SFRA Review

Issue #213, September/October 1994

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SFRA INTERNAL AFFAIRS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I've just returned from our 25th Annual Meeting in Arlington Heights, Illinois. It was great. Co-chairpersons Beverly Friend and Elizabeth Anne Hull — with a lot of help from their committee and gofers — provided a really wonderful four days of thought-provoking papers, interesting guests, new chums, and genial camaraderie. As usual, it was very exciting to get to meet and talk with the guests, who this year included Octavia Butler, Sheri Tepper, Gene Wolfe, Lois McMaster Bujold, Joan Slonczewski, Joan Vinge, Jim Frenkel, Jim Gunn, and Fred Pohl. The opening speech by Octavia Butler and the keynote address by Sheri Tepper at Saturday's Pilgrim Banquet were truly memorable. It is our tremendous good fortune that both were recorded by the Science Fiction Oral History Association and will be available on videocassette.

The memorial tributes to Tom Clareson evoked many happy memories, and reminded us all of what SFRA has lost with Tom's passing.

It was nice to make so many new friends this year, and to renew so many old acquaintances. We got to meet our 1994 Pilgrim — John Clute — in person, as well as watch our new Review editor Amy Sisson in action, rustling up reviewers. (You should send her something!) Takayuki Tatsumi came all the way from Japan to receive his Pioneer Award.

Did I mention the fun that was had in the Hospitality Suite, at Medieval Times, or watching the horses run at the Arlington Park race track? Or the wonderful non-stop snacks in the book room? You shoulda been there.

Start planning now to attend next year's meeting. It will be held in Grand Forks, North Dakota with B. Diane Miller as our Conference Chairperson. And watch for news of the new SFRA Anthology, which is in preparation and should be available for adoption in mid-1995.

The Business Meeting saw the approval of an outstanding slate of candidates for the officer elections. Please be sure to mark and return
your ballot, included in this issue. We also heard from Treasurer Bob Ewald that SFRA is in good shape financially; there will be no need for a dues increase in 1995, thanks to some of our recent economies.

As is usually the case, I came back from the meeting with renewed enthusiasm and excitement, and a long list of must-read books. So, bye for now; I have to go to the bookstore.

— David Mead

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of June 30, 1994

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Cash Balance as of 6-30-94: S 24,979.49 (including encumbrances of S11,678.48)
Prior Encumbrances

through 1993 $ 9,938.31
Harper Royalties $ 1,740.17
TOTAL ENCUMBRANCES $ 11,678.48

NOTE 1: Most of the expenses for missing issues 208, 209, 210, and 211 have been incurred except for postage which should be around $1000.

NOTE 2: Extra mailings from various members of the Executive Committee put us over budget.

— Robert J. Ewald

SFRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

July 7-8, 1994
Arlington Heights, Illinois

President Mead called the meeting to order at 8:30 p.m., July 7, 1994. Present were Muriel Becker (Vice President), Robert Ewald (Treasurer), Joan Gordon (Secretary), and Peter Lowentrout (Immediate Past President).

The Minutes of the meeting of January 22, 1994 were read and approved.

Officer Reports: 1) Mead reported the 1994 Directory has been mailed. Milton Wolf and David Hartwell are editing the new (third) SFRA Anthology for TOR Books. They are drawing up a contract with TOR now, and SFRA will receive a share of royalties. The SFRA President will review the contract with TOR before Wolf and Hartwell sign it. TOR proposes to reissue Gunn’s The Road to Science Fiction #3 using the SFRA logo. Mead announced the Pioneer and Pilgrim Award recipients. He discussed problems with plans for the 1995 meeting. 2) Becker had nothing new to report. 3) Ewald presented the Treasurer’s Report, indicating that SFRA is in good financial condition. This report will be published in the SFRA Review. He drew attention to a substantial sum of “encumbered” funds (apparently SFRA Anthology royalties); after some discussion it was decided that he and Mead would try to determine who is to receive these monies. Ewald also
noted some confusion about the policy of not providing honorary members with subscriptions to the scholarly journals. After discussion, Mead said he would write a letter to the Pilgrims explaining the policy. This subject will be on the agenda of the next Executive Committee (EC) meeting. Ewald will send a proposed budget for 1995 to the new EC before its winter convocation. 4) Gordon reported that she has secured reciprocity with SFWA by exchanging membership directories. She will write a statement for the SFRA Review informing the members of the arrangement, emphasizing the use of writers' addresses for scholarly purposes. 5) Lowentrout announced the slate of nominees developed by the nominating committee for the 1995-96 Officer elections (himself, Muriel Becker, and Martha Bartter): President — Joe Sanders, Lynn Williams; Vice President — Carolyn Wendell, Milton Wolf; Secretary — Joan Gordon, Susan Stone-Blackburn; Treasurer — Bob Ewald, Joe Marchesani.

Other Reports: 6) Editor Amy Sisson reported on her plans for the SFRA Review. The EC advised her that as Editor she has the authority to make all decisions regarding associates, assistants, and advisors. B. Diane Miller, using Sisson's address, will be Assistant Nonfiction Editor. No one but Sisson or her appointed representative will be authorized to ask publishers for review copies for the SFRA Review. 7) Milton Wolf, co-editor of the new SFRA Anthology, reported on the progress he and David Hartwell are making. TOR intends to reissue James Gunn's The Road to Science Fiction #3. The new anthology will cover SF since 1980, including hard, soft, and postmodern stories. Publication is planned for Spring 1995. SFRA will receive 2% royalties. Wolf suggested there be a session at the 1995 annual meeting to discuss classroom use of the anthology. He also suggested that a teacher's guide could be developed, with contributions by the membership. Wolf will use the Review to inform the membership of the anthology's contents and progress. He suggested TOR might be willing to help bring authors whose works appear in the anthology to the 1995 meeting. 3) B. Diane Miller proposed hosting the 1995 annual meeting in Grand Forks, North Dakota, on the campus of the University of North Dakota. The EC welcomed the proposal but made acceptance conditional on Mead's being unable to find a conference director and site in the eastern U.S.

Old Business: Susan Baugh reported on her plans for the 1996 annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. The hotel will cost $61 per night
The hotel is handicapped-accessible and sensitive. She will try to arrange continuing education credits for participation in the conference. She will keep the membership informed of her plans through the Review. Plans to have the 1995 meeting in Phoenix/Tempe, Arizona, with Daryl F. Mallett as Conference Director, were reviewed and discussed at length.

**New Business:**
1) The EC unanimously approved a Mead/Becker motion to approve the use of the SFRA imprint on the TOR reissue of Gunn's anthology, with the clear understanding that SFRA expects no royalties from the sale of this book and that Gunn must approve.
2) A Mead/Ewald motion to allocate $482 plus hotel cost and meals for Pilgrim John Clute was unanimously approved.
3) A Mead/Gordon motion to approve $60 in conference expenses for Amy Sisson was unanimously approved.
4) A Mead/Ewald motion to approve the nominating committee's slate for new officer elections was approved unanimously. The slate will be presented to the Business Meeting for approval and additional nominations. Sisson will mail ballots for the Officer Elections in the next *SFRA Review* (#213 September/October, to be mailed August 25, 1994); the completed ballots must be returned to Lowentrout by October 31, 1994 to be counted.
5) Mead will appoint a new By-Laws Committee Chairperson.
6) A Mead/Lowentrout motion to rescind approval of Daryl F. Mallett as Conference Chair for the 1995 meeting was approved unanimously. Mead will write a letter to Mallett notifying him of this action.
7) A Gordon/Becker motion to purchase the complete set of tapes of the 1993 meeting from Milton Wolf was approved unanimously. These will be housed at the University of Kansas.
8) B. Diane Miller's proposal to host the 1995 annual meeting was accepted, on the condition that a general chairperson and site in the eastern U.S. could not be found soon.
9) A Gordon/Ewald motion to rescind approval of Daryl F. Mallett as a co-editor of the new anthology was approved unanimously. Mead will inform him of this action.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m., July 8, 1994.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Gordon, Secretary
SFRA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

July 10, 1994
Arlington Heights, Illinois

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by President David Mead. There were no additions or corrections to the minutes of the 1993 Annual Meeting.

Officer Reports: 1) Immediate Past President Peter Lowentrot presented the slate of nominees for the 1995-96 Officer elections. Candidates were asked to provide campaign statements for publication in the *SFRA Review*. He reported that $300 has been added to the scholar support fund this year. 2) President Mead reported briefly on the new edition of the SFRA Anthology. He announced our need for a 1995 meeting site, emphasizing the desire for an eastern location. Beverly Friend suggested a link with ReaderCon next summer; Mead will explore the possibilities. If none are found, we will accept B. Diane Miller’s proposal to hold our meeting at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. 3) Vice President Muriel Becker reported that she has worked to contact potential members. 4) Treasurer Bob Ewald presented the annual financial report. The scholars' support fund was not included; last year’s fund of $130 has been dispensed to support foreign memberships. The additions to this fund reported by Lowentrot are welcome. SFRA has 294 members so far this year; average membership in the last few years has been 300-325. Our cash position is good. We are researching how to dispense approximately $8,000 in encumbered royalties from the SFRA Anthology. $3,000 is encumbered to subsidize the Pilgrim Award volume, which seems close to completion. Problems with *Foundation* due to an oversight on our renewal form have been corrected. Office expenses are up due to extra mailings and the production of mailing labels. Although *Science Fiction Studies* is raising its rate by $1 next year, we will not have to raise membership dues. Ewald reports having written about 200 letters in his capacity as Treasurer. 5) Secretary Joan Gordon reported on all motions carried at the Executive Committee meetings on July 7-9, and announced that we have exchanged membership lists with SFWA. SFRA members can contact Gordon to get a SFWA member’s address for scholarly purposes.
Other Reports/Comments: 1) Beverly Friend suggested we create a "Lifetime Membership." This topic will be discussed at the next EC meeting. 2) Milton Wolf reported that he and David Hartwell, with the help of Gary Wolfe, are editing the new anthology, that it should be out in Spring 1995, and that TOR is republishing Gunn's *Road to Science Fiction #3* as a companion volume. He suggested a session at next year's meeting be organized to discuss the use of the new anthology. He will publish the table of contents in the *Review* soon. Members present urged keeping the price as low as possible and distributing desk copies. 3) Amy Sisson, Editor of the *SFRA Review*, reported that her goals are to increase the number of nonfiction reviews and to assign these reviews. Her deadlines for submissions are the first of every other month (including August 1). 4) B. Diane Miller announced her offer to host next year's meeting at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. (The Executive Committee has accepted this offer, on the condition that an eastern location cannot be found by Mead soon.) 5) Conference Co-Chairperson Elizabeth Anne Hull reported that the conference was a financial success and that she may be able to return money to SFRA. There were 80-90 paid memberships. She planned for an absolute minimum with contingency plans for more members, resulting in a generous hospitality suite. She also reported that Gary Wolfe and John Huntington plan to edit a conference proceedings, which may focus just on the papers about Octavia Butler and Sheri Tepper. [Mead noted that SFRA has an agreement with Borgo Press regarding publishing the conference volumes.] The SF Oral History Association videotaped one "track" of all sessions and the other special events; tapes will be available to members.

The members present expressed their sincere appreciation to Beverly Friend, Elizabeth Anne Hull, and their committee members and helpers for a smoothly-run, pleasant, stimulating conference.

Old Business: E. Susan Baugh reported on her plans for the 1996 meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. She plans tracks on E.R. Burroughs, children's SF/Fantasy literature, and the portrayal of women, children and families; there will also be an "open" track. She emphasized the attractiveness of Louisville for family vacations.

New Business: 1) Additional nominations from the floor for officer candidates were called; there were none. A Becker/Donsky motion to adopt the proposed slate carried unanimously. The adopted slate
will be published in the Review, with a call for other nominations according to the By-Laws. 2) Arthur Lewis proposed establishing an award in the name of Tom Clareson. He suggested this might honor a major book, an outstanding graduate student, or an untenured scholar, or might support a North American scholar or honor general distinguished service. Donsky suggested forming a small committee to consider the reward. A Sanders/Lewis motion to establish such a committee was unanimously approved. Alice Clareson, it was agreed, should be asked to serve on this committee. Mead will appoint the other members. 3) A Hull/Baugh motion to purchase a set of tapes of this meeting from the SF Oral History Association carried unanimously. The tapes will be placed in the Archives at the University of Kansas. Announcements of the availability of the tapes of the 1993 and 1994 meetings will be announced in the Review. 4) B. Diane Miller announced an SFRA breakfast at the 1994 Worldcon.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Gordon, Secretary

CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS AND VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

The candidates' statements appear in alphabetical order for each office. Please complete the ballot enclosed with this issue of the SFRA Review and mail it to Peter Lowentrout, 5225 St. George Rd., Westminster, CA 92683, USA. Ballots must be received by October 31, 1994 to be counted.

Ballots to members outside the United States have been mailed separately via airmail to allow sufficient time for voting. These members should return the ballots via airmail to ensure they are received by the deadline.

An extra ballot has been enclosed in the issues of the SFRA Review going to those with joint memberships.

If your ballot is missing, please contact Amy Sisson, SFRA Review, 1850 S. 34th St. #303, Grand Forks, ND 58201, USA.
Please be advised that Article VI Section 5 of the SFRA By-laws provides that additional nominations may be made. Call Peter Lowentrout if you have any questions about the procedure.

President

Joe Sanders: I began reading SF in the late '40s and started writing about it (in fanzines) during the late '50s. I joined SFRA in 1975; I'm very honored to have been nominated for the presidency. If elected, I'd use my ties with IAFA and fandom to encourage more cooperation between SFRA and such groups. I'd also like to convince more people of the pleasure and stimulation that SFRA offers, and to do that I'd draw on my experience as someone who teaches full-time at an open-entry school but who still produces a decent amount of scholarship.

Lynn Williams: SFRA is a well-run organization as it stands now and I have no intention of trying to fix something that isn't broken. I would like to do more outreach to cognate organizations like IAFA and the Society for Utopian Studies, and am also thinking of suggesting a SF/F caucus at some of the regional MLAs. If any of you plan to be in Boston for NEMLA in March, please contact me.

Vice President

Carolyn Wendell: I am honored to have been asked and delighted to run for the office of Vice President. I have been a member of SFRA since 1974 and have attended a few more than half of the conferences since then. Since the organization has given me so much, the least I can do is serve in whatever capacity I can to support and strengthen it. I would like to see SFRA encourage new members while keeping the old, build stronger ties with other groups (like IAFA), and consider more aids for teaching science fiction (for instance, a compilation of course materials used by our members). Whether I am elected or not, SFRA will continue to be my favorite professional organization.

Milton Wolf: Since I joined SFRA in 1979 I have worked industriously for the organization, hosting conferences, assisting with publications, and attracting new members. If elected to be the Vice-President, I would do my best to serve the functions of that office. In particular, I would work to ensure that SFRA members had numerous opportunities to publish not only in our own publications but in the many other
related organizations with which we could make common cause. To list only a few organizations which could assist each other to mutual advantage in publishing, membership benefits, occasional joint meetings, and the public importance of science fiction, I would seek out liaisons with the: American Library Association, Popular Culture Association, International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts, The Society for Utopian Studies, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Association, etc. I have been generously rewarded by my membership in SFRA and would like to give something back.

Secretary

Joan Gordon: I am just completing my first term as Secretary of SFRA and have found it a wonderful opportunity to increase my involvement with the organization. I would be happy and proud to serve another term, offering continuity as well as the standard expeditious handling of my modest duties: recording minutes of our meetings, sending out notices, and welcoming new members. During my term I added a new duty: to serve as intermediary between SFRA and SFWA, trading directories for our mutual benefit.

Susan Stone-Blackburn: I have been a member of SFRA for many years and have valued the contacts, the conferences, the journals, the Review, etc. All have been helpful in my teaching and research besides being enjoyable. I've found my academic "center" moving more squarely into SF, and SFRA is the academic organization that means the most to me, so I'm ready to do my bit after reaping benefits from the work others put into it. Besides being reasonably organized and reasonably literate, which should enable me to do the Secretary's part, I would enjoy working with others to keep SFRA strong and growing.

Treasurer

Bob Ewald: I'm sure that many of you have met me or heard from me or sent me money in the last two years, for I am running for reelection as Treasurer. My wife would be very happy if I were not, but she will still love me. I have been a member since 1977 in Evanston and have made some wonderful friends in SFRA — I hope they all vote for me. I teach English in a small university in northwestern Ohio and manage to sandwich a science fiction course between composition and British literature. More significantly, I have been reading SF, fantasy,
and horror since I picked up my first issue of *Weird Tales* in 1939 at the age of ten.

My major qualification for Treasurer is my extensive computer background. I have been playing with computers since 1958 when they were my single occupation until I started teaching in 1972. If you feel you would like me to continue for another two years, I would be deeply honored. I have a very deep attachment and loyalty for SFRA and would be glad to serve for another term.

**Joe Marchesani:** Being the Treasurer for the SFRA is a position with more responsibilities than glory. It requires an eye for detail, a strong sense of order, prompt reactions, computer literacy, and a diplomat's skills in fielding concerns from the membership. I believe that our current Treasurer, Bob Ewald, has these skills in abundance, and I was honored to be nominated in his company. If I were elected SFRA Treasurer, I would do my best to exercise such abilities, but I would, even more happily, continue to entrust the organization's finances to Bob's experienced hands.

**NEW MEMBERS/RENEWALS AND CHANGES OF ADDRESS**

John P. Brennan  
Dept. of English & Linguistics  
Indiana Univ. - Purdue Univ.  
Fort Wayne IN 46805-1499  
H: (219) 483-4768 R: (219) 481-6709  
Fax: (219) 481-6985; E-mail: brennanj@cvax.ipfw.indiana.edu;  
OR brennanj@ipfwcvax.bitnet  
Utopian literature, hard SF, sociopolitical critique.

Peter Brigg  
Dept. of English  
University of Guelph  
Guelph ON N1G 2W1 CANADA  
H: (519) 821-1630 R: (519) 824-4120 ext. 3262  
E-mail: pbrigg@uoguelph.ca

Robert E. Myers  
P.O. Box 278  
101 Gresham Drive  
Bethany WV 26032  
H: (304) 829-4542 R: (304) 829-7121  
Philosophic and ethical issues in SF.
Derek Nichols
685 Charlotte St. #2
Fredericton NB E3B 1M4 CANADA
H: (506) 452-7479 B: (506) 450-3759
Fax: (506) 452-7479
Main interests include series research, doubles, and DAW publishers.

Nancy Steffen-Fluhr
1172 Green Pond Rd.
Newfoundland NJ 07435
H: (201) 208-9015 B: (201) 596-3266
E-mail: steffen@admin.njit.edu
Women and SF; SF film; H.G. Wells.

Scott Library
York University
Central Serials Records
4700 Keele Street
North York ON M3J 1P3 CANADA

GEOGRAPHICAL INDEX

INDIANA
  Brennan, John P.

NEW JERSEY
  Steffen-Fluhr, Nancy

WEST VIRGINIA
  Myers, Robert E.

CANADA
  Brigg, Peter
  Nichols, Derek
  York University, Scott Library

LETTERS

Dear Ms. Sisson:

In her recent "Feature Review" (Review #212), Virginia Allen claims that my article "Defending Our Lives (As Science Fiction Critics)" (Review #205) "echoes with apparent seriousness the too familiar lament that science fiction is second-rate literature written by second-rate authors and studied by second-rate critics." This is an almost libelous misstatement of my position. Even seen through the distorting
lens of Daryl F. Mallett's intrusive editing, my article clearly offered no strong opinions about the quality of science fiction scholarship, citing my insufficient knowledge, and simply declined to argue about the quality of science fiction literature, professing that to be an issue of little importance. I have already made a few enemies because of what I have said; I do not wish to make more enemies because of what I did not say.

Sincerely,
Gary Westfahl

***

Dear Ms. Sisson:

Last week I received issue #212 of the SFRA Review, and I write to tell you that while I think the issue was very fine, what I missed was the listing of new and forthcoming books in the field that appeared in previous issues of the Review. Has this feature been discontinued? If so, I think you are making a serious mistake. I found this feature very valuable because I often found books I'd missed in other sources. Please think this over.

But I still find the news and reviews very helpful. I wish you the best with future issues. But please reconsider the list of new and forthcoming books.

Sincerely,
Gary W. Crawford

[See editorial]

***

Dear Amy Sisson:

I am puzzled by Neil Barron's comment on Lee Server's statement that the paperback industry began in 1938 with Pearl Buck's The Good Earth. While it is true that paperbacks of various kinds were available earlier in the U.S., these kinds were quite limited in the '20s and '30s: the Street and Smith 15¢ novels consisted almost entirely of juvenile series such as the Horatio Alger books; the Haldeman-Julius Little Blue Books were available primarily by mail order (20 for $1.00); novels is-
sued in wraps (i.e. in volume identical to the hardback except for the cover) were generally available only from certain not-very-successful book clubs; the UK Penguins were available in the U.S., if at all (I never saw any), only at a few book stores; and the Tauchnitz reprints of English-language books were distributed only on the Continent. All this is to say that before 1939 paperback books simply did not exist in the U.S. for most readers.

The beginning of the U.S. paperback era can be dated precisely as a certain month (I don't recall which one) in 1939 when a 12-pocket rack containing 12 Pocket Books appeared on U.S. newsstands. Lost Horizon was #1 in the series, The Good Earth was #12. (There may have been a 1939 paperback edition of The Good Earth, but I doubt it.) This was the first well-financed, well-organized effort to launch a paperback line; earlier experiments had been half-hearted. Its success led to the present-day paperback industry.

Cordially,
R.D. Mullen

CORRECTIONS

Please note that on page 12 of issue #212, Virginia Allen's feature review should read: "The PC-charge, which started out as an insiders' joke, has turned into an outsiders' truncheon..." rather than "...into an insiders' truncheon." The wrong word was accidentally substituted during typesetting; my apologies to Virginia.

EDITORIAL

As I put the finishing touches on this issue of the Review, I feel much more comfortable with my role in editing this publication and as an SFRA member in general. For one thing, I had the opportunity to meet many of you at the meeting in Chicago, and I now have faces to go with the voices on the phone and the return addresses on the envelopes. I received a warmer welcome at the conference and enjoyed myself more than I ever could have imagined. I've also had so many offers of assistance, and so many members have indicated an interest in reviewing, that I realize all I really have to do is put it together.
This issue has many more reviews than the last one, but more importantly, it also has a much broader base of reviewers. Thanks for your help!

On editorial matters: I've had several inquiries regarding issues #208, 209, 210 and 211 of the Review. Perhaps I should have addressed that in the last issue, but I had thought that David Mead's letter to the membership dated May 5, 1994 explained the situation. In any case, Daryl F. Mallett is responsible for producing the missing four issues and he has indicated that they are forthcoming. Please direct questions regarding those issues only to: Daryl F. Mallett, 717 S. Mill Avenue #87, Tempe, AZ 85281.

Other members have expressed the desire that I retain the list of current and forthcoming books which has been a feature in the Review in the past (see Gary Crawford's letter in this issue). I have included such a list here, and while it is not as extensive as I would like, I will be attempting to improve it in the future. One of the ways members can help is by sending clippings about books which they find of interest; Michael Klossner and Neil Barron have already been doing so. It isn't necessary to send clippings from Locus, as that is already my main source for book listings. Per Neil's suggestion, I will also utilize Forthcoming Books in the future.

Beginning with this issue, the Review will again be sent at bulk mail rates. I had to go first class with issue #212 because I didn't have enough time to organize bulk mailing, and although it was quick, it was expensive. The Review will still be mailed on the 25th of the month before the cover date but will take a little longer to get to you.

So, keep the reviews coming! Write if you're interested in reviewing and I'll send you an interest profile sheet. I'm having the time of my life editing the Review — thanks for entrusting me with it.

— Amy Sisson
SFRA-25 Videos

Video Order Form

If you were unable to attend SFRA-25, here is the perfect way to catch up on what you missed. If you did attend, why not preserve your memories and share them with others? Tapes are $20 each, including postage and handling, or get a quantity discount by ordering 3 tapes for $50 or 6 tapes for $95. Please reproduce this sheet and mail your order to Larry Tucker, 3358 Chelsea Circle, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. Make checks payable to Larry Tucker. The following tapes, each 1 to 1 1/2 hours long, are available:

- Memorial tribute to Thomas Clareson
  Opening Speech: Octavia Butler: The Parable of the Sower
- Authors Reading: Octavia Butler, Lois McMaster Bujold
- Panel: Science Fiction Fan Subculture: Diane Miller, Frederik Pohl, Alex Eisenstein, Leah Zeldes Smith, Beverly Friend
- Author Reading: James Gunn
- Paper: Joan Slonczewski: Aliens in your Hamburger: How Bacteria are Winning the "War on Drugs"
- Panel: Teaching Science Fiction and Science Fiction Anthologies: James Gunn, Brian Attebery, Gary Wolfe, Phyllis Eisenstein, John Huntington
- Panel: Breaking into Writing: Joan Vinge, Joan Slonczewski, James Trenkel, Gene Wolfe, Frederik Pohl
- Panel: How I'd Like to be Taught: Sheri Tepper, Octavia Butler, Lois McMaster Bujold, Elizabeth Anne Hull
- Authors Reading: Gene Wolfe, Joan Vinge
- Keynote Speech: Sheri Tepper: No Great Endeavor Presentation of Pilgrim and Pioneer Awards

Number of tapes @ $20 (or 3 for $50, 6 for $95) $______

Name: ____________________________

Address: __________________________

City, State, Zip: ____________________

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NEWS AND INFORMATION

CANDID CAMERA AT THE 1993 SFRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A two-hour videotape of the 1993 SFRA Conference held in Reno, Nevada is available from Milton T. Wolf. It includes most of the major speakers (Frederik Pohl, Jack Williamson, Poul Anderson, Kevin Anderson, James Gunn, Kim Stanley Robinson, Karen Joy Fowler, Lisa Goldstein, Joan Slonczewski, Keith Ferrell, etc.) as well as a four-minute sound bite from the Sci-Fi Channel and an interview with Guest Artist Rodney Marchetti. Many of the conference participants are also captured presenting papers or schmoozing with guests. And there are short takes of JoAnne Pransky, the robotic psychiatrist, Paul Joseph, the Star Trek lawyer, and Mel Seescholtz, the cryogenics chronicler. While this is an amateur tape, it is usable for classroom teaching as well as being a great memento. If interested, send a check for $25 (proceeds above expenses will go to SFRA) to: Milton T. Wolf, Getchell Library, UNR, Reno, NV 89557-0044.

— Milton T. Wolf

SFWA DIRECTORY

As Secretary of the SFRA, I am the keeper of a copy of the SFWA directory, which contains the names and addresses of many professional SF and Fantasy writers. If you need such information in order to contact a writer for scholarly purposes, please let me know and I may be able to help. Keep in mind that SFWA has a copy of our directory too, so they know where we live! Contact me at: Joan Gordon, 1 Tulip Lane, Commack, NY 11725.

— Joan Gordon

COLLECTION FOR SALE

The fourth edition of Anatomy of Wonder, due in January from Bowker, is the last edition I will edit. I’m nearing early retirement and am selling most of my collection of fantastic fiction and related nonfiction. Many of the books were tagged as “best” books in my SF, fantasy and horror guides. Much of the fiction is inexpensive mass
market or trade paperback reprints, although there are some hardcovers (including some firsts), cassettes, and LP recordings as well. The nonfiction includes general reference, history and criticism, author studies & bibliographies, film/TV studies, art/illustration, classroom aids and mostly complete runs of magazines about SF. A supplemental list includes new review copies at 40-70% off list price. The fiction and nonfiction lists are $1 each, from Neil Barron, 1149 Lime Place, Vista, CA 92083-7428.

— Neil Barron

HEINLEIN DISSERTATION TO BE PUBLISHED

Last November, Marie Guthrie Ormes successfully defended her Ph.D. dissertation entitled Robert A. Heinlein: A Bibliographical Research Guide to Heinlein’s Complete Works. Marie presented a brief overview of her research at the 1993 SFRA Annual Meeting in Reno. She is currently making arrangements to publish this work through an academic press.

— Amy Sisson

SF GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Minstrel Books and Archway Paperbacks have produced a Teacher's Guide to Science Fiction and Fantasy, by Lindalee Irene Stuckey, for teachers who need help in choosing and recommending high interest children's and young adult science fiction and fantasy. The Guide is organized by author and series. Titles include Bruce Coville's My Teacher is an Alien, Ann Hodgman's My Babysitter is a Vampire, Mel Gilden's My Brother Blubb and R.L. Stine's The Beast, as well as eight Star Trek books by various authors. Detailed plot summaries, discussion questions and related activities are provided.

Although series books are generally seen as somewhat less than great literature, children like and read these books in enormous numbers. Book companies publish so many of them not out of some dark desire to destroy the market for so called "better" literature, but because they sell very well. It is to the whole language reading teacher's advantage to be familiar with these series so that children can be guided into other books with related themes when they are ready to
move away from series. In the meantime, for the TV generation any reading can be considered good.

Teachers comfortable in the whole language approach to literacy have experienced considerable success by focusing classroom activities around independent reading of high interest tradebooks that students self-select. For them the *Teacher's Guide to Science Fiction and Fantasy* should prove helpful in expanding their classroom libraries. Teachers who wish to order this guide free from the publishers can call the Minstrel/Archway Customer Service number, 1-800-223-2348.

— Sandra J. Lindow

**FAN CLUB ADDRESSES**

Patrick R. Dewey's *Fan Club Directory* (McFarland, 1993, 104 pages, $28.50) provides addresses for 2,000 clubs, including 189 *Star Trek* clubs, 144 Elfquest clubs and 54 devoted to SF in general (compared to only 24 for Elvis Presley). There are 28 for *Dr. Who*, 17 for animation, 10 for *Beauty and the Beast*, and smaller numbers for countless other television shows, individuals characters, authors, and movies.

— Michael Klossner

**SFRA REVIEW INDEX DATABASE**

I will be putting together a computer database listing of books reviewed in the *SFRA Review* in the past (that is, for those issues I can get my hands on). This is something I will be doing in my spare time, with no specific deadline, and my primary reason is so that I have a reference tool to tell me what books have been in the *Review* and when. It occurred to me that this information could be of use to others, and at this time I am asking for comments and suggestions on how best to arrange the information, what the listings should include, and whether anyone would like to have this information when I am finished. Please contact me at 1850 S. 34th St. #303, Grand Forks, ND 58201.

— Amy Sisson
The 1995 SFRA Annual Meeting has come to Grand Forks, North Dakota, and will be held June 22-25, 1995 on the University of North Dakota campus. Most of you have probably never been to North Dakota — now is your chance! If you have, now’s your chance to come back.

Grand Forks is the most cosmopolitan of this sparsely populated state’s cities. It’s a great place to bring your family for a pleasant vacation, with 12 movie theaters, weekend sprint car races, three golf courses, two shopping malls, bingo, a water slide, miniature golf, and go-carting. On the upscale, we have an art museum, a history museum, and "Summerthing" in the park. We also like to think we’re part of the "Wild West," so the local bars have blackjack tables for the gamblers. Childcare or activities for teenagers can be arranged. Within a short drive from Grand Forks there is horseback riding, fishing, boating, camping, and berry-picking.

For accommodation, we have inexpensive ($25/night) dorm rooms — but this is not your average dormitory! Swanson’s rooms are airconditioned with private baths; it has a 4-story atrium and a glass elevator. It was specifically built with conferences in mind, so those of you who don’t want to relive your college days too much won’t have to "rough it." It is connected to the Student Union, where the main conference will be, and it is neighbored by the Hyslop Sports Center where you can play racquetball, workout, or swim.

For those who prefer a little extra luxury, or need more room for families, rooms are blocked at the Holiday Inn ($48-$58) and Econolodge ($33-$36). Rates will be valid before and after the conference, June 19-30.

We’re planning a 2-hour Riverboat dinner cruise on the Dakota Queen for Friday ($25.50 each, choice of entries, includes cruise, meal, dessert, drink, tax, and gratuity). Ever eaten buffalo? We’re working on that as an entree choice for the Saturday banquet. Also in the works are an Atmospherium show, a campus tour including the Center for Aerospace Sciences’ Cray computer and flight simulators, and a tour of the Grand Forks Air Force Base.

I am currently looking for topic and panel suggestions. The multi-media facilities at the University are available to us, so if you want to take advantage of them for your topic, let me know. Please contact me regarding questions, suggestions, registration, volunteering for panels, or proposed topics:

B. Diane Miller
1402 4th Avenue North
Grand Forks, ND 58203
(701) 775-5038
E-mail: Internet ud068741@vm1.nodak.edu or Genie d.miller14
SELECTED CURRENT & FORTHCOMING BOOKS

This list was compiled primarily from listings in Locus and clippings of book notices contributed by Michael Klossner and Neil Barron.

NONFICTION

**FICTION**

LAST YEAR, ALTHOUGH THE PIONEER AWARD COMMITTEE READ MANY FINE ESSAYS, NONE HAD THE BROAD APPLICATION TO SF FOR WHICH WE WERE SEARCHING, SO WE MADE THE DIFFICULT DECISION NOT TO GIVE THE AWARD. THIS YEAR, WE READ MANY ESSAYS WIDE IN SCOPE AND OUR DECISION WAS DIFFICULT IN A DIFFERENT WAY — HOW TO CHOOSE AMONG A LARGE FIELD. OUR DECISION, WHEN IT CAME, HOWEVER, FELT ABSOLUTELY RIGHT TO ALL THREE OF US, BROOKS LANDON, JOE SANDERS, AND MYSELF. THE ESSAY WE CHOSE APPEARED IN A JOURNAL OUTSIDE THE ACADEMIC MAINSTREAM, SO YOU MAY NOT HAVE READ IT YET, BUT WHEN YOU DO, WE HOPE YOU WILL BE AS EXCITED AS WE WERE BY ITS INNOVATION, IDEAS, AND ENERGY.

THE ESSAY WE SELECTED IS AN INSPIRING CALL TO ARMS, PART OF THE GROWING DEMAND AND DISCOVERY THAT POSTMODERN DECONSTRUCTIVE FICTIONS SHOULD HAVE A SOUL. BECAUSE OF THE ESSAY'S LIVELY CLARITY, RATHER THAN SUMMARIZING ITS CONTENT FURTHER, LET ME SIMPLY PRESENT SEVERAL COGENT PASSAGES.

1. Metafiction made us aware that what fiction can tell us is not reality itself but a narrative version of reality. But in the post-Foucaudian hyperreal age we have come to realize that our contemporary lives are all ideological versions of reality, with us characters within narratives.

2. Broaden metafiction just slightly to include fictions'-relationship-to-reality, then metafiction becomes inevitably and centrally concerned with matters of meaning, power, language, semiotics, metaphor, lies, model-making, realism, illusion, truth interpretation, insanity, solipsism, world-building — in short, the concerns of metafiction begin to overlap increasingly with issues associated with postmodernism itself.

3. American people are tempted to understand the ideology of pop-culture, whereas Japanese people don't find it
necessary. Japanese culture has long appropriated and re-appropriated Western formulas without appropriating or understanding the ideological implications responsible for these formulas... In a capitalistic society you try to own the right to own things; but in a hypercapitalistic society you wind up owning the right to be owned by others. If capitalism is a form of ideology, hypercapitalism is a formalism of the post-ideological age. (48)

4. The almost unbelievable expansion of the pop culture industry has changed the world — not only has pop culture "colonized" the physical space of nearly every country on earth, but (just as importantly) it has begun to colonize even those realms that nearly everyone once thought were inviolable — like, for instance, our unconscious, our sexual desires. And in order to expel the colonizers, in this case I don't think passive resistance will work... What we need isn't passive but very active resistance... I'm talking about strategies related to cyberpunk's goal of taking on technological change on its own ground, seizing control of it for our own purposes rather than sitting around like aging 60s hippies... You storm the reality studio. And retake the universe. (49)

These quotes hint at the scope and cleverness of the essay. Its insights apply not only to cyberpunk SF but to SF as a potential nexus of popular culture and the avant-garde, what the essay calls avant-pop. Further, its style illustrates its content. About metafiction, the essay comments on its own form, computer "notes" transformed/transcribed into an epistolary written essay. Calling on its readers to use technology to "storm the reality studio," it uses computer technology to send that message.

Particularly alert listeners may have heard two voices in those quoted passages. It took two clever people to write this essay: one voice deliberate, cerebral, and aphoristic; the other expansive, passionate, and declamatory. The combination is so successful one hopes for further collaborations.

These are two incredibly energetic scholars. One has written eight books and translated three others, as well as having an extensive list
of articles, editorial positions, and awards. The other has written or edited seven books, three anthologies, and ten special issues of literary journals; he too has an extensive list of articles, editorial positions, and awards.

Who are they hyper-active hyperrealists? Larry McCaffery and Takayuki Tatsumi, authors of "Towards the Theoretical Frontiers of Fiction: From Metafiction and Cyberpunk Through Avant-Pop," in the Summer 1993 issue of *Science Fiction Eye*.

— Joan Gordon

**Pioneer Award Acceptance Speech**

It goes without saying that I am greatly honored by being named co-recipient of the SFRA Pioneer Award. As some of you may recall, I was the Director of the 1986 SFRA Conference that was held in San Diego. That experience not only helped me gain a greater appreciation for the personal dedication and high quality of scholarship that has been associated with the SFRA since it was first founded, but it also provided the opportunity to first meet Takayuki Tatsumi, who was attending that Conference gathering. I deeply regret not being able to be here this night to receive the award in person — but I am delighted that at least my close friend and co-conspirator — Japan's leading Avant-Prof and SF critic, Takayuki Tatsumi — is here to read these brief acceptance remarks.

I would like to thank first of all Takayuki Tatsumi, who first suggested that we collaborate on a "mutual correspondence." It has been my personal good fortune to be able to work with Professor Tatsumi on numerous other projects. Certainly whatever success any of these collaborations have would have been impossible without his personal generosity to me in all sorts of ways, and his willingness to share with me his remarkable insights concerning the ways SF is currently expressing so many features of the logic of hyperconsumption that has such a dominant influencing on both Japanese and American cultures. So, thanks, Mr. T!

Secondly, I would like to accept this award on behalf of Steve Brown, the Editor of *SF Eye* in which our essay was published, and all
the other people associated with SF Eye, who regularly contribute essays and columns.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the SFRA's awards committee for their willingness to give this award to work appearing outside the "officially sanctioned" network of academic publications. I therefore accept this year's Pioneer Award not only for myself and Takayuki Tatsumi, but on behalf of all the other authors, fans, and critics who over the years have contributed so much to our understanding of SF in that most unique of all publications — the SF fanzine and its various hybrid forms such as SF Eye.

— Larry McCaffery (presented by Takayuki Tatsumi)

From the American literary perspective, the title of our collaboration, "Towards the Theoretical Frontiers of Fiction: From Metafiction and Cyberpunk Through Avant-Pop," must sound misleadingly chronological. Yes, it is true that Larry and I got interested in metafiction back in the 1960s and '70s, and then promoted cyberpunk fiction in the 1980s, and have worked together to elaborate on the theory of avant-pop literature in the '90s. Given the postmodern literary context in which the boundary between mainstream and popular fiction is being deconstructed, you may as well be prepossessed with the impression that our collaboration is a desperately Quixotic attempt to reprogram the good old Hegelian dialectical vision of literary history, which will idealize and naturalize the advent of avant-pop as a literary evolutionist state in the post-metafictional and post-cyberpunk age.

Let me propose, however, that to me the formation of avant-pop, from the beginning, has been neither chronological nor evolutionistic, but hypertopographical and trans-nationalistic. Of course, avant-pop is a useful concept for explaining what's going on now in the field of post-metaliterary and hypertextual experiments. But, by the same token, avant-pop helped me develop my own comparative literary perspective, revealing itself to be a science fictional possible world, transgressing not only the existing generic boundaries but also the existing national boundaries, especially between Japan and the United States. For me, avant-pop is a magnificent symptom of the hypercapitalistic cultural coincidence between these two countries.
This is very important, since Larry McCaffery first came to speculate on the literary possibility of avant-pop when he was asked by a Japanese journal *Positive* in the summer of 1990 to write an essay on the trends of post-80s American fiction, which was published much earlier than his avant-pop manifesto first printed in English in the October 1992 issue of *ANQ*. What is more, while Larry was staying in Japan for a couple of months in the summer of 1992, one of the promising and ambitious Japanese writers Masahiko Shimada suggested that I and Larry contribute a mutual correspondence on avant-pop to the September 1992 issue of his edited literary newspaper *Domoku-Shinbun*. This was a fantastic experience similar to musical improvisation, so later we decided to revise, expand, and incorporate this mutual correspondence into my serial column called "Graffiti's Rainbow" in #12 of *SF Eye*. Therefore, let me say our mutual correspondence is a collaboration, not only between the two of us, but also between the authors and the skillful editors and even the 5th Pioneer Award nomination committee members, to whom our deepest appreciation should be expressed. And yet, our literary friendship should not be called international, but just transnational. For the term internationalism used to be another name for Americanism, whereas it signified post-War Occidentalism on the Japanese part. The avant-pop culture has developed as our transnational imagination bloomed.

Such a '90s viewpoint has allowed me to reinterpret the literary status of science fiction. I began reading science fiction, mainly Anglo-American science fiction, in the mid-'60s, when I was a teenager. It is also around this period that Japanese science fiction writers started their career by imitating and assimilating the works of the Anglo-American precursors. If science fiction is a literature reflecting the frontiers of techno-capitalistic society, for them Japanese writers in the '60s it was inevitable to follow the exemplars produced within the Pax Americana climate. In the '80s, however, a revolutionary paradigm shift took place. As you all have noticed, Anglo-American writers started reappropriating Japanesque images more often than not, whereas Japanese writers came to notice that writing science fiction in the wake of cyberpunk means gaining an insight into the radically science fictional within the semiosis of "Japan." Of course, insofar as Anglo-American representation of Japan becomes attractive by distorting Japanese culture, it sometimes gives rise to heated controversy on the part of the Japanese audience. For instance, I remember one of my friends from Chiba City getting very angry when he read
the first chapter of William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, "Chiba City Blues," in which to my friend Gibson seems to represent Chiba people very pejoratively. In retrospect, however, back in the '50s and the '60s Japanese people tried to import a huge amount of Anglo-American cultural products, and unwittingly misread their Occidentalism as a genuine internationalism. Representation of the ethnic Other, whether it is correct or incorrect, has long fascinated talented writers who are ambitious enough to incorporate most avant-garde images into their fiction. As Anglo-American representation of the Japanese other seems still based on the stereotypes of Fujiyama-Geisha-Computer, so we Japanese people (including intellectuals) have long modelled America upon the stereotypes of Kennedy-Monroe-Gone-With-the-Wind. But now in the '90s, we are witnessing fabulous intersections and negotiations between Orientalism and Occidentalism, western belief in eternity and Japanese aesthetics of the ephemeral, western productionist and idealistic sensibility and Japanese high-tech-consumerist and post-historical mentality, or even between the science fictional Japan and Japanese science fiction. To me, it is through this melting pot of the western and Japanese stereotypes that an imaginary interpretive community of avant-pop comes into being. Thus, our literary critical journey from metafiction and cyberpunk through avant-pop will carry us further into a transgeneric and transethnic and transpacific spatio-temporal structure, somewhere over the rainbow.

— Takayuki Tatsumi

**Pilgrim Award Presentation Speech**

First, let me offer my thanks to SFRA for the honor of serving on the Pilgrim Committee, and my gratitude to David Ketterer and Brian Attebery who made it both a learning experience and a pleasure to work with them.

The 1994 Pilgrim meets, to some extent, the current requirement for multi-culturalism. His language is and always has been English, but he is a Canadian who has lived in the United States, and who now resides in England where he has been for many years. I do not know which country he calls home at this point, but he is a native resident of science fiction country, a place most of us in this room call home.
In an early essay, the first in his collected reviews, published in 1988, he speaks of an epiphany he had as a young man walking down a chilly street in Toronto in 1966 and seeing the Shell Building glowing in the sunset. "And I thought in my peajacket, staring, that I was the first or maybe the second generation of us mortals to see so flat and so vast and so vertical a reflection on this curved Earth, third planet from the sun." And the writer wills himself aloft, above this glossy modern building, and sees himself entering "the maturity of mankind some several years hence," into the "City of God of our science-fiction dreams" when humankind will go traveling. He wistfully comments that "we were born too soon... and I look about and isn't it all to incompetent and incomplete for words, our world?"

Then he recalls a science fiction story by Sturgeon in which a man afraid of heights discovers with alien help that his true home is in space, that his fear of falling is not, after all, what it seems; it is, rather, the fear of the space-traveler — the fear of the planet falling upon him. And the writer concludes that this is

...a parable of our present condition: that we are stifled here in our own juices, and that this is not our home. Which is why I read so avidly in the literature of escape, I suppose. Because this congenital and tiny world is falling on top of me. As I rose level with the sun above Toronto I said Lord make me waterproof, but I remain mortal. I remember very clearly how I continued to walk south on Huron Street going waesuck, waesuck, how the world kept hitting my feet like tons of lead.

In the twenty-eight years since he wrote that, this Pilgrim has been a critic of the literature he loves best. Much of his work has been in review form and the list is long and multi-national: Interzone, Observer, Omni, Toronto Globe and Mail, Washington Post, New York Times, Foundation, Fantasy and Science Fiction make only a partial list. His name appears in the 1993 Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, by John Clute and Peter Nicholls, where the entry under this Pilgrim's name says that his "criticism, despite some studiously flamboyant obscurities, remains essentially practical." At another point in the Encyclopedia, Peter Nicholls describes his criticism as "pungent." On the plane coming here, I was reading an issue of Locus, in which Russell Letson refers to him as a "reviewer's reviewer."
Shortly before leaving for Chicago, I received some back issues of *Foundation*; I turned to the letter written by this year's Pilgrim, commenting on someone else's essay: the first item in his list was that the essay was written "ass-backwards." Not a man to mince words or cushion criticism, is our Pilgrim.

He describes writing criticism as an art and draws an analogy with the works of Georges Simenon. The Simenon works that do not feature Inspector Maigret move from order to chaos, showing a protagonist discovering his world is not as neat as had been believed. The Maigret novels, on the other hand, move from chaos to order. Our Pilgrim sees himself and other critics as practicing the art of Inspector Maigret:

...it is an art of reconstitution, but also of closure, for in the critic, as in Maigret, there is a rage for order. Both the rage for chaos and the rage for order, though one may be higher than the other and more profound, are impulses of the creative spirit; and it is in this sense I feel, when I am acting as a critic, that I am acting as a kind of creator. Accusations that the critic is inherently parasitical have always seemed fatuously self-serving to me... the critical act is a form of shaping...

I wish time allowed me to read you several examples of the wit of this year's Pilgrim. He has always had a particular interest in metaphor as a structural and thematic device of science fiction: his own are vivid and startling. Let me indulge myself and delight you with just one. One of his reviews tackles the matter of a novel written in collaboration. The review assigned blame for bad writing to the lesser-known collaborator by deduction: "[The better-known writer] may be sentimental at times; his stories may derive more from pulp and less from mythopoesis than he (or his protagonist) tends to think; he may sleep at the wheel. But he does not wamble like a spastic turkey on a skating rink." Then he analyzes, in Delany-like fashion, a passage from the novel, sentence-by-sentence, and calls it "drunken turkey tracks." Not only is his exegesis convincing, but the image of a drunken turkey on skates is one that will stay with me whenever I see bad writing.
I've tried to give you a sense of a bit of the critic's methods and concerns. Most of the material comes from a collection called Strokes: Essays and Reviews 1966-1986, a book that Peter Nicholls, in The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction, calls "an example of a wider perspective on sf, dealing as it does with sf's concerns in terms of their metaphoric resonance — their subtexts — as well as their literal meaning."

You've probably noticed I've referred to John Clute and Peter Nicholls' Encyclopedia several times. Peter Nicholls won the Pilgrim Award in 1980 for the 1979 Encyclopedia. I took a careful look at my copy the other night — it looks like the veteran that it is — discolored by time, coffee, diet coke and chocolate, folded-over corners and paper clips on pages I no longer recall what I was looking up on.

Like many of you, I have bought the 1993 Encyclopedia (one attempt to lug the library copy home and back again for renewal drove me directly to Border's Books). It weighs 5 3/4 pounds, as opposed to its former sylphlike heft of 2 1/2. The 1979 version had 672 pages, the 1993, 1370. The original version has 700,000 words of text; the 1993, 1.3 million words. There are 2900 author entries; of those, 2300 are by John Clute.

He also wrote his own entry, which I quoted earlier — the "studiously flamboyant obscurities." This harsh self-assessment of Clute's own work suggests, I think, the rage for order and instinct for judgment he sees in Inspector Maigret as well as his willingness to judge himself by the standards he applies to others (and maybe even a sense of fun).

Besides the hundreds of author entries, much of the other work of the new Encyclopedia is also his. As a reader, a teacher, a fan, and lover of science fiction, what more can I say, what more can we all say, but thank you, John Clute, the 1994 Pilgrim.

— Carolyn Wendell

Pilgrim Award Acceptance Speech

Thanks must be my first word: thanks enormously for letting me in here. And in a few minutes, thanks will be my last word as well.
As a ringer in quite a few towers — as a non-English Englishman; as a writer of fiction who writes two stories a decade; as a non-academic who does bibliography with violent intensity; as a man of mature years who spends a good deal of his time writing book reviews in ephemeral journals with great passion; and as a solitary unemployed freelance who spends the rest of his time, with a passel of colleagues, beavering away at encyclopedias — it is a most unusual experience for me to have a sense that I am coming home; but here I am, and I think I might well call it home.

The plane gives glimpses of Chicago as you land at O'Hare, but you never step into the same Chicago twice. The city I remember with clarity comes back to me, over the steppes of the years, like Oz, like science fiction, just as it did the first time. This was 1956. The airport was Midway. For a 16 year old immigrant from Canada, who had spend the previous four years reading pulp magazines and Ace Books, the first sight of Chicago was like a vision from the Golden Age. Michigan Avenue — as far as the 16 year old kid was concerned — gave off a Golden Age reek, raw and clean and real. Soldier Field was Nuremberg, without the bad vibes. All in all, Chicago looked like what anyone who drew cities in Astounding thought a metropolis should look like. Chicago was where the Future Histories started.

A year later came the poison chalice of Sputnik, and although it took a while to sink in, I suspect I was just the right age — like some vast baby duck — to find myself unconsciously bonded to disillusion, without knowing what it was I had lost. Certainly I'd lost the Golden Age of childhood, as we all do; but there was more than that. What I'd lost — and what SF had lost — after Sputnik had stitched its way back and forth across the new mundane sky, was the old sense that space was a magic portal, an image capable of dragging us into the future. What Sputnik did — what indeed the whole, archaic, doom-ridden space programme did — was to drag the future backwards into the now. Space was no longer free space. Overnight, space was tied to the seamy contentious intricacy of human history upon the planet, a continuation of life on Earth by other means.

A child might not have noticed the change. An adult might have ridden it. A 17 year old, on the other hand, might well have found himself stuck in midstream, only half aware that his dream world had been sign-changed into a continuation of homework. I don't want to
erect a few tiny coincidences into bad theory, but I rather wonder if it might not be modestly relevant that I was born the same year as two SF writers with whom I feel a particularly strong cognitive rapport — Tom Disch and Norman Spinrad — and that we all impacted late adolescence, the end of the Eisenhower years, and Sputnik at the same time. Let us put fiction aside, as I've never written enough to sort it: but as critics, all three of us have seemed at times to evince a certain strange pachydermatousness about SF, like lovers who will not admit their wound. I (for one) know how truculently thin-skinned I've been, how savage I've been about any SF which seemed — through cynicism or fake camaraderie or apeing of the old — to mock our loss.

Here is the mountain which this molehill makes: I think certain kinds of loss, inflicted on the psyche at certain vulnerable moments, makes for natural critics. I do not claim that a natural critic is necessarily a good one, nor that those who failed to have something to sulk about when they were seventeen must necessarily produce flawed critical works; only that the obsessive acts of secondary re-creation which make up the work of the natural critic can be seen as a redemptive enterprise, and that what is being redeemed is the cracking of the Golden Age. I'd suggest, en passant, that the wounds which may spark a talent for creative writing almost certainly occur earlier in the life passage of the writer-to-be; and that the writer's search for those wounds can take forever. What in particular marks the critic's wound is that it is visible to the eye. What made me a critic was a loss I could read about in the newspapers.

But back to Sputnik. In all seriousness, I think it genuinely may be fitting — if we sidebar any cod theorizing about the wound that engenders the critic — to treat the beginning of the space age as a turning point, beyond which the quasi-organic conversation of American SF — for the moment let me call it First SF — began to ramble, and to lose the thread of the story; began the long descent into the blather of sharecrop. Before Sputnik, First SF had thrived in a native habitat, which included the moon and the stars as draws; afterwards, new versions of SF, new conversations, began to collide with the dying gabfest of Future History; and First SF sporulated into a series of loose overlapping genres. As genre critics, it is right and proper for us to note that Sputnik changed — once and for all — the conversation of precedents that bathed First SF texts into a teeming, immensely fruitful squabble where old and new modes fight for lebensraum, Cy-
berpunk sagas cohabit with dinosaur senilities, sequels set in the worlds of dead authors share shelf space with New Waves, with postmodernist pastiches set in nostalgia-choked alternate history Toontowns, with fossil singletons, with works of genius by new writers and by writers who had moved from the old to the newer mode.

Taking some few stabs at understanding this new world has filled up most of my working life.

It is also interesting, I think, to notice how markedly the new SF resounds to certain underlying continuities, base tonalities, that mark American literature as a whole. For me — speaking as an onlooker, as a ringer who lost his green card decades ago — it is remarkable how clearly the literature of the United States is marked by a sense of belatedness: a sense that the frontier is always beyond reach, or that when it is finally penetrated it turns out already to have been abandoned; a sense that the Great Gatsby will never gain the garden or the city, no matter how hard he rows; a deep central disappointed knowing that the breast is shut. If this sense of things is at all accurate, then post-Sputnik SF has become all the more essentially American, now that its best authors tend to explore the recedingness of things, attempt to limn the uncapturable complexities of a world whose futures are profoundly various, profoundly pressing.

None of this alters the sense that First SF has become a bounded region, that its own, deeply unselfconscious belatedness is something we can — as it were — look back on. Like the rockets at Cape Canaveral, First SF was tied to a version of history, and when that version passed it became part of a told story. A conviction of the usefulness of "belatedness" as a concept grew on me as I worked with Peter Nicholls, John Grant and Brian Stableford on the second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* — as careers and motifs continued to obsess my dreams, while the years passed. I don't think the *Encyclopedia* insists upon this thesis — it would be extremely inappropriate if it did argue, in an ex cathedra tone, a position which is both debatable and partial. But certainly, as I wrote, I felt, and I think my partners may have felt, that a large and significant and deeply loved part of what we were calling SF was, in 1993, a completed topic.

But if the old compact had told its tale by now, what on Earth was replacing it? If I was going to claim that the most significant Ameri-
can SF writers from 1960 on didn't really write First SF any more, what on Earth were they doing? While working on the Encyclopedia, I backed away from thinking too much about answering this question, partly because the Encyclopedia — as Peter Nicholls originally conceived it in 1975; and as we all continued to think of it in the 1990s — was intended to represent a broad-church, non-prescriptive sorting of anything we thought might possibly be describable as SF. But the question remained.

In twenty years, I may begin to believe any of the answers I come up with. For what it's worth, I tend at the moment to think that, over the last few decades, SF has begun to lose its profound attachment to what one might call the Fables of the First World: tales whose protagonist, usually human, represents the dominant species in the venue being described, the species which knows how to get to the future. I think that SF stories today are more and more beginning to sound like Fables of the Third World: stories whose protagonists, often human, represent cultures which have been colonized by the future. The future may come in the form of aliens, or as AIs, or as bio-engineered transformations of our own species; but whatever it touches, it subverts. SF stories of this sort can — depressingly — read rather like manuals designed to train Polynesians in the art of begging for Cargo; but they can also generate a sense of celebration of the worlds beyond worlds beyond our species' narrow path.

For me — to conclude — the Encyclopedia was not primarily designed to emphasize this change. In its sometimes manic comprehensiveness, it worked, in the end, for me, as an attempt to seal over the cracks in the Golden Age by surrounding the fissure. (Childless people — I am one — often tend to have large extended families.) For me, the Encyclopedia was an act of healing, on the part of a thin-skinned adolescent with a tendency to mourn.

In the end, standing here now, I have to admit — it's an oddly difficult thing to say — that I do feel moderately healed. I do feel that we've not been wasting our time. I think we've all been having a good conversation these last few years, about the literature we bend our heads over. In the end, then, as it was in the beginning, the first and last thing for me to say is Thanks.

— John Clute
[I am pleased to include this insightful review of *I. Asimov: A Memoir*, which James Gunn prepared at the request of *Tangent*. He kindly submitted a copy to the Review as he thought it might be of interest to our readers. Mr. Gunn has recently signed a contract with Scarecrow Press for a revised edition of his *Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of Science Fiction.* — [ed.]


Isaac Asimov has completed his life's work with a final autobiographical volume. His life's work, of course, was himself, and he celebrates it in *I. Asimov*. Asimov readers hoping for a continuation of his big, two-volume autobiography, totaling nearly 1500 pages and published in 1979 and 1980 to celebrate his 200th book, may be disappointed. He promises in the final words of the autobiographical volume that took his life story up to 1978 that it would "be continued eventually," but instead *I. Asimov* offers a series of short chapters that go back to his beginnings and offer glimpses of Asimov at various stages of his life and career.

This recent book is like sitting down with Asimov to listen to him reminisce about people and events, and it is best read like that. *I. Asimov* is a book to be picked up, enjoyed for a quarter of an hour or so, and put back down with the assurance that whenever you feel like it you can admit yourself once more to the delightful talk of a great conversationalist. It does not have the continuity, the theme of a viewpoint and a life in perspective, of his two earlier volumes, and that may be why Asimov called it a memoir, which Webster defines as "an account of one's life, or episodes in it, written by oneself," rather than an autobiography. In a preface, Asimov justifies his memoir in place of an autobiography because the earlier books are out of print and readers would have difficulty putting his later life into context, but one wonders whether the compulsive writer found concentrated effort too difficult in his last years and, like his final Foundation book (*Forward the Foundation*), he found his energies more suited to shorter spurts of effort. And Janet Asimov is quoted as saying, "Don't give a day-by-day account. Be subjective. Give your thoughts. Start from the beginning. Cover your whole life in a retrospective, but don't
go into unending details..." Nevertheless, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Asimov's state of health had something to do with the final shape of the memoir. In fact, a good part of the memoir was composed on writing pads during a two-week period in February 1990 while Asimov was in the hospital and didn't have available his diaries and the first two volumes of his autobiography. He died of heart and kidney failure on April 6, 1992.

So we who knew and loved Asimov and his works have been deprived of his presence in this world, and even of that final, comprehensive look at his life, the summing up that we may have wanted, but we have his books — all 470 of them, carefully listed by category at the end of the memoir — including his two autobiographical volumes and now his memoirs. It may be more than we can rightfully expect of death, to leave us this much of Asimov behind.

And the memoir does offer new information; there are, to be sure, those twelve years unrecorded in his autobiographies. He tells us, for instance, of his ascension into best-sellerdom with *Foundation's Edge*. Although he doesn't repeat the tribute to my *Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of Science Fiction* that he published in *IAsfm* and the more recent editions of *The Foundation Trilogy*, he does explain its length and, to some readers, its comparative sprawl. "I had been asked," he wrote, "to make *Foundation's Edge* longer than my early novels." And "I had written the Foundation stories, from beginning to end, between the brash ages of twenty-one and thirty, and had done so under John Campbell's whip. Now I was sixty-one years old and there was no John Campbell any longer, or any present-day equivalent either."

He assumed that the same advice about length held for his later novels, which he made 140,000 words as well. And he commented about the *Robot* novel series that "I had already decided that the robot, Daneel Olivaw, was the real hero of the series..." He also discusses his decision to tie the robot novels and Foundation series together and the opposition of his paperback publishers, the Del Rays (which was never mentioned again once *Robots and Empire* was published).

I don't know how other people reacted to Asimov. I suspect that those who believed in the ineffable and transcendental, in the super-
narrow, and in UFOs and unsolved mysteries found Asimov irritating or even hateful in his serene skepticism and unshakable insistence on physical proof and logical process. If so, they clearly disliked about him what I liked the best: He was the sanest, most rational man I knew, and I titled the headnote for one of the stories I reprinted in *The Road to Science Fiction* "The Clear, Cool Voice of Asimov." "Reason," the name of the story, was his way of life. *I. Asimov* embodies his creed: "I believe in the scientific method and the rule of reason as a way of understanding the natural universe." And it sums up his own acceptance of death as a natural process: "The shades of night are still there on the near horizon... My turn will come, too, eventually, but I have had a good life and I have accomplished all I wanted to, and more than I had a right to expect I would."

In an epilogue, Janet Asimov reports that Isaac once said, "I don't feel self-pity because I won't be around to see any of the possible futures. Like Hari Seldon, I can look at my work all around me and be comforted. I know that I've studied about, imagined, and written down many possible futures — it's as if I've been there."

That is what *I. Asimov* stands for, and every time we want to hear Asimov's clear, cool voice, we have only to open its covers.

— James Gunn


In 1930, two young pulp writers, Hugh B. Cave and Carl Jacobi, entered into a correspondence which ended in 1992. Cave has detailed his early pulp experiences and compiled a portion of that correspondence in *Magazines I Remember*. The early letters are mostly Cave to Jacobi; copies of Jacobi's letters were destroyed in a fire.

*Magazines I Remember* is an informative book, offering a picture of the pulp era from the viewpoint of the writer. Cave and Jacobi's comments about magazines and editors are potentially valuable to the scholar, as are Cave's comments about his writing, submissions and sales. The commentary on magazines is broadly based; *Short Stories,
Ghost Stories, Weird Tales, Oriental Tales, Dime Mystery Magazine, Western Story Magazine and many others are mentioned in varying levels of detail.

*Magazines I Remember* has value, but could have been made significantly more valuable and useful with the inclusion of a good index to the contents. Anyone who studies the pulps should probably read *Magazines I Remember,* science fiction research collections should acquire a copy.

— Hal W. Hall


The connection between imaginary voyages and utopias has long been assumed (as in the pioneering works of Geoffroy Atkinson and Philip Gove and the more recent studies of Frédéric Lachèvre, Raymond Trousson, and Lise Leibacher-Ouvrard), but nowhere previously have the facts, the interpretation, and the significance of the connection been so closely knit. Fausett, whose recent translation and edition of Foigny’s *Southern Land, Known* has brought new light to the best known of these utopias, has examined the literary, geographical, political, and — yes — even what might be called the mythical aspects of these works. His conclusions are supported by carefully accumulated evidence and presented in precise and flowing prose. Extensive footnotes, a seventeen-page bibliography, and a good index add to the usefulness of the book.

Fausett’s interest is in examining "a mode of utopian writing that was common in earlier times and closely bound with patterns of travel and human geography" (1), with a view to assessing what modern writing about society owes to this earlier, highly popular form. He is, it seems to me, more interested in the writing than in the content of the works considered, and it is certainly their connections with the transition from the localized, limited world view of medieval and Renaissance times to the broader, more abstract (and at the same time more realistic) view of the Enlightenment that he finds most significant. The discovery of new lands and the conversion of unknown to
known, as described both in the popular reports of voyages to these new lands and in the criticism of contemporary society embodied in the utopian works that sprang from them, mark an important turn in human culture.

After a brief discussion of early utopian ideas and the extent of classical/medieval knowledge and conjecture about the "Great Southern Land" and of the East, Fausett turns to the sixteenth and early seventeenth century voyages through the Indian Ocean and the land masses that touch thereon. The imaginative, sometimes utopian voyages of Euhemerus, Iambulus, and Lucian give way to the explorations of the Portuguese, the Spanish, the English, and, most important of all to Fausett's thesis, the Dutch. These explorations, in the beginning often kept secret for business reasons, gradually came into the public consciousness, and the imperfectly known lands they found were easily adapted as home of various utopian/dystopian societies.

Two Dutch merchant ships that suffered shipwreck on the coast of Australia became well known in spite of the Dutch East India Company's attempt to keep them secret. The wreck of the Batavia in 1629 was followed by mutiny, murder, sexual scandal, hangings, and marooning of some sailors who were never found. The loss of the Vergulde Draeck in 1656 led to two years of search for the ship's cargo of bullion and for survivors, some of whom made long voyage in a ship's boat to Java, as well as others who were never found; other ships were lost in the ensuing search.

The stories of these and other wrecks, often garbled by censorship and secrecy, became at least a partial foundation for several of the most significant utopian voyages. It was common for utopian writers to lard their tales of hazardous travel with reference to the true stories about these unfortunate vessels and their castaway passengers. Fausett regards such usage as an essential part of the shift to the greater realism of novels of the Enlightenment.

Discussion centering on the use of exotic lands by More (1516), Hall (1605), Arthus (1605), the immensely popular Neville (1668), Brome's play The Antipodes (performed 1668), and others precedes treatment in individual chapters of the three most significant voyages, those of Vairasse, de Foigny, and Smeeks. Denis Vairasse's History of the Sevarites was first published in English in 1668, and in French in
1677-79. Fausett finds this work to be important, at least in part, by "introducing to utopism an evolutionary element: a progression from primitive or castaway societies to the absolute statehood of modern Europe" (125). Gabriele de Foigny's *La Terre Australe connue* (1676) is a short, but elaborately constructed work. Its literary merit has long been diminished, especially for English readers, by the translation in 1693 from a bowdlerized edition of 1692. Fausett sees the work as one — and here many of us would disagree — that sets up a perfect world "only to knock it down... critically dissected, as the eutopia turns into dystopia, revealing such perfection to be problematical and, ultimately, impossible" (137). Henrik Smeeks' *Beschryvinge van het magtig Koningryk Krinke Kesmes...* (1708), forthcoming in a translation by Fausett as *The Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kesmes*, is much less well known. It is, according to Fausett, the culmination of "The formative period of the Enlightenment novel of travel and utopian discovery... [heralding] the rise of the Robinsonade — an avatar emphasizing individual experience rather than the communal dimension in episodes of shipwreck, marooning, and cultural contact" (157). All three works relied heavily on sometimes half-knowledge of actual events in the discovery, exploration and opening of "this last earthly unknown" (1-2), *terra australis incognita*. They opened up the old localized view of the body politic and through the joining of utopia and history made way for the novel as the vehicle for the new ideas of the Enlightenment.

One can easily disagree with many of Fausett's statements and conclusions: e.g., much of the world remained unknown long after the beginning of the eighteenth century; the case for calling de Foigny's a dystopian work is weak; some of the connections between the *Ver-gulde Draeck* and the fictional voyages are pure speculation; Plato does not mention Atlantis in *The Republic*. Indeed, even the major conclusion that these works were instrumental in pioneering a new realism may be overstated when one considers, for example, the Elizabethan rogue literature and its immediate successors. Nevertheless, this is a work of scholarly merit, an interdisciplinary study of the relations of things and ideas, that promotes our continuing effort to understand how we got from there to here and reminds us that the consideration of utopian writing can be a major part of that effort.

— Arthur O. Lewis

Dr. Filmer's intent in this volume is to illustrate her belief that modern fantasy literature plays a significant part in the religious concerns of our time; not simply by the expression of religious themes and arguments, but by providing a mechanism to satisfy our psychological need to hope. She uses familiar authors and stories to develop this argument, such as Tolkien, Lewis, LeGuin, Hoban and Orwell, to name a few.

Filmer believes that the appeal of fantasy in today's world is because fantasy offers "in this sceptical age what religion would offer in an age of faith." In dealing with the need to "believe" or, at least, to "suspend disbelief," she transforms the derisive "escapist literature" tag into an idea that fantasy is not so much an escape from, but rather an escape into the deep inner spirit.

Since both science fiction and fantasy have borne the brand of escapist literature (and some argue that science fiction is simply a subset of the broader spectrum of fantasy), it would seem that the same arguments apply — perhaps in a slightly different form and degree — to science fiction itself, although Dr. Filmer specifically discounts that possibility. However, in speaking of the shift of literary theological approaches from that of Transcendent God to Immanent God ("the Kingdom of God is within you"), one is irresistibly reminded of the theme in Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*, with its "Thou Art God," and other similarities to the points made by Dr. Filmer. Other SF works also seem to fit this theme although, admittedly, fantasy in general fits it best.

In arguing that humans have a basic hunger for religious belief, and for the hope that things will, in some way, get better, Dr. Filmer echoes (perhaps unconsciously, and certainly more seriously) Voltaire's "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him." Undoubtedly, there is some basic instinct in humans that causes hope to appear — even where none seems possible. This instinct, and its expression in fantasy, is the basis for Dr. Filmer's book. Although it is
not light reading, and its message may not be of interest to everyone, there is certainly food for thought here.

— W.D. Stevens


Underwood-Miller's third compilation of illustrations by Virgil Finlay for the pulps and astrological magazines spans forty years, with numerous examples of the artist's work from the four decades of his prolific career (1930s-1960s).

The front jacket illustration, which also serves as the pictorial cover of the softcover edition, is the cover illustration for A. Merritt's *Creep, Shadow*, reprinted in the August 1942 issue of *Famous Fantastic Mysteries*. Unfortunately, the color reproduction of this illustration is very poor, with the light flesh tones, rich greens and blues, and more somber shades of red, yellow and brown exaggerated to the point that the colors resemble a cinecolor version of a film originally released in three-strip technicolor. Finlay's color work deserves better than this.

This betrayal of the original colors is particularly distressing, for if Finlay initially became known for his covers and interior illustrations for *Weird Tales* in the 1930s, many admirers of his work believe that his best period was in the 1940s when his artwork graced almost every issue of *FFM* and its shorter-lived companion, *Fantastic Novels*. He was particularly noted for his illustrations for the fiction of A. Merritt, illustrating not only the original magazine reprints of the early '40s, but also the subsequent reprints in the late '40s in *FFM* and *FN* and in A. Merritt's *Fantasy Magazine*. In addition to the inclusion of several of the Merritt interior illustrations, there are fine examples of his work for the stories of such writers as H. Rider Haggard, E. Charles Vivian, Francis Stevens, H.P. Lovecraft and Austin Hall.

The selections are not, of course, limited to the work appearing in these Munsey — later Popular Publications — magazines, but are chosen from a life's work that is summarized in Gerry de la Ree's checklist
published in *Virgil Finlay* (Don Grant, 1971) as consisting of 2,656 interior illustrations and 212 covers.

It is apparent that the three volumes published by Underwood-Miller leave untouched hundreds of illustrations. The volumes have been organized thematically and have certainly introduced Finlay to a generation that knows little of his legacy to present-day artists. One might have wished for a more systematic presentation, with some sense of chronology and artistic development, but the several hundred illustrations that have been included suggest their own rhythms and support Stephen E. Fabian’s comment, in his introduction to this book, that the tribute which Edgar Degas wanted after his passing, might also be paid to Virgil Finlay: "He was a man who loved drawing."

— Walter Albert


In an attempt to allow their authors to work at greater depth, Twayne, heretofore the publisher of innumerable brief, single-author studies, has begun what they call their Masterwork series, short critical volumes dedicated to individual great works of literature. Series additions relevant to our genre have included *The Lord of the Rings* by Jane Chance, *The Chronicles of Narnia* by Colin Manlove, as well as volumes on the Alice books and More’s *Utopia*.

*Charlotte’s Web: A Pig’s Salvation*, the latest book in the series, provides a solid introduction to E.B. White’s most popular work of children’s fiction. Drawing on previous criticism by Joseph Epstein, Perry Nodelman, Roger Sale, Peter F. Neumeyer and others, as well as on Scott Elledge’s definitive biography, Griffith surveys the novel’s literary and historical context, discussing White’s style, his views on nature, and his thematic preoccupations. There is little here that is startling or revelatory — the messages of *Charlotte’s Web* are intended to be easily available to children. Griffith, however, does a good job of explaining what he sees as the central issue of the novel, "why a pig should be saved," and of tying that question to White’s own, wistfully expressed feelings of inadequacy and alienation.
This short volume also includes a chronology of White's life and works, a useful annotated bibliography and, perhaps the most valuable part of the book, an excellent appendix on approaches to teaching the novel that is aimed at both primary school teachers and professors of children's literature.

—Michael M. Levy


Jones' Guide, the second in a series that began with his Illustrated Vampire Movie Guide (1993), is seriously mistitled. In addition to dinosaur films, it covers films and television programs featuring cave-men or giant animals of any kind. Included are the giant insect films of the 1950s, the Japanese giant monster movies and all films involving missing links, Abominable Snowmen, Bigfoot, the Loch Ness Monster, Moby Dick and the Creature from the Black Lagoon. The television section lists not only relevant series but also episodes of non-fantastic series, such as a Wagon Train episode featuring a sabre-tooth tiger. Jones casts his net so wide he includes Howard Hawks' Bringing Up Baby (1938) for a dinosaur skeleton; Disney's Pinocchio (1940) for Monstro the Whale; and Tim Burton's Edward Scissorhands (1990) for dinosaur topiary.

For some reason Jones omits films about the dinosaurs' closest legendary cousins the dragons, such as Fritz Lang's Siegfried (1924), Terry Gilliam's Jabberwocky (1977), Matthew Robins' Dragonslayer (1981) and, I assume, many Chinese films. He mentions but has no entry for Barney. Even if Barney is found mainly on direct-sale videos rather than on television, the Guide should have included videographic information. Nevertheless, Jones' Guide is the most complete list for this subject with about 500 films, as opposed to several dozen in the other book in the field, Roy Kinnard's Beasts and Behemoths (1988). Most of the films are, of course, obscure and atrocious. Jones' entries provide alternate titles, date, nationality, whether color or black and white, director, production company and principal cast for each film, but not length or character names. His descriptive/critical annotations are terse, rarely more than 100 words. A title index covers films but unfortunately not the listed TV shows.
The *Guide* is as useful for starting arguments about opinions as it is for settling arguments about facts. Jones rates all the films, including those he admits he has not seen. I was pleased to see Jones rate Don Chaffey's and Hammer Films' lively *One Million Years B.C.* (1966), in which Raquel Welch in a fur bikini is carried away by a Ray Harryhausen pterodactyl, higher than Hal Roach's more dignified *One Million B.C.* (1940). However, I feel Jones is often too severe. He gives low marks to Willis O'Brien's many pre-*King Kong* silent prehistoric shorts and to Winsor McCay's *Gertie the Dinosaur* (1909). My disagreement with those ratings makes me wonder about his similar poor ratings for silent films (which I have not seen) by D.W. Griffith, Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin.

I hope no one will be dissuaded by Jones from seeing Ishiro Honda's *Mothra* (1962) and Don Chaffey's *Creatures the World Forgot* (1971), as well as some films watchable solely for an outstanding performance, such as Martine Beswick, who manages to look dangerous and imperious while sitting bikini-clad astride a giant rhinoceros in Michael Carreras' *Slave Girls* (1967).

— Michael Klossner


The cover subtitle is accurate: "The most comprehensive encyclopedia of world cinema in a single volume," which was true of the first edition in 1979, also a large (7x9x3 inch) trade paperback. My copy was very well thumbed, with the pages beginning to darken with age, so I was pleased to see this new edition of a standard. It was delayed when Katz, who was nearing the end of the alphabet, died in 1992. It's a standard reference in libraries as well, which will have to live with paper covers since Harper isn't releasing a hardcover edition.

The 7,000+ entries emphasize directors, producers, actors, actresses, screenwriters, technical crafts (cinematography, makeup, etc.), but include as well dozens of organizations, studios, events, schools of filmmaking, country entries and many technical terms. Academy award winners for major categories are listed, but none of the other award entries show winners. There's a new, enlightening entry, "gay and lesbian cinema (queer cinema)," a brief one of sexploitation films, but none on film genres — musicals, westerns, SF, etc. Katz deliber-
ately omitted entries for films themselves, which are often briefly dis-
cussed and always listed (FILMS [inclusive] and FILMS INCLUDE
[selective]) in personal name entries. There are no illustrations.

Chronological coverage ranges from the earliest years (e.g. Georges
Méliès, 1861-1938) to early 1994 (the nominal cutoff was probably
the end of 1993). There are hundreds of new entries, mostly of peo-
ple who have become more prominent in the past 15 years. The cov-
erage of individuals is comprehensive, with every major figure given
entries proportional to their relative importance, even including poor
old Edward D. Wood, Jr., "widely regarded the worst director of all
time." The entries are primarily descriptive but include what might
be called consensus evaluative comment, as in the Wood entry.

It's a great book for browsing. I was up 'til two one night flipping
back and forth, discovering some great trivia, such as the name of that
bare-chested strongman striking the huge gong in the the old J. Arthur
Rank films, an ex-boxer named "Bombardier" Wells. There's some-
thing for everyone with even the slightest interest in film (TV work is
discussed in the entries for individuals, but people known mostly for
TV work are excluded). I spot-checked dozens of entries and found no
errors, although John Cleese's entry is slightly misplaced (after Clé-
ment). Cross-references to other entries are printed in small caps but
not always consistently.

Katz doesn't have any direct print competitors, but your interests
in film are likely to dictate the sort of reference work best suited to
your needs. Leonard Maltin's annually revised Movie and Video Guide
now includes entries for hundreds of actors, directors, etc. whose films
are annotated in the main text, but lists after the name only the films
annotated, not, say, all of John Wayne's westerns. Maltin's annotations
are incorporated into Microsoft's Cinemania '94 ($80), a well-reviewed
CD-ROM that provides access to about 20,000 films by genre, cast, di-
rector, etc. and, of course, provides snippets of films, photos, dialogue,
etc. In addition to Maltin, reviews from Pauline Kael's 5001 Nights at
the Movies, Ebert's Video Home Companion and Baseline's Motion
Picture Guide are also included, along with the biographical entries
from Katz, although presumably from the first edition (I haven't seen
this CD to verify that last statement). For my low-tech needs, Katz is
unbeatable, a bargain and an essential companion.

— Neil Barron

This issue of the irregularly published journal contains four essays and several pages of correspondence relating to *Monad* No. 2. "Wells' Martians" by Michel Meurger, translated from the French by Damon Knight, discusses the scientific conjecture that went into H.G. Wells' depiction of the physiology of Martians in *The War of the Worlds*. In the process Meurger reviews late nineteenth century writing speculating about the red planet including Wells' own published material related to his depiction of Mars and its inhabitants.

In "On Writing A Woman of the Iron People," Eleanor Arnason recollects the process of writing her novel about the encounter between humans and an alien creature and reacts to reviewer comment on her characters.

Gary Westfahl uses "Good Physics, Lousy Engineering: Arthur C. Clarke's *A Fall of Moondust*" to rethink critical attitudes toward hard science fiction. By examining the Clarke novel and comparing it to Tom Godwin's "The Cold Equations," Westfahl argues that Clarke celebrates not technology but the triumph of human desires over scientific realities.

Finally, Thomas Perry in "Ham and Eggs and Heinlein" explores Robert Heinlein's political activity prior to World War II and explains Heinlein's decision to be deliberately vague about his political beliefs in *Take Back Your Government*, a practical guide to politicking he wrote in 1946 and which was published posthumously in 1992.

Of minor annoyance is Pulphouse Press's failure to make the method of documentation consistent in the three essays that use outside sources. Nevertheless, all four essays are thorough and well-written and provide useful insights into their subject matter. References in the letters column to Gary Westfahl's article on academic criticism of science fiction in *Monad* No. 2 indicate that the material in the earlier issue of this occasional journal is equally intriguing.

— Agatha Taormina

[This review originally appeared in *Fantasy Review*, Vol. 10., No. 6, #103, July/Aug. 1987. It has been reprinted with the permission of the author. —Ed.]

The relationship between science fiction and religion fascinates me; consequently I approached *The Religion of Science Fiction* with great interest. Unfortunately, the book itself proved distracting. Kreuziger's earlier *Apocalypse and Science Fiction* (1982), which covered many of the same issues, used standard typewriter font but was nicely bound, with index, bibliography, and notes. *The Religion of Science Fiction* is typeset but in other areas inferior; it includes neither index nor bibliography, and chapters are numbered with no indication of what each covers. As a reference, the book is virtually useless.

Nor do the contents alter that impression. Instead of examining the connections between SF and religion, it asserts that science fiction is a religion — although the definitions of "science fiction" and "religion" (Kreuziger employs essentially a secular approach to religion) remain hazy throughout. The prose is dense, obscure, and highly abstract, more concerned with the minutiae of theological discourse than with SF. It asserts rather than demonstrates or discusses, often not mentioning science fiction for pages at a time, while philosophical or theological points are examined with hair-splitting minuteness.

In spite of my ready interest, I found this study difficult to read, often only tenuously connected to the criticism of science fiction. Not generally recommended.

— Michael R. Collings


While flawed, Jane Lindskold's biography/critical study of Roger Zelazny is well worth reading for all but the most expert Zelazny scholar, and will be most valuable to those wishing to begin a study of Zelazny's work for the first time. Lindskold's writing style is direct and approachable, and she manages to mention just about every facet of Zelazny's work and the best of the critical scholarship on him, giving
this book the unique position of being perhaps the first published scholarly opinion on much of his lesser known or later works.

Lindskold quickly passes through Zelazny's early biographical information and moves on to discuss the various influences on his work. Formal education, influential teachers, and writers who had impact either on Zelazny's style or interest are identified here. Her analysis of a passage of Proust with the paragraph it inspired in Blood of Amber is an interesting study of style but does not seriously explore the possibilities of thematic links between the two works. She briefly looks at Zelazny's work as a collaborator and examines how each collaboration offered him new artistic challenges. She seems more interested in impressing upon the reader the depth and scope of Zelazny's self-imposed informal education, and how certain works inspired him, than in critiquing just what those choices might mean to individual pieces of writing. Her proclaimed intention is to show the author's personal and professional development, as well as his desire to continue expanding his information base and testing his writing skills.

Lindskold looks not only at literary influences but at other arts that she feels have impacted Zelazny's writing and career: his interest in music (primarily jazz); his serious study of various Oriental martial arts; and his many collaborations with artists for illustrations of his own work. Finally, Lindskold discusses the influence that physical localities have had on Zelazny, particularly his move to New Mexico, which was the primary impetus behind his Eye of Cat.

The most valuable portion of this book is Chapter Four, "The Pervasive Influence of Poetry," originally published in Extrapolation (33.1, Spring 1992). As far as I am aware, no one else has seriously examined the influence of poetry on Zelazny's work or Zelazny as a poet. Many critics, such as Sturgeon, have talked about Zelazny the prose-poet, but Lindskold reprints and closely examines not only those lyrics that have appeared in his novels from time to time but also several poems that have only appeared in his two collections of poetry. This chapter is a delight to read for those who enjoy science fiction poetry and wise criticism.

In the last two chapters of the book, Lindskold looks at the oft-discussed Zelazny hero and the seldom-discussed heroine. First, she offers a road map through the changing face of the Zelazny hero and
the critical opinion upon the same. Organizing these heroes by types and themes, she quickly skims through the mythological hero/gods that have been discussed extensively in the essays of Carl Yoke and Joseph Sanders, among others. Lindskold's own comments on the second Amber series and the new Amberites are interesting and groundbreaking, and her insights into the character of Martin are helpful and enlightening. If this chapter suffers from anything, it is trying to do too much in too little space. Zelazny has simply written too much.

The final chapter on Zelazny's female characters is one of the first serious discussions of the subject. Lindskold fairly critiques both the failed, weak heroines as well as the stronger ones. Her discussion on the Faoli as a bad stereotype was much needed. She spends considerable time on several recent stories in which the female characters have become stronger and more central to the plot, especially "24 Views of Mount Fuji by Hokusai," whose protagonist, Mari, is a woman.

Although perhaps not critical enough in itself, Lindskold's Roger Zelazny points the way for further scholarly investigation on many aspects of this diverse writer's career. She more than adequately defends her own thesis that Zelazny is a writer who has continued to grow and seek new challenges like his model, Leonardo da Vinci. Her book brims over with quotes from her long-standing correspondence with Zelazny as well as numerous interviews with him. Her knowledge of the body of criticism is sound although she does not venture much into in-depth critiques or theoretical considerations. This is a work that can be appreciated by the knowledgeable fan as well as a general critic, and her chapters on Zelazny's poetry and his female characters are valuable pieces of much needed scholarship.

— Suzette Henderson


One of the current hot topics in theoretical physics is the concept of time travel, also known in the scientific literature as "translation along closed time-like curves" or, more colorfully, "relativistic pathologies." Paul J. Nahin's book *Time Machines* brings into focus the debate on the physical possibility of time travel and examines the
implications of this possibility in terms of both philosophical discourse and science fiction speculation.

Time Machines is divided into four chapters. The first gives an overview of time travel as treated in both science fiction and physics, the second examines the nature of time and space, the third deals with the "arrow of time" problem, and the fourth discusses paradoxes and the author's explanation for why paradoxes do not occur. Following the body of the book are notes and references, including what must be the most extensive bibliography ever compiled of science articles and science fiction relating to time travel. (Dr. Nahin even includes his Internet address for readers to tell him about any resources he missed.) The set of nine technical notes isolates the book's mathematics, giving a more in-depth explanation of the science of time travel.

Dr. Nahin has done a fine job with his book. Time Machines is an excellent synthesis of the current state of philosophical and physical discussion on time travel. His use of science fiction to illustrate the possibilities of this research make his work very readable for the layperson as well as the scientist. His explanation why H.G. Wells's time machine wouldn't work (it does not move in space) is particularly engaging. The one shortcoming, however, appears in the fourth chapter. During his discussion of paradoxes, it becomes apparent that Dr. Nahin is a believer in the "block universe" concept. This idea, most notably expressed by Einstein, holds that the universe — past, present and future — is a solid block that is eternal and static in its existence, so that you cannot change the past or future and there is no such thing as free will. The block universe is based on relativity only and therefore discounts all quantum theory. This reviewer believes that this is unnecessarily limiting, and that quantum physics has much to offer to the question of time travel. Apart from this, Time Machines is an excellent addition to the discussion of time travel.

— George Kelley


Odd Genre is John J. Pierce's most recent addition to a series of scholarly texts assessing the history and themes of science fiction, all
published in Greenwood Press's "Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy." As a former editor for Galaxy, Pierce clearly has the credentials to deal with SF, particularly what he defines in the opening pages as "genre SF" — those novels, stories and films that see themselves as primarily SF, and that build on the heritage of the Golden Age pulps and the continuity of a dedicated fan-readership trained in the conventions of the form.

Much of Odd Genre is devoted to deviations from those conventions. Rather than work through a straight-line history of SF, Pierce chooses to examine its elements, noting which are unique to SF and which are shared in greater or lesser measure by non-SF, more-or-less mainstream approaches to literature. His chapters — encyclopedic in the fullness of their citations to works past and present — examine SF in the context of its fundamental presuppositions (critiquing Darko Suvin, Samuel R. Delaney, and other theorists), and as it intersects with genre romances, detective fiction, juveniles and the bildungsroman, multi-generational family sagas, and science-oriented problem-solving fiction. Subsequent chapters discuss SF and Lost Race romances, superhero pulps, horror, the traditional cosmic voyage, action-adventure novels; and examine SF as escape from mainstream and point of escape into mainstream for various writers.

In spite of the command of his subject Pierce demonstrates, however, Odd Genre suffers from being too much and too little. In attempting to discuss the many permutations of SF form, themes, plots, and images, Pierce incorporates more information than he can fully discuss. Few authors receive more than a paragraph; many receive as little as a single line, a thumbnail sketch at best, that requires the reader to bring to the text an erudition and reading background as wide as Pierce's. Some of these one-liners imply judgment as well as explication, as when Pierce states that "Anne McCaffrey's model for Restoree (1967) was formula gothic romance, helpless heroine and all" (23). There are occasional tonal breaks as well; at one point, Pierce invites readers to "check out... a wild plot" (134).

His choice of examples largely favors older models. Brian W. Aldiss is mentioned primarily for Billion Year Spree and his "anti-novels" of the 1960s; Hellconia is absent. Orson Scott Card's Ender might have been included in chapters on treatment of juveniles, on genocide, and on storytelling. Stephen King and Dean R. Koontz are referred to as
cross-genre authors but discussed peripherally, with Koontz described as "the most notable example of a genre SF writer who has graduated to commercial success, but not literary renown" (116).

It would be easy to continue taking potshots at Odd Genre simply because it is not three or four times as long as it is; given the limitations of space (and the hefty $55.00 price tag for 222 pages of text, notes, and bibliography), Pierce's discussions have nevertheless suggested enough avenues of possibility to keep SF scholars profitably busy for some time. If nothing else, Pierce suggests a centrality for SF that supports my own sense of SF as the primary literary mode for the last decades of a technology-oriented, science-obsessed 20th century.

— Michael R. Collings


The literary merit of the works of Howard Philips Lovecraft (1890-1937) is an open question. The impact of the works of H.P. Lovecraft on the critical community is not. His impact is undeniable. Using even the crudest bibliometric methods, one finds the footprint of the critical work done on him to be arresting, to say the least: two hundred MLA indexed citations since 1967 alone, monographs and articles in a dozen languages, and perhaps a thousand small press items, many existing outside the bibliographic record. He is not much less privileged in the critical attention he has drawn than such canonical figures as Henry James and T.S. Eliot.

Some of this work, particularly this letter collection edited by David E. Schultz and S.T. Joshi, is incisive because it directs us to further work that needs to be done. Much of the existing work is, I think, misleading since it seeks to wrap Lovecraft up neatly with a set of derogatory epithets such as racist, bigot, failure, mama's boy, and hack.
To so label Lovecraft is to simply reduce him to a stereotypical photographic image. Some would seek to do this, perhaps, because to do so conveniently suggests that his stories were the articulation of his own inner torment rather than one artist’s rendering of the postmodern world. This does nothing to inform us as to the source of the pervasive interest in his work, nor does it help to get us to the man behind the gaunt, long-jawed, bespectacled image that many have come to associate with the writer.

These two collections of Lovecraft letters to Robert Bloch are a welcome addition to the work available and clearly demonstrate a great deal of painstaking labor done by Schultz, Joshi and others to present this material in both an authoritative and accessible form, useful to scholar and fan alike. Personally, I found the letters fascinating on several levels. First, on a human level, Lovecraft's concern and generosity in the literary development of the then-teenaged Robert Bloch, whose own distinguished career in several genres now spans sixty years, is genuinely moving, as is Lovecraft's willingness to share his own very limited tangible artistic resources. Lovecraft writes in a firm yet encouraging voice, directing Bloch to source materials that would enhance the novice's craft as a story teller. In addition, Lovecraft's letters show how difficult things must have been for the talented Bloch as he tried to make a living in show business as well as writing; Bloch actually worked in the vaudeville world of rubber cigars and pratfalls. It seems as if Lovecraft was always there through his letters, to encourage and suggest but never judge.

Further, much of the advice Lovecraft gives to the young writer would be as valuable today to any young and creative genre writer as it was in the 1930s. Some might argue that Lovecraft could have benefitted from his own advice, but from the letters it seems that Lovecraft did not take himself as seriously as have some of his critics.

On a more elaborate register, it is very refreshing to hear H.P. Lovecraft speak effortlessly in the same narrative voice that he used to write his wonderful essay, "The Supernatural in Horror in Literature," a piece that even Edmund Wilson grudgingly acknowledged as significant in its scope. It seems clear that Lovecraft was capable, perhaps even facile, in some of the forms he chose to express his ideas and formulate his beliefs. It is also apparent that Lovecraft was acutely aware of the historical drama he witnessed, particularly the
rise of Fascism. It is strange to think while he wrote to Robert Bloch alone, he also wrote to all of us.

To me, the most significant contribution that these letter collections make is that they allow Lovecraft to speak in his own voice, so that his work may perhaps be readdressed from a late 20th century critical perspective looking at the cultural issues Lovecraft dealt with. I feel the horrific aspect of his work lies both in his rejection of religion and his extension of Logical Positivism to a conclusion which removes human activity from any high purpose, religious or secular. He raises again the question of whether scientific knowledge is power or if it leads to what for some is the paralyzing realization of humanity's insignificance in the boundless void of eternity.

I would recommend these collections to all those who seek artistic insights into a sensitive individual, the value of whose perspective is enhanced by its marginality. At the least, they are a must to be included in any 19th and 20th century literary research collection, and they make very good reading on their own merit as well. I hope they become available through mass market distribution to a more general audience. My only suggestion for improvement is that the collections be made available in a hardbound form suitable for libraries.

— Philip Kaveny


The enduring popularity of *Dracula* (1897) has been both a blessing and a curse for Bram Stoker. On one hand, it has ensured his literary immortality by linking his name forever to an archetypal figure of supernatural horror fiction. On the other hand, this fame has been achieved largely at the expense of recognition for Stoker's other writings. As Carol Senf notes in her introduction to this compilation of critical pieces on Stoker's writing, *Dracula* is the only one of Stoker's ten novels (not to mention his two story collections and various works of nonfiction) that has never been out of print. Admittedly, most of his novels are badly-dated Victorian romances that highlight some of his worst traits as a writer — his fondness for melodrama and for characters speaking in dialect, for example — but their unavailability
has deprived twentieth-century readers of an important context in which to read Stoker's vampire tale. As a result, Dracula was, until only twenty-five years ago, largely denied any serious critical attention by other than horror readers.

Proof of this neglect can be found in the thirteen sections of this volume, each of which collects two to eleven pieces on a specific book published during Stoker's lifetime. Senf has assembled this volume to reconstruct the critical heritage for most of Stoker's writing, but through no fault of her own she demonstrates that Stoker has almost no critical heritage to speak of. Only six sections feature any criticism more recent than a year or two beyond the initial publication date of the book being covered, and even those sections show glaring gaps of thirty to eighty years between selections. A perfect example is the section on Dracula, by far the meatiest: seventy-five years separates the first three critical selections (all from the book's year of publication, 1897) and the fourth selection, Royce MacGillvray's "Bram Stoker's Spoiled Masterpiece." (References to Dracula can be found in works from this period by Dorothy Scarborough, H.P. Lovecraft, Montague Summers, and Stoker's biographer Harry Ludlum, but some of these appear in Margaret Carter's splendid Dracula: The Vampire and the Critics (1988) and Senf has scrupulously avoided reprinting any of this book's contents).

The sections covering Stoker's lesser-known books underscore further obstacles to his critical recognition. Modern studies of The Jewel of Seven Stars by Nina Auerbach and Phyllis A. Roth, although sound in their analyses of Stoker's attitudes toward gender and identity, are compromised by being based on later editions of the novel in which Stoker, at his publisher's request, replaced his original grim ending with a happy one. Since Roth, the author of the fine Twayne author study Bram Stoker (1982), is one of the few critics to have actually read all of Stoker's primary texts, Senf was compelled to excerpt her book a second time for the section on The Man (1905), which she and Roth both value as Stoker's "most satisfying novel," but which few contemporary critics have ever read.

Even for the handful of critics who show some familiarity with Stoker's other work, there is a tendency to view that work through the lens of Dracula. Several reviewers of the romantic melodramas Miss Betty (1898) and The Mystery of the Sea (1902), quoted here, express
expectations that these books will contain the same thrills as Stoker's vampire novel. One can't help but wonder if Stoker didn't write *The Lady of the Shroud* (1910), whose heroine masquerades as a vampire, in response to such critics. Senf's culling of the review pages of *Punch, The Bookman, The Athenaeum, The Spectator* and other magazines for early criticism of Stoker deserves the highest praise, even though it reveals most of Stoker's reviewers to be a relatively unenlightened lot. The most interesting finding in these snippets is the general familiarity with vampirology at the time of *Dracula's* publication, when there was hardly a significant body of vampire fiction.

The most valuable part of this volume is Senf's lengthy introduction, in which she supplies the publishing history for nearly all of Stoker's books (including the short story *Dracula's Guest*, published posthumously in 1914 and not covered here), and outlines their shared themes, motifs and ideas. To her great credit, she has sifted through works as different as a buried treasure adventure (*The Snake's Pass*, 1890), the tale of a genteel American woman's love for a mountain man (*The Shoulder of Shasta*, 1895), a domestic fable about a young woman raised as a man (*The Man*), and even a miscellany of anecdotes regarding famous imposters (*Famous Imposters*, 1910). She has winnowed out Stoker's opinions regarding sex roles, modern science, and religious faith, and presented them convincingly as emblematic of his time and place. Her efforts leave one to speculate what other critical insights about Stoker's work might emerge if only the primary texts were available for study.

— Stefan Dziemianowicz


The title is certainly enough to whet one's appetite, implying a sweepingly ambitious attempt to place modern British fantasy in its historical context. However, my disappointment began on page 1 of the introduction and remained largely unalleviated through page 521 of the index.
It should be made clear from the start this is a literary history of British fantasy FOR CHILDREN. Why is this not indicated in the title? I wondered at first if it was some sort of misguided attempt to deceive potential purchasers, but it soon became clear that whatever Smith's faults are, dishonesty is not one of them. No, it is simply that the author actually imagines that fantasy is exclusively a branch of children's literature. She apparently remains almost entirely unaware of the development of fantasy as a popular adult genre, of scholarship in the fantastic from Todorov on, and of the psychological dimension of the word. I say "almost" because the introduction contains the briefest mention of such critics as Bruno Bettelheim and Jack Zipes. It is just that Smith is motivated by two factors, one admirable, one less so. The first is that she loves to read a certain kind of children's literature; the second is that she completed a doctoral dissertation in 1982 with the same title as this book and was apparently encouraged to feel that with some adjustments and "updating" it could be turned into a work of literary-historical scholarship.

This is not a work of literary-historical scholarship. It is a catalogue, and by no means an exhaustive one, of about two hundred British children's books divided into four historical periods. The small merit of this work is in the plot summaries of the books, though most are long-winded. The periodic division might have offered a useful historical scheme had more convincing arguments for its appropriateness been offered. The period 1840-1899, for example, is grandly titled the period of "Enlightenment" fantasy, right after Charles Shaw and Charles Kingsley have been cited on the deeply unenlightened Victorian attitude to children of unprivileged backgrounds. Preceding the chapters cataloging the periods are four sociohistorical chapters supposedly dealing with evolving "concepts of childhood." These reveal little historical knowledge or sensitivity: Rousseau is marked as the "influential successor" of John Locke; upper-class Edwardians were "engaged in leisure activities not unlike those that might have been pursued and enjoyed in the closing years of the nineteenth century."

The passage just quoted is verbiage disguising banality, and this is, unfortunately, entirely characteristic of Smith's style, one which almost totally undermines the intellectual pretensions of the project. On almost consecutive pages (306-10) we learn that in the twentieth century "children came to be viewed as fascinating beings possessed of unusual potential to be both tapped and nurtured"; that "one expla-
nation for the relative absence of educational references in literary works may be that educational theory is a fluid area filled with debate and, in many cases, lack of resolution"; and that "the late Joseph Campbell envisioned myth as something basic to the belief system of man." How could the poor reader, confronted again and again with such crashingly clumsy statements of the obvious, be expected to recognize the occasional insight that Smith might be statistically likely to make in the course of five hundred pages?

Even the index is a mess, with an entry for every character's name mentioned but no cross-referencing between authors and titles. Yet this work is not absolutely devoid of merit. The last chapter in particular, on contemporary Australian and New Zealand children's fantasy, while having almost nothing to do with the topic at hand, seems at least to offer a preliminary guide to unfamiliar territory. Nevertheless, as it stands, the book is ill-conceived, ill-argued and ill-written, and is not recommended for any academic collections.

— Nicholas Ruddick


In Starships and Dragons, Susan Van Schuyver has created a well-designed workbook that can be helpful in providing science fiction and fantasy language arts skill building and enrichment. The publisher lists a 6th grade readability level and suggests the workbook is appropriate for students between 6th and 10th grades. However, my own experience as a K-12 Reading Specialist indicates that it would be best used for language arts enrichment for 6th through 8th graders.

Since the pages are authorized reproducible by the publisher, teachers can buy one workbook and copy just those skill sheets that reinforce the skill being taught — critical thinking, comprehension, vocabulary, writing and grammar. Creative descriptions of dragons, unicorns, starships and robots should make the exercises of high interest to those students who are already fans. Reading/writing activities ask students to define an underlined word from its context: "Although children enjoy playing in the labyrinth, its winding paths and tall hedges are dangerous in the darkness." Creativity exercises include
designing the ground rules for establishing a colony on an alien planet and plotting a story by entering magic gateways into other worlds. Students can work independently or cooperatively. The self-contained activities are not dependent on the reading of science fiction or fantasy works, but some optional "challenge" activities list recommended titles. Complete teaching notes and answers are included.

The activities are thoughtfully designed and likely to inspire creativity in average and above average students who are already readers. However, studies have shown that even the best-designed workbook cannot take the place of actually reading and writing about good literature. No workbook can change a reluctant student into a lifelong reader. Studies have also shown that new vocabulary presented in workbook format tends not to transfer into long-term memory; this is particularly true for average and remedial students. Teachers cannot expect students to learn new skills solely through workbook exercises; skills are best learned by reading and writing in lengths of a paragraph or longer. Furthermore, teachers who wish their students to become interested in science fiction and fantasy must read such books aloud in the classroom and make readily available a classroom library of the best genre books with interest and readability levels ranging from primary to young adult and adult. *Starships and Dragons* can be useful in the classroom, but it can't do the job alone.

— Sandra J. Lindow


When Bridge called me to ask if I'd review this, I said I would and asked the length. I was incredulous when told it was about 400 pages, even though I knew Hubbard was a prolific pulpster during the 1930s and 1940s under various names. Only a handful of Hubbard's fictions were reprinted as books (but see below). Currey's authoritative bibliography, current through mid-1977, lists only 11 books. As far as I know, Hubbard has not been a subject of any of the pamphlet or book-length bibliographies earnest scribes have compiled in recent decades.
It was therefore with some interest that I read this substantial cloth-bound work. A chronology of the published fiction cites the number as 226; if a half page of descriptive bibliography were devoted to each item, you'd still be a long way from 400 pages. It's the ancillary material that bulks up the book. A 15 page biography is followed by chronological lists, the first all-genre, the others by category: adventure, western, mystery/detective, fantasy, SF and romance. This information is expanded in the sections devoted to books, magazine fiction and nonfiction, verse, audio recordings, plays, screenplays, and various secondary listings. A section titled "About the Author: Monographs, Interviews, References & Reviews" says it lists materials "which deal with the author or his works in depth or in passing." In fact most items deal only with Hubbard's fiction. Omitted are such openly hostile books as Jon Atack's *A Piece of Blue Sky* (1990) and Russell Miller's *Bare-Faced Messiah* (1988).

At least a third of the book could be considered celebratory of its subject, which doesn't mean it's of no value, at least to Hubbard fans. Photographic sections are devoted to the Writers of the Future contests and to Hubbard's life and many magazine and book publications, including *Battlefield Earth* and the ten volume series, *Mission Earth*. If you missed his earlier fiction, much of which has never been reprinted, you won't have long to wait, for Author Services, Inc. (the agency that handles most Hubbard-related matters) began issuing in 1990 the L. Ron Hubbard Classic Fiction Series, a leather-bound subscription series, collecting virtually all his shorter and longer fictions (all published and forthcoming books in the series through 1999 are listed in the book section).

I checked this bibliography against sources I owned and found no significant omissions if discussions of dianetics and scientology are excluded. Bill Contento, a co-compiler of the definitive index to fantastic fiction magazines (three volumes, forthcoming from Garland), sent me the Hubbard entries. Widder had everything, except the indexed articles which are outside his scope, including a handful of tales which should have been but weren't in the index.

I read many of Hubbard's better-known fictions, like *Fear*, *Typewriter in the Sky*, *Final Blackout* and probably others but remember little of them today. This bibliography would be useful for anyone
studying Hubbard's fiction or popular fiction of the 1930-1950 period, but for few others, save a handful of large university libraries.

— Neil Barron


Do we really need yet another book on science fiction and feminism? Probably not, but this short study by a British scholar is sensible and clearly written, if not entirely free of academic jargon. It is thoroughly researched, sprinkled with the names of famous theorists like raisins in a fruitcake, but does not always follow the postmodern party line. Wolmark challenges the writings of critics like Frederick Jameson and Jean Baudrillard as male-centered, and criticizes some ideas of feminists like Marleen Barr and Donna Haraway as well.

Having suggested that the contradictory boundaries between feminism and science fiction need redefinition, Wolmark selects some interesting texts for analysis. She uses Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* and *Patternmaster* novels to demonstrate the ways in which Butler disrupts ordinary science fiction narrative expectations about gender and race, and then compares her to Gwyneth Jones, who uses the device of the alien to parody and subvert standard SF conventions and assumptions. She continues somewhat less successfully with Vonda McIntyre and C.J. Cherryh as subversive users of conventional SF narrative structures, then turns to the feminist utopias/dystopias of Suzy McKee Charnas, Sheri Tepper, Pamela Sargent, and Margaret Atwood. She makes a good point about their ambiguity in comparison to 1970s utopias like Sally Gearhart's *The Wanderground*. The final chapter covers cyberpunk, masculine except for Pat Cadigan and unable to escape from a patriarchal view of social relations.

Wolmark's unspoken assumption that heterosexuality necessarily implies patriarchy skews some of her judgments and may cause her to misread some texts, in particular Elizabeth Vonarburgh's *The Silent City*, but on the whole, this is a well-balanced book which readers interested in SF feminism will find stimulating.

— Lynn F. Williams
FICTION REVIEWS


This novel, first published in Great Britain, is an interesting work. The author is a screenwriter who has written a number of well-known (and successful) movies and TV screenplays both here and in Great Britain. This is his first novel. The amount of publisher's hype, primarily devoted to Ambrose's success as a screenwriter, coupled with glowing praise for this book from such varied sources as Whitley Strieber and Douglas Adams, almost prepare one to dislike the book before starting it. That is unfortunate, because the story demands attention in the first few pages and keeps it up until the end.

It starts innocently enough, with a successful magazine publisher preparing to launch a new venture, when he suddenly flees a meeting with his bankers and races to a site where he has envisioned an accident involving his wife and son. The scene is exactly as he saw it and, with the death of his wife, his extreme emotions propel him into an alternate universe, although he is slow to recognize it as such. Here, his wife survives, but there is no son, he has a different occupation, and lives at a different address. The story goes through the usual steps of having him treated for insanity, and of his coming to grips with the situation, but at that point it begins to depart from the standard plot. It wouldn't be fair to reveal too many of the plot twists, but they involve the fact that both the personality from the previous universe and the one from this one are inhabiting the same body. Eventually, the "original" personality learns to travel between the two universes. Everything leads toward the conclusion that the entire affair is the product of a mind affected by extreme grief — and then that conclusion is discarded and things move in new directions.

Ambrose has done an excellent job of setting both universes and, particularly, of dealing with the same people in different situations in different universes. This is unusually good for a first novel; one can only hope there will be more.

— W.D. Stevens

I don't think I have ever seen a science fiction detective novel quite so original as this one. Patricia Anthony gives a new twist to familiar themes: a post-holocaust village cut off from the outside world, benevolent but mysterious aliens, a murder, and a police chief pursuing the killer among a cast of local characters. Ever since Bomb Day, the small town of Coomey, Texas has been surrounded by a Line (usually purple paisley) which hides the presumably devastated landscape beyond. Once they have adjusted to the situation, the inhabitants lead fairly normal lives: the mayor has taken to growing marijuana and the town banker has reverted to the tie-dye shirts and beads of his youth, but most people keep on working, especially the two-man police force, plagued by hot-rod runners running the town's single red light, and the preacher, who needs a telescope to keep track of all the sinful goings-on in this southern version of Peyton Place. The alien Torku, who have popped up out of nowhere, supply everyone's necessities — gas, chicken feed, Dr. Pepper, tapes of old movies — in their UPS trucks. They show up regularly at the Biblical Truth Church even though the preacher rants against them as alien "demons."

But when Loretta, Mary Kay representative and champion housewife, is found murdered, Police Chief DeWitt Dawson is way out of his depth. He is no Sherlock Holmes, and in fact would be much happier if they could all pretend it hadn't happened. Nor is he helped much by his subordinate officer Bo, whose hatred of the Torku and guilt about his past make him a dubious helper at best. The Chief chases after his own list of suspects, including his own wife but not the Avon representative, who I would have thought would be an obvious choice. His inept investigation leads to a spectacular trial in which far more of the truth comes out than he or most of the rest of the town ever wanted to hear.

*The Happy Policeman* is witty and well written, and the climactic trial scene and its aftermath as exciting and horrifying as any reader could wish. But there is something wrong with the book's tone. The characters are grotesque, but not really funny enough to be comical or believable enough to be tragic. The Torku are peculiar, even for aliens. At first I assumed the zen conundrums in which they converse
were meant as parodies, but then wondered if they were meant to be taken seriously. The biggest weak spot is Police Chief Dawson, the main character. He treats the murder (an ugly one) with offensive levity, at first tries to conceal it, and then makes only half-hearted attempts to solve it. When he finally does become serious, he accuses obviously innocent people, fails to follow up obvious leads, and instead leaps to conclusions unsupported by any evidence whatsoever.

So it's hard to know how to take this book. Is it parody or is it a serious look at the nature of time and reality? Read it yourself and decide. It won't bore you.

— Lynn F. Williams


A child of the mean streets and urban blight, Cassandra Blaine burgles economic data on contract. Her beloved Dosh is a gay hustler with a weakness for sadomasochistic violence; their other lover, Moke, makes Art. Together they whore for the hyperclasses to earn passage to a new life on another world. A contract for starring roles in a cinema verite adventure feelie promises to make their dreams come true, until they find themselves marked for dramatic death by their leading lady. Trying to survive the Nimbus's bloodthirsty script, find an audience for Moke's sculpture, and escape an assassin, Cassandra is set on a crash course in harsh truths about love and responsibility.

*Crashcourse* flashes the usual signs of cyberpunkishness: cover blurbs by leading C-P authors (Gibson, Cadigan), high tech electronics, body-mods and biotech, derm-delivered recreation drugs, orbital habitats, gunge bars, corporate Overmen and criminal underclasses, etc. It is somewhat redeemed from the increasingly tedious formula by the genuineness of Cassandra's feelings for Dosh and Moke, and for her moral consciousness of what she has done to those who love her and for what she has allowed Nimbus and the unloving world to make of her. Dosh and Moke, however, and the very interesting character Sword, remain sadly undeveloped, and Baird's future Earth is too sketchy to be "felt reality."
The book has its moments, and Wilhelmina Baird's talents as a writer hold promise of better things to come. But moments don't always cohere to make a story, and that of Cassandra and her friends needs more development. Let's hope the author does better next time.

For C-P junkies, Crashcourse will provide a short-lived hit; if you aren't hooked, you can afford to pass on this one.

— David Mead


Although Gregory Benford's Furious Gulf is not openly marketed as a series book, it is the fifth is his "galactic" series which includes In the Ocean of Night, Across the Sea of Suns, Great Sky River, and Tides of Light. This latest volume depicts a future in which much of Humanity has been destroyed. Pursued relentlessly by robotic beings called "Mechs," the remnants of one of the last Human outposts head for an unknown sanctuary that myths and legends say is located near the heart of the galaxy, a place where few Human ships have gone. Facing certain death at the hands of an implacable enemy, and running out of options, the leader of the Human ship Argo makes the decision to head for the core of the galaxy and attempt to locate the refuge while benevolent aliens, allied to the Human cause, fight a desperate rearguard action. At the very center of the galaxy lies a supermassive black hole that will either hold the secret to the Argo's survival or ensure its complete destruction.

There were numerous parts of Furious Gulf that I really enjoyed. Benford develops the book's principal characters quite well; the growing bond and comic interplay between the Captain's son and his bug-like alien mentor definitely add to this work. I also appreciated some of the social commentary on the pros and cons of Humankind's growing reliance on advanced technologies, particularly in the areas of teaching and learning. Undoubtedly the strongest aspect of this book is Benford's depiction of various galactic and celestial phenomena. The images of the singularity in the center of the galaxy are extremely well done. I could not help but "see" the visions that the Argo's crew faced as they plunged headlong towards the unknown.
However, I felt there were serious drawbacks to this novel. In his efforts to make the aliens more alien, Benford uses several different styles of text and language which, coupled with excessively surreal and abstract passages, serve to distract the reader from the meaning and plot of the story. The effect is magnified towards the end of the book, spilling over into descriptions of events experienced by the main character. The end result was that I was totally confused as to what was happening and why certain events occurred the way they did. In addition, there seemed to be more than the usual amount of proofreading errors, including one of continuity. I found myself continually rereading paragraphs to make sense of these mistakes, which interrupted the flow of the story. Had the abstract quality of many of the passages been absent, and had the editing been more conscientious, I would have enjoyed the novel to a much greater extent than I did.

— Paul Abell


The Furies is a complex, disturbing, and ultimately honest sequel to Walk to the End of the World (1974) and Motherlines (1978). It suggests that the usual alternatives offered by feminist utopian fiction — the restoration of heterosexual marriage or the establishment of an all-female society — ignore too much: in the former case, the rage attendant upon generations of oppression and brutalization; in the latter, the divisions among women that prevent them from acting together on their own behalf.

The story opens with Alldera, the female protagonist of the two earlier novels, leading a group of free fems (women who had escaped their enslavement by men in a post-holocaust hierarchy) back to the Holdfast. Together they invade their former home in order to free the women who still survive. They find that in the chaos following the fall of the Holdfast, conditions for some of the women have marginally improved, and not all of them are enthusiastic about their liberation. In their turn, the free fems enslave, rape, and in one incident slaughter men who had previously enslaved and brutalized them. They also engage in power struggles among themselves, with disastrous consequences. Ultimately, they come to terms with the necessity for some sort of reconciliation if the species is to survive. Alldera in particular
must confront Eykar Bek, one of two men who had raped her. She realizes that he is the father of the daughter she bore after her escape. Bek acknowledges that, though he deplored the corruption of the society that produced him, he nonetheless benefitted from it. Alldera spares his life and protects him, recognizing a bond between them which she cannot define, but she is a long way from forgiving him at the end of the book.

The journey of the free ferns is undertaken in defiance of the Riding Women, a band of nomadic tent-dwellers capable of reproducing without males, who fear the loss of their way of life if the men discover their existence. If fact, *The Furies* is much more about the free ferns and the Riding Women's learning to accept and work through their own differences than it is about women and men.

The novel is divided into five books and an epilogue. Readers unfamiliar with the earlier novels will be glad of a storyteller's summary given in the second section of the first book. No brief review can do *The Furies* justice, but it is a must for readers of feminist utopian fiction, and for anyone else interested in well-crafted, literate SF.

— Carol D. Stevens


A colony ship comes out of hyperdrive in unknown space. Desperate, lost, its crew manages to reach a G-type star with a habitable planet. Unfortunately, the planet is already home to an intelligent species, the *atevi.* The starship's crew insists on building a space station, planning to use it as a base from which to explore other nearby systems in search of an uninhabited world. The ship's colonists, however, want to land, and the starship abandons them, unlikely to ever return. The human colonists immediately get into a devastating war with the *atevi* and end up confined to an island, gradually trading advanced technology to the aliens in an attempt to earn their acceptance and friendship.

This is the opening scenario for C.J. Cherryh's fine new science fiction novel. The main plot, set some two hundred years later, centers
on Bren Cameron, the diplomat who is the sole mediator between the atevi and the rest of humanity. Cameron's job is made difficult by the fact that the aliens look very human, but operate under genetic and cultural imperatives that seem impossible to understand. Although scientifically advanced, the atevi are obsessed with numerology. They have no national boundaries but live intensely hierarchical lives within a series of overlapping political associations. They consider assassination an entirely legitimate political maneuver as long as it's done according to the rules and with finesse. They are incapable of personal loyalty or friendship, but are absolutely faithful to their leaders and primary associations.

Two hundred years after the Landing, human-atevi relations are fairly cordial, due in part to Cameron's successful personal relationship with Tabini, the most powerful atevi leader. Anti-human sentiments are still common, however, and, since the aliens have now received most of the humans' advanced technology, the balance of power is fragile at best. Then Cameron finds himself the target of an illegal assassination attempt and is whisked out of the capital and off to Tabini's ancestral fortress, home of the atevi leader's strong-willed, bitter, and perhaps not entirely sane grandmother. Conditions deteriorate quickly, more assassination attempts are made, security systems break down, and Cameron begins to fear that even the atevi he feels closest to cannot be trusted. The entire future of atevi-human affairs seems to hang in the balance.

*Foreigner* is C.J. Cherryh at close to her best, a well-written and exciting novel of political intrigue on a well-realized world populated by interesting and enigmatic characters. Strongly recommended.

— Michael M. Levy


With all its playfulness, witty and accurate extrapolation on planetary environments and alien morphology, and the good humor that is so characteristic of this fine old pro, this new novel by Hal Clement turns out to be a very solemn affair. As we have come to expect, Clement writes about a strange menagerie of intelligent aliens who are gathered this time on the unusual planet Habranha trying to
cooperate (or not cooperate) with the native Habra species on a systematic geologic study of origins. But Clement waxes somewhat solemn about problems in communication which, by extrapolation, really become problems about novel writing; additionally, he is very serious at the end about science itself. With bows to Asimov inventiveness and playfulness (the book is marketed as part of the series called "Isaac's Universe"), this book is an important addition to the Clement accomplishment and, in its self-consciousness about both writing and science, deserves serious attention. His fans will adore it for the characteristic wit and accurate speculations about weird future possibilities. For example, Habranha is in a binary star system with strange enough weather, temperature, and pressure variations to take its place with Mesklin, Abyorman, and all the other inhabited planets in Hal's universe, which is physically more interesting than Isaac's.

But the more conscious variations — the communication problems and the science problems — are the real stuff of this novel. Clement has always been a writer deeply attuned to languages and to writing itself. Some of his funniest and most profound passages from Mission of Gravity and The Nitrogen Fix have to do with how hard it is to communicate with aliens and even among ourselves. In Fossil, there are two humans, the husband and wife team of Hugh and Janice Cedar, working with the other alien species on Habranha; throughout the major portion of the narrative they communicate only by typing messages to each other because they are immersed in "diving juice" in order to withstand the pressure — like back to the evolutionary womb. I was reminded of the long tradition of the modern novel from Pamela to John Barth where couples write letters to each other. But there are two other tricks Clement uses here to draw special attention to the literary business of novel writing. One is simply a sonnet; the book has fourteen chapters, each with an iambic pentameter line as its title, so that the table of contents reads like a Shakespearean sonnet. More seriously, the reader should take note of one of the alien species, the Naxians, who are serpentine-shaped and who forge all sorts of artificial situations and life shapes (they are medical doctors) in order to watch emotions and entertain themselves. The snake-like Naxians are the novelists in this story, and they are fun.

I never had the opportunity to talk much with Asimov and only knew his wit through his printed work. But I have spent some time with Clement; I know how much he loves these mental games and that
he is a very nervous and self-conscious fictionist in the tradition of the novel, so I love his epistolary and sonneteering games. But his taste and his highest seriousness leads him, like Asimov, finally to science. And what seems most profound and most troubling in this late work are his agonies over what is really at stake in science. Near the end of the story, Janice Cedar says, "No one ever performs the final experiment — the one which removes all possible doubt. This... is why science never gets past theory." What she is referring to would be like Earth geologists trying to study dinosaur extinction by simulating a world catastrophe event, and in fact there is a species in the story that pushes in this dangerous direction. They are a sluglike, non-angelic species, indicating that Clement digs deliberately into the Earth and away from the heavens and flying angels. He does this in several ways here and not totally satisfactorily. But I guess the point is that we do not yet know how much we can hope to gain from sluglike science. The fact that Clement is driving himself to such morbid speculation is significant, however, and in my opinion makes this book, with all its silliness, an important work.

— Donald M. Hassler


One of the great pleasures of SF is worldbuilding, stretching the physical limits of our surroundings and seeing what happens to humans who live in a different place. When readers discovered the real Mars was uninhabitable, we moved farther out, to Frank Herbert's Dune, and now Heald has created the planet Ver Day as a replacement for our old image of Venus: hot, wet, and already packed full of life-forms with whom humans must co-exist. Descendants of Ver Day's settlers have made their accommodation. They use the bare minimum of hard technology, eat native food as much as possible (hence their green complexions), and try devoutly not to disturb the jungle dwellers. Off-planet humans, however, are contemptuous of such caution, and they are patient to get on with exploiting Ver Day. In particular, they have begun to interfere with the activities of Sal Banks, a young woman who just wants to continue her business of hauling supplies through the jungle on a sled. Sal doesn't have much use for government people or stupid "newbies" in general. She is very unhappy when she has to hire Meesha Raschad, a newbie who has
survived the planet's dangers for a few years. When the offworlders become especially bothersome because of their interest in Raschad, though, Sal gets mad.

Heald controls the viewpoint skillfully; we know a lot less about the overall situation than we'd like but still enough to make decisions and act. She's also good at building characters, especially at revealing Raschad as someone worth knowing and fighting for. The love that develops between him and Sal is not just dictated by the plot; it grows convincingly through distrust, silly jokes, denial, need — the uncertain process that people must go through as they discover each other. But the major attraction of the book is Ver Day. This is a vivid, living world, a fine testing ground for the human spirit. And Mistwalker is an extremely well done first novel. Recommended.

-- Joe Sanders


In *Butcher Bird*, the sequel to Dean Ing's bestselling *The Ransom of Black Stealth One*, people are mysteriously dying; first an Iraqi garrison commander in Mosul, then a Kurd leader in Syria simply collapse into convulsions and expire for no apparent reason. Ben Ullmer, an NSA-contracted aerospace engineer, has an idea as to the cause: a tiny, flying killer robot armed with an ultraviolet laser. He must work to stop the little horror before its creator programs it with a new task: to kill all the top aerospace engineers in the world.

Even though Ing describes this story as a "tale of the barely possible," I had my doubts as to the feasibility of the technology presented. Said doubts were quashed rather quickly when I started doing a little research. The propulsion system of the butcher bird, counter-rotating rotors powered by a small gas turbine, is well-established technology. I had trouble finding material on a nuclear reactor pumped ultraviolet pulse laser, but the design of an atomic warhead powered X-ray laser for the SDI program seems to bear out the plausibility of this item as well. The artificial intelligence necessary for a weapon to find and attack its target by its image alone already exists; the U.S. Army has a cruise missile that can find missile launch trucks, even when they are partially hidden in trees, and attack them with
cluster bombs (not quite as elegant as punching a neat hole in them with a laser but effective nonetheless). So it would seem that all the technology necessary to make a butcher bird already exists.

I was asked if I would classify this book as science fiction. That's a tough one. The story skirts the boundary of what is possible and what is merely speculation. It really comes down to where the reader believes the distinction is. I personally would have to offer a hesitant "No," this is not what I consider science fiction. It is a pretty neat story, with only the resolution to one particular plot line making it difficult to suspend disbelief. This book is definitely a techno-thriller, and people who like aerospace gadgets or aviation will probably like it. I know I did.

— John Nordlie


*Invisible Machines* is a remarkable collection of collaborative poetry. Excellent hard SF poetry is rare and successful collaborations are even rarer; yet, Rhysling winners Andrew Joron and Robert Frazier make it look easy. The images are starkly beautiful and subtly terrifying. The collaborative interweaving is so smooth as to appear seamless, a powerful new voice neither Frazier nor Joron.

In his preface Joron writes that SF is historically a "dialogical genre." Ideas are brainstormed and texts are produced through a "sustained community effort." Frazier and Joron ably transfer that same "cross pollinating spirit" to poetry. Joron uses a neuro-linguistic model to explain the act of collaboration: "Bob and I seem to operate by recoding rather than rewriting; strands of text are interwoven, arranged in a different order, attached at the appropriate receptor sites."

The poems are alternative universes in miniature, a dynamic interweaving of science, myth, and emotion, as in the first poem, "Original Rays": "Light the lamp/ & boil some water/ Find the words revolving silently/ Out of reach/ all the starry lattices/ In our cells/ contain the signs/ For 'love' and 'fear.' "

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Many of the poems have a dark, film noir tone. They are set in strange techno-cyber worlds reminiscent of Blade Runner, like the city under siege in "A Measure of Calm," where "On the multi-tiered street/ before me the city mutates/ under the mocklight of an information bomb/ meteors of re-structuring data/ the insurrection has come to us finally." The theme is depersonalization, the process by which human beings become "a palimpsest of worn-out tissues/ no longer wedded to the State." Through detached, scientific description, the rent flesh and bared bones of human tragedy are disclosed.

Juxtaposed against poems set in grim, not-far-enough futures is a lyrically beautiful vision of the past. "Hominid Voices: Songs of the Migration Out of Turkana" begins with a quote from Richard Leakey and consists of seven prophetic voices. The footstep and heartbeat rhythms of the travellers' songs sustain them as they cross the thin strip of land that joins Africa and Asia. The poem is a masterful blending of praise ("oh volcano of light/ which shatters into countless seeds/ each clear night"); creation myth ("you will make/ a bowl in the shape of the world/ a womb for the wind/ and you will build a fire great as the Sun"); promise ("then you will know/ the herb for every cure/ five ways to tame storms"); and future history ("you will build and rebuild the days/ you will dismantle the legends/ tame and untame creation/ and let tomorrow lengthen from hidden roots").

What stands out in "Hominid Voices" is the hope for a brave new world that is not apparent in most of the other poems. Joron and Frazier's understanding of the present seems to preclude any possibility of an unspoiled future where individuals commune with nature and God in any meaningful sort of way. Only in "Strange Attractor: A Song of Linked Minds" do they provide any vision of hope and that not from mankind but from a "cetacean poet L'Orca, a specimen of 23rd-century bioengineering," who concludes, "we are driven on currents of chaos/ toward rebirth/ a pod-rendezvous/ at the eye of the storm.

Without didacticism, the poems of Invisible Machines come together to form a powerful cautionary tale. Highly recommended.

— Sandra J. Lindow

It must have seemed like a good idea at the time... Of course, when the publishing industry must produce hoards of original theme anthologies, any idea may seem like a good one, but the life and works of Shakespeare seem like intriguing places for writers to begin new stories. It's hard to say, then, exactly why this is such a dull, dead book. Perhaps the writers never really made the effort to add much of their own imagination to Shakespeare's; his own creations are so vivid that the new stories fall flat — who cares about a vampire Romeo, for heaven's sake, except as a cute notion? It's possible to do a piece that is based on Shakespeare but still stands by itself, as Neil Gaiman showed with his Sandman script taking off from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (collected in the trade paperback *Dream Country*), but most of the writers here seem anxious to toss out their ideas and get off stage. Even a story with a substantial and really disturbing idea, Kate Daniel's take on *Hamlet*, alternates between sharply developed scenes and racing, panting plot summary. Of the readable pieces, Gregory Feeley offers intriguing but ultimately pointless speculation on Shakespeare's life, Jack Oakley does a clever version of Lear as a computer program, Brian Aldiss has fun with language, Kevin Murphy does a droll sorcery-complicated Romeo, and Greg Benford produces a story that might actually deserve to be printed outside this wretched assembly. And the others? Well, let's be kind: The rest is silence.

— Joe Sanders


One of the main themes is freed artificial intelligence developing in ways its makers would not have predicted. In the 21st century, the major powers devise a scheme to escape the economic weight of a continuing arms race that has become complicated by the miniaturization and unhumanization of the military, topics Lem has treated in other works, notably One Human Minute (1985, 1986). They agree to use the United Nations to transport all weapons research and development to the moon, where sectors are allotted to the participating nations. Industrial computer systems on the moon begin simulating and then designing and building weapons systems according to their nations' programming. To preserve the balance of power, elaborate protections are set up to make sure that no one on Earth can know what is happening on the moon. As a result, four impossibilities are achieved: continuing the arms race while universally disarming; arming at maximum speed at no cost beyond the initial setting up; full protection against surprise attack while preserving the right to wage war; and the elimination of troops while preserving the officers and their strategic work.

After a time, conflict over this process emerges. The military-industrial complex is eager to regain the power it lost. Humanity seems in danger of stagnation in the technological prosperity that follows the end of the arms race. Most effective are the pressure groups that cause authorities to worry about what is happening on the silent moon, and whether the computers have gone beyond their programming and plan some sort of attack on Earth. Ijon Tichy is tapped to scout the moon, taking Earth's highest technology to do what is supposed to be impossible.

The novel begins after he has returned from his mission, apparently having discovered very little. On the moon, he was attacked in a way that separated his right and left brain, resulting in a division of his memory. The novel alternates between chapters exploring Tichy's training and the journey and chapters showing his gradual discovery, through numerous conversations with scientists, spies, and agents, of what happened to him on the moon. As Lem's regular readers would expect, Tichy never learns the whole story, but he learns enough to understand that human technology once again produces surprising unintended consequences. This novel ends on a hopeful note, because the results seem not to put humanity in danger of imminent destruc-
The novel is rich in digressions — often satirical — on medical and scientific rivalries that ignore the interests of their human subjects, the heroism of empirical food explorers, the entertainment possibilities for virtual reality and simulations, the antics of high-tech security forces, and many other topics relevant to the main plot. Lem's storytelling is delightful, funny, thought-provoking on a range of issues, and always engaging. What a wonderful imagination! He is a Polish national treasure.

— Terry Heller


This first novel is surprisingly good. A detective story in the style of the '30s but set sometime in the next century (date unspecified, but sometime well after 2008), this is a curious mixture of *Sam Spade*, 1984, and *Animal Farm*, with a few other oddments tossed in for good measure. Nevertheless, it has internal consistency and a good plot.

Conrad Metcalf is a P.I. (Private Inquisitor) who must solve a murder to help a client he doesn't want while trying to stay out of trouble himself. The Los Angeles of this world is a dark one, and getting darker. Radio news is done by musical interpretation; the printed word has been outlawed and replaced totally by pictures; no one except an Inquisitor is allowed to ask questions of any kind, and if the Inquisitors (official, not private) don't like you they can slap you in the freezer (literally) for as long as they like. The average citizen has almost no privileges, and there are even fewer by the end of the book.

Metcalf is being followed by a trigger-happy hoodlum who is an "evolved" kangaroo, and other evolved animals, more-or-less accepted on the same basis as humans, appear throughout the book. Although the overall story is grim, there are some very good ideas and an interesting plot. Lethem is said to be at work on another novel. If so, it should be one to watch for.

— W.D. Stevens

First released in the UK over a decade ago, *Prince Ombra* has been re-released by ORB Books as a trade paperback for U.S. markets.

MacLeish spins an interesting tale of a cycle of conflicts between good and evil over the history of mankind. The author's concept of a "Hero reincarnate" appearing again and again through time as various heroes to oppose Prince Ombra, the ultimate evil force, unveils a rudimentary similarity in the heroes of legend. A greater flavor of reality comes from the fact that the "heroes" don't always win, and the world is thrown for a time into self-destructive darkness where evil reigns. In this cycle, MacLeish subtly raises the spectre of nuclear war as the ultimate victory by Prince Ombra if he is able to defeat Bently Ellicot, a crippled eight year old boy growing up on the New England coast.

Through several characters living in the small coastal town of Stonehaven, MacLeish shows how the evil Ombra, still in an insubstantial form, twists them into instruments he can use to attack the young boy. Using Bently's own family and friends, Ombra tries to plant fear and doubt to destroy the boy from within. There are some characters on Bently's side, however: an admittedly "hokey" German doctor by the name of Kreistein and a young girl, Sally, who speaks gibberish only Bently understands. Eventually Kreistein becomes Bently's teacher, helping him to learn what he must do by studying the hero legends of old, while Sally becomes the "rememberer" from whose perspective the story is told.

MacLeish has a talent for creating characters the reader can identify with on an emotional level. In addition, he addresses the topics of infidelity, divorce, rape, insanity and prudishness in such a way as to tap the reader's gut responses. My only criticism of the book would be the author's tendency toward flowery descriptions. There are times the extensive alliteration almost leads the reader away from the story; the vivid pictures he paints are absorbing, but there seems to be too much of a good thing. My favorite part of this story is an interesting spin MacLeish puts on the King Arthur legend, but I won't spoil it for you. All in all, *Prince Ombra* is a good book.
worthy of re-release, and is of interest to anyone who believes good may triumph over evil, even in the hands of an eight year old boy.
— Jay Andrews


James Morrow is at it again. This foray into (Christian) religious satire involves a supertanker captain responsible for the largest oil spill in history who is given a chance to get his ship, and maybe his career, back. That chance comes from the Catholic Church, and all Captain Van Horne has to do is tow the two-mile-long corpse of God (yes, the Creator — and he really is dead this time) from near the equator, where it is in danger of decomposing, to an iceberg tomb that the angels have prepared near the arctic circle.

Van Horne's supporting cast includes a Jesuit physicist named Thomas Ockham (the pun on his name comes late, but it is worth the wait), a nun who may have been and may be again romantically involved with Ockham, a feminist playwright, a condom-industry heir, several angels, a couple of buddies who stage reenactments of World War II battles, a bureaucratic Vatican, and the sort of crew one might hastily assemble at the end of the day from the New York Hall of the National Maritime Union.

The main tension appears to be between Van Horne and his attempt to tow the enormous cadaver north and the efforts of the condom heir, leader of the "Enlightenment League," and the war reenactors, who think that the body is part of a Japanese plot, to destroy it. In reality, the reader soon realizes that both sides are equally locked in modes of thought which are rooted in an archetypal/stereotypical past and are therefore incapable of dealing with current reality. As the two groups move toward the ultimate confrontation, Morrow takes his satiric swipes at a wide variety of contemporary belief systems.

Although Morrow tends to hit readers over the head with his satire from time to time (and he sometimes hits several times with the same point), *Towing Jehovah* is nonetheless a good read. Morrow is always entertaining, and even if he lacks the cutting edge of a Swiftian
satirist, he is a talented writer and *Towing Jehovah* is one of his best
to date.

— C.W. Sullivan III

**Turtledove, Harry. Departures.** New York: Ballantine/Del Rey,

If one defines alternative history strictly as the fictional working
out of events following a recognizable alteration in the reader's and
writer's past, then Harry Turtledove is well on his way to becoming
the most prolific AH author yet. (A broader definition including all
the works that depend on the concept of the "multiverse" would
award the title to Michael Moorcock.) Within the past two years, Tur­
tledove's Basil Argyros series, collected as *Agent of Byzantium* (a re­
nnaissance Byzantine Empire absent the threat of Islam), the acclaimed
*The Guns of the South* (a confederate victory aided by racist time
travellers), and the first volume of *World War: In the Balance* (aliens
invade Earth during the beginning of hostilities in 1941) have all ap­
peared in book form. Now Del Rey gives us some of his earlier, one-
shot investigations into altered history, from the pages of *Asimov's*,
*Analog, F&SF*, and sundry original anthologies, c. 1980-92.

The jacket copy of *Departures* is just a bit misleading, though, in
suggesting that all the stories therein are AH. In fact, only eight of the
nineteen qualify, with most of the others being a mix of *Analog* prob­
lem-solving or engineers' humor and *Unknown*-style adult fantasy.
The AH material contains perhaps Turtledove's two most widely-read
works, the title story involving the early days of Saint Muhammed
(which contains the source of the Argyros series) and the spoof on
environmental bureaucracy impeding Columbus, "Report of the Special
Committee on the Quality of Life." There's also a reverse-spin to the
Muhammed story, "Islands in the Sea," and several stories which in­
volve insignificant protagonists on the margins of the altered past, all
very satisfying in their understated excellence.

The *Analog*-derived non-AH material is a different bag altogether,
and Turtledove almost seems to put on a different auctorial persona,
responding overtly to the broad but predictable guidelines of what
*Analog* editor Stanley Schmidt would like. Even in Turtledove's ca­
pable hands, most of these stories cause my eyes to begin to glaze,
though a murder mystery set on one of Saturn's moons during a Winter Olympics, "Les Morts d'Arthur," is highly entertaining.

Two baseball tales from *F&SF* (one, "Batboy," being perhaps the only vampires-in-baseball story ever written) are pleasant time-passers, and the one out-and-out fantasy, "Clash of Arms," would have fit nicely in *Unknown* had that great pulp survived. Finally, all teachers, whether SF or not, will find bittersweet enjoyment in the brief "Gladly Wolde He Lerne," a product of Analog's "Probability Zero" whose probability, alas, is just that.

In sum, *Departures* is a comprehensive introduction to Turtle-dove's short fiction, essential for AH completists and recommended to all others.

— Bill Collins


Science fiction is one of the few genres which allows and even encourages experimentation within its very flexible boundaries. Anthologies allow authors to address old themes in new ways, novels have been written via round robin, and now there is a book in which the writer has been told to illustrate the illustrations with his fiction. This book is *Mind Fields*, with the fiction of Harlan Ellison complementing the imaginative artwork of Jacek Yerka.

Most of the 34 paintings by the Polish artist share a common theme: nature growing through and out of man-made objects, or man-made objects growing through and out of nature. The work is detailed and whimsical, with a thatched-roof cottage growing out of a tree and an entire city carved into both the inner and outer walls of an active volcano. A group of wooden buildings huddle inexplicably in the middle of a river, and vehicles have evolved into reptiles with tails, teeth and tires. By themselves, some of the paintings are dark and dreamlike while others are light and airy, conveying at least a bit of hope. But with the addition of Harlan Ellison's short-short fiction, one piece per painting, the entire book's mood becomes gloomy. While some of the fiction is well-written, it is also full of bitterness and
anger, and much of it is obscure and difficult to understand even with the author's notes that appear at the end of the volume. The most understandable aspect of the fiction is that it clearly shows Ellison's dismav about growing older.

This is a book for both Harlan Ellison fans and those who appreciate fantastic artwork. I enjoyed it on the latter grounds, especially as I was previously unfamiliar with Yerka's work. However, I attach even greater importance to this book due to its experimental nature, and hope that publishers, writers and artists will continue to occasion­ally break the usual molds.

— Amy Sisson


This young adult novel is a mishmash of a coming-of-age story, a redemption story, and a take-off on H.G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, none of these themes is well-developed.

While mountain-climbing, seventeen-year-old Morgan falls to what seems to be his death, but awakens on a tropical island inhabited by his rescuer, an angelic creature named Melby; Dr. Robulo, a mad scientist/physician; and Maria, the girl of Morgan's dreams. The two adolescents, sometimes aided and sometimes thwarted by Robulo, explore the island, escape sundry close brushes with death, make friends with the indigenous lions, discover a magical pool whose waters cause them to grow younger, and learn of Robulo's experiments to control the balance of nature on the island. With the help of Melby they eventually defeat Robulo and evolve into beings of light at one with the universe.

The story is full of dangling plot threads. Morgan alternately frets about the possibly pregnant girlfriend he left behind and makes love to Maria. Maria's past, her relationship with her parents (whom Robulo frequently cites as authority) and the reason she came to the island are never explored. Melby tells Morgan he must find the secrets of the island, but the secrets — Robulo's experimental laboratory, the magical pool — seem unconnected to Morgan's development. Morgan's
final realization of the unity of all life is imposed by Melby rather than growing out of Morgan's experiences.

These strange, too-loosely-plotted adventures are narrated in pedestrian prose. The text contains numerous typographical and proofreading errors and a dozen blank but numbered pages. Not recommended.

— Agatha Taormina
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