Fullerton; Fullerton, CA 92634-4150; 714/773-
2976; FAX 714/773-2439, or Allen Ellis above. Deadline for submission of
manuscripts is June 30, 1994.

—Neil Barron

JOURNAL OF THE FANTASTIC IN THE ARTS: Editor Carl B. Yoke is
seeking papers for a special issue on alienation and the figure of the outsider
in the fantastic, 3,000-6,000 words in length, following the current MLA style
manual. This special issue will appear in late 1993 or early 1994; submit
immediately to 1157 Temple Trail; Stow, OH 44224-2238.

—Neil Barron

I am putting together a collection of essays on the fiction of R. A. Lafferty, to
be called The Astrolabe Papers. I'm looking for original scholarly essays on
all aspects of Lafferty's fiction. Papers can be about a specific story or novel,
recurring themes, almost anything that relates to the work and career of R. A.
Lafferty. I'm paying $35.00 plus two copies of the book. Submissions and
queries should be sent to Steve Pasechnick; Edgewood Press; P.O. Box
380264; Cambridge, MA 02238.

—Steve Pasechnick

SFRA ANTHOLOGY: Daryl F. Mallett and I have been asked to edit a new
SFRA anthology of short stories to be used for teaching in college and
university science fiction classes. The present anthology, published by
HarperCollins, is badly out of date and the publisher appears to have no
desire to revise it. Therefore, we are selecting ideas about what you liked in
the old anthology and what you would like to see in a new one. If interested
in assisting us in this endeavor or just in making suggestions, please contact
either of us soon.

—Milton T. Wolf

INTERNATIONAL EATON CONFERENCE: An international conference on
the topic "The Time Machine: Past, Present, and Future," will be held July 26-
Wells Society and The J. Lloyd Eaton Collection of Science Fiction and
Fantasy Literature at the University of California, Riverside, the joint
international symposium will be held to celebrate the centenary of H. G.
Wells's The Time Machine. Outline proposals for the following areas are
particularly welcomed: The Time Machine as Text; TTM and the fin-de-siecle;
TTM and 19th century science; TTM and the Int'l Development of Modern SF;
TTM and Modern Cosmology: The Coming Together of Biology and Physics.
Proposals should be sent to Dr. Sylvia Hardy, H. G. Wells Society, Dept. of
English, Nene College, Moulton Park, Northampton NN2 7AL ENGLAND, FAX: 011/44/604-720636 and to Dr. George E. Slusser, J. Lloyd Eaton
"I am preparing to edit THE DICTIONARY OF LITERARY BIOGRAPHY volumes on British science fiction and fantasy authors. If SFRA members are interested in contributing an/some essay/s to these volumes, please send me a list of author/s by preference and a summary of your related expertise. I shall be happy to give any additional information as needed. Send replies/queries to Darren Harris-Fain; 113 Paces Run Court; Columbia, SC 29223-7944. Please note new address."

—Darren Harris-Fain

"I have been appointed editor of a Special Issue of SHA W which will be concerned with "Speculative Fiction and George Bernard Shaw." I am interpreting that loosely enough to invite articles on late 19th century speculative literature which may have influenced GBS and the English culture of the time. There will be a panel on this subject at both the next IAFA meeting in March and at the SFRA meeting in Reno. I welcome proposals for both the meetings and the publication. There is plenty of lead-time, so give it some thought."

—Milton Wolf

GREENWOOD PRESS: Call for monograph proposals in science fiction and fantasy. Greenwood Press is seeking proposals for book-length, single-authored scholarly volumes in its CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY series, edited by Marshall B. Tymn, Donald E. Palumbo, and C. W. Sullivan III. Proposals should include a brief prospectus, a table of contents, a one-paragraph description of each chapter, and a curriculum vitae. Proposals on science fiction and fantasy are invited in such areas as film studies, other popular culture studies, art, science fiction, fantasy literature, mythology, and folklore.

Please send proposals that deal primarily with film, other popular culture studies, art, or science fiction to Donald E. Palumbo; Dept. of English; East Carolina University; Greenville, NC 27858. Please send proposals that deal primarily with fantasy literature, mythology, or folklore to C. W. Sullivan III; Dept. of English; East Carolina University; Greenville, NC 27858.

—Donald E. Palumbo & C. W. Sullivan III

SFRA MEMBER WORKS IN PROGRESS

Becker, Muriel. Clifford D. Simak, a revised edition of the bibliography.
Cannon, Peter. Scream for Jeeves, a collection of parodies combining the styles of H. P. Lovecraft and P. G. Wodehouse.

Cummins, Elizabeth. A Judith Merril Bibliography for Borgo Pr.

Eisenstein, Alex. Book on the art of Ed Emshwiller.

Elsbree, Langdon. Have just completed a mss. on anthropology and SF, with special focus on rites of passage and liminality in Clarke, Sturgeon, Golding, Le Guin, and Gibson.


Gordon, Joan. Book on the relationships among realism, speculation, hallucination, and metaphor in science fiction, with the working title of *Möbius Science Fiction*.

Harris-Fain, Darren. Editing *Dictionary of Literary Biography* volumes on British SF and fantasy; Book on American SF since 1970.

Landon, Brooks. *Science Fiction Since 1900* for Twayne Genre Series.

Levy, Michael. Article on YA SF as *bildungsroman*; Editing the long-delayed *SF&F Book Review Annual, 1992*.

Lewis, Anthony R. Collection of Barry Malzberg's recursive SF stories; Second Edition of *Bibliography of Recursive SF*.


Pastourmatzi, Domna. Working on a bibliography of fantastic literature (SF/F/H/Mystery) of translated authors in the Greek language, with possible publication Summer 1994.

Sanders, Joe. Revisions of Zelazny bibliography and Smith author study (Borgo/Starmont); *SF Fandom* (Greenwood); *Functions of the Fantastic* (Greenwood).

Shirk, Dora & Douglas. Compiling the most "complete" bibliography about SF/F/H...all help welcome.


Winnington, G. Peter. Mervyn Peake bibliography.

**BARGAIN BOOKS**

This (20 January 1994) list supercedes that in *SFRAR #206*. Books listed here were unsold at the Reno SFRA Conference, plus books received since then, all at savings of 40-60% off list price. All books listed are hardcover except as
noted (tp=trade paperback), are new, often with publisher information laid in, with jackets if issued. Year of publication is 1992-94 except as noted. List price appears in parentheses, selling price in boldface. USPS surface shipping costs: $1.50 first book, $1.00 each additional book, with books shipped free for any order totaling $100.00+. (Figure two mass market paperbacks=one book). Make all checks payable to NEIL BARRON, 1149 Lime Place; Vista, CA 92083; 619/726-3238 (after 6:00 p.m. Tue.-Thurs., Sun., anytime Fri. or Sat.). Please list alternates; a refund check will be immediately sent for any books previously sold. A portion of the revenue from the sale of these books will be donated to SFRA.

Reference:
Barron, Neil, ed. *Fantasy Literature: A Reader's Guide and Horror Literature: A Reader's Guide*. Garland, 1990. Similar in format to AOW, 600+ pages each, ($55.00 each), $44.00 each. None of these titles is ever sold at less than list.
Cassidy, Bruce, ed. *Modern Mystery, Fantasy, and Science Fiction Writers*. Continuum, 700 p., ($75.00), $40.00.

History & Criticism:
Aertsen, Henk & Alasdair A. MacDonald, eds. *Companion to Middle English Romance*. VU University Press, ($34.95 tp), $12.00.
Caidin, Martin S. *Natural or Supernatural: A Casebook of True, Unexplained Mysteries*. Contemporary, ($12.95 tp), $5.00.
Ketterer, David. *Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy*. Indiana University Press, ($27.50), $16.00.

Malmgren, Carl D. *Worlds Apart: Narratology of Science Fiction.* Indiana University Press, ($22.50), $12.00.


Murphy, Patrick D., ed. *Staging the Impossible: The Fantastic Mode in Modern Drama.* Greenwood Press, ($49.95), $22.00.


Slusser, George E. & Eric S. Rabkin, eds. *Styles of Creation: Aesthetic Technique and the Creation of Fictional Worlds.* University of Georgia Press, ($20.00 tp), $12.00.


Film & TV:
Clover, Carol J. *Men, Women, and Chain Saws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film.* Princeton University Press, ($12.95 tp), $8.00; ($19.95 cloth), $12.00.


Landon, Brooks. *The Aesthetics of Ambivalence: Rethinking Science Fiction Film in the Age of Electronic (Re)production.* Greenwood Press, ($45.00), $23.00.

Marrero, Robert. *Dracula: The Vampire Legend on Film.* Fantasma, ($12.95 tp), $6.00.


Nottridge, Rhoda. *Horror Films.* Crestwood, ($12.95), $5.00.


Renzi, Thomas C. *H. G. Wells: Six Scientific Romances Adapted for Film.* Scarecrow, ($29.50), $14.00.


Shapiro, Marc. *When Dinosaurs Ruled the Screen.* Image, ($12.95 tp), $6.00.


Weaver, Tom, ed. *Creature from the Black Lagoon.* Magicimage, ($20.00 tp), $12.00.

Wiater, Stanley. *Dark Visions: Conversations with the Masters of the Horror Film.* Avon, ($10.00 tp), $6.00.
Illustrations & Comics:

Hardcover Fiction:
Pellegrino, Charles. *Flying to Valhalla*. AvoNova/Morrow, ($22.00), $9.00.

Trade Paperback Fiction:
Ford, John M. *Growing Up Weightless*. Bantam, ($11.95), $5.00.
MacDonald, Ian. *The Broken Land*. Bantam, ($11.00), $5.00.
Wilson, Robert Charles. *The Harvest*. Bantam, ($12.00), $5.00.

Mass Market Paperback Fiction:
Donaldson, Stephen R. *A Dark and Hungry God Arises*. Bantam, ($5.99), $2.00.

The following mass market paperbacks are most list-priced at $4.50-$4.99 and are uniformly priced at $1.50 each. Publishers are omitted:
Arnason, Eleanor. *Changing Women*. 33
Asimov, Isaac. *Lucky Starr and the Oceans of Venus*/*Lucky Starr and the Big Sun of Mercury.*
Bischoff, David. *Aliens: Genocide.*
Bova, Ben. *Sam Gunn Unlimited.*
Bredenberg, Jeff. *The Dream Vessel.*
Bredenberg, Jeff. *The Man in the Moon Must Die.*
Cole, Adrian. *Thief of Dreams.*
DeHaven, Tom. *The Last Human.*
Deitz, Tom. *Wordwright.*
Geston, Mark S. *Mirror to the Sky.*
Gravel, Geary. *Batman: Duel to the Death.*
Gravel, Geary. *Batman: Mask of the Phantasm.*
Gravel, Geary. *Batman: Shadows of the Past.*
Green, Sharon. *The Hidden Realms.*
James, L. Dean. *Summerland.*
Jeffries, Mike. *Hall of Whispers.*
Jeter, K. W. *Alien Nation #2: Dark Horizon.*
Keith, W. H. *Warstrider.*
Kerr, Katharine. *Daggerspell.*
Leigh, Stephen. *Dinosaur Planet.*
Perry, Steve & Stephani Perry. *Aliens, Book 3: The Female War.*
Robeson, Kenneth. *The Forgotten Realm.*
Rohan, Michael Scott. *Chase the Morning.*
Turner, George. *The Destiny Makers.*
Weis, Margaret & Tracy Hickman. *The Hand of Chaos.*
Willis, Paul J. *No Clock in the Forest.*
Willis, Paul J. *The Stolen River.*

Audio:
*The Diamond Lens,* performed by George Gonneau, music by Brad Hill.
Spencer Library, ($10.00), $5.00.
The Fall of the House of Usher, performed by Lloyd Battista, music by Brad Hill. Spencer Library, ($10.00), $5.00.

Fanzines:
Approx. 50 specimen issues of recent fanzines, including many from Necronomicon Press, list-priced from $2.50-$6.00; $1.00 each, list upon request.

Comics and Graphic Novels:
A handful of these, all dirt cheap, list upon request.
—Neil Barron

MAGAZINE/CATALOG NEWS

The Brinke Stevens Newsletter No. 8 (Summer 1994) available from the Brinke Stevens Fan Club (8033 Sunset Blvd, Ste. 556; Hollywood, CA 90046) contains recent and forthcoming appearances by this scream queen, as well as ongoing projects such as Brinke of Eternity, a new comic book featuring the raven-haired beauty.


Gryphon Publications (P.O. Box 209; Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209) sends their latest catalog, a one-sheet, with information about exciting new releases and old favorites. Included: Vampire Junkies by Norman Spinrad; 3 for Space by William F. Nolan; The Sinister Ray by Lester Dent; Science Fiction Detective Tales by Gary Lovisi; Double Your Pleasure: The Ace SF Double by James Corrick; A Guide Through the Worlds of Robert A. Heinlein by J. Lincoln Thorne; The Gargoyle by Gary Lovisi; Prince Raynor by Henry Kuttner, as well as PB guides, Sherlock Holmes stories, and hard-boiled detectives. Most of the SF titles are available in hardcover from The Borgo Press (P.O. Box 2845; San Bernardino, CA 92406).

Magic Realism, Vol. IV:2, No. 8 (Summer 1993), edited by C. Darren Butler (Pvx Press; P.O. Box 620; Orem, UT 84059-0620), contains fiction by Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Jeff WnderMeer, Brian Skinner, Daniel Quinn, and Robert Pope, and poetry by Tom Riley and Elizabeth Hillman, among others.


*Tomorrow: Speculative Fiction*, Vol. 1:6 (December 1993), edited by Algis Budrys (P.O. Box 6038; Evanston, IL 60204; 708/864-3668) contains fiction by veterans like Robert Reed, K. D. Wentworth, and Nina Kiriki Hoffman, as well as newcomers Dennis Minor, Annis Shepard, John W. Randal, and Jeffries Oldmann. A great new magazine edited by a great ol' pro.

*Views from the Abyss: The Horror Newsletter from Dell/Abyss* (Spring 1994) contains a letter from editor Jeanne Cavelos and forthcoming book news, as well as brief blurbs by Robert Devereaux and Dale Hoover. Contact Dell Publishing at 1540 Broadway; New York, NY 10036.

—Daryl F. Mallett

**SCHOLARLY CONFERENCES/CONVENTIONS**


SFSF '94, June 22-23, 1994. Barcelona, Spain. International workshop on Science & Technology through SF. Miquel Barceló; Facultat d'Informàtica; Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya; Pau Gargallo 5; E 08028 Barcelona SPAIN; blo@isi.upc.es.


95th ABA Convention & Exhibit, June 17-20, 1995, Chicago, IL.

96th ABA Convention & Exhibit, May 25-28, 1996, Los Angeles, CA.

—Daryl F. Mallett

**WARP GRAPHICS FLAGSHIP TITLE GOES MONTHLY**

*Elfquest: Hidden Years*, Warp Graphics' flagship title, is undergoing changes which include a multipart storyline, greater publication frequency, a new artistic team, and the return of classic *Elfquest* cover artist Wendy Pini.

*Hidden Years*, a bimonthly publication since its inception, moves to monthly status with issue #11. The current storyline, "Shards," marks a return to the more traditional, longer quest-style stories which had earlier become a trademark of the *Elfquest* mythos.

The new art team of penciller Brandon McKinney and inker Craig Taillefer debuts with issue #12, an April release. McKinney's past comics work includes *Child's Play* (Innovation), *New Warriors* (Marvel), and assorted projects for Dark Horse Comics and Malibu Graphics. Taillefer's previous
projects include *Samurai* and *Dragonforce* for Aircel Publishing and *Planet of the Apes* for Malibu Graphics.

*Hidden Years* #12 also marks the return of *Elfquest* co-creator Wendy Pini as regular cover artist. According to Wendy, who is writing the comic along with *Elfquest* co-creator Richard Pini, the decision to return to doing covers was motivated by the content of the "Shards" storyline. Completing the new lineup on the title are colorist Suzanne Dechnik and letterer Gary Kato.

—Conrad L. Stinnett III, Warp Graphics

**COLLINS COMES ABOARD AT WARP GRAPHICS**

North Carolina based writer Terry Collins has signed on as the regular writer for Warp Graphics' *Elfquest: Blood of Ten Chiefs* comics series.

A craftsman who prides himself on his versatility, Collins has written stories in every comics genre from pulp horror to funny animal, with stories appearing in *Doc Savage, Looney Tunes, Lost in Space, Tazmania, Anne Rice's The Witching Hour, Quantum Leap, H. P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu, Archie's Pal Jughead, Lucifer's Hammer, Tiny Toon Adventures, The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, and a host of anthologies, including *Negative Burn* and *What The?*

No stranger to the *Elfquest* universe, Collins' work previously appeared in the 1992 and 1993 *Elfquest: New Blood Summer Specials*, as well as *New Blood* #8. He will be involved in generating new stories in the ongoing saga of the *Elfquest* Wolfriders' past, as well as adapting existing prose stories from the Tor Books anthologies of the same series name. Collins will debut on the title with issue #8, scheduled to ship July 22.

—Conrad L. Stinnett III, Warp Graphics

**SMITHSONIAN NEWS**

"More stuff for the 'nation's attic," a.k.a. The Smithsonian Institution. Museum officials report 1993 acquisitions include the postal uniform worn by the 'Cliff Clavin' character on the long-running TV show *Cheers*; a syringe and infusion bag used in the first human gene therapy experiment at The National Institute of Health; nearly 500 small items of *Buck Rogers* and *Flash Gordon* memorabilia; a meteorite that probably comes from Mars; twenty dish towels made from feed sacks and embroidered with kitchen themes in the late 1940s by an Aurora, IL farm woman; and a flight suit, prison suit, fur hat, diary, unpublished journal, and rug made by or belonging to U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers during his incarceration in a Soviet prison."

—Michael Klossner
ANIMEIGO NEWS

Coming from AnimEigo Inc. (P.O. Box 989; Wilmington, NC 28402-0989; 910/251-1850) in July 1994: Urusei Yatsura TV Volume #14: "First appearance of Kotatsu cat, the giant white half-ghost kitty. Jariten meets Kotatsu and invites him home. Upon seeing a kotatsu, a heater table, in the house, Kotatsu cuddles up beside it, blocking the stairway. Sakura and Cherry arrive to expel Kotatsu and find out that Kotatsu died of cold many years ago, and that is why he wants the heat. Also includes Lum-chan's Great Year-End Celebration episode."

August titles are Oh My Goddess! #4: Evergreen Holy Night and Oh My Goddess! #5: For the Love of Goddess. In #4, "Bugs are descending from Heaven, and the closer Belldandy and Keiichi get, more of them pop up! And if that isn't bad enough, the Chairman of the Board gives Belldandy a notice of recall! Are our two lovers starcrossed after all?" And in #5, "Having been recalled by the Big Boss of Big Bosses himself, it looks like Belldandy will never see Keiichi again! Can they discover the cause of their troubles before it's too late?"

Laserdisc release is Urusei Yatsura, Movie #6: "A love potion, by any other name, would taste as awful! A theatrical film produced three years after Urusei Yatsura Kanketsuhen. Ataru's flirtatiousness hasn't changed in the slightest. Lupica, princess of space, appears and abducts Ataru. Lum chases after them in her spaceship. Lupica's goal is to obtain the greatest love-potion in the galaxy, which she intends to use to induce Rio, her sweetieheart, to tie the knot. To get it, she needs the possessor of the greatest lust in the universe—now you know why she needs Ataru Moroboshi..."

And August's LD release is Oh My Goddess! #2, a compilation of Episodes 4 and 5.

—AnimEigo Inc.

1993 TOUR STORES TO RECEIVE ORIGINAL ELFQUEST ART

The thirty retail locations which hosted Warp Graphics' 1993 Fantasy With Teeth Tour will receive a page of original Elfquest art by Elfquest: New Blood writer/artist Barry Blair.

The art pages are from Elfquest: New Blood #13 and #14, which comprise the opening chapters of the "Forevergreen" storyline currently being serialized in the title. Each fully colored page is autographed by Blair. Unlike a previous giveaway, in which randomly selected stores received art from New Blood #11, Blair's debut issue, the destinations for this latest giveaway were deliberately chosen.

The recipients are: Jelly's Comics (Pearl Kai & Honolulu, HI); Stalking Moon Bookstore (Glendale, AZ); Page After Page (Las Vegas, NV); Golden Apple Comics (Los Angeles, CA); Moondog's (Chicago, IL); Heroes Aren't Hard to Find (Charlotte, NC & Spartanburg, SC); Mile High Comics (Thornton, Colorado Springs, Littleton & Aurora, CO); Steve's Comic Relief (Philadelphia, PA & Toms River, NJ); Dark Star Books and Comics (Yellow Springs, OH); Fantasy Books (Livermore & Santa Rosa, CA); Lee's Comics (Palo Alto, CA); Einstein's Comics (Rowlett, TX); Heroes (Ft. Worth, TX);
**NEW NAME FOR THE BIG BANG**

"Carl Sagan, the astronomer who helped judge a *Sky & Telescope* contest to rename the Big Bang creation theory, said the following entries show why it won't be changed: Allness, Bob, Bursting Star Sack, Doink, Go God!, Hey Looky There at That, Hot Hurl, Jify Pop. Let There Be Stuff, OK Fine, Stupendous Space Spawning, and The Whole Enchilada."

—Michael Klossner

**LIBYAN LEADER BADHAFI AS SF WRITER?**

An SF writer of unusual clout may be on the horizon. According to Chuck Shepherd's syndicated column, "News of the Weird," *The Toronto Globe Mail* reported in December 1993 "the imminent publication of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi's first collection of short stories, to be titled, *The Village, The Land is The Land, and The Astronaut Commits Suicide*."  

—Michael Klossner

**TOLKIEN ANTHOLOGY**


—Michael Klossner

**TOLKIEN, LEWIS, AND BREENS**

Meredith Veldman's *Fantasy, the Bomb, and the Greening of Britain: Romantic Protest, 1945-1980* (Cambridge University Press, 384 p., $54.95, cloth; $17.95, paper) links Britain's tradition of romantic protests against industrialized society with the popularity of Tolkien and C. S. Lewis, anti-nuclear protests, and the Green movement.

—Michael Klossner

The preview will include interviews with writers Mike W. Barr and Michael Jan Friedman. It will also include special sneak-previews of artwork for the crossover by Gordon Purcell and Terry Pallot.


—Malibu Comics

### WILLIAM GIBSON, ICE-T AND DOLPH LUNDGREN?

Yes...Henry Rollins will take to the movie screens again. This time he'll be working with Dolph Lundgren and Ice-T in William Gibson's *Johnny Mnemonic*...

—Info taken from *Concrete Corner*, May 1994

### ELFQUEST FEATURED IN MAKE-A-WISH COMIC BOOK

Warp Graphics, the Poughkeepsie, New York-based publisher of the *Elfquest* line of comic books and illustrated graphic albums, has announced that characters from the popular fantasy epic will appear in a comic book to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central New York.

The story, "Wish Upon A Star" tells how budding astronomer Stevie, while battling a life-threatening disease, is able to fulfill his dream of visiting a major observatory with the aid of the Make-A-Wish Foundation and elfin stargazer Skywise. Written by *Elfquest* co-creator Richard Pini and illustrated by *Elfquest: New Blood* writer/artist Barry Blair, the eight-page comic will sell for $2.00 with proceeds benefitting the Make-A-Wish Foundation. According to Pini, this is the first time that *Elfquest* characters have been used to help promote a national charitable program.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation was begun in 1980 with the fulfillment of the desire of a seven year old boy, suffering from leukemia, who wanted to be a policeman. Officers from the Arizona Department of Public Safety granted his wish, presenting him with a custom-made uniform, helmet, badge, and even giving him a helicopter ride. That one child's delight in the realization of his dream provided the inspiration for the Foundation. Headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, the Make-A-Wish Foundation of America Inc. is the largest wish-granting organization in the world.

—Conrad L. Stinnett III, Warp Graphics
VAMPIRE MOVIES

Fantasma Books (419 Amelia St.; Key West, FL 33040) announces the forthcoming release (September 1994) of *Vampire Movies*, by Robert Marrero. The author of *Giant Monster Movies* and *Vintage Monster Movies* presents here a 176-page nonfiction book with 150 color and black-and-white photos detailing vampire movies from the famous to the infamous.

—Furumi Sano

DOGS OF WAR

Defiant Comics released issue 1 in *Dogs of War*, a spinoff from another Defiant series. Inked by a number of talented artists like Georges Jeanty, Bob Downs, David Miller, George Roberts, and James Brown, and written and developed by Jim Shooter and Arthur Loy Holcomb, it features xenogenetically-engineered army soldiers who have returned from the far reaches of space to fight evil here on Earth.

—Furumi Sano

METROPOLIS AS "AUDIO MOVIE"

Ziggurat Productions: Third Ear Radio Theatre (P.O. Box 292; Topanga, CA 90290) announced the forthcoming release of *Metropolis* as an "audio movie." Previously released was A. E. van Vogt's classic novel *Slan*. These productions go beyond "books-on-tape," complete with soundtrack, special effects, and more.

—Daryl F. Mallett
A common denominator for the whole of SF, which would serve as a basis for a really unifying and all-embracing definition, has proven difficult to find. The capturing of the animal called "science fiction" seems to stand more chances of success using the intuitive practices of a stalking hunter rather than the scientific taxonomic criteria of Linne or Brehm. We know IT is there, we know what IT is, but we can't tell explicitly WHAT exactly it is, we can't conceptually formulate a satisfactory definition of that WHAT which we intuitively grasped to the full: *Si quaeres nescio*, said St. Augustine so many centuries ago about another of the numerous "animals" of this kind, swarming in this *selva oscura* which forever has been the world.

"What is time indeed? Who could explain it, briefly? Who could comprise it in thought or express it in words? And yet what notion is more familiar, better known when we talk about it, than time? (Because when we talk about it we understand, and it is the same when we hear someone else talk about it.) What, therefore, is time? If no-one asks me, I know. If I am asked and try to explain, I don't know."  

What, therefore, is science fiction? *Si quaeres nescio*... However, empirically there is a general, widespread consensus, shared not only by scholars, but also by writers and fans (which is very unusual!), a consensus concerning the specific kind of aesthetic pleasure that only SF can offer: it is the famous "sense of wonder" (or "sensawonda" or "sensawunda"). A definition of SF based on it hardly seems possible logically, since "the sense of wonder" itself is difficult to define.

It can be a starting point, though.

As many writers have grasped—among them Damon Knight, Peter Nicholls, Alexei Panshin—"the sense of wonder" is, essentially, an emotion of the sublime, it is the same thing as "a sense sublime," which Wordsworth was speaking about as early as 1798. This could mean that the old aesthetic concept of the sublime may be the long-sought common denominator of SF, of hard SF at least.

Science fiction could thus be defined as a literature of the sublime, as the contemporary reification of the sublime, perhaps the most privileged and characteristic of our times. "It provided a language for urgent and apparently
novel experiences of anxiety and excitement which were in need of legitimation.

* * * * *

The endless and apparently worthless controversies over the definition are not just luxuries or a scholarly whim, but a vital condition for the existence of SF. In defining its own specific character as literature, SF is confronted with its own difficulties, some of which are the same, but most are different from those occurring in the case of mainstream literature. What was a specific difference there becomes a proximal genre here, for which a new specific difference must be identified. This one, in its turn, becomes a new proximal genre (SF), for which another specific difference should be sought (hard SF).

A secondary difficulty, although it becomes the primary one in the immediate reality of literary life, where SF is obstinately underrated, lies in the difference of social status and "respectability" between the object of literary theory and the object of SF theory: literary theory proper encompasses the "mainstream" literature, the "great" literature unanimously validated and acknowledged as spiritual activity worthy of all respect, while SF theory is circumscribed to a "ghetto," to a field where outside validation of values is absent, where theoretical and critical acknowledgement is still to be won, since SF pieces and masterpieces have not gained unanimous recognition by the very fact of their existence.

The solution to this last difficulty can only be the consequence and a corollary of the solution to the first difficulty. The SF theory is still literary theory, because SF is literature. But in order that the literary status of science fiction should be acknowledged, which would grant it legitimate rights within literature, its identity must be proven first: it must be defined, delineated, separated, and named. But here we face an even darker jungle than the genological one Darko Suvin speaks about (it is the same in fact, but seen from another angle). It is enough to consult some reference works about the definition, or definitions rather, to be thrown into chaotic confusion by the multitude of definitions and criteria, which lead the most diligent and neutral observer to the conclusion that the "subject" cannot be defined. "If the test of a good definition is that the terms it uses to define its subject should be clear, readily understandable, and themselves capable of accurate definition, then few of these offerings pass. Those which are clearest are, alas, the least definitive." No approach of a certain theoretical scope can avoid the delicate problem of the aesthetic status of SF, of its nature and essence, identity, and even identity crisis.

"It Became Necessary to Destroy the World in Order to Save It." It became necessary to conquer fear and repulsion from the "Procrustean bed" which any unifying theoretical principle may turn into. That stalking hunter mentioned in the beginning could easily train us how to prevent the risk.

On the other hand, there is also the opposite risk. Reading of SF through the structuralist or semiotic grid, for example, induced a vivid rejection reaction, first of all from the writers themselves, but also from critics and even theoreticians. The reason is that such an approach is feudatory to a doctrine, to a "reductionist" ideology which disregards the concrete individuality of the
literary work, whose textual indicators it extends or contracts, whose face it disfigures to the point where it can no longer be recognized:

Both the theoretical critic and the semiotician are likely to have some trouble in showing that science fiction, as they would define it, is the same animal as the genre which goes under that name for its writers and readers.8

Nor could the concept of "cognitive estrangement" offered by Darko Suvin9 as theoretical key for the whole of SF escape the accusation of reductionism, the objection that it was "an idea derived from the Russian Formalists and Bertolt Brecht rather than from firsthand contact with science fiction.10

What, therefore, is science fiction? What is its true identity? What is its quiddity, its essence, which will be necessarily the basis for the theoretical definition of this kind of literature, as well as the critical criterion of characterization and valuation of the individual works? To say that the critical criterion is actually the same as the aesthetic criterion, and both are identical with the valuation criterion would be just gross tautology which would not take us any further. Giving the illusion of having reached the much desired common platform, this tautology has limited, in Romania at least, all critical and theoretical opinions expressed about science fiction. It is a limitation and stopping of critical thinking, in a general climate of ambiguity and indifferent general complicity, which everybody seems to revel in and wish nothing more.

As regards the definition of SF, at least its "proximal genre," there is a unanimous agreement, aesthetically warranted: SF is literature, nothing else, nothing more but, equally, nothing less. The place of science fiction is inside literature, not outside it. SF is science fiction, not science fact, not a bank of scientific ideas and non-materialized technical inventions. SF is not vulgarization of science, nor nuclear or ecological warning, it is not futurology, UFO-logy, ESP-logy, it is not dianetic, scientology, or any other religion. At the most, science fiction could become a religion of the sublime, in the sense that art, including literature and poetry, is currently said to be a religion of the beautiful, a secular cult of pleasure. "If you ask what kind of pleasure then I can only answer, the kind of pleasure that science fiction gives: simply because any other answer would take us far afield into aesthetics, and the general question of the nature of art."11

Those who cannot enjoy this kind of pleasure, who consequently do not accept it as supreme aim in literature are aesthetically infirm—they banish themselves from the sphere of literature. It's true that nobody succeeded in finding the perfect definition of literature (here is another si quaeris nescio, another "animal"). All the same, the term "literature" is fully operative. If there is no unanimous theoretical agreement concerning literature, there is a critical one, whose ultimate clauses—explicitly stated or only tacitly accepted—are the aesthetic pleasure and, ipso facto, value. These ultimate clauses are in force in the case of SF as well, granting it legitimacy inside literature.

Value, yes!—it is the banner uniting us all, only to fight one another in order to gain possession over it! Not unusual, if we think of the many other
banners such as this and even more intolerant fronts (political, ideological, philosophical, religious, and so on).

What does everyone understand by "value" and "aesthetic pleasure"? What kind of value and aesthetic pleasure does everyone require from science fiction? Does SF share with the "great" literature merely the presence itself of a generic aesthetic pleasure? Isn't the aesthetic pleasure supposed to be different in the various kinds of literature? Or is an *ad litteram* sameness required, leveling and detrimental, and in fact impossible? In what direction should we look for *value*, and what arguments would prove its existence when we think we have found it?

The opinion of the majority is directed—explicably, if not acceptably—toward what is already currently acknowledged as value in "great" literature, pleading or claiming for this "what" in science fiction as well. The labels most frequently invoked as valuating criteria in SF are a few well-known and accepted concepts, "borrowed" from outside SF: the fairy miraculous—"fairy-tale of the cosmic era" is a stereotype compliment for an SF film or book; then there are the concept of the fantastic and the concept of mimesis, the latter including a lot of exigencies which are derived from realistic or naturalistic fiction (complex characterization and profound psychology, for instance). It would take too much now to discuss extensively all these implications.12 A simple and elementary theoretical *distinguo* could solve the problem. Postulating the existence in itself of value as general requisite in literature and art, one can easily notice that there is more than one way to fulfill this requisite. Aesthetic pleasure is the general condition of value in literature and art; nevertheless, this generic aesthetic pleasure, although single as an effect, may be originated with more than once cause. Not only the beautiful may be the source of aesthetic pleasure, but also the sublime. Therefore, a value criterion derived from the sublime is perfectly possible and legitimate. A criterion both aesthetical and critical, and at the same time an organic criterion of an irreducible and irrefutable identity, is the criterion of dignity and aesthetic justice in science fiction.

Why "dignity," I don't think I need to explain. No need to comment the deplorable aspiration to mainstream assimilation at any cost, even at the cost of giving up one's own identity. Unfortunately, this uprooting or apostasy of the SF writer is not just a purely theoretical and hypothetical risk. There are so many real cases, more or less illustrious, but...*nomina odiosa*!

To place science fiction under any "foreign" aesthetic jurisdiction is both ethically and aesthetically frustrating. Aesthetic justice, like any justice, is undividable, isn't it? Science fiction, too, has the right, like any other kind of literature, to have its own and adequate literary status, hasn't it? And which would be the aesthetic concept able to ensure such a status, such a statute, for SF? What is that quiddity which can be found in SF only and through which this is what it is? What does its identity come from?

* * * * *

It comes mainly from the fact that science fiction is a fiction of science. The anchoring into science, the assimilation and appropriation of the image of the Universe as it results from the incessantly developing twentieth-
SFRA Review #211, May/June 1994

century science, ensures for SF unlimited resources to figure infinity—resources out of reach of other forms of literary expression.

"Forty-two powers of ten so far span our firm knowledge; we have only brave hints and conjectures beyond that. We do not yet know, though we can argue about it, whether infinity lies within the real world as it lies within the mind's reach"—certify Philip and Phylis Morrison in "a book about the relative size of things in the universe and the effect of adding another zero."13

At one end of this span-scale are magnitudes of the order of $10^{25}$ meters (the farthest galaxy ever seen is five or ten billion light-years away); at the opposite end are magnitudes of the order of $10^{-15}$ meters (the quarks, particles never yet seen on their own); in the middle, between galaxies and quarks, the "human scale" covers only a dozen powers of ten (from $10^9$ meters, the distance to the Moon, to $10^{-3}$ meters, the tiniest screw of a fine watch). In Lilliput and Brobdingnag, Gulliver visited the two neighbouring powers of twelve."14 "Different perspectives dependent upon changes of scale are central to many of the satires recognized today as works of proto science fiction, most notably Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) and Voltaire's *Micromégas* (1750)."15

Infinity plays a key role in the understanding and definition of the sublime ever since the eighteenth century, from Burke, Kant, and Schiller to the present; but even Burke noticed, as early as 1756, that "there are scarce any things which can become the objects of our senses that are really and in their own nature infinite. But the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they seem to be infinite, and they produce the same effects as if they were really so."16 Kant also defined the sublime as "what is absolutely great,"17 and, in our century, the German philosopher Nicolai Hartmann defined it as "the overwhelming" or the "overwhelmingly great"; and "everything that is overwhelming is meaningful by itself," added Hartmann.18

In science fiction, this meaningfulness is provided by the conceptual breakthrough19 which is triggered by fictional distortion or transposition on the scale of magnitudes (static or dynamic) in the Universe. It is also provided by extrapolation, juxtaposition, and/or oscillation between great and small,20 the reference point being the "human scale," human standard dimensions available to senses. On the scale of spatial magnitudes—cosmos and microcosm, "the great infinity" and "the small infinity," the huge and the minute, "the two abysses" of Blaise Pascal,21 are conceivable and perceivable by reference to the human-body size range (as, for instance, in E. C. Tubb's story "Evane" (1966), or, oppositely, in Richard Fleischer's film and Isaac Asimov's novelization, *Fantastic Voyage* (1966)). On the scale of temporal magnitudes—the infinity of time, instantaneousness and eternity are conceivably and perceivably by reference to standard "ephemeral" human lifespan (as, for instance, in Poul Anderson's story "Kyrie" (1968)). A certain overwhelming potential is also involved in "the third spatial infinity," which Pierre Teilhard de Chardin pointed
out;\textsuperscript{22} this infinity or "corpusculization" in the Universe, of inexhaustible complexity and variety located at "the human scale," theoretically implies an infinity of virtual lifeforms which SF fictionally filled up with its alien biology and robot fauna. Available to the senses and common macroscopic perception, by its "average," "human" size, this "third infinity" can be, nevertheless, no less overwhelming to human finitude, by its very kaleidoscopic polymorphism and inexhaustible Otherness. (To give just one example, a memorable achievement of extrapolation on the scale of alien complexity of life may be found in F. L. Wallace's story "Student Body" (1953)).

In science fiction, science enforces the sublime, for science is what makes us think the infinite and seize the magnitude, which become accessible to our senses by fictional proceedings (analogy, extrapolation, juxtaposition, transposition, oscillation, distortion, etc.). For not only "the science in science fiction," but also "the fiction in science fiction" contributes convergently to the same unique effect: experiencing the aesthetic pleasure of sublime. The mechanism of extrapolation itself, defining in SF, necessarily leads to overwhelming escalades and accumulations as compared to the limits and fragility of the human being. But still, this is not enough. Even when understood in its milder sense, mentioned above—as "absolutely great" (Kant), or as "overwhelmingly great" (Hartmann)—infinity can hardly, if at all, be "represented" to the senses, which work at "the human scale" only. However, it may be the most successfully (i.e., with the greatest artistic effect) "figured" in a concrete manner and brought to our intuition by SF—literature or cinema—rather than by any other literary or artistic form. More exactly, SF may, up to a certain point of course, "figure" intuitively the very incapacity of intuition to represent infinity concretely: and this is precisely how that underlying intellectual mechanism of the sublime, which precipitates "a pleasure that is only possible through the mediation of a displeasure,"\textsuperscript{23} is triggered in SF. (This is, in fact, the last application so far of that "analytics of the sublime" definitively performed by Immanuel Kant as early as 1790, in his classic \textit{Critique of Judgement}) In SF, as everywhere in the sublime, the specific and defining effect, aesthetic sublimation of pain into pleasure, is produced only if and only when human reason acknowledges its own freedom from and qualitative superiority over the quantitatively overwhelming nature, real or imaginary. Overwhelmed by the immensity of the physical Universe, Man is compelled to resort to non-physical reaction, to the idea of his free mind—a faculty standing above the senses, irreducible to nature and above it: "Still the \textit{mere ability even to think} the given infinite without contradiction, is something that requires the presence in the human mind of a faculty that is itself supersensible.\textsuperscript{24}

It is not an easy task, maybe it is even an impossible one for SF writers, as maintained by one of the most famous and skilled of them:

\begin{quote}
It must be admitted that the universe presents the "peak of indigestibility" for fiction writing in the whole field of our
\end{quote}
experience. For what can you do as an author with the central subjects of cosmology—with the singularities? A singularity is a place that exists in the continuum just as a stone exists here; but there our whole physics goes to pieces. The desperate struggles of the theoreticians, going on for several years now, have only the purpose to postpone this end of physics, its collapse, by yet one more theory. In fiction, however, things like that cannot be domesticated. What heroic characters, what plot can there be where no body, however strong or hard, could exist longer than a few fractions of a second? The space surrounding a neutron star cannot be passed closely in a spaceship even at parabolic velocity because the gravity gradients in the human body increase without a chance that they might be stopped or screened, and human beings explode until only a red puddle is left, just like a heavenly body that is torn apart from tidal forces when passing through the Roche limit. Is there therefore no way out of this fatal dilemma: that one must either be silent about the cosmos or be forced to distort it?²⁵

In Ancient Greece, the philosopher Zenon of Elea brilliantly demonstrated, in his famous "Eleatic" paradoxes, that motion is impossible; but Diogenes, the Cynic philosopher, tried to overthrow Zenon's subtle demonstration simply by rising and walking, the fact being in itself a sufficient proof: "Look, I walk, so motion exists." In his well-known Critique of Judgement (1790), Kant brilliantly demonstrated that the hypothesis of "worlds inhabited by rational beings" couldn't ensure a valid support for experiencing the emotion sublime;²⁶ but the writer Stanislaw Lem memorably invalidated this, in his masterly novel, Solaris (1961). In his striking essay "Cosmology and Science Fiction" (1977), the same Lem also brilliantly demonstrated that the literary figuration of a cosmic "singularity" is impossible; but the essayist's demonstration had been invalidated beforehand, as early as 1968, by the writer Poul Anderson in his marvelous story "Kyrie." (Needless to say is that the ipso facto argument does not have the same validity in the case of a philosopher and in that of a writer. The former produces ideas, which can only be invalidated on the level of ideas; the latter produces unique "aesthetic objects," aesthetic "singularities," which cannot be legitimated, but nor can they be invalidated, on the level of ideas: they can only be so as singular objects. And, for an object, the very fact of its existence means there is a sufficient reason for it to exist. Provided it has value, of course, in art unlike in nature.)

In Poul Anderson's "Kyrie," the captain of the spaceship Raven, exploring a developing singularity, is fully aware of the indomesticatable situation described in Lem's essay:

This is the first time anyone's been close to a recent supernova. We can only be certain of so much radiation that
we'll be dead if the screenfields give way. Otherwise we've nothing to go on except theory. And a collapsing stellar core is so unlike anything anywhere else in the universe that I'm skeptical about how good the theory is.\(^{27}\)

Whatever his character, the writer finds the fictional solution to perform the quadrature of the circle, to bring in front of the reader's eyes what the human eye cannot see, plus in front of his mind what his senses cannot perceive. Linking several "theoretical breaks"\(^{28}\) into one (jumps in space-time, telepathy, "magnetohydrodynamics" as a base of an alien biology, etc.), the writer succeeds in domesticating the singularity, in intuitively figuring time dilation, which equals instantaneousness to eternity, ephemerally to immortality. Aesthetically, the keystone of the story is an excruciating cathartic effect. Namely, not a tragic catharsis, but a sublime catharsis, which is the supreme aim in science fiction: a catharsis "sublimed" not from the suffering caused by Man to Man, as in tragedy, but from the suffering caused to Man by the Universe—cosmos and microcosm—overwhelming Man by dimensions, magnitude, force, speed, duration, complexity, etc. A catharsis "sublimed" from the very fact that the physical universe, such as disclosed by this century's science, is not made commensurate with Man, it does not wait for Man, does not know of Man and of the cosmic loneliness of Man marooned in this strange and indifferent Universe.

From the viewpoint of the sublime, a humanistic SF appears as an oxymoron, because of the very fact that "a humanistic sublime is an oxymoron," as stringently demonstrated by the American scholar Thomas Weiskel in his his unique work \textit{The Romantic Sublime} (posthumously appeared in 1976).\(^{29}\) Exasperated by this oxymoron, Lem said that a humanistic, "anthropocentric" SF was rather an "onanistic" SF.\(^{30}\) But at its best, science fiction certainly isn't so. If Anderson's "Kyrie" is onanistic, then Sophocles' \textit{Antigone} is onanistic, too. The paradigm of plot and characters' relationship is similar to a certain point (\textit{Antigone} = Eloise Waggoner; \textit{Creon} = Captain Teodor Szili; \textit{Polynikes} = Lucifer). The aesthetic effect is the same, catharsis is in both of them, but a tragic one in the ancient tragedy, while a sublime one in modern science fiction.

There is catharsis in this paragon hard SF story, and there is suffering, there is pain, from which this catharsis results; but what kind of pain is it, what is its cause, its source? Does this pain come from human beings (including the self), or does it come from "gods," like with ancient Greeks? Is there a \textit{hybris} of Man, the jealousy or anger of the gods, or an ill fate, a \textit{moirai}? No, there is only the cosmic loneliness of Man and his otherness in front of his indifferent, though not hostile, cosmos. "Loneliness and otherness can come near breaking you out here, without adding suspicion of your fellows"—the same spaceship captain thought. There is no need, in science fiction, for pain coming from humans, from fellow-beings, nor from gods, whose existence has become a dispensable hypothesis not only to science, but also to science fiction.

It is enough to have an intuitive short circuit, a sudden shift or transposition on the scale of magnitudes in the Universe, a striking
juxtaposition of two or more orders of size located on this span-scale at large distances from one another, in order to precipitate the effect of "cognitive estrangement" or "conceptual breakthrough," operated in SF by analogy or, even more frequently, by extrapolation (i.e., projection into the imaginary). It is enough to make the senses perceive the pain of being so small in a Universe so immense, or of being so immense as compared to the microcosm so minute, or of being so ephemeral as compared to the great cosmic duration, or of being so weak in front of the great cosmic forces, or of being so irrevocably confined within ontological and biological limits, the pain of being so much stranger and lonely as compared to everything that exists or can be imagined to exist in the physical Universe. The indifference of this Universe is enough, there is no need for its "anger."

The Laws of the Universe are quite absolute indeed—and ruthlessly just. Obey them scrupulously, and they work for you; defy them, and you get crushed quite casually, without the slightest bitterness, or anger, or concern. ...Perhaps there is no God after all. But there is One Universe, and its laws are absolute, unswerving, unyielding, and enforced on us without argument.

Yet here is a fact, perhaps too obvious and unwieldy to make much of: in the history of literary consciousness the sublime revives as God withdraws from an immediate participation in the experience of men. The secondary or problematic sublime is pervaded by the nostalgia and the uncertainty of minds involuntarily secular—minds whose primary experience is shaped by their knowledge and perception of secondary causes.

In the tragedy Agamemnon, "the chorus, in a series of wonderful chants, express the quintessence of Aeschylus' thinking: Zeus shows man the path of wisdom by making him learn through pain (tōi pathei mathos). Thus, the gods, forcing men's will, do them good." There is catharsis in science fiction as well, resulted equally from tōi pathei mathos, but the gods no longer exist: there is no one in the Universe to be concerned about Man's existence, no one to acknowledge Man's presence, no one to do him good or evil, to cause him pleasure or pain. There is pain in science fiction, but it is of a different nature: it is a pain concrescent not with the tragic, but with the sublime. And the aesthetic pleasure cathartically distilled by the pain, by that "pleasure in pain" which belongs not only to the tragic, but also to the sublime, is also a different aesthetic pleasure: the aesthetic pleasure and emotion of the sublime.
But the sublime is perhaps too strong an essence, too concentrated to be administered as such in individual cases. As an aesthetic concept, it certainly has a theoretical function, not a critical one. For the critical use, we have "the sense of wonder": it is (as Peter Nicholls was the first to notice) the same thing as "a sense sublime" which Wordsworth spoke about in 1798, in his well-known poem, popularly though somewhat inappropriately known as "Tintern Abbey." nevertheless, it is, so to speak, a diluted solution of this theoretical essence of the sublime. The "sense of wonder" provides a more diffuse, more "softened" and critically more pliable expression of the same old concept and eternal aesthetic experience known under the name of "emotion of the sublime." Thus, the "wild" theoretical concept is tamed to become a current critical instrument.

And it is indeed used by SF critics and reviewers as a current and efficient critical tool. The phrase "sense of wonder" emerged, seemingly, as a spontaneous and anonymous product of the English language, having no certified paternity (to my knowledge, at least). However, it practically became hard currency in SF criticism. It is currently and naturally used in commenting on SF books: it has almost become a critical cliché. To say, in a critical review of a book or an author, that one can express this indefinite or even indefinable "sense of wonder" is undoubtedly a superlative: it is like granting the book or author free-entry to the "genre SF," or, even more, it is equal to a judgment of value, an unreserved critical endorsement.

It is what Donald A. Wollheim, for example, did in The Universe Makers (1971), when referring to Ray Cummings:

He completed Verne's work. He did not venture into sociology. He did not impair our balance by social predictions. In him, the old Sense of Wonder was at its best.38


There are perpetual surprises, constant evocation of the sense of wonder, and occasions of the most breathless suspense.39

More recently, in The Atlanta Constitution, the following could be read about Gregory Benford and David Brin's Heart of the Comet (1986):

This is "hard" science fiction at its best. It brings us to the cutting edge of current scientific research, but always keeps the human issues forefront of the story. We see the best and worst of human nature in how the different colonists react to the hostile world of the comet. At the same time, the novel provokes that "sense of wonder" that has been the hallmark of "hard" SF.40
I don't know, unfortunately, who the author of these assertions is, but I think he or she is right. The sense of wonder is indeed a hallmark of hard SF and, from my point of view, it is only natural to be so. Although, practically in all major SF topics and motifs, belonging to both hard and soft SF, a certain overwhelming potential is involved, as mentioned above, it is more directly and strikingly operating in "hard" themes and topics: black holes, computers, faster-than-light velocities, the fourth dimension, gravity, nuclear power, power sources, rockets, space flight and ships, stars, technology, terraforming, time paradoxes, time travel, a.o., or any other topics derived from the "hard sciences" (astronomy, cosmology, cybernetics, mathematics, physics, a.o.)41 Of course, not only the "soft sciences," but also "pseudo-sciences," and even "imaginary sciences" can provide overwhelming factors (e.g., Isaac Asimov's "psychohistory" and "positronic" brains of his robots; A. E. van Vogt's "nexialism"; Ursula K. Le Guin's "terolinguistics" and "ansible"; Bob Shaw's "slow glass"; and so on). All the same, the "overwhelmingly great" and, consequently, the sublime, are at home especially in hard SF.

It is "the science in science fiction" that ultimately establishes the relationship and basic delimitations between science fiction and realistic fiction, between science fiction and pure fantastic fiction, between science fiction and science fantasy, between hard science fiction and soft science fiction. The feeling of credibility guaranteed by "hard" science is necessary in SF not only, and not in the first place, for creating "that willing suspension of disbelief" which Coleridge spoke about,42 that flimsy but indestructible "realistic illusion" on which the "versimilitude" of any mimesis is based. All these fictional achievements are always welcome in SF, of course, as everywhere in literature. But it is not the essential here. The essential is that in science fiction, science enforces the sublime.

Sublime's pleasure in pain appears, Kant says, when "the subject's very incapacity betrays the consciousness of an unlimited faculty of the same subject";43 but, Schiller adds, "it must be something serious, to the senses at least, for reason to seek support in the idea of its freedom."44 And it is exactly this "serious" support or alibi of the aesthetic emotion that is provided by the science in SF, in hard SF more than in soft SF. For, the "harder" the science, the more "serious" it seems; and, consequently, the more efficiently it operates as a triggering, precipitating factor.

* * * * *

The fact that nowadays the "sense of wonder" is claimed as a hallmark for hard SF in the first place may mean that we witness a resurgence of hard SF after a period, starting in the late '60s, during which it has retreated in front of soft SF and the "New Wave." However, it should not be forgotten that the "sense of wonder" had been used and abused in SF criticism before the '60s. It even reached a level of maturation and sickness, reserve and condescension, expressed by the "corrupt" forms "sensawonda" or "sensawunda," used in fan circles. But we shall also find this kind of reserve and condescension clearly declared: SF criticism often talks of a "sense of wonder" that the field is
supposed to generate, but upon close examination that 'wonder' divulges its
close relationship to the tricks of a stage magician," said Lem in 1977 in the
aforementioned essay.45

"We sometimes speak of a sense of wonder as if it were one of the
great good things—an automate credit in the critic's account book," said Peter
Nicholls in 1972.46 in a review that surpasses by far the theoretical level of such
a scope. "The trouble is that a sense of wonder is often confused with a sense
of gullibility: the ooh's and ah's at the sideshow pitches of any second rate
carnival demonstrate a sense of wonder at its most depressing level.

"... The phrase 'sense of wonder' includes so much. It may include the
feeling of natural awe felt by a Wordsworth in a clean, empty landscape:

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky and, in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

That is to put it at one of its highest points. It may include, differently, the
exhilaration Einstein must have felt when it first occurred to him to question the
static Cartesian framework which had been used up to his time to give
mathematical expression to the shape of an entire universe.

But that sudden romantic expansion of the mind is a very different thing
from the momentary little frisson we get when we read that a cow gave birth to a
calf with two heads...47

Even so, "tired and misused"48 as it is, "that old critical phrase 'a sense
of wonder,' familiar to all SF fans"49 remains useful and functional, Peter
Nicholls admits, it "is as good an 'open sesame' as any for getting into the
question I am broaching."50 And this is important: delimitation of "the areas
where the science-fictional imagination is very strong, and those where it is
weak."51 Among the former ones, there is obviously "hard science fiction—that
surprisingly small but important branch of the genre in which the science is
central and not simply decorative."52 And the two novels reviewed here by
Nicholls—Poul Anderson's *Tau Zero* (1970) and Larry Niven's *Ringworld*
(1970)—"deserve their reputation as landmarks (spacemarks) in the history of
hard science fiction."53

Despite its high incidence and empirical action, the phrase "sense of
wonder" remains relative and ambiguous; there are very few attempts to confer
it the conceptual denotation and univocal clarity required by the logic of a true
definition. Even the all-embracing and all-covering *The Encyclopedia of
Science Fiction*, edited in 1979 by the same Nicholls54 lacks the entry which the
"sense of wonder" would have deserved. The phrase seems also
untranslatable: in Ugo Malaguti's review, *Nova SF*, for instance, the phrase
"sense of wonder" was left untranslated in the middle of the Italian text. But if it cannot be translated from English into Italian, or from English into Romanian, it cannot be translated from English into English either.

On the other hand, some intuitive approximations are available. "What we get from science fiction"—said Damon Knight decades ago in his In Search of Wonder (1956), which became a classic of SF criticism—"what keeps us reading it, is not different from the thing that makes mainstream stories rewarding, but only expressed differently. We live on a minute island of known things. Our undiminished sense of wonder at the mystery which surrounds us is what makes us human. In science fiction we can approach that mystery, not in small, everyday symbols, but in the big ones of space and time.

"...Science fiction exists to provide what Moskowitz and others call 'the sense of wonder': some widening of the mind's horizons, no matter in what direction—the landscape of another planet or a corpuscle's-eye view of an artery, or what it feels like to be in rapport with a cat...any new sensory experience, impossible to the reader in his own person, is grist for the mill, and what the activity of science fiction writing is about." This is the "classical" definition of the undefinable "sense of wonder," almost four decades old and yet the best so far, as shown by its frequent quoting. It is not logically rock-solid, of course it is rather a metonymical approach of the subject, but the live intuition guiding these metonymical suggestions is perfectly valid, even after four decades. (Which, in the turmoil of SF criticism, represents a true record.)

"Landscapes of another planet" abound in SF books and films; anyone can choose freely as many examples as one wishes. "A corpuscle's-eye view of an artery" we saw in the film Fantastic Voyage (1966), directed by Richard Fleischer. The odyssey of blind navigation, plunged in darkness, of hemoglobin cells under the obscure vaults of the blood pipes could also be watched nonfictionally on television, in straight-scientific films, impressive by their technical performance of in vivo filming. But..."what it feels like to be in rapport with a cat? A mere eccentricity escaped from the tip of the pen, without actual coverage? Not at all. In the film, The Incredible Shrinking Man (1957), by Jack Arnold, after Richard Matheson's novel, the gentle housecat becomes a fierce, threatening monster for its human master, whose body is submitted to an irreversible shrinking process. The "rapport with a cat" is entirely different in Cordwainer Smith's story, "The Game of Rat and Dragon" (1955), where the relationships between man and cat are amiable and even more, fused in a sui generis telepathic link, the only one able to generate the superhuman reaction speed required by "pinlighting"—the deadly fight against the dark monsters of the cosmic void, known as "Dragons." But...enough of these non-theoretical digressions, which I shouldn't have mentioned if they hadn't been concrete cases of the "sense of wonder."

As regards the paternity of the phrase, Knight throws no light. There is slightly more to be found from Alexei Panshin, for instance, though it is uncertain we have got to the farthest end:

It was Sam Moskowitz, writing about the sterility of the Fifties' science fiction, who first brought up the sense of wonder. Moskowitz borrowed the term from the psychologist Rollo May: "Wonder is the opposite of cynicism and boredom: it indicates that a person has heightened aliveness, is interested,
expectant, responsive. It is essentially an 'opening' attitude...an awareness that there is more to life than one has yet fathomed, an experience of new vistas of life to be explored as well as new profundities to be plumbed."57

Even this seems to Panshin too little as compared to his own experience, his own living of the indescribable "sense of wonder," which, to him, is a devastating revelation, an "epiphany" in the supreme aesthetic sense given by James Joyce to the term borrowed from theology.58

What first inspired me was the sense of wonder, and the sense of wonder is not merely what Damon Knight and science fiction held it to be...

It was this that I felt that day when I was twelve. A sense of a different dimension of being asserting itself and erupting into ordinary life. It was a revelation of new vistas of life to be explored, an awareness that there was more to life than I had yet fathomed.

It was not Knight's mere "widening of the mind's horizons, no matter in what direction." It was not merely that the amount of science fiction that I knew to exist became fifty times larger in an instant.

What I felt was something else. It was awe, and fear, and power and truth, as though a goddess had for a brief moment lifted her veil before me.59

There is no mystical revelation here, of course, it's just aesthetic epiphany, for it can also inspire verbal exaltation when the words try to describe the indescribable: the only thing really worthy to be said in a "work of art" deserving this name.

If it's not less true, though, that the sense of wonder loses its specific relevance for science fiction when equated to generic aesthetic epiphany, to any aesthetic pleasure, which can be given by any art form. It loses this way its function and legitimacy as differential specifica. For the fine sensors tuned in on the specific SF wavelength, and fused under the name "sense of wonder," will not detect in science fiction an "epiphany of beauty," like with Joyce, but "merely" an "epiphany of the sublime."

We should not let ourselves be taken in by the common meaning of "beauty," whose semantic area tends to include the area of the "sublime," with some people, at least, who don't bother to analyze their own feelings. For most of them, the immensity of the starry sky is plainly "beautiful," despite the fact that it is one of the first immemorial experiences of the sublime on Earth, a "classical" example of emotion of the sublime of nature in textbooks of aesthetics. But what intensity is more paroxysmal than the awe inspired by the stars as seen not from the Earth, but from a spaceship wholly exposed to them, and to someone who has never seen stars before in his life:

"Now," said Joe, "I'm going to show you the stars!"

Faithfully reproduced, shining as steady and serene from the walls of the stellarium as did their originals from the black deeps of space, the mirrored stars looked down on him. Light
after jeweled light, scattered in the careless bountiful splendor across the simulacrum sky, the countless suns lay before him, in every direction from him. He hung alone in the center of the stellar universe.

"Oooooh!" It was an involuntary sound, caused by his indrawn breath. He clutched the chair arms hard enough to break fingernails, but he was not aware of it. Nor was he afraid at the moment; there was room in his being for but one emotion. Life within the Ship, alternately harsh and workaday, had placed no strain on his innate capacity to experience beauty; for the first time in his life he knew the intolerable ecstasy of beauty unalloyed. It shook him and hurt him, like the first trembling intensity of sex.60

No, it is not an "ecstasy of beauty," but an "ecstasy of sublime," and this is one of the most impressive descriptions of it in all science fiction, even if it is mislabeled.

A similar objection could be made to Suvin's theoretical construction, focused on the concept of "cognitive estrangement,"61 intended to grasp the essence of science fiction and making possible its definition as a genre. But even if we limit ourselves to Viktor Shklovski's finding (from whom Suvin borrowed the concept of "estrangement"), that we "come across estrangement almost wherever image exists,"62 it is clear that this concept of estrangement may serve as "proximal genre," but not as "specific difference." In order to find this specific difference, Suvin introduces the notion of "cognition" which, in its turn, postulates the change of that novum63 to which the respectability of "specific difference" in the SF definition is transferred. This novum itself cannot be defined theoretically, supertemporally, categorically, as Suvin himself points out. It can only be grasped in its concrete, historical, individual hypostases. From this cul-de-sac, this obscum per obscuris (as this flaw of definition is called in logic) one can escape much more simply, by accepting magnitude (static or dynamic, spatial or temporal) as specific difference in science fiction, by accepting ipso facto that not any "cognitive estrangement" is defining for SF, in the same way that not any "epiphany" is defining. Specific and defining for SF is only that "cognitive estrangement" which is triggered by the shift on the scale of magnitudes in the Universe, in the macro- and microcosmos, the reference point being "the human scale" of magnitudes directly perceivable to senses. Similarly, on the scale of temporal magnitudes, placed between instantaneousness and eternity, the reference point is "ephemeral" human lifespan.

If there is a "new quality of moral judgment arising from size alone,"64 there will also be a new quality of aesthetic judgment arising from size alone. It is true that "the effects of scale go well beyond perception in engendering novelty,"65 but this implies a novelty engendered by the changes of scale themselves, and moreover by the large and sudden changes of scale.
Only this "conceptual breakthrough"—this short circuit of the mind by the sudden shift on the magnitude scale, by juxtaposition perceptible to senses of magnitudes, dimensions, durations, forces, degrees of complexity in the Universe etc. at immense distance from one another on the scale of magnitudes in the Universe, and even more in the Universe as revealed by contemporary science—only this "intellectual vertigo" is specific and defining in SF; in hard SF at least—this should be emphasized again and again. Viewed through the prism of the aesthetic concept of the sublime the whole SF territory, especially its central, vital zone, its "hardcore," is rearranged and ordered coherently to give a comprehensive general image, the uncovered subregions being minimal and non-defining.

The virtual danger of a new dogmatism, or reductionism, cannot be excluded. But this reductionism is inherent and it is accounted for by the necessary minimal "esprit de géométrie" involved by any theory (including literary) deserving this name. Any generalizing and unifying principle risks to become a reductionist and repulsive "Procrustean bed," as warned against above. This risk is directly proportional to the degree of essentiality the principle is endowed with, to its unifying, all-embracing and implicitly reductive scope. The more essential the principle, the greater the risk of being abused, the more aggressive and totalitarian it seems when confronted with concrete, individual facts which it is called to put in a coherent order. However, this is a necessary evil, a necessary risk.

For there is another risk, much greater and more serious: the magnetic needle is only useful if it points to the North.

And in science fiction, the North is the sublime. —Cornel Robu

Bibliographical Survey

In SF criticism, Sam Moskowitz is said to be the first who coined "the sense of wonder"; memorable descriptions of it offered Damon Knight (In Search of Wonder, 1956; revised edition, 1967) and Alexei Paneshin ("The Profession of Science Fiction, XIV," in Foundation no. 14 (September 1978)). The first to grasp the idea of the sublime in connection with SF and "sense of wonder" was Peter Nicholls (in his reviewing of Poul Anderson's Tau Zero and Larry Niven's Ringworld, in Foundation no. 2 (June 1972)); he was followed by Wayne Connelly ("Science Fiction and the Mundane Egg," in Riverside Quarterly no. 20 (April 1973)); David Ketterer ("Science Fiction and Allied Literature," in Science-Fiction Studies no. 8 (March 1976)); Bart Thurber ("Toward a Technological Sublime," in The Intersection of Science Fiction and Philosophy, edited by Robert E. Myers, 1983); and Cornel Robu (A Key to Science Fiction," in Foundation no. 42 (Spring 1988)).

As for the "systematic" aesthetics of sublime, the foremost remain "the founders" in the eighteenth century: Edmund Burke (A Philosophical Inquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, 1756); Immanuel Kant (The Critique of Judgement (Kritik der Urteilskraft], 1790); Friedrich Schiller (with some of his "minor" philosophical writings: "About the Sublime" ("Vom Erhabenen"), 1793; "On the Pathetical" (Über das Pathetische), 1793, 1801; "On the Sublime" (Über das Erhabene), 1801, a.o. In our century, first mention

**Notes**

1. Comparison taken from Patrick Parrinder; See Note 8.


7. The mentioning of this film here may be arbitrary, I admit that, the more so as I have not even seen it. Nevertheless, I hope the title in itself, as a mere phrase, is appropriate, even more as it is very striking and paradoxical.


11. I do apologize for this "ludus scholasticus" (confer Johan Huizinga, *Homo ludens*, 1938) and please read the restored quotation as follows: "If you ask what kind of pleasure then I can only answer, the kind of pleasure that poetry gives: simply because any other answer would take us far afield into aesthetics, and the general quotation of the nature of art." (T. S. Eliot. "The Social Function of Poetry" (1945), in *On Poetry and Poets*. London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1957, p. 18; See also the American edition of the same book: New York: Farrar Straus and Cudahy, 1957, p. 18.)

12. My first attempt to tackle these problems is to be found in my essay, "A Key to Science Fiction: The Sublime," in *Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction* no. 42 (Spring 1988). As I said there, elucidation of these problems would require a further examination of both pro- and contra-arguments.


19. The intellectual and aesthetic pleasure supposed to accompany, implicitly and unfailingly, the mind's "breakthrough" of the mystery of the world, of the barrier of the unknown, immeasurable, infinity, etc., "the shift from one paradigm to another," may be considered "the essence of SF," its specific and defining element:

Such an altered perception of the world, sometimes in terms of science and sometimes in terms of society, is what SF is most commonly about, and few SF stories do not have at least some element of conceptual breakthrough... No adequate definition of SF can be formulated that does not somehow take this theme into account.

(Peter Nicholls. "Conceptual Breakthrough," in the quoted *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, p. 134-136.) This entry is in fact the most complete and knowledgeable theoretical and historical elucidation of the theme of "conceptual breakthrough," from its mythical roots (Prometheus, Dr. Faustus) to the most remarkable SF achievements of the '50s, '60s, and '70s.

20. See Note 15.

21. Pascal's *Pensées* (1670) are a milestone in the history of the idea of sublime and, consequently, "Pascal's Terror" involves a structural affinity with modern SF, especially hard SF, as certified by Gregory Benford in his essay, "Pascal's Terror," in *Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction* no. 42 (Spring 1988): 18-20. Stanislaw Lem also invoked in this regard the *silentium universalis*, "those eternally silent abysses of which Pascal spoke with horror," in his essay discussed here below (See Notes 25, 26, 30).

22. In twentieth-century SF, and the sublime, Man is no longer "sustained between two infinities," as expressed by Pascal in the seventeenth century; Man is now sustained "between three infinities" or four, if we also consider time:

Even if we do not take into account the depths of Time—that is in an instant section of the Universe—there is a third abyss: that of Complexity... Thus it is not on two (as often considered) but on three infinities (at least) that the World is spatially built. The Minute and the Immeasurable undoubtedly. But also (rooted like the Immense
Which means, added the French thinker Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "just what we call Life" (La place de l'homme dans la nature: Le groupe zoologique humain. Paris: Albin Michel, 1949, 1962, p. 26-27). In SF, this third infinity is equally if not more productive from a quantitative point of view than Pascal's two infinities.

24. idem, p. 500.
26. "So, if we call the sight of the starry heavens sublime, we must not found our estimate of it upon any concepts of worlds inhabited by rational beings, with the bright spots, which we see filling the space above us, as their suns moving in orbits prescribed for them with the wisest regard to ends. But we must take it, just as it strikes the eye, as a broad and all-embracing canopy: and it is merely under such a representation that we may posit the sublimity which the pure aesthetic judgement attributes to this object." Immanuel Kant, op. cit., p. 507. Kant was referring here to the so-called doctrine of the "plurality of inhabited worlds," which was already developing in his time and continued to develop for a while in a stuff of nonfiction writings, forgotten today (fanciful essays, comments and speculations at the boundaries of astronomy, philosophy, religion, etc.). These writings offered, at the best, a static and lyricist contemplation of the presumed "plural inhabited worlds" and not the narrative movement and epic substance of fiction. SF would break this deadlock by specifically literary solutions, each of them unique and irreproducible, of course, as everywhere in genuine art. A wonderful solution, a true "quadrature of the circle" was found by Stanislaw Lem in his masterpiece Solaris (1961): not an "inhabited world" proper, but a whole-thinking world, an alien "one-brain planet," a superhuman "nous-planet." Needless to say, what an unparalleled overwhelming potential lies involved here.

28. "A rough count in a good local SF shop suggests that something like 80% of the material on sale is fantasy, replete with dragons, swordsmen, warlocks and what-have-you. You may like this genre—though personally I don't—but I think that most of us would deny that it is SF. Yet SF, almost by definition, requires at least extrapolation from, if not a definite departure from, current Scientific knowledge and theory. So what is allowed? No many may lay down the law; but I am attracted by Poul Anderson's rule, which he put forward in an interesting essay attached to Virgin Planet. This was that the writer may allow himself one theoretical break, but otherwise must limit himself to reasonable extrapolation. (Incidentally, we must acknowledge that he follows his own precept pretty faithfully.)" M. Hammerton. "SF and Accurate Science," in Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction No. 47 (Winter 1989/90): 70. I unreservedly agree with Hammerton, although Anderson's Virgin Planet unfortunately wasn't available to me so far. When it will finally be (dum spiro spero?) I could possibly examine this highly
promising "Anderson's rule" as a criterion in defining hard SF; (not the only one of course: just as a necessary condition, not the sufficient one, of this possible and much-desired definition).

29. The essential claim of the sublime is that Man can, in feeling and speech, transcend the human... Without some notion of the beyond, some credible discourse of the superhuman, the sublime founders; or it becomes a "problem." This is as true in Romanticism as in antiquity. "The beautiful," says Schiller, "is valuable only with reference to the human being, but the sublime with reference to the pure demon" in Man, "the statues of pure spirit." A humanistic sublime is an oxymoron. Thomas Weiskel, op. cit., p. 3. See Note 3.

30. "The SF of today resembles a 'graveyard of gravity' in which that sub-genre of literature that promised the cosmos to mankind, dreams away its defeat in onanistic delusions and chimeras—onanistic, because they are anthropocentric." Stanislaw Lem, quoted essay, p. 109. See also Notes 21, 25, 26.

31. Suvin, Darko, op. cit., passim. See also Notes 4, 9, 61, 63.

32. Nicholls, Peter, quoted entry in The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction. See also Note 19.


34. Weiskel, Thomas, op. cit., p. 3-4.


38. Since an English edition of Donald A. Wollheim's The Universe Makers (1971) was not available to me, the passage quoted here is retranslated from a French version:

Il (Ray Cummings, i.e.) a complété le travail de Verne. Il ne s'est pas aventuré dans la sociologie. Il n'a pas fait vaciller notre équilibre par des prédictons sociales. En lui, le vieux Sens du Merveilleux jouait à plein.


40. The quoted passage is also reproduced as a blurb on page iii of the paperback edition (1987) of Gregory Benford and David Brin's Heart of the Comet (1986).

41. This survey of the "hard" themes and topics is drawn out from Peter Nicholls and John Clute's Encyclopedia of Science Fiction (1979; second printing, 1981).


46-53. Nicholls, Peter, quoted review. See Note 36.

54. In his *Encyclopedia*, Nicholls is likely to transfer much of his ideas concerning the "sense of wonder" to the account of "conceptual breakthrough," synonymous to a certain point, and which he seems to feel especially fond of.


58. James Joyce coined the aesthetical meaning of "epiphany" first in *Stephen Hero* (posthumously appeared in 1944) and then, without expressly mentioning the term, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), in both of these variants of the novel, many samples of "epiphany" being incorporated.

59. Panshin, Alexei, *ibidem*.


62. The concept of "estrangement" ("ostraneniye" in Russian) was coined by Viktor B. Shklovsky in his essay "Iskusstvo kak priyom" ("Art as a Device"), 1917. Since an English version of this essay was not available to me, the passage quoted here is translated from a Romanian version: "Arta ca procedeu," in the anthology *Ce este literatura?: Scoala formala rusa (What is Literature?: The Russian Formal School)*. Bucharest: Editura Univers, 1983, p. 391.


66. "Intellectual vertigo" ("vertij intelectual" in Romanian) is a phrase coined by Voicu Bugariu, one of the foremost Romanian SF writers and critics, in an attempt to grasp
and describe the same indescribable "impression of reading" which engendered such English phrases as "sense of wonder" or "conceptual breakthrough," discussed above.
FEATURE REVIEW


As most students of serious literature know, Coover is not a conventional fantasist, but a postmodern literary "fabricator" or author of "metafiction," who has satirized numerous American cultural icons from the babysitter to Richard Nixon. Even before he wrote the supreme text for Nixon haters in *The Public Burning*, Coover had cauterized small town hypocrisy and wacky religious fanaticism in his first novel, *The Origin of the Brunists*, which won the William Faulkner award for 1966. That was followed by Coover's high-spirited satire on theology, which portrayed the Christian God as the ultimate player of fantasy baseball in *The Universal Baseball Association* (1968).

Numerous metafictional exercises and titles followed, along with awards, honors, and grants. Coover, who grew up in Southern Illinois, the son of a small town newspaperman, has spent a lot of energy and talent battling the forces of ignorance and inhumanity, and trying to exorcise the demons who have stymied the progress of twentieth century liberal humanism.

Coover's position in literary history as a political satirist and as an innovator in fictional technique are assured. Whatever positive goals Richard Nixon accomplished, Coover's *The Public Burning*, portraying Nixon's role in the McCarthy Era and the Rosenberg case, will always rank as probably the best of the books that captured Nixon's moral hypocrisy—at least for those, like me, who remember Nixon's presidency as mostly a season in hell.

Similarly, Coover's collection of early postmodern stories, *Pricksongs and Descants* (1969), will surely rank as one of the influential collections of "metafiction," as Robert Scholes and other scholars have argued. But to see Coover as merely a satirist or a prankish innovator, however, is not to grant him the stature he deserves as an artist. Perhaps Coover's predilection for intellectual slapstick and farce has probably proven a handicap here: unless you happen to be a continental writer, or Samuel Beckett, it can be hard to be a metaphysical comedian and retain the final accolades of some contemporary American academic critics or voting members of the literary establishment, not to mention the committees who choose the Nobel laureates.

There also has arisen a curious latter day response to Coover on the part of some the very readers who should admire his work the most: not long ago, a sensitive liberal academic
poet who liked Coover's satire on Nixon complained to me privately that he found the "presence of too much violence against women" in Coover's work troubling. Aside from ignoring the satirical or mimetic context of such events in Coover, I have to wonder if the "politically correct" among us have ever heard of Henry James' principle of allowing the artist to have his subject.

At any rate, Pinocchio in Venice will probably add luster to Coover's reputation as a mature artist with a personal vision, though his audience is always likely to be limited to academic scholars, other highbrow critics, and the small audience of non-professional readers of postmodern fiction. This Pinocchio novel reworks many of the pratfalls and slapstick devices he has been using for two decades, as well as the priapic and scatological metaphors; but instead of targeting a particular institution or person, the novel offers a comment on mortality and the limitations of human achievement.

In Pinocchio, the classic children's fantasy by Carlo Lorenzini (which he published under the pseudonym of C. Collodi, using the name of his native village), the main character was a wooden puppet whose energy and mischief created a series of comic misadventures, including an ill-advised form with commedia dell'arte marionettes, a miserable time when he was transformed into a donkey, and a perilous undersea trip in the stomach of a monstrous fish. But when Pinocchio developed a conscience and a sense of compassion, the Blue Fairy granted his desire to become a "real boy." Of course, in the Disney movie version, the story is sentimentalized and the satire was blunted. Despite some fine innovative animation for the early '40s, the Disney people made Pinocchio into a lovable little waif and the Blue Fairy became an animated blond vaguely resembling Betty Grable.

Lorenzini's original story is much tougher in tone, and his Pinocchio fairly bounces with folly and mischief, not to mention a little malice. Of course, sophisticated readers should have no trouble recognizing that Lorenzini's fantasy, like most Victorian children's fantasies, is a fable about growing up, with a fairly Victorian theme about the importance of acting responsibly.

Likewise, scholars of literature have noted the influence of commedia dell'arte characters and Lucius Apuleius' Golden Ass on Lorenzini's story (influences Coover calls attention to).

But once Pinocchio became a human, how did he use his life? And, being human, he was of course subject to aging and mortality like the rest of us, though we seldom bother to think about that.

In Pinocchio in Venice, Coover has reversed the plot of Lorenzini's story. In his ninety years of life as a human, Pinocchio has followed the Blue Fairy's wishes all too well, and after emigrating to America, he has become Dr. Pinenut and devoted his life to the highest achievements of scholarship in aesthetics, philosophy, and theology, winning not one, but two Nobel prizes. Now, in his nineties, he returns to Venice as a distinguished emeritus professor, hoping to find the proper concluding chapter for his last book and to see the Blue Fairy once more.
As Coover's tale unfolds, Pinocchio once again falls upon hard times, meeting the same characters who conned him, befriended him, or betrayed him nearly a century ago. Gradually, however, Pinocchio is losing his flesh and returning to the condition of wood; but he suffers many other indignities and misadventures, being tricked by the fox and the cat again; meeting the *commedia dell'arte* puppets again (now performing as a punk rock band); and being deceived by his friend Eugenio, who wants to industrialize the decaying city of Venice and make it a rival of such choice environments as New Jersey.

The reader soon comes to realize that Pinocchio is in search not only of the Blue Fairy, his surrogate mother, but of his lost innocence. In his zeal to become a responsible citizen, Pinocchio has lived an overly cerebral life, and now the most satisfying thing he can do is to renew his acquaintanceship with the underside of existence which he has repudiated. Finally, the aging professor succeeds in finding the Fairy, and one of the three wishes she grants him is to have his old puppet body returned to life as his human self expires.

In the literary background of this novel, there is much more than Lorenzini's fable; one august model for Coover is Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*, and occasionally Coover's Pinocchio may remind us of a more comic Gustave Von Aschenbach. However, not even Aschenbach suffered the humiliations of losing baggage, clothes, and even parts of his body, as Pinocchio does, and Aschenbach was spared farcical episodes of Coover's "carnival" sequence, where a visiting count makes a spectacle of himself and bestows on the city the gift of a lost painting called the "Madonna of the Organs," which depicts a virgin with her insides hanging out. (Clearly, Coover can imagine something more grotesque than the self-exposures of a certain American rock icon.)

Although Coover's intellectual fantasy is audaciously conceived, and narrated with meticulous attention to detail, its action remains curiously abstract. Like many postmodern authors, Coover employs the present tense for his narrator, but his style is so elaborately baroque, relying heavily on asides and endless subordinate clauses, that the telling of the story sometimes suggests a Faulkner who has read Joyce's *Ulysses* once too often.

Another feature of the novel which may drive off all but the most dedicated and mature readers of postmodern fiction is the obsessive inversion of religious imagery into sexual and scatological references. The publisher's blurb speaks of Coover's work as being "deliciously wicked," but there may be a little too much of a good thing in this slapstick "wickedness."

Nevertheless, as a meditation on aging and mortality, Coover's novel succeeds in spite of its excesses. Moreover, some of Coover's best comic touches come at the expense of academia. As a professor at Brown University, Coover has plenty of experience in this realm. It's hard not to like a novel where the protagonist's metaphor for boredom is a long faculty meeting discussing tenure, and where the Ivy League universities are
referred to as the "I.V." institutions because they are said to have introduced the concept of education as "intravenous feeding."
—Edgar L. Chapman
SUBJECT HEADINGS FOR GENRE FICTION

Libraries do not usually provide subject access for most works of fiction. The lists below are presented for two purposes. First, to help library users decide whether to ask libraries to expend extra time enhancing subject headings for fiction. Second, as suggestions for anyone who needs genre fiction subject headings for personal projects.

The headings SCIENCE FICTION, HORROR TALES, and FANTASTIC FICTION are already authorized in The Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) list, but are usually applied only to anthologies, not to novels. The same headings with the subheadings -HISTORY AND CRITICISM, -BIBLIOGRAPHY, or -AUTHORSHIP are used for nonfiction works.

Two recent books have suggested improvements in subject headings for fiction. Guidelines on Subject Access to Individual Works of Fiction, Drama, Etc., an AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE REPORT written by Barbara Berman and others (ALA, 1990) and Steven Olderr's Olderr's Fiction Subject Headings (ALA, 1991) both list existing LCSH headings they believe should be applied to novels, and additional headings of their own devising which they believe are needed.

Libraries today usually have clerical staff perform "copy cataloging" of materials using bibliographical records from the OCLC database. Most OCLC records for works of fiction are created by the LC and have few or no subject headings. Enhancing subject headings would require extra work by a local library. It would probably mean shifting the cataloging of fiction from clerical staff to more highly trained, better-paid personnel capable of analyzing the contents of a work of fiction and deciding what headings are needed. Libraries are unlikely to make this change unless library users demand it. However, if enough libraries decide they need enhanced fiction subject headings, the LC may agree to change its policy and provide fiction headings, shifting the burden of work from local libraries to itself.

Berman's and Olderr's lists attempt to cover all fiction genres. The excerpts below include only headings relevant to SF, fantasy, and horror. "L" denotes a heading already authorized in LCSH (but not now usually applied to individual works of fiction); "B" is a heading on Berman's list; "O" is a heading on Olderr's list. Both Berman and Olderr urge the use of headings for names of characters and settings, such as TARZAN (FICTITIOUS CHARACTER) and DUNE (IMAGINARY PLACE). Berman (but not Olderr) includes headings which could be applied to video and sound recordings, such as SCIENCE FICTION FILMS, FANTASTIC TELEVISION PROGRAMS, and HORROR RADIO PROGRAMS. Note that whenever a topical heading is followed by the subheading -FICTION, the same heading could be used with the subheadings -DRAMA, -POETRY, or -JUVENILE FICTION and applied to appropriate works.
ALTERNATIVE HISTORIES (B)
ANIMALS, MYTHICAL—FICTION (L, O)
ANIMATED FILMS (L, B)
ANIMATED TELEVISION PROGRAMS (B)
APOCALYPTIC FICTION (O)
ARTHURIAN ROMANCES (L, B, O)
COMIC BOOKS, STRIPS, ETC. (L, B, O)
DEMONAIC POSSESSION—FICTION (L, O)
DOPPELGANGERS—FICTION (O)
DYSTOPIAS—FICTION (L, B, O)
EXORCISM—FICTION (L, O)
EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION—FICTION (L, O)
EXTRATERRESTRIAL BASES—FICTION (L, O)
EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEINGS—FICTION (O)
FABLES (L, B, O)
FAIRY TALES (L, B, O)
FANTASTIC FICTION (L, B, O)
FANTASTIC FICTION, HUMOROUS (O)
FANTASTIC FICTION, SWORD AND SORCERY (O)
FANTASTIC FILMS (L, B)
FANTASTIC POETRY (L, B)
FANTASTIC RADIO PROGRAMS (B)
FANTASTIC TELEVISION PROGRAMS (L, B)
FOLK LITERATURE (L, O)
FOLKLORE (L, B)
FOURTH DIMENSION—FICTION (L, O)
FUTURE—FICTION (O)
GHOST STORIES (L, B, O)
GIANTS—FICTION (L, O)
GOTHIC NOVELS (B)
GOTHIC REVIVAL FICTION (O)
GRAIL—FICTION (L, O)
HAUNTED HOUSES—FICTION (L, O)
HORROR COMIC BOOKS, STRIPS, ETC. (L)
HORROR FILMS (L, B)
HORROR PLAYS (L, B)
HORROR RADIO PROGRAMS (L, B)
HORROR TALES (L, B, O)
HORROR TELEVISION PROGRAMS (L, B)
IMAGINARY HISTORIES (L, O)
IMAGINARY WARS AND BATTLES (L, O)
INTERPLANETARY VOYAGES—FICTION (L, B, O)
INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL—FICTION (L, O)
JINN—FICTION (L, O, for genies)
LEGENDS (L, B, O)
LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS—FICTION (L, O)
MAGIC—FICTION (L, O)
MAGIC REALISTIC FICTION (O)
MAGICIANS—FICTION (L, O)
MAN, PREHISTORIC—FICTION (L, O)
MONSTERS—FICTION (L, O)
MOTION PICTURE SERIALS (L, B)
MYTHOLOGY (L, O)
NEANDERTHALS—FICTION (L, O)
NUCLEAR WARFARE—FICTION (L, O)
OCCULT FICTION (B)
OUTER SPACE—FICTION (L, O)
PARALLEL WORLDS—FICTION (O)
QUESTS—FICTION (O)
SATANISM—FICTION (L, O)
SCIENCE FANTASY (O)
SCIENCE FICTION (L, B, O)
SCIENCE FICTION COMIC BOOKS, STRIPS, ETC. (L, B)
SCIENCE FICTION, CYBERPUNK (O)
SCIENCE FICTION FILMS (L, B)
SCIENCE FICTION, HARD SCIENCE (O)
SCIENCE FICTION, HUMOROUS (O)
SCIENCE FICTION, LITERARY (O, proposes this heading for "works of science fiction that seek to transcend the lighter aspects of the genre and use a literary style to deal with the philosophy and universal themes of human existence." Library catalogers are not accustomed to making such judgments.)
SCIENCE FICTION, MILITARY (O)
SCIENCE FICTION PLAYS (L, B)
SCIENCE FICTION POETRY (L, B)
SCIENCE FICTION RADIO PROGRAMS (L, B)
SCIENCE FICTION, RELIGIOUS (O)
SCIENCE FICTION, SOCIAL SCIENCE (O, proposes this heading for "works of science fiction written from the viewpoint of the social sciences; emphasis is placed on the sociological structure of civilizations and the relations of members to their society.")
SCIENCE FICTION TELEVISION PROGRAMS (L, B)
SEQUELS (LITERATURE) (L, O)
SPACE COLONIES—FICTION (L, O)
SPACE FLIGHT—FICTION (L, O)
SPACE STATIONS—FICTION (L, O)
SPACE WARFARE—FICTION (L, O)
SUPERHERO COMIC BOOKS, STRIPS, ETC. (B)
SUPERHERO FILMS (B)
SUPERHERO RADIO PROGRAMS (B)
SUPERHERO TELEVISION PROGRAMS (B)
SUPERNATURAL—FICTION (L, O)
SURREALISTIC FICTION (O)
SURVIVAL AFTER NUCLEAR WARFARE—FICTION (O)
TALL TALES (L, B, O)
TELEPATHY—FICTION (L, O)
TIME TRAVEL—FICTION (L, O)
UTOPIAS—FICTION (L, B, O)
VAMPIRES—FICTION (L, O)
VOYAGES, IMAGINARY (L, B, O)
WEREWOLVES—FICTION (L, O)
WITCHCRAFT—FICTION (L, O)
WIZARDS—FICTION (L, O)

Note that Berman and Olderr use different terms for the same concept at least twice. Berman uses ALTERNATIVE HISTORIES where Olderr and LCSH use IMAGINARY HISTORIES. Berman uses GOTHIC NOVELS where Olderr uses GOTHIC REVIVAL FICTION.

The list below is from Bryan Senn and John Johnson's Fantastic Cinema Subject Guide: A Topical Index to 2,500 Horror, Science Fiction and Fantasy Films (1992). Headings such as CATS, MACHINES, and PLANTS refer to films about malevolent cats, machines, or plants which threaten the protagonists. Although Senn and Johnson's categories do not follow LCSH patterns, equivalent terms to most of their headings could be found in LCSH.

ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN
ALIENS—INVADERS ON EARTH
ALIENS—ENCOUNTERS IN OUTER SPACE
ALIENS—BENEVOLENT
ALLIGATORS AND CROCODILIES
ANIMAL GIANTS
ANTHOLOGIES
APE GIANTS
APES AND MONKEYS
ATLANTIS
BATHORY, ELIZABETH
BATS
BEARS
BIGFOOT
BIRDS
BLOBS
BRAINS—DISEMBODIED
BRAINS—LIVING HEADS
BRAINS—BRAIN SUCKERS
BRAINS—BRAIN TRANSPLANTS
BUG GIANTS
BUG-PEOPLE
BUGS
CANNIBALS
CARS AND VEHICULAR VILLAINS
CAT-PEOPLE
CATS
CAVEPEOPLE
COMIC BOOK FANTASY HEROES
COMPUTERS
CRABS AND CRUSTACEANS
DEMONS AND DEVILS
DINOSAURS
DOGS
DOLLS
DREAM KILLERS
FISH
FISH-PEOPLE
FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER
FREAKS
FUTURES ON EARTH—AFTER THE BOMB
FUTURES ON EARTH—UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS
GENIES
GHOSTS
GRAVE ROBBERS
GRAY, DORIAN
HANDS
HUMAN GIANTS
HYPNOTISTS
INVISIBILITY
JACK THE RIPPER
JAPANESE GIANT MONSTERS
JEKYLL, DR., AND FAMILY
MACHINES
MAD SCIENTISTS
MADMEN
MAGICIANS
MARS
MOON
MUMMY
MYTHOLOGY
PHANTOMS
PLANET OF THE APES SERIES
PLANTS
POE FILMS
PSYCHIC ABILITY
RATS
REINCARNATION
ROBOTS
SEA MONSTERS
SHRINKAGE
SINBAD
SNAKES
SPACE TRAVEL
STATUES COME TO LIFE (includes the Golem)
SWORD AND SORCERY
TIME TRAVEL
TWO-HEADED CREATURES
UNDERGROUND WORLDS
VAMPIRES—DRACULA AND FAMILY
VAMPIRES—OTHERS
VENUS
VOODOO
WAX MUSEUMS
WEREWOLVES
WITCHES, WARLOCKS, AND CULTS
ZOMBIE FLESH EATERS
ZOMBIES

A few other possible headings which come to mind are:

ARABIAN NIGHTS FANTASIES
EVIL CHILDREN
HORROR COMEDY
LEPRECHAUNS
LOST RACE FICTION
LOST WORLDS

—Michael Klossner
NONFICTION REVIEWS


Hershenson, Bruce. *Cartoon Movie Posters.* West Plains, MO: Hershenson (P.O. Box 874; 65775), 1993?, 96 p., paper, $20.00; no ISBN.

From the silents to the mid-1950s, Hollywood produced thousands of short cartoons. Amazingly, many of these shorts had their own posters, which were displayed alongside posters for the liveaction features the cartoons supported. Hershenson's beautiful book reproduces 391 posters and lobby cards from 1911-72. Most advertised shorts; a few dozen posters for animated features are included. Hershenson estimates that at least 1,000 more posters for U.S. animated shorts existed. He notes with regret that Warner Bros., the only studio to rival Disney, produced few cartoon posters, but most of the major characters from the other studios are well-represented. The sparse text of *Cartoon Movie Posters* is informative, but the major source on U.S. cartoon history is Leonard Maltin's *Of Mice and Magic, Second Edition* (1987). Hershenson lists the names and cities (but, strangely, not the addresses) of the major dealers and collectors in cartoon posters.

*The Disney Poster* includes about 100 pieces, mostly posters for shorts. Art for only fifteen Disney features is included. Hershenson has about as many examples of Disney art as the Disney volume, with little duplication. *The Disney Poster* has no *Fantasia* (1940) art; Hershenson has five *Fantasia* posters and eight lobby cards. Among the many pieces in *The Disney Poster* and not in Hershenson are two strikingly contrasting *Beauty and the Beast* (1992) posters. One emphasizes the dancing teacups and an exuberant Belle and shows the Beast's far-from-frightening face; the other (used much less in theaters) is a disturbing image of a tiny girl dancing with a huge Beast whose face is hidden in shadows.

Books on posters for liveaction fantastic films include Robert Brosch's two *Color Collectors Guides* (1990, 1993; *SFRA Review* #206); Bruce Wright's *Yesterday's Tomorrows* (1993, *SFRA Review* #206); Ronald Borst's *Graven Images* (1992, *SFRA Review* #204); and Alan Adler's *Science-Fiction and Horror Movie Posters in Full Color* (1977). Both *The Disney Poster* and *Cartoon Movie Posters* are gold mines of colorful, delightful, and often powerful images. Hershenson's book is the first choice because of its greater variety, but both volumes are recommended for collections on either film advertising or animation.

—Michael Klossner

Levy's book, the first on Babbitt, is a well-written and informative survey of her life and work. Following the TUSAS format, Levy provides a biographical sketch nicely enriched by his correspondence with Babbitt and her gracious cooperation, followed by a descriptive survey of her works and a brief discussion of her relationship to contemporary children's fantasy.

Having lived in more than twenty houses in her lifetime, Babbitt sees herself and her writing as significantly formed by experiences of loss and reconstruction. A key event in her life was reading Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1964, which led her to break out of the fairly restricted feminine role she had somewhat reluctantly accepted after her graduation from Smith College and begin her illustrating and writing career in earnest. She began thinking of herself as an illustrator, but soon found she was also a writer.

Levy articulates several main themes that will help readers appreciate Babbitt's works. She deals often with children finding themselves apart from their adults, so most stories involve a child forced to take responsibility and make difficult decisions by herself. Often the child must decide what to believe and what should count as evidence for belief, a problem complicated by realizing adult fallibility. Other common themes include how to deal with the weight of the past, how to balance the imagination as a source of joy with the need to be practical, and how to deal with loss.

Levy characterizes Babbitt's work as pastoral fantasy, as distinct from the two most popular trends in children's literature during her career. New realism describes authors such as Judy Blume, who write stories in contemporary settings that deal frankly with the more serious social and personal problems of modern children. Heroic fantasy describes works such as *The Earthsea Trilogy* of Ursula K. Le Guin and *The Lord of the Rings*. Pastoral fantasy, in the tradition of Lewis Carroll tends to use small-scale settings for stories of "humor, characterization, and moral development rather than action," occupying a sort of middle ground between new realism and heroic fantasy.

Readers of Babbitt and students of children's literature will be grateful for Levy's clarity and careful work.

—Terry Heller
Fiction Reviews


Disaster novels have become commonplace, but this is the first to deal with the occurrence of a supernova in Sirius B that threatens the Earth. A young astronomer has discovered a flaw in the standard model of star; a flaw that points to a high probability of instability. The problem lies in getting his data accepted in the face of a long-standing belief in the star's stability. In the meantime, a fanatical new religion, commonly known as the Doomcultists, has secretly gained access to his data and has begun preaching the end of the world. As the scientific world begins to accept the reality of the approaching supernova and tries to predict the extent of the damage to Earth, the cultists begin planning to take over the world that remains after the disaster.

The authors are both well known, and one of them is a scientist who has done research on supernovae, so the details in this novel are very realistic. Characterizations are well done, and several plot threads are interwoven to make a satisfying book.

—W. D. Stevens


Café Purgatorium is a collection of three novellas in the horror genre by veteran Charles de Lint and two newer authors. The three are not linked thematically, but only by length and genre.

The title novella, "Café Purgatorium," by Dana Anderson, is the weakest of the three. Anderson gives us nothing new in his tale of a man who buys a haunted bar and falls in love with one of its ghosts. Further, he doesn't give us characters we can care about.

Ray Garton's "Dr. Krusadian's Method," a better effort, demonstrates once again that the most terrifying stories are those that can occur in daily life. Garton's crusading doctor metes out punishment to two drunken child abusers. The most terrifying scenes in the story are not those of the doctor's treatment, but the earlier scenes of child abuse.

"Death Leaves an Echo" is the strongest of the three. Charles de Lint creates an eerie, unsettling tale of a man who wakes up from an apparent nightmare and finds his wife never existed. As he explores his predicament, he finds that he must choose between remaining in a dead woman's wish-fulfilling dream, or returning to a life in which he is totally incapacitated.
Charles de Lint is always worth reading, and we will read better things from Anderson and Garton, I am certain. Though there are good things in these novellas, *Café Purgatorium* is not strong enough as a whole to warrant recommendation.

—Laurel Anderson Tryforos


This volume represents an omnibus collection of Anderson's tales of the Time Patrol, complete with a new short novel, *Star of the Sea*, and 1988's *The Year of the Ransom* (the "little known" prequel to the author's only full-length *TIME PATROL* novel, 1990's *The Shield of Time*).

In *Sea*, agents Manse Everard and Janne Floris come upon an alternate volume of Tacitus which chronicles a temporal anomaly in A.D. 70 in which Germanic barbarians nearly succeed in a revolt against the Roman Empire. Fueled by the charismatic prophecies of the sibyl Wael-Edh (servant of the war goddess Niaerdh), the resulting power shifts echo up the timelines and threaten to dramatically alter the course of coming centuries.

Three major themes characterize this new work: first and most obvious are Anderson's abiding interests in history and culture, and his graceful use of language which elevates his subjects well above the usual stylistic trappings of the genre. Just as importantly—and this applies to the entire *TIME PATROL* canon as well as to *Star of the Sea*—through Anderson's consideration of "variable realities" he adroitly confronts the treatment of time itself as one of two major elements (the other, of course, being space) which set SF off significantly from other literary forms. By breaking the tyranny of time (usually considered even by SF's most imaginative writers as an unbroken linear progression) and thus making peace with non-linear plot structure, Anderson is thus able to infuse his characters and their surroundings with what Jack Vance refers to as a quality of "nowness" and "hereness"—a sense of immediacy born of a direct and continuous interdependency between past, present, and future.

My only negative criticism of *Star of the Sea* would be that, despite obvious attempts to flesh out the 20th century sections by introducing a romantic interest between Floris and Everard, these few sections—no more than a couple of pages when taken together—remain a rather flat sort of frame tale extraneous to the action of the main plot. However, the rich social and mythological traditions upon which the plot is built more than compensate for this one weakness, and the novel as a whole makes a fine addition to Anderson's *TIME PATROL* cycle.

—Joseph M. Dudley


If I were back in junior high, I'd love this fantasy.
I can remember very clearly the overly intellectual, ecto/endomorphic type, semantically witty and not yet quite publicly erotic, to whom this novel would have appealed (and probably still does). Richly ornamented with puns, usually of the groan-eliciting variety, the narrative is in a clear, conversational style, and the plot proceeds apace with sudden twists and miraculous turns explained with a light-to-flippant casualness. *Quest* is a predominantly mental story that seems to take place within a cosmic computer program. This is ultimately a novel about growing up and the effects (often long-delayed) of choices. As such, it is a good book for young teens painfully aware of being at odds with the "Adult Conspiracy" (capitalization his). There is also an uncharacteristically poignant tale about the magician's son gone bad due to parental neglect.

The teasing references to sex, while irritating to me personally, may actually be appropriate for what I assume is the audience ("It was all right to see a girl bare, if she didn't mind, but panties were something else"). However, the way women are consistently depicted reinforces that such writings are better transcended. "Eeeek," MariAnn cried in perfectly feminine fashion, grabbing onto me." Again, "She tells the truth about everything except her age. That's not considered lying, in females." Finally, in the frame story, the 30-year-old woman, Lacuna, is missing something in her life, and the magician of information tells her that, because she did not marry a certain man, then made her second mistake of turning 30, her third mistake "will be in turning forty, and that will finish you as a potentially worthwhile female human being." In fact, the Lacuna is magically filled by changing her past to one of marriage with three children, but this seems to me a rigidly conventional formula for "a potentially worthwhile female human" existence.

In many respects, *Quest Quest* is entertaining and fills the needs of male juveniles for sugar-coated pills of instruction. I wish, however, that Anthony would not have coated some of those pills with the sugar-and-spice-and-everything-nice that he evidently feels good about that little girls should be made of.

---Don Riggs


Set in the prehistoric Europe of 50,000 years ago, Attanasio's newest foray into the edges of magic realism imputes a contact with mystical beings, both good and evil, to the protohuman Neanderthal race. Like several now-famous authors, the most noted to date being Jean Auel, Attanasio chronicles what seems to be the ascendancy of Cro-Magnon over Neanderthal man, but attaches to it a religious fervor based on these supernatural beings, simply named the Dark Ones and the Bright Ones. According to his story of that transition, Cro-Magnon has been successfully pursuing and killing off his brutish predecessors because they are periodically possessed by dark spirits which turn them into vicious and deadly killers. Cro-Magnon, being unable to make contact with the dark and bright ones identify the results of this possession with the agents, their prehistoric enemies, hence the reason they are bent on assuring the destruction of this race. The reader, however, is
expected to accept their existence, and that there are two types of possessing spirits, one who brings brightness and one who brings ravening bloodlust and superhuman powers to the prehistoric race. Apparently, when one is open to the Bright Ones, one is also vulnerable to the Dark Ones.

The story is about three quests, all precipitated by the first in which the last of the Neanderthal men, called Baat, is trying to complete his death journey so that he can be joined at death to the Bright Ones, an uplifting overmind best reached through a cave in the northern mountains. The second quest is by a Cro-Magnon avenger, Yaqut, whose tribe and family were brutally murdered by Baat's. His fervor to kill off the last of the Neanderthal allows him to show no mercy for his own kind or others. The third is by outcast members of another Cro-Magnon tribe for one of their members, a young woman named Duru who is kidnapped by Baat to aid him in his journey. The story is a simple narration of these three quests, one for sublime release from the material form, one of revenge and one of rescue. The novel thus possesses many elements of adventure and wonder, in fact, all the elements found in contact stories by Auel and others. Its only new element is a replacement of the Bright and Dark ones for the spirit contacts in Lindholm's books or the racial memory of Auert's. Added to this supernatural element is a rich panorama of prehistoric landscape and lifestyles that pull the reader into an alternative history of early human life—a rewriting vis a vis the supernatural which is reminiscent of Attanasio's previous novel of the 17th century, Wyvern.

—Janice M. Bogstad


Banks has adopted his science fiction personae for this collection of eight beautifully crafted stories accompanied by often whimsical block-print illustrations. The eponymous story was also published as a separate novella in 1989, but is worth having in this edition. Like most of the tales, this reprinted story is set in the "Culture" of his Consider Phlebus and The Player of Games. "State of the Art" is the longest tale, about 100 pages, and deserves attention for its stylistic features, diction, method of presentation and typographic appearance. Ms. Diziet Sma is the first-person narrator reporting on a mission to observe the planet Earth. Her observations are punctuated by the fussy corrections of the protective 'droid that has accompanied her to London, Paris, Berlin and other sites in Europe of 1977 and 1978. Humor is provided through these interruptions by the 'droid as well as Diziet's descriptions of pranks played by the intelligent spaceship, Arbitrary, and its manipulative tending of the crew. The ship sends her on one last mission which develops into a dialog between Diziet and one Dervley Linter, a second member of the culture who has decided to stay on Earth and give up the privileges of increased lifespan and technology-eased existence of the "culture." She cannot understand why he rejects the range of pleasures, including the possibility of changing physiological sex, in order to partake of the pathos of human existence, one for which he sacrifices his life.
"A Gift of the Culture," and "Cleaning Up," are also set in that same universe. The "Gift" of the aforementioned piece is two-fold, an alien pistol and another escapee of the "culture" contact team who's lived on Earth for eight years. His actions in defense of an Earth lover betray the story's title as irony. The second of this pair describes the effects of other unwitting gifts, transported by mistake from a "culture" factory to an unsuspecting Earth. Another favorite of mine is the "found tale" called "Piece," and in honor of the Lockerbie tragedy and the Rushdie/Satanic Verses horror. All eight fictions partake of the sardonic humor and indeterminate significance that characterize Banks' writing in both mainstream and science fiction, but the seven short pieces read like homilies or parables. For example, "Descendent" features a robot spacesuit that convinces itself it is its human occupant in order to persuade itself to keep moving towards rescue. "Road of Skulls" narrates, from and undetermined voice, the visual aftermath of total social dissolution. The brief "Odd Attachment" presents alien first-contact through the eyes of a distracted, vegetable, lovesick alien. Each of Banks' fictions is an experience which is hard to represent and, like too little SF, an experience which changes with each rereading. These, while exceptional, are no exceptions.

—Janice M. Bogstad


I usually like the works of Barth, but I have only one word for this novel...confused. I had to look at the jacket summary in order to find out what was going on in the story. That states that Simon William Bedler, aka Somebody the Sailor, is a journalist who has fallen overboard near Sri Lanka and somehow wound up in the medieval Baghdad of Sinbad the Sailor. Somebody (Bedler) then challenges Sinbad to a storytelling marathon in order to find out how he can return to his own time. Although the story jumps back and forth between the past of the fictional Sinbad and the present of equally fictional Bedler, the problem is that each section is not cohesive enough for the reader to follow. In each section, whenever a new character is introduced, there is a long digression into everything we probably don't need to know about the. This makes the narrative hard to follow because you try to make sense of how each character is to finally fit into the story before you can fully know what the story is to be. It wasn't until about page 67 that I began to see that the main character was from the future, and not part of the past. I then had to place all the contemporary characters into their proper place without really knowing how they fit into the storyline. By the time you are around page 111-116, you think you have the pieces together and can enjoy the story, but by that time, Barth would have lost all but the most tenacious readers.

Therefore, I can only say that this book is a good wrestle, but if you want a relaxing read, you should go somewhere else.

—W. R. Larrier
Baudino's two newest novels are part of a subseries set in the same imaginary fantasy world as other earlier novels of Solomon Braithwaite. Braithwaite is a divorced professor of Medieval British archaeology, principally 5th century. He finds himself drawn into another world by a mysterious dragon. On this world, he is the young warrior-king Dythragor Dragonmaster whose services are much needed by a people at war. This subseries is the story of his waning power and the establishment of a new Dragonmaster, this time a woman in her thirties, Suzanne Helling, who is Braithwaite's Teaching Assistant at UCLA. When Solomon is called back to Gryylth, his imaginary world, Silbakor, the dragon brings Suzanne along. There, she is transformed from a plump, short woman into an Amazon warrior called Alouzon. Gryylth is one of several countries which seem to be perpetually at war. Through her efforts, the misunderstandings that have opened and reopened these wars are sorted out in the course of the two books.

While telling this story as a sword-and-sorcery adventure in a far off, fantastic land where earth magic is both powerful and accessible, Baudino intimates that Gryth exists because of unresolved psychological difficulties of both Solomon and Suzanne. They apparently knew each other during the 1970 Kent State riot and killing of four students and were on opposite sides of the Vietnam issue at the time. In the course of many battles between the peoples of Solomon's Gryth and the Dremonds of Corrin, Suzanne discovers that Gryth is an incomplete land which is surrounded by misty nothingness. It is the embodiment of Solomon's dreams about 5th century England and hate for his estranged ex-wife. As Solomon's blind spots about the necessity of physical conflict lead to more and more bloodshed, Suzanne's original pacifism helps her to minimize some of those conflicts until Corrin and Gryth eventually stop warring with each other in the first book.

The second book introduces a third country, Vayyle, apparently sprung from Suzanne's psyche. The work opens with an apparently unprovoked attack on Suzanne and Solomon's ex-wife, Helen, by a huge white worm-dragon. The good dragon, Silbakor, comes to get them and take them to the fantasy world where this worm must be defeated in order for Corrin, Gryth and Vayyle to live peacefully together. Again, many references are made to the confusion of ideologies and personal solutions that characterized the turbulent sixties and touched so many lives of those of us who were in our late teens and twenties during those years. Suzanne must overcome the moral paralysis that ensued as a result of this confusion in order to save herself and the people of her fantasy world. *Duel of Dragons* is a bit more amusing than *Dragonsword* because it uses a device to explode the very negative attitudes of males of Gryth towards females. In the midst of a battle, the troop of the best fighters in Gryth are turned into females. Some of them immediately commit suicide. Others, with Alouzon's help, go on to become military heroes, in the course of which they gradually change the society's expectations for women. One might want to read this novel simply for the amusing situations in which women who were formerly sexist warriors
find themselves in. In general, however, the two books are rather long sword and sorcery fare.

—Jan Kaveny


Bradshaw give us here a "slip-stream" work, a historical novel with just a pinch of the supernatural. Though her preface modestly proclaims the work to be mostly imagination rather than solid fact, it is immediately clear that Bradshaw is extremely knowledgeable about the classical world. The events of the novel take place in central Asia around 140 B.C., the narrator is Tomyris, a noblewoman of a tribe called the Saka, the real protagonist is a Hellenic princess of Bactria named Heliokleia. These women probably did not really exist, but the geographical units Bactria and Ferghana did, and Bradshaw knows as much about them as any modern writer can, down to language, religion, and custom. What she doesn't know, in terms of technology and everyday life, she extrapolates with remarkable vigor.

The reason the book is a fantasy is that the resolution of the plot, in which protagonist and lover escape from sure death, relies on the intervention of a two-headed monster and a heaven-sent horse. Call these *dei ex machina* if you like; they still have a magical quality.

Bradshaw's style takes a little getting used to. In the first place, she is a maximalist; every gesture, every emotion, every scene requires detailed description. After about three pages, one is willing to forgive her the excess, simply because she does it so well. The shadings of emotion and imagery justify the adjectives.

Another oddity is the point of view. Bradshaw starts scenes and episodes in Tomyris' first-person point of view, Tomyris being the serving maid of Heliokleia, then modulates into speculating on Heliokleia's feelings, and finally narrates in Heliokleia's third person point of view. This sounds more unsettling than it really is, but readers may accept such shifts of perspective somewhat grudgingly. The shifts are not careless, however, but obviously the result of a rather unusual artistic choice on Bradshaw's part.

And it is well that Tomyris, the waiting-woman, is the first-person narrator rather than Heliokleia, because Heliokleia is a complex and mysterious character. Moreover, if Bradshaw had used only Heliokleia's point of view, the heroine's nobility of spirit would have moved into priggishness. Indeed, even as it is, Heliokleia is sometimes infuriating in her love of religion (Buddhism, curiously) and devotion to duty. For example, her refusal to wear jewelry when she rides to meet her royal husband seems wrongheaded and irritatingly abstemious. Her later gelid submitting to his unpleasant sexual addresses make her a martyr, yes, but they also make one wonder why she doesn't have the common sense to tell him what he is doing wrong. Her frigid passivity whips the old king into a frenzy of jealousy; when she finally allows herself to feel passion for his son, the reader tends to feel pity for the old man, despite his lapses into violence.

Ultimately, a book like this must be judged by whether it brings a world to life and tells a fine story within that world. Bradshaw accomplishes both these tasks. Her style is highly idiosyncratic, but in the end a joy.
ancient world comes alive; the characters engage us; the events satisfy. No reader can demand more.

—Mary Turzillo Brizzi


Brennert is one of the notable people who've made the transition to mainstream writer without turning their backs on genre fiction. Most of his time nowadays seems to be spent on TV, but he presents here an interesting collection of older and brand new stories.

Brennert's research for an episode of *China Beach* is used in "Ma Qui," published in *F&SF* in 1990. The finished/mangled TV program referred obliquely to the Vietnamese notion that when dead people aren't buried properly their souls wander about as agonized, very dangerous ghosts; the story shows one G.I.'s after-death discovery that everything he'd been told about the war—along with much Western idealism—is mistaken. It's quite cynical and convincing.

"Ghost Story" is equally bleak but more confusing. The story seems to be describing degenerate survivors on Earth after starships have evacuated the rest of humanity, especially their bafflement at the projected messages left by the people who abandoned them. Maybe. Since the point is the characters' groping uncertainty, the story can afford to stay cryptic.

"Stage Whisper," on the other hand, is about opening up, becoming less isolated from others and oneself. Even though it first appeared in the third volume of *New Voices*, this is a mainstream story; the ghosts that plague a dying Tennessee are a man's own memories and fears. The story is a pretty successful depiction of people growing under extreme pressure.

The hitherto unpublished "Futures" takes this concern with human possibility into the fantastic, as the narrator begins seeing people around him as they'll be years in the future. But are these true visions? And could that mean his own future is already determined? Brennert makes it affecting and memorable.

I've enjoyed Brennert's work in the past, and it's good to see him dipping back into fantastic literature. It would be nice if he'd contribute more writing to our small pool, but it's good to catch what he does produce as he glides through.

—Joe Sanders


This is the second novel by this young British writer and shows a degree of promise. The story is set on the planet of Expatria. The actual social set-up is a little hazy but appears to revolve around a number of clans which have primacy over particular areas, whether only a small part has been colonized or whether humans range over the entire landmass is not specified. The action here involves, in part, the rivalry between two particular clans for
territory. There is also a jumble of religious sects which add considerably to
the confusion.

On the whole, technology has been rejected in the Primacy controlled
by March Hanrahan, a fact that pleases the Conventists greatly. Mathias,
March's heir, is young and rebellious. He also has a talent for electronics and
much of the trouble he gets into revolves around his passion for reading and
experimenting. Then his father is murdered and Mathias is accused of the
crime. When no one seems interested in discovering the truth, he takes the
opportunity to flee the city. He tries to make a success of his life in the port of
Orlyons, mending things and designing boats. He is forced to move on again
when assassins sent by his half-brother, now Prime of Newest Delhi, catch up
with him. He takes up the offer of Kasimir Sukui, who is in charge of the
scientific projects supported by the Prime of Alabama, to join his team. As a
result of the teams work, they bring technology back into use, the discover that
there are not only people still living on the Ark ships that brought the
colonists but a ship from Earth is also arriving imminently.

There are a number of potentially interesting themes present here:
the schism between those who want to revive technology and those who wish
to repress it entirely, the separation those on the planet and those who stayed
in space, the potential arrival of unknown factors aboard the Earth ship.
None of these are explored deeply enough. The story, by concentrating
mainly on Mathias' family problems, doesn't quite get to grips with any of these
factors. This especially applies to the religious aspect since the Conventists
turn out to be at the root of all Matthias' misfortunes, yet they take very much
a minor role despite their devious machinations offstage. Perhaps this will be
rectified in the second volume.

Characterization is variable. Sukui comes across very well as the
essence of scientific investigation with his meticulous notetaking and
measurements and contrasts nicely with the intuitiveness of others who
actually make the breakthroughs. Also some minor characters are nicely
realized, like the Prime of Alabama. Others have been skimmed over even
though they play important roles. Perhaps Brooke needs to be bolder in
presenting his conflicts. Nevertheless, there is quite a lot which will interest an
avid SF reader.

—Pauline Morgan

Brosnan, John. The Fall of the Sky Lords. London: Gollancz, October 1991,

This concludes the SKY LORDS trilogy. The plot has branched somewhat since
the first volume, The Sky Lords, in which Jan Dorvin was snatched from
home by the giant balloon that demanded tribute from the town. And the
world has opened out. Palmyra is a land-based community on the Australian
coast. Like all similar towns, they are threatened by the encroachment of
genetically engineered blight. Unlike the others, they are in contact with the
people who live in an underwater habitat. They have exchanged food for
items of abandoned technology. In orbit are several space habitats, one of
which picks up radio signals from Palmyra, another is the home of a clone of
Milo Haze. Below the Antarctic ice is the computer-protected home of the
Eloi, where Inn is now trapped with her lover Robin. Floating in the skies of
Earth are the remaining balloons controlled by the spoiled, childish computer program called Ashley and on one is another clone of Milo Haze. Events come to a focus in Palmyra as one of the balloons crashes into the sea nearby, the space dwellers decide to annex it, and Milo Haze (both of them) schemes to come out on top. The events of the book are only really comprehensible to someone who has read both the previous volumes.

Throughout the series it is possible to trace a development. In The Sky Lords, there were the balloons and the tribute towns and the rest of the world was blight-infested. The story was told mostly from a single point of view. By the end there were hints that this was not the whole picture. Volume two, War of the Sky Lords, introduces new habitats, principally that of the Eloi, and as the field of view expands, fresh viewpoints are added. In the final volume, there is a far more complex interplay of places and events. Gradually, over the writing of these three books, Brosnan has developed his ideas and the final result is a more comprehensive overview of the fate of future Earth than there was at the start. It also indicates his development as a writer.

—Pauline Morgan


This concludes the Sky Lords trilogy. The plot has branched somewhat since the first volume, The Sky Lords, in which Jan Dorvin was snatched from home by the giant balloon that demanded tribute from the town. And the world has opened out. Palmyra is a land-based community on the Australian coast. Like all similar towns, they are threatened by the encroachment of genetically engineered blight. Unlike the others, they are in contact with the people who live in an underwater habitat. They have exchanged food for items of abandoned technology. In orbit are several space habitats, one of which picks up radio signals from Palmyra, another is the home of a clone of Milo Haze. Below the Antarctic ice is the computer-protected home of the Eloi, where Inn is now trapped with her lover Robin. Floating in the skies of Earth are the remaining balloons controlled by the spoiled, childish computer program called Ashley and on one is another clone of Milo Haze. Events come to a focus in Palmyra as one of the balloons crashes into the sea nearby, the space dwellers decide to annex it, and Milo Haze (both of them) schemes to come out on top. The events of the book are only really comprehensible to someone who has read both the previous volumes.

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Sometime in a far future, on planet after planet throughout the inhabited parts of the galaxy, stasis reigns among humanity. In a last-ditch attempt to rekindle human dynamism, far-future scientists design and program a Ship, fill it with "atavistic" human colonists, then send it and them to the Arm of Stars, an uninhabited area of the galaxy. As the Ship traverses the Arm of Stars, it "seeds" likely planets with colonists. Reaching the end of its traverse, it returns to the beginning and goes through the seeding sequence again, observing and evaluating what has been happening, for the Ship's programming allows it to evacuate failing colonies and relocate them.

*A Maze of Stars* takes place long after the initial seeding. Brunner alternates chapters dealing with specific planets with chapters aboard the lonely Ship, which has taken advantage of a programming loophole to evacuate not whole colonies but individuals who, for various reasons, are about to die.

The novel's basic theme is one of Brunner's favorites: what it means to be human. And, again typically for Brunner, he examines this theme by negative as well as positive statement. Like *The Compleat Traveller in Black* (1971, expanded version 1989), *A Maze of Stars* explores the idea that "humans are geniuses at being no damn good." Here's the list, planets first: Trevithra, religious insanity leading to xenophobia (i.e., cosmic racism); Klepsit, socialistic monomania; Shreng, academic dogmatism; Yellick, excessive capitalism; Ekatila, eastern-style religious despotism; Sumbala, rugged individualism; the Veiled World, scientific imperialism; Zemprad, debilitating nostalgia. And on a planet aptly called "World With No Name," the colonists even lose their humanity completely, having been absorbed into the planet's biosphere.

Balancing all these different ways, the colonists become less than fully human in the Ship's struggle to become more human, poignant not only because the Ship is a machine but also because its basic consciousness is not human but derived from a squid. So the Ship's struggle iterates another of Brunner's central ideas: we are most human when we grow because of new experiences.

*A Maze of Stars* is not a major novel. Sure, it has Brunner's trademark shifting points of view and a full complement of science-fictional themes: faster-than-light travel (via tachyonic physics), planet building, artificial intelligence, time travel, ecology, super-biology (e.g., gene armoring and molecular nanosurgery). But the novel also has several problems. The structure is tedious, reading like a series of short stories glued imperfectly together at the seams. The "Twenty Questions" format used over and over again in the colloquies between the Ship and each set of new passengers is tiresome. I also found overly precious the names Brunner makes up for each planet's flora and fauna: tagglefish, reddery, g1eeze, frang—for me, a little of this goes a long way. But most distressing is the final chapter, where Brunner, attempting to answer all his readers' questions, in fact ignores an important
question, provides an answer inconsistent with the novel's major theme (e.g., the People actually guiding the Ship have *transcended* humanity, except for their thirst to explore a new galaxy), and raises different questions (e.g., about the claim that what seems time travel is in fact the People remembering the Ship's travels).

Still, shining through this minor and flawed work is Brunner's attractive rational humanism. So Brunner fans will want to pick it up, even though I suspect even they will find it disappointing. SF readers who are new to Brunner, if there are any, should steer themselves to the major work first: *Stand on Zanzibar, The Sheep Look Up*, and *The Shockwave Rider*. Everything here is there, and more—much more palatably, too.

—Todd H. Sammons


The jacket blurb of *The Phoenix Guards* says that Brust lives in Minneapolis and is "of Hungarian ancestry." This may indicate that English is Brust's second language. If this is the case, then it is understandable that his story reads like Dickens or Trollope or perhaps like the assembling instructions for toys written by Italian or Japanese native speakers. The language in convoluted, wordy, and difficult.

Brust frequently appeals to the reader, which is distracting. Especially so because he does it to tell what he is not going to put in the story. The storyline, when it is possible to follow, is interesting but it is a challenge to keep up.

Brust needs a firm editor with a solid hold on a blue pencil.

—Ann Hitt


Among a number of delightful books set in the same future intergalactic culture, *Barrayar* is one of the more delightful. Bujold has a talent for injecting humor into her tales of valor and adventure that transform them from the standard space opera into memorable works. This novel charts of origins of another of her memorable characters, Miles Vorkosigan, whose physical disabilities did not limit his scope in such novels as *The Vor Game*. Yet, in providing Miles with a believable background, she has also expanded on the character of his magnificent mother, Cordelia, who is in the forefront of *Barrayar*. Beginning before Miles' conception, the novel chart's Cordelia's introduction to her new husband's society, a militarist patriarchal one.

On one level, the novel is enjoyable because she sees the society of Barrayar from outsider's eyes, just as readers do. Her observations at the absurdities of Barrayaran social structures and practices are then passed on to the reader who easily can lose sight of the fact that Barrayar more closely resembles contemporary Western culture than does Cordelia's beloved native land. We laugh with her about the low esteem in which women are held,
about the credulity with which the men of this planet greet her military abilities, about the assumptions that make as to her weaknesses. We triumph with her as she uses these misconceptions to explode a plot against her husband and son, and when her husband supports her against her colleagues and his father. A typical interchange occurs when she is sent to a doctor by her husband, having just spent weeks on foot and horseback, in high mountains, hiding out with Barrayar's young prince. The doctor asks "What can I do for you," and she runs through several options in her mind, but doesn't answer. He says, "What is your problem." She says, "Exhaustion. I delivered a baby by caesarian just a few weeks ago." And he writes down "Postpartum Depression" and asks her if she has considered and exercise program. It never occurs to him that she may have been overexerted since women, in his experience, are sedentary beings. That she can buy a sword, defend her son, defy her husband and his father, plot a successful, creative, subversive strategy, are never suspected by the males of her husband's planet, but we are in on the secret. On the other hand, I find it equally as difficult to accept that so many men would be so dense as to accept Cordelia's fascination with domesticity after the kind of life she has lead and the kind of talents she has pursued previous to her marriage. But then, I have never considered myself to be the paradigmatic reader and want to make it clear that Bujold's books delight me nevertheless. Barrayar is perhaps even a little more fun for the voyeur that Ethan of Athos, another of my favorites. And I have now read Barrayar twice, enjoying it thoroughly both times.

—Janice M. Bogstad


Cherryh created the setting for the shared-world anthologies of which this is the most recent in Merovingen Nights: Angel With the Sword. Her background material is drawn from the origins of trading cities of the 12th and 13th centuries, such as the Prussian Hanseatic League. Merovin is constructed on a series of loosely connected islands with canals as main streets, making it reminiscent of 12th century Venice. While sole author of that first book, Cherryh has edited the subsequent six, including the fiction of authors Lynn Abbey, Nancy Asire, Mercedes Lackey, Janet and Chris Morris, Bradley H. Sinor, Leslie Fish, Robert Lynn Asprin, and Roberta Rogow. The first six authors on that list share this anthology with Cherryh. In general, each of the works can be read separately and without reference to the others without much disorientation. While the reader enters into ongoing feuds and relationships, they are basic enough to be understood as the normal fare for political and interpersonal relationships. In fact, the stories all assume that politics is really a set of interpersonal relationships which often cut across classes.

An attribute of her editing style is that the stories share a very similar voice and can easily be read as different viewpoints on the same set of historical events. In #7, it is the dissolution of Merovin, a loose confederate of trading families. Internal corruption is helped along by a rival confederacy, Nev Hetteck, whose agents have taken key positions by marrying into the
ruling family or by encouraging the children of the ruler, Iosef Kalugin, to consolidate power around themselves. One can almost see in this rivalry the historic Venice and Genoa. The stories of old friends and enemies caught up, either as perpetrators or hapless victims, in this chaos are followed through the various writers. This seventh shared-world anthology is a braided set of stories. The narrative of one set of characters by one author is braided between that of others, presenting a shared chronology of days and nights. The work begins and ends with Cherryh's story, "Endgame," of Tom Mondragon, a sort of agent provocateur who has been betrayed by his ambitious friend, and his hopeful lover, Jones, a denizen of the canals. Intermingled between these narratives are parallel stories of friends and lovers tying to locate and, in some cases, identify each other to prepare for the coming social destruction all are expecting. While there are six different stories, characters are shared between them, and this, along with the shared chronology, makes the whole read like one story with a lot of detail and local culture. However, it is clearly the events and setting, not the characters, that drive the narratives. The anthology should be read by those who enjoy event more than character.

—Jan Kaveny


Very cerebral for a space-jockey novel, this second in what seems to be the continuing saga of Nicole Shea, ace pilot (of airplanes as well as spacecraft), is another mystery plot. In her inaugural adventure, *Firstflight*, Nicole set out with her first space command, a milk-run that turned into a battle with space pirates and an alien first-contact voyage. Having barely survived, lost friends and her first ship, communicated successfully with not-so-friendly aliens in feline form, Nicole is back on earth for most of the second novel. She has been declared unfit to fly, but her success with the aliens has earned her, partially at their insistence, a place as their facilitator.

Claremont's novels, despite a female protagonist who fills a stereotypical, young, male role as what some would call State of the Art flyer, this novel is a delight to enthusiasts in the history of fast planes and the beginnings of the space program. It is set at Edwards Air Force Base in the Mojave desert which became famous after the book and movie, *The Right Stuff*. One can indulge nostalgia as Nicole drinks at the bar, looks at the pictures of pilots who did not survive on the wall, uses the language of those men's men who broke the sound barrier and, often as not, died for the thrill of it. But there is also a mystery. Someone is trying to kill Nicole. And since she is not important politically or strategically, it is some kind of personal vendetta. Her job, in addition to acting as facilitator, translator for the aliens, is to figure out who. Until she does, no one around her is safe and she presents an unacceptable risk to any starship on which she might serve.
The novel contains lots of pure fun as well as nostalgia. Following Nicole's reasoning processes, watching her operate, learning about aliens and participating vicariously in the life of a military hot-shot pilot are all classic adventure positions for the reader. A techie feast with a real plot, this novel cannot be overly faulted for its predictable characters and stereotypical aliens because it falls so easily into a tried-and-true SF sub-genre.

—Jan Kaveny


As the only human private eye in a world of gnomes, vampires, centaurs and other, even stranger, creatures, Garret gets some very weird cases. In this book, he's on the trail of a serial killer who kills young girls gruesomely, but leaves no blood behind. Gaffet manages to find the murderer fairly easily (people who have fiery green eyes and green butterflies coming out of their mouth tend to be noticed), although the killer gets killed in the process. Normally, that should wrap things up but, in this case, the killer just won't stay dead. There is a very old curse involved which keeps recreating the killer.

The Garret stories, and this one in particular, show a lot of imagination. There appear to be enough possibilities to keep the series going for several more books, at least.

—W. D. Stevens


Ah! Good old-fashioned pulp SF in novel form! The cover art by Martin Andrews reminds the reader of *Galaxy* or *Analog* covers a la the days of Frederik Pohl and John W. Campbell. And DAW's classy and distinctive packaging style enhances that image even more.

Set in the far, far future, with a destroyed Earth and Terra II also in wreckage, the remnants of humanity have been brought together in a loose confederation. A group of "graduate students" go on a research mission to the Dead Worlds, a grouping of twenty or so planets in the universe without a trace of life left on them, and their cores are cold as well. On Planet One, a huge hieroglyphic message has been left on the side of the planet warning all who approach away...or does it? When the crew of the *Paulus* begins to unlock the secrets of this sector of the galaxy, all hell may break loose.

A gripping tale which took me back to my brittle pulp magazines looking for more stories in the same vein, Zach Hughes continues to amaze with his diversity. A good novel.

—Daryl F. Mallett

L. Dean James is quickly developing into one of the top writers in the fields of science fiction, fantasy, and horror. Author of fantasy novels *Sorcerer’s Stone* and *Kingslayer,* horror novels *Winterscream* and *Trickster,* she now branches out into SF with *Mojave Wells.*

When an eccentric professor takes one of his graduate student TAs into the California desert, the TA is metamorphosized, a la a Kafkaesque dream, into an alien lifeform. What follows in John Caldwell’s incredible transformation is death, destruction, and the threatened existence of the very Earth and Mankind as a race.

Set exclusively in Southern California (and another world), James paints an exquisite portrait of the desert clime, the SoCal atmosphere. She painstakingly defines her characters, molding them into believable people we come to care for. The story grips from the hero on the run from page one, through the mysterious deaths and painful physical changes, to the very end, a thoroughly compelling tale. I’m looking forward to watching L. Dean James undergo her own metamorphosis from neo-pro writer into the next Andre Norton or C. L. Moore of her generation. Unlike anything you’ve ever read before, this one is a must-read.

—Daryl F. Mallett


What would happen if a contemporary Mysterious Stranger or Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg opened a shop in a small New England town and began selling dreams? In *Needful Things,* the result is a chain of horrors that leads to King’s starkest confrontation between good and evil as he resolves terrors central to earlier stories (*The Dead Zone, Cujo, The Body, The Dark Half,* with echoes of *Christine, The Talisman,* and *The Tommyknockers*) in a place where love, belief and magic tricks can fight evil to a draw.

We enter the novel mediated by an avuncular voice simply telling us a tale, one of King’s most effective narrative stances. The main movement of the novel is carefully paced, with Castle Rock gradually drawn to the new shop, *Needful Things.* A day before the store opens, a boy buys a rare baseball card for eighty-five cents and the promise to play a trick on someone later on. That establishes the pattern: townspeople come, find what they believe is their heart’s desire, and purchase it at a bargain price, plus the promise of a small trick.

Eventually, interlocking circles of purchases and promises magnifies the worst in the people: greed, superstition, selfishness, self-centeredness, cruelty, madness. Some become willing conspirators in their own destruction; several need only a final push to spiral into madness and rage. Others must be handled carefully, their needs and their secrets gradually revealed. But all are paced so that their fears explode in a single, cataclysmic day of mayhem and violence that destroys Castle Rock itself as friendship and civility dissipate under evil’s manipulation. Husbands turn against wives; mothers abandon
children; lifelong friends embrace jealousy and envy. Groups already polarized by prejudice degenerate into unthinking mobs. King adroitly intensifies his maelstrom plot by such references to Lovecraftian horrors as "The Plains of Leng" and "Yog-sothoth," and such aptly twisted literary allusions as a "Ray me/Snort me" parody of Alice in Wonderland. The result is a powerful tale of sin and redemption through trial and suffering and forgiveness, where horror, terror, fantasy, and magic define fundamental human states. King's climax relies on something as simple as Stanley Uris' bird book in It or the wad of red licorice in "The Library Policeman," yet at the same time, it is apocalyptic in the true sense of the word: King "uncovers" truth that alters his characters' perceptions of the world around them. If Needful Things represents a capstone to a segment of King's career, it is an appropriate one, taking leave of a familiar landscape by imbuing it with a forceful, complex, and ultimately uplifting parable of good and evil.

—Michael R. Collings

[A substantially longer version of this review appeared in Mystery Scene 31 (October 1991): 1.


Only about a fourth of this is fantasy; the rest is a recreation of the society of painted Celtic warriors of British pre-history. The recreation is so vivid it is, in itself, a fantasy of imagination, rather than fictional fantasy of magic and faery. Lawhead's Celtic society lacks fantastical elements except briefly at the bards' gorsedd and during the siege of Findargad. Lord Nudd of the underworld and his underlings also appear on stage for a page or two.

The first quarter of The Paradise War tries to clarify the connection between this world and the Otherworld through a nexus, which may be accessed, in either direction, on certain days in the time-between-times (i.e., twilight). Book One of THE SONG OF ALBION opens in Oxford in the late twentieth century with the plexus connecting the nexus fraying, for unknown reasons, and allowing oddities to appear in both worlds. The first such oddity is a just-killed auroch that appears in a pasture in a remote part of Scotland. The news story brings two Oxford doctoral candidates—the over-indulged, wealthy dilettante Simon Rawson, and his wimpish American apartment-mate, Lewis Gillies—to the nexus. Simon goes through the nexus, to be followed some days later by Lewis, the narrator. Both arrive in the Otherworld of Albion, where time moves at a different rate, and the air, colors, and all else are more vivid and alive than in our world. Simon is already a leading warrior and confidant of Prince Meldrun of the Llywyddi. Wimpish Lewis, the newcomer, is sent by Meldryn Mawr, the king, to train as a warrior.

The remaining three-quarters of the book tells of Lew's training, the disaffection of the Prince as stirred by Simon, and the first phases of the Paradise War. Throughout the tale, Lew attempts to get both Simon and himself back to our world as a means of healing the plexus. The book concludes with the wily Simon's evading forced return and Lew's recognition
that he is now more nearly Llew Silver Hand, as a *banfaith* prophesied he would be, than Lew Gillies, and that he, too, belongs in Albion.

Book Two will, no doubt, bring both Simon and Lew back to Albion, where we will learn more of Otherworld politics and society. The fantasy element may increase as we see more of Celtic life and myth. Perhaps the doltish Society of Metaphysical Archaeology (in today's Britain) will also have a part to play.

Two faults made this book disappointing to me. *The Paradise War* is a long-winded introduction to the probable tale to be told by *The Song of Albion*. The narrator, Lew, neither speaks nor acts like the American doctoral candidate of today he is supposed to be.

Even without a bolstering story, Lawhead's version of the Otherworld and its Celtic society is enjoyable.

—Paula M. Strain


This is not the same as the collection that was published by *Weirdbook* in 1984, quite. Two stories from the previous incarnation, "Isles of the Suhm-Yi" and "Curse of the Golden Guardians," have been omitted (to appear in later books of the same series) and one, the previously uncollected "To Kill a Wizard," has been added. They have all been written over a period between 1973 and 1988.

The volume has an old-fashioned feel to it because of the form that it adopts. The introduction tells us that the author's friend, Thelred Gustau, discovered a box sealed within a sphere that had been hurled from the throat of the volcano on Surtsey. Within the box were a number of artifacts and a collection of written material. The box appeared to come from a period predating the dinosaurs. Before he disappeared under mysterious circumstances, Gustau translated many of the papers which has been sealed in the box by their author, a wizard called Teh Atht. The stories in this book are purportedly based on those translations.

One of the things that marks these tales is that the majority have dark endings. The principal character, usually a muscle-bound barbarian, comes to some kind of untimely end, often due to his over-arrogance. Stories that don't feature a Conan clone usually involve the machinations of sorcerers. They can also be classified as Lovecraftian as frequently there is the suggestion of nameless horrors lurking in the background. One of these is the god Cthulhu, who has a central role in two stories, "The House of Cthulhu" in which foolish pirates turn up at the god's temple looking for treasure and only succeed in waking the god, and "The Sorcerer's Dream," wherein Teh Atht attempts once again to find the secret of immortality.

The stories are all smoothly told but are not outstanding, and a number of them have predictable plots. The book will only appeal to those who enjoy this type of story and is not likely to convert new readers to the genre.

—Pauline Morgan

A beautiful and a painful work, Lindholm's *Cloven Hooves* is another surprise. It is both unlike anything else she has written and markedly a Lindholm novel. It can be compared to *Wizard of Pigeons*, my previous favorite, for its casual inclusion of the mythical into captation existence. Evelyn, the hero of this allegory, is a secret wild-woman. Her childhood in Alaska was punctuated by her relationship with a wood-satyr, the "mythical" childhood friend who accepted her love of nature, wild things and solitude. She grows up and goes to college, where she form a close relationship with her eventual husband, Tom. The story she tells through this novel begins when she, Tom and their five year old, Teddy, are on their way to what is supposed to be a short visit to her in-law's farm. Her pain and self-discovery are rendered more poignant by the first-person narrative which places the reader at the center of her fantastic world-view.

Evelyn is not looking forward to this visit, feeling that she has nothing in common with Tom's family that he may all too easily be pulled back into their view of reality, the pragmatic, midwestern stereotypical acceptance of homogenized expectations for people, objects, and most especially, nature. As she fears, the visit gets extended longer and longer and her husband becomes less and less tolerant of her difference, of those very qualities of pure wildness that drew him to her originally. The family, Tom included, cannot see her reality and she cannot see theirs, but she, and her son, Teddy eventually, can see her Satyr, who comes to seduce, entice but mostly to support her in her difference.

The reader is not encouraged to decide whether the Satyr is a symptom of Evelyn's insanity or a eruption of the supernatural into our world. However, the shared reality of Evelyn, her Satyr, and even Teddy, is immeasurably more satisfying that the one Tom and his family have to offer. Like *Wizard of Pigeons*, this novel insists that the mythic dimension is just "there" for many people, even though others strive to deny its existence. And like earlier novel, it intimates the rest of the world is lucky that visionaries exist. However, this is a very realistic novel in its articulations of family dynamics. Evelyn was odd woman out even as a child, in her birth-family. Having built a new place for herself with Tom, she watches it crumble as he returns to his "place" in his own family while her uniqueness is suppressed. That he comes to accept his family's assessment of her and her relegation to emotional sacrificial goat for their limited vision, is an accurate representation of a interpersonal dynamic that belies a currently prevalent sanguine acceptance of family as a basic, positive value. Families can as often smother us as individuals as well as nurture us. Thus when Evelyn escapes to a solitary life, the bittersweet sadness of her failed marriage is also the triumph of the self. This excellent, thoughtful and beautifully conceived novel is not classical SF nor fantasy. It is, and is only, The Fantastic.

—Janice M. Bogstad

A necroscope is someone who can speak with the dead. The minds of the dead continue to be active long after their bodies have decayed. Unfortunately they have no one to communicate with, usually. In the first volume of this horror quintet, just called *Necroscope*, we were introduced to Harry Keogh who could and made the dead his friends. Conversations with the mathematician Moebius, who had continued his research after his death, lead Harry to acquire the ability to travel almost instantly from place to place using the Moebius Continuum. Also in this volume we were introduced to E-Branch, the psychic department of government service and the Wamphyri, creatures living in a dominant symbiosis with humans, turning their hosts into vampires.

At the start of volume five, Harry, who has since become a vampire hunter, has discovered that he has become infected by a Wamphyr. He is determined to leave Earth and return to the homeworld of the Wamphyri once he is unable to control the parasite, but before he goes he needs to find the murderer of Penny Sanderson. The killer is someone who is capable of causing pain to the newly dead. As his time runs out, E-Branch start to hunt him. This covers part of the novel. The rest concerns events on the Wamphyri homeworld. In earlier volumes, Harry helped defeat the Wamphyr lords and banish the survivors to the icy wastes. Here, Shaithis, and his ancestor, Shaitan, plot to regain their power and revenge themselves on Harry and his allies.

If anything, there is too much going on in this volume. There are too many strands to keep hold of and large sections of the book dwell with one set of characters to the exclusion of the others. This probably doesn't matter that much if you are familiar with them from other volumes, but it has the effect of breaking the tension. Basically there are two books here. Harry's desire to complete unfinished business on Earth and the Wamphyri's struggle to regain lost territory. This part could have been part of a dark fantasy novel or an exploration of the nature of SF aliens. If anything, Lumley does not make enough of the evil side of their natures and there is a danger that the reader may begin to sympathize with them. For those who like horror, this is a good read.

—Pauline Morgan


Starting more or less where *TekWar* left off, this novel finds Jake Cardigan, newly of the Cosmos Detective Agency, at once having to deal with a menacing synthetic plague that's decimating San Francisco, his teenage son's behavior problems at school, and the fact that he's being stalked by "reprogrammed" human zombies, who, after unsuccessful murder attempts, immediately self-destruct. In addition, Jake and his partner learn that the
TekLords are planning to eliminate city after city in their campaign to gain total amnesty for the drug cartel as they pedal their electronic drug, Tek, and to facilitate this they've covertly arranged for the release of Dr. Gordon Chesterton, the plague's inventor, from the orbiting prison known as "the Freezer."

Several bows to Gibson's *Neuromancer* imply Shatner is trying to write a cyberpunk novel—apparently he doesn't realize the movement's over—and settings such as a mobster's undersea estate and an orbital gambling casino would be interesting if developed to their full potential; ultimately, however, the author's only real familiarity with the genre seems to be based on his *Star Trek* experience (there's even, at one point, the obligatory beautiful young woman dressed in flowing space-silk). Thus Shatner's Greater Los Angeles of the 22nd century becomes a technological nirvana where—unlike the bleak setting of *Blade Runner* (to which it's been compared)—inhabitants are totally pampered by their machines without paying moral or ethical prices and there's no real societal consequence for the abundance of technophile pornography. Additionally, dialogue is a major snag for a plot that absolutely plods along, as characters constantly regale each other with long-winded diatribes to reveal information that could've either been given in straight exposition or left out altogether. Also, the large number of robots and androids (and one particularly mouthy desktop computer) seem like pointless window dressing, since Shatner never really bothers to differentiate them substantially from their human masters (I did wonder, however, why they didn't revolt; they appear to outnumber the human population by at least five to one).

Perhaps *TekLab*, the next novel in the Jake Cardigan series, will show Shatner to have matured as a science fiction writer; *TekLords*, however, demonstrates a host of narrative flaws which will doubtless be a hindrance to all but the most forgiving readers.

—Joseph M. Dudley


Exploiting a growing acceptance of the spiritual dimension of what were formerly thought of as primitive cultures, Shea explores the 19th century struggles of Indian tribes to survive and maintain their spiritual contacts. The novel is set in Michigan territory of the 1820s through '30s and narrates the battles of Black Hawk and the Sauk people to keep control of their native lands against the wave of Western settlement supported by President Andrew Jackson and his successors. The battle at this point in history is over lands East of the Mississippi, and takes place mostly in Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota. It is based on historical accounts of the time. The story is told through experiences of a boy who grows to manhood. He is of mixed Sauk and French blood. White Bear/Auguste is the son of a French landowner held captive for several years by the Sauk a tribal medicine woman, Sun Woman. He lives his first fifteen years with his tribe, then six years as a white man, to return to his tribe before the beginning of Black Hawk's great
legendary battles and back to the white settlement after Black Hawk's surrender.

White Bear's narrative adds the spiritual dimension and the Indian perspective to what many of us know of only as historical dates. He has been chosen as a Shaman, his totem or spirit is a large white bear. He is also educated in Jesuit schools so that he is truly conversant with the Indian and the White world and, within his own body, carries the mediating forces that will allow survival, but not triumph, for his Indian people. This spiritual dimension and White Bear's function as a Shaman is integral to the story. The story unfolds largely through his thinking processes and experiences, although the perspective infrequently changes to that of his first wife, the Sauk woman Redbird, and their son, Eagle Feather. In this manner, Shea narrates the fate of the Sauk while also representing White Bear/Auguste's absences from the Indian tribe and activities in the world of the White Man.

At the end of his six years of education, Auguste returns to the frontier town of Victor and his White family's settlement of Victoire. He is considered an honorable man by his family. So much so that his father willed him the family estate over the protests of his Indian-hating uncle, Raoul. When the White Bear's father dies, Raoul takes the estate by force and Auguste flees to the Sauk tribe. The family conflict and Raoul's hatred for Auguste, whom he feels has taken his place in the affections of the family, are woven into the Black Hawk wars in a plausible, if not documented, explanation of the hopeless Sauk attempts to retake their land east of the Mississippi. Raoul's refusal to accept the surrender of the Sauk early in the wars must represent the many whites who wished to wipe the Indians off the face of the earth at any cost. Shea comments on the sources for his story in a postscript, identifying the major players in the wars but failing to describe the historical accuracy of Auguste and his family. The fiction is absorbing for its attempts to present a dual perspective on the Indian wars not found often in history or literature even if the many insights imputed to White Bear/Auguste seem implausible. The book should be of interest to historians, those interested in Indian culture and religions as well as frontier life.

—Jan Kaveny


*Once a Hero* is unusual—a fantasy complete in one volume, with no hint of add-on volumes. It is also unusual in that alternate chapters report events 500 years apart which parallel each other and advance the single story of the last half-dozen chapters. While not all that unusual, Stackpole deals with a half-dozen races, of which Man and Elf (one of the two First Races) provide major characters.

Sixteen year old Neal of the Roclazw, who became Neal Elfward and Knight-Defender of the Empire by his thirty-fifth year, is attempting to claim a magical sword, Cleaveheart, from Tayashul, the Reithrese villain, as the story opens. Events 499 years in the future involve the *sylvanestri* Genevra, granddaughter of Neal's elf friend, her lover Durriken, and Duke Berengar who has his own quest for the once-more-lost Cleaveheart.
The publisher's note gives Stackpole fourteen novels, including at least one fantasy. The characters and plotting show skill, but editing has been done unevenly, particularly in the early chapters.

Does *Once a Hero* live up to the blurbs of the publisher and the author's friends? I began reading it on a flight from Kailua-Kona to San Francisco and finished it on the red-eye to Dulles that night.

—Paula M. Strain


Echoes themselves are worthwhile. Stevermer echoes respected writers in other fields, but is to be valued in her own right. Georgette Heyer, in novels laid in Jane Austen's time, echoed Austen's plots and humor so well that she created the Regency romance. A generation later, Stevermer echoes Heyer's style and plotting in fantasy. She may create another subgenre if she continues as she has here and *Sorcery and Cecelia*, written with Patricia C. Wrede (1988).

*A College of Magics* is set in the early days of the twentieth century in a Europe that has, somewhere between Paris and Istanbul, a duchy of Galazon where winters are long and cold. Greenlaw College, on the English Channel, has for three hundred years been turning out witches, though students are forbidden to attempt magic while at the school, and magic is not taught there at all. The rebellious Faris Nallaneen arrives there as if sent to a finishing school.

The first two-thirds of the story shows Faris broadening her single-minded ambition to become friends with Greenlaw classmates. So little magic is apparent that it is only in retrospect, in the last part of the story, that we recognize its earlier appearance. Even in the climax, Faris' great accomplishment, healing the rift in the world's balance created by her grandmother, occurs more within her mind than in magical bravura. As Faris accomplishes the task, her real attention is focused on the fate of Tyrian.

Stevermer's male characters are much like Heyer's—stereotypes. Like Heyer, she draws moody Faris and sensible Jane better. She also echoes Heyer in the remarks her characters make, that the careful reader will chuckle over though the characters do not.

Neither Heyer nor Stevermer have Austen's genius, but their echoes of her style and wit reverberate musically. Readers of any one of the three will enjoy the other two, though the genres in which they write differ greatly.

—Paula M. Strain


Author and illustrator Hudson Talbott has written and designed a very attractive version of the Arthurian episode made famous by the Disney film. The text is straightforward, retelling the traditional events without modifying
them except for making all of the principal characters somewhat better than usually depicted. Uther, for example, does not fall in love with Igraine until after she is widowed. Although intended for younger readers, the language in no way talks down to them. Words like "wrought," "avail," and "reassurance," may make it difficult. On the other hand, it makes for effective reading aloud by adults. The narrative has suspense, romance, and excitement, and even touches of pathos, as when the young Arthur, just learning that he is to be the king, sobs at the prospect of having to leave his beloved foster father, Sir Ector.

The superb illustrations more than enhance the story, appealing though it is. Opposite the first page, the picture of the dragon sign which appeared in the sky on the night of Arthur's birth, is spectacular. A huge shimmering image against the dark blue sky, it dwarfs the figures of Merlin and Uther looking up from their tower. Several of the crowd scenes, such as the tournament, are exquisitely detailed, recreating the vivid medieval panorama. Throughout the book the drawings are richly done in dazzling bright colors, and the close up portraits depict an array of emotions. Highly recommended both for the simple moving tale and for the dramatic illustrations.

—Charlotte Spivack


This is the fourth in the MAMMOTH SHORT SF NOVELS series to appear from Carroll & Graf, the earliest volumes having been devoted to the "Classic" 1930s, "Golden Age" 40s, and "Vintage" 50s. The volumes were originally published in Great Britain and "New World" is apparently a euphemism for "American." The book contains no introductory or explanatory material, except for a brief reference to the "new wave" on the back cover, and the criteria used by Waugh and Greenberg in collecting these stories are unclear. Two of the novellas, "Soldier Ask Not" (1964) by Gordon Dickson and "Weyr Search" (1967) by Anne McCaffrey, were Hugo Award winners and a couple of the stories may have been award nominees, but others are relatively obscure. Thus, the volume can neither be described as a best of the decade anthology, nor as a collection of half-forgotten gems. "Soldier Ask Not" and "Weyr Search," of course, represent high points in two of the more important series in the history of science fiction, Dickson's DORSAI tales and McCaffrey's stories of the DRAGONRIDERS OF PERN. "The Eve of Romoko" (1969), by Roger Zelazny, is an excellent piece of hard science fiction about the sabotage of a government project attempting to tap the Earth's magma. "The Night of the Trolls" (1963) by Keith Laumer, is a competent but hardly memorable installment in that author's long-running series about the Bolos, highly advanced fighting machines. Mack Reynolds' "Mercenary" (1962) is yet another piece of competent military science fiction, albeit one told from Reynolds' always iconoclastic leftist viewpoint. Rick Raphael's "Coce Three" (1963) is a solid, but, once again, routine story of
future police work. Much more memorable is Robert Silverberg's "How It Was When the Past Went Away" (1969) which involves the dissemination of a drug that causes amnesia and the rise of a religious cult. Randall Garrett's "The Highest Treason" (1961) is an unexceptional space adventure. Considerably better is Dean McLaughlin's "Hawk Among the Sparrows" (1968), which concerns the pilot of an advanced fighter plane who goes back in time in an attempt to influence the outcome of World War I. "The Suicide Egress" is an enjoyable episode from another important series, Philip José Farmer's Riverworld.

When you think about some of the stories that could have been included in a volume subtitled Short Novels of the 1960s, a fairly impressive list comes to mind, including Jack Vance's "The Druon Masters" and "The Last Castle," Philip José Farmer's "Riders of the Purple Wage," Robert Silverberg's "Nightwings," Roger Zelazny's "He Who Shapes," and Harlan Ellison's "A Boy and his Dog." Even granted that the above stories are all award winners and are thus available in various Hugo and Nebula Award anthologies, I still can't believe that a higher quality selection of 1960s short novels wasn't available. If, as the back cover of the book suggests, "the 'new wave' started in Britain in the early 1960s and then spread to America, where it was hugely popular and changed the face of SF for years to come," why have Waugh and Greenberg chosen very little new wave work and instead filled their anthology with what is, for the most part, old-fashioned military science fiction?

The stories in The Mammoth Book of New World Science Fiction are hardly losers. Each and every one of them is at the very least a good read. With a few exceptions, however, they simply aren't representative of the era's best fiction. This is a perfectly solid anthology is recommended for medium to large sized public libraries. It should especially appeal to relatively new genre readers of a conservative bent.

—Marcia Marx


Wu presents Book Five in the ISAAC ASIMOV'S ROBOTS IN TIME series. Packaged by Byron Preiss and named in honor of the late, great Isaac's Three Laws of Robotics, Wu describes the pursuit of component gestalt robots into humanity's past.

In Emperor, MC 5 has transported himself under Third Law imperatives to the time of Genghis Khan. R. Hunter, together with Steve and Jane, pursue him, in turn pursued by roboticist Dr. Wayne Nystrom and R. Ishihara.

Encountering the Khan himself, as well as Marco Polo, our heroes traipse across the Chinese countryside, encountering Chinese and Mongols, Arabs and Europeans chasing their quarry.

A delightful tale, one which Wu seems to relish telling, since his delight in his ancestry and history is no secret. A good read.

—Daryl F. Mallett

Winsor McCay was a major figure in the early history of both newspaper comic strips and animated films. His *Little Nemo* cartoons in *The New York Herald* (1905-12) were noted for the beauty and detail of their backgrounds, especially architecture and crowds of fantastic creatures. His ten short animated films, made 1911-21, were of course much simpler due to the meager budgets and primitive film techniques available to McCay, who produced the thousands of drawings needed for each film either alone or with one or two assistants. His only *Little Nemo* film (1911) has characters, but no backgrounds.

Hata and Hurtz's *Little Nemo*, a Japanese-U.S. co-production, brings the gorgeous detail of the *Nemo* strips to the film screen for the first time. McCay's fantastic environments—vast, often upside-down or underwater—are beautifully rendered by the Japanese artists and still fascinate the viewer after eighty years. The film's story and characters are generally bland, except for the irresponsible Flip, voiced by Mickey Rooney. The villain, the Nightmare King, a character not in McCay's strips, looks almost exactly like Chernobog, the Demon in the "Night on Bald Mountain" sequence of Disney's *Fantasia*. Although a livelier story would have been welcome, the film has enough visual richness to satisfy both children and adults.

*Little Nemo* was one of several non-Disney animated features released between Disney's two latest hits, *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *Aladdin* (1992). The only box-office success of the lot was *Ferngully: The Last Rainforest*. Flops included *Little Nemo*, the British-drawn *Freddie as FR07*, and the U.S.-made, part live-action *Cool World*. The latter two deserved their grim fates, but *Nemo* is much better and has found success on videocassette. *Variety* reported that 62,000 copies were sold during the first two weeks of the video release.

A video anthology, *The Best of Winsor McCay* (Movies Unlimited; 800/523-0823), collects several of his animated cartoons, including *Nemo* (1911) and *Gertie the Dinosaur* (1914), perhaps the most famous silent animated film. A collection of many of McCay's *Nemo* newspaper strips is available from Dover.

—Michael Klossner

Early sound films were often notoriously dialogue-heavy. Studios assumed that if audiences wanted speech, they should hear a lot of it. Universal's *Dracula*, directed by Tod Browning, was bogged down by many stilted dialogue scenes but its striking atmosphere and Bela Lugosi and Dwight Frye's classic performances established gothic horror as a Hollywood genre.

Studios were accustomed to selling silent films easily in foreign markets; only brief intertitles had to be translated. When silents were superseded by all-too-loquacious talkies, studios feared that foreign audiences would not accept either dubbing or extensive subtitles. Consequently, foreign-language versions of several major films were made in the early 1930s. Germany's UFA Studio made an English version of their 1932 SF film *F.P.I Antwortet Nicht*. While Browning and Lugosi made the English-language *Dracula*, Universal assigned George Melford to direct a Spanish version, using the same sets but different actors. Melford's *Dracula* is one of the few films made by a director who could not understand the language spoken by his cast. Universal's Spanish *Dracula* was considered a lost film for many years, until a print was found recently in a Cuban archive.

Carlos Villarias (called "Carlos Villar" in the credits) as Dracula and Pablo Alvarez Rubio as Renfield are both excellent, though not in a class with Lugosi and Frye. The actor who plays Van Helsing is a wimp compared to Edward van Sloan. Nevertheless, although almost twenty minutes longer than the Browning version, the Spanish film is considerably less tedious than its rival, partly because Lupita Tovar is more appealing than Helen Chandler as the ingenue, but mainly because Melford's direction is more imaginative than Browning's.

Tovar, still vivacious sixty years after her work in *Dracula*, introduces the videocassette. Taken from a clean print, with legible English subtitles, the video presents a major version of *Dracula* which should be seen for its own merits as well as its historical interest.

—Michael Klossner


The BBC's *Doctor Who* was the longest-running SF television series (1963-89), comprising 158 stories, most told in four or more half-hour episodes. These videos provide overviews of the work of the first four of the seven actors who played the Doctor. The tape devoted to the First Doctor, William Hartnell, begins with the first, untelevised version of the first episode of the first *Doctor
**SFRA Review #211, May/June 1994**

*Who* story, *An Unearthly Child*. The complete story, as televised, is available on video in America. The differences between the two versions of the introductory episode are rather slight. Unlike *An Unearthly Child*, many of the early *Doctor Who* stories have been partly or completely lost. *The Hartnell Years* includes the only surviving episode for two stories—*The Crusade* (1965), a representative *Doctor Who* historical adventure with no SF except the presence of time travelers; and *The Celestial Toymaker* (1966), a superior story reminiscent of *The Twilight Zone*. The tape features strong performances by Hartnell and by Jean Marsh and Michael Gough in guest parts.

The Patrick Troughton tape consists of episodes from three Second Doctor adventures which did not survive in their entirety—*The Abominable Snowman* (1967), *The Enemy of the World* (1968), and *The Space Pirates* (1969). All are rather talky. The last two are pure space opera. *Enemy* is one of the earliest of many anti-military *Doctor Who* stories and features Troughton in an unusual double role, as the Doctor and the villain. The first two Doctors' adventures were in black-and-white; all subsequent stories were in color.

Almost all of Jon Pertwee's work as the Third Doctor has been preserved. The Pertwee tape includes the final episodes from three stories not available on video in the U.S.—*Inferno* (1970), *The Daemons* (1971), and *The Frontier in Space* (1973). These stories are more polished and faster-paced than the adventures of the earlier Doctors. *Frontier* includes excellent work by Roger Delgado, the better of the two actors who played The Master, the Doctor's most brilliant and persistent opponent.

The only disappointing video is the two-tape collection on Tom Baker, the Fourth and longest-lived Doctor (1974-81). Instead of complete episodes, the tapes have short clips from all forty-one Baker stories, interspersed with the star's mostly trivial reminiscences. Many of the most memorable scenes from the Fourth Doctor's adventures are included, but many of my favorite scenes are missing, and some surprisingly ordinary clips are shown. This collections provides only a sampler for novices and a nostalgic treat for fans.

The writing, direction, and acting on *Doctor Who* was often of surprisingly high quality. Twenty-one complete *Doctor Who* stories are available on video in the U.S. The Hartnell, Troughton, and Pertwee compilations are recommended to anyone seriously interested in the program.

—Michael Klossner
MISCELLANEOUS REVIEWS

Thonen, John, ed. *Imagi-Movies*, Vol. 1:1-. (Fall 1993-). (7240 W. Roosevelt Rd; 60130) Forest Park, IL; Quarterly, $18.00/4 iss.; ISSN 1069-5095.

Since 1970, *Cinefantastique*, edited by Frederick S. Clarke, has been the most serious magazine devoted to SF, fantasy, and horror film and television. However, with six issues a year, *Cinefantastique* cannot cover as much ground as the twenty-four issues of two more popular, fannish monthlies published by the Starlog Group—*Starlog*, covering SF and fantasy, and *Fangoria*, specializing in horror. The balance was redressed in 1992 when Clarke began publishing the slightly embarrassing *Femme Fatales*, edited by Bill George, a pin-up-and-interview magazine devoted entirely to actresses in fantastic films. Now, Clarke has launched a third magazine, *Imagi-Movies*, which at least is a more respectable companion to *Cinefantastique* than *Femme Fatales*.

Editor John Thonen writes that *Imagi-Movies* will concentrate on "low-budget films, classic films, obscure titles and the people responsible for them," but not to the exclusion of major films and TV productions. The first issue includes articles on Roger Corman, the British cult TV show *Red Dwarf*, Japan's erotic horror animated feature *The Wandering Kid*, and four U.S. B-films, but also coverage of four new Stephen King film and TV adaptations, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, and *Alien 3*. Brief reviews assess ten B-films, one A-film (*Body Snatchers*), and a video game. Regular features are a "Videophile" column on foreign films on video by Craig Ledbetter, editor of *European Trash Cinema* magazine, and a music column by Randall D. Larson, author of *Musique Fantastique: A Survey of Film Music in Fantastic Films* (1985).

Sharing the high quality of *Cinefantastique*, *Imagi-Movies* should be considered by large film collections where *Cinefantastique* has proved useful.

—Michael Klossner
IN MEMORIAM:

John James, writer, d. 10/10/1993
Rick Raphael, writer, 2/20/1919-1/4/1994
Pierre Boulle, writer, 2/20/1912-1/30/1994
Jack Kirby, comics artist, 1917-2/6/1994
Keith Watson, comics writer, d. 4/9/1994
John Preston, writer, d. 4/28/1994
Russell Amos Kirk, writer, 10/19/1918-4/29/1994
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The SFRA is the oldest professional organization for the study of science fiction, fantasy, and horror/Gothic literature and film, and utopian studies.

Founded in 1970, the SFRA was organized to improve classroom teaching, encourage and assist scholarship, and evaluate and publicize new books and magazines dealing with fantastic literature and film. Among the membership are people from many countries—authors, editors, publishers, librarians, students, teachers, and other interested readers. Academic affiliation is not a requirement for membership.

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My principal interests in fantastic literature are (limit to 30 words):  

110
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Paper submissions must be in English and no more than 6000 words long. The Proceedings of the Workshop will be published by the organizing institution.

Authors are requested to submit a Letter of Intent with the title of the paper and a short abstract (less than one page) before November 30, 1993.

Authors must submit five copies of each paper, before January 31, 1994, to the:

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IMPORTANT DATES
- Deadline for Letter of Intent: November 30, 1993
- Notification of Acceptance: March 15, 1994
- Paper Submission: January 31, 1994
- Camera Ready Papers Due: April 30, 1994
10 May 1994

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Here is your copy of the preliminary program of main events for SFRA-25, along with a registration form and hotel reservation card. If you are arriving at O'Hare, be sure to request the courtesy car to the hotel, which has changed its name to the Arlington Park Hilton.

Those who want to participate in the optional excursion to Medieval Times Friday evening to see the fine horsemanship and jousting (and dine on a game bird with your fingers) MUST reserve by June 20.

Additional tickets for the Pilgrim/Pioneer Awards Banquet Saturday evening can be purchased @ $33 per guest.

Program participants have been asked to bring additional copies of their papers to accommodate conflicts caused by multiple track programming. We are making arrangements to videotape panel discussions and authors reading so those who want to attend paper discussions will be able to obtain copies of these sessions from the Science Fiction Oral History Association. All attendees are invited to bring 30 copies of a current syllabus for an exchange of course outlines.

Many novels will be available for those who want to purchase books by the attending authors (and get them autographed).

Alex Eliseaslev is assembling a special art show; we’ll have a fundraising drawing for a group of books donated by Illinois authors and our attending authors to support our needy international scholars; and we’re working on other wonderful surprises.

Please let us know if you have special needs (vegetarian or otherwise restricted banquet meal, wheelchair access, etc.). We want everyone to enjoy the conference fully!

Elizabeth Anne Hull and Beverly Fried, Co-chairs SFRA-25
All books and correspondence should be sent to Daryl F. Mallett, Editor; *SFRA Review*, 717 S. Mill Avenue, #87; Tempe, AZ 85281 USA. Changes of address and inquiries regarding membership should be sent to Robert J. Ewald, Treasurer; 552 W. Lincoln Street; Findlay, OH 45840. A charge of $2.00 will be assessed for forwarding copies returned due to incorrect addresses.

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All reviews must list: Author(s), *Title of the Book*, City of publication: Publisher, date of publication, pagination, cloth or paper, price, ISBN. Reviews not meeting these requirements will not be published. Editor's Note: I like one to two page reviews; longer than that and they tend to not get looked at except as filler space.

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SFRA Studies in Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror

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