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Please submit reviews, news items, letters, etc. to Amy Sisson, Editor, SFRA Review, 3845 Harrison St. #103, Oakland CA 94611; telephone (510) 655-3711; e-mail “sfraamy@aol.com”. Submissions are acceptable in any format: hardcopy, e-mail, Macintosh disk, or IBM disk (saved as text-only or ASCII). Please note the SFRA Review has an agreement with the Science Fiction & Fantasy Book Review Annual (Robert Collins & Michael M. Levy, Eds.) under which reviews are exchanged between publications. If you do not wish your review to be submitted to the Annual, please indicate the same.

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Corpus Christi TX 78415

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Before you do anything else, look at the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting. Go ahead; I'll wait here for you... Okay, of all the things we talked about there are two you should especially remember: the 1996 conference will be a very well run, valuable affair, especially if you're there to contribute to it; and Dave Mead urgently requests your help in nominating our next set of officers.

***

Reading science fiction isn't the only way to see things from a different perspective...

Looking out of a hotel window at Machu Picchu, it's easy to come unstuck in time. The morning mist swirls through the mountains, across the terraces and buildings of the Incan city. The Spanish invaders destroyed everything of the native culture they could and hid the rest. Machu Picchu, already abandoned, survived undisturbed. Today, water still flows through the city's stone channels, and many of the houses lack only their thatched roofs — some are being restored by native workmen — to be inhabitable. Especially in the early morning mist, the city looks whole, alive, and the hotel and its grounds look like the abandoned ruin.

The Incan empire thrived in its fullness only about a century before the Spanish arrived. It's interesting to speculate whether it could have lasted much longer. The Incas ran a tightly organized but not inhumane state. They weren't obsessed with human sacrifices, and they didn't wipe out cultures that they conquered. Instead, they absorbed the best technologies of their prey, and assimilated them into the empire. In return for independence, the Incas offered security. Apparently, many people were willing to make that trade.

Meanwhile, back in the present, we were amazed at the change in Lima. On our last visit, during the onslaught of the Shining Path, it had been a truly frightening place. Now, though the city itself is pretty dismal (it's like Los Angeles without the pleasant scenery and climate), the mood was totally different. People were relaxed, comfortable. If President Alberto Fujimori behaves like a semi-dictator, people...
can accept that. The alternative of brutal violence — and the uncertainty about what could come after the violence — was too awful.

We returned home to the government shutdown, the mean-spirited bickering over Whitewater and Travelgate, and Newt Gingrich on the cover of Time as Man of the Year. People, we hear, are angry about what they see around them, uncertain exactly what they’d change, maybe ready to follow someone who offers fast, simple-sounding answers to their discontent.

And meanwhile, back at Machu Picchu, I looked out at the mountains and the city that echoed the mountains’ shape and endurance, and I thought about the impermanence of human societies and ideals.

***

Here’s probably the last installment of my report on SF magazines available for classroom use:

As you’ve probably noticed in your mail, Dell Magazines is offering subscriptions to Asimov’s and/or Analog on the standard school plan — free subscription for the teacher if students sign up. Speaking as a teacher at a school on the quarter system, I’m afraid that by the time the magazines began arriving the course would be over; perhaps it’s more practical for semester-long courses.

More what I had in mind is described in an e-mail message from Bryan Cholfin, editor of Crank!, who says he’s willing to sell multiple copies (at least 10) of a single issue to college bookstores at a 50% discount ($2.00 a copy) if he is given enough lead time and especially if the order is prepaid. Payments and orders should be sent to Broken Mirrors Press, P.O. Box 380473, Cambridge MA 02238.

— Joe Sanders

SFRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE CALL MEETING MINUTES

January 28, 1996: The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. Present: President Joe Sanders, Vice President Milt Wolf, Secretary Joan Gordon, Treasurer Bob Ewald, Immediate Past President Dave Mead, Editor Amy Sisson. Also on the phone for the first few minutes of the meeting were 1996 Conference Chairs Jan Bogstad, Phil Kaveny, and Mike Levy.

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Conference Report: As of this date, there were 20 paid members. Dave Mead and Milt Wolf, who both have chaired previous conferences, agreed this was about normal, as most registrations come in during February, March, and April. George Zebrowski and Pamela Sargent are the confirmed Guests of Honor. Baen is sponsoring Lois McMaster Bujold to attend the conference. Joan Slonczewski and Eleanor Arnason are also confirmed guests, and Futurist Earl Joseph may attend as well. Contingent upon the number of paid memberships, the conference chairs believe the conference can support two more guest authors. The facility for the conference has been confirmed, with three programming rooms. They are looking into the possibility of an art show of local professional artists, which would most likely take place in a hotel room. Arrangements have been made for the annual SFRA banquet, as well as a picnic trip to a local observatory (for an additional fee) on the non-banquet night. The chairs said they are looking for someone to run the silent book auction, and Amy Sisson agreed to obtain books from publishers and ship them to Mike Levy in Wisconsin. If she can attend the conference, she will run the auction there as well; if she cannot attend, Phil Kaveny will try to find a local person to help him. At the end of this portion of the meeting, the Executive Committee expressed satisfaction with the Conference Committee’s work.

President: Sanders reported his delight at returning, after a month out of the country, to find everything in the organization running smoothly.

Immediate Past President: Mead reported that he has placed an order for ten more each of the Pioneer and Pilgrim plaques, for a total cost of approximately $650. Sanders will need to decide who will keep them until used. Mead then confirmed that as Immediate Past President he is responsible for heading the election-nominations committee. He asked that suggestions for committee members be e-mailed to him. He also will send an announcement for inclusion in the SFRA Review. He will send all old SFRA papers to the University of Kansas in June.

Vice President: Wolf reported on the progress of the junior/senior high school anthology for Tor Books. Dave and Muriel Becker are leading the effort, and a 1997 publication date is presently planned. Tor has appointed Patrick Hayden Nielsen as editor, but it has been agreed that SFRA will have
full consulting power. Muriel Becker and Marcia Holzman began working on classroom material in December. The college anthology should be published later this year.

Wolf continued his report by relating progress on future annual meetings. The 1997 meeting will be in Riverside CA in conjunction with the Eaton Conference.

Secretary: The first dues notice went out in a timely manner, and the second dues notices will go out as soon as Gordon receives the appropriate list from Ewald. A discussion followed about how to resolve the problem of late memberships, which result not only in inconvenience but in added expense for the Review mailing. A penalty was discussed but not agreed upon. Gordon will send papers she received for the Arlington Heights conference proceedings to Wolf for potential publication; Sanders will ask Betty Hull to send the papers in her possession to Wolf too. Sanders, Wolf, and Gordon will discuss joint editorship of a theme-based proceedings volume with IAFA officers when they attend ICFA. They will also discuss the jointly-edited electronic journal, of which the first issue is expected in April. It was suggested that the journal be available not only on website but on email.

Treasurer: Ewald stated that the end-of-the-year report is not yet complete, but he was able to give a general outline and will send the report itself as soon as possible. We are in a good cash position with a current balance of approximately $17,000 as of 1/1/96. Expenses from Imaginative Futures and the Pilgrim anthology are still outstanding. Editor Daryl Mallett states that the Pilgrim anthology will be published this year.

We have about $271 on hand for the scholarship fund, and Ewald suggested a "Thank You" notice in the Review. Sisson suggested a potential South African recipient and will mail the information to Ewald. Discussion followed about how to handle the student discount membership, and it was agreed to ask for proof of student status in the form of a copy of student ID or registration.

Editor: Sisson asked when the elections for new officers would be. Mead said they would be announced in the Review following this year's conference. He will send the nominations request to Sisson for inclusion in the Review.
Old Business: Last year’s Pioneer Award is still languishing, waiting for contact to be made with its recipient.

Diane Miller informed us that $112.70 remains on hand from the North Dakota conference.

New Business: The Committee agreed definitely that the 1998 conference will be held in Phoenix AZ, with Diane Miller and Bruce Farr as chairs. The Committee decided that the $112.70 in Miller’s possession should serve as front money for the Arizona conference.

Manufacture of plaques for the Clareson Award awaits Alex Eisenstein’s design. The first winner has been determined. New members for the committee should be appointed, serving on a staggered cycle. Sisson offered (to wild enthusiasm) to print the 1996 membership directory.

The meeting concluded at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Gordon, Secretary

LETTERS/CORRECTIONS

Dear Ms. Sisson:

Thanks for running Sandra J. Lindow’s thorough review of The Year’s Best Fantasy & Horror in the latest issue (#221). Unfortunately, I’m writing to point out a severe error: In her opening paragraph, Ms. Lindow says that Terri Windling edited the first two volumes of this series alone. All eight volumes in this series have been co-edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, and in all eight volumes Ellen Datlow has selected the horror fiction and Terri Windling has selected the fantasy fiction. The only difference has been that the first two volumes did not have the words “and Horror” as part of the title.

Yours truly,
Gordon Van Gelder
Editor, St. Martin’s Press
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATES

New Addresses:

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Old Headington
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England
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Fax: 01865 744435

Diane Poirier
7 Homer Square
Sommerville, MA 02143
Telephone: 617-666-2854

EDITORIAL

This editorial will consist of a few short pleas. First, I'd love to have some more reviewers in the "pool," so the regulars aren't always swamped and so we have some new perspectives represented in the Review. Please contact me if you're interested.

Secondly, please send more news items. Thanks to Neil Barron for supplying most of the news notes — please give him some help! Notes on research projects are also welcome, either as a "call for information" or simply as a blurb in the "SFRA Members & Friends" section. We only see each other once or twice a year; it would be nice to know what everyone is up to.

Finally, if you ever receive a Review with missing or duplicated pages, please drop me a postcard and I'll be happy to replace it. We try to spot-check the issues as we stuff envelopes, but we don't catch them all, and we need to inform the printer if there are significant problems.

Thanks, folks! Hang in there until Spring comes around. For myself, after three years in North Dakota, I am basking in this so-called Northern California "winter."

Happy Reading,
Amy

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## SFRA BUDGET

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**Note:** Directory costs absorbed by Review costs.
The 1996 meeting of the Science Fiction Research Association will be hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire at the Holiday Inn-Campus Areas at 2703 Craig Road, Eau Claire, WI on June 20-23, 1996. Our guests of honor are Pamela Sargent, author of Shore of Women and Venus of Dreams and editor of the Women of Wonder anthology series, and George Zebrowski, author of Macrolife and Stranger Sun and co-author of The Killing Star. Other attending guests include novelists Lois McMaster Bujold, Joan Slonczewski, and Eleanor Arnason, as well as noted futurist Earl Joseph. Further guests will be announced as their attendance is confirmed.

Our conference theme is SF and the Writer-Editor-Critic. Pamela Sargent and George Zebrowski have both had considerable success in all three of these areas. We’re thus interested in receiving papers not only on our GOHs’ fiction, but also on their work as anthologists and critics, as well as on the ways in which the fiction, criticism, and editing activities of other writers have interacted. Other topics we’re particularly interested in seeing papers on include the fiction of our other guests, children’s and young-adult science fiction, alternative history, gender and science fiction, and alternative futures, both positive and negative.

For information on papers and programming, please contact: Michael M. Levy, Chair of Programming, 1996 SFRA Annual Meeting, Department of English, University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751; home phone 715-834-6533; fax 715-232-1346; e-mail “levym@uwstout.edu”.

For registration materials and other information write to: SFRA Annual Meeting, College of Arts and Sciences Outreach, University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004; phone 715-836-2031, fax 715-836-2380, e-mail “sneenl@ uwec.edu”.

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CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

SFRA officer elections for 1997-98 will be held later this year. If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else to run for President, Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary, please contact:

David Mead
Humanities
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Corpus Christi, TX 78412

E-mail: “David-Mead@falcon.tamucc.edu”
or “Davem43@aol.com”

CHILDCARE AT SFRA 1996?

Anyone interested in having childcare at the 1996 SFRA Meeting in Eau Claire, June 20-23, 1996, should contact Michael Levy (e-mail: levym@uwstout.edu) by April 1, 1996. If enough people are interested it may be possible to hire a childcare provider or, alternately, set up cooperative childcare.

ADVENT TO ISSUE REVISED & ENLARGED AWARDS BOOK

One of the standard listings of fantastic fiction awards is A History of the Hugo, Nebula, and International Fantasy Awards, compiled by Donald Franson and Howard DeVore, last revised in 1985. In December DeVore sent a tape to George Price, who “is” Advent and who will format the text and publish the listing sometime this year. The World Fantasy Award has been added to this new edition. What is distinctive about this guide is that it lists not only the winners but the hundreds of nominees, and often shows the original sources for short fiction. As everyone who’s ever looked at the voting figures knows, winners and runners up are usually separated by only a few votes. For winners only, the most comprehensive listing by far is Reginald’s Science Fic-

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tion and Fantasy Awards, compiled by Daryl Mallett and Robert Reginald and updated every few years (the 3rd edition, 1993, is the latest).

— Neil Barron

1995 PHILIP K. DICK AWARD NOMINEES

Six works have been nominated for the 1995 Philip K. Dick Award, which is given annually for distinguished science fiction published in original paperback form in the U.S. The final winner will be announced at Norwescon 19 in SeaTac, Washington on April 6, 1996. The nominees are:

- Shale Aaron, *Virtual Death* (HarperPrism)
- Bruce Bethke, *Headcrash* (Warner Aspect)
- Greg Egan, *Permutation City* (HarperPrism)
- Richard Paul Russo, *Carlucci's Edge* (Ace)
- Amy Thomson, *The Color of Distance* (Ace)
- Elisabeth Vonarburg, *Reluctant Voyagers* (Bantam Spectra)

SALEM GUIDE NEARS COMPLETION

As of January 1996 approximately 800 articles had been received and edited for *Magill's Guide to Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature*, whose consulting editor is Tom Shippey. Approximately 650 essays are devoted to single books, the balance to clusters of related books. Publication of the four-volume set by Salem Press is tentatively set for October. This set updates two earlier five-volume sets devoted to SF (1979) and fantasy (1983).

— Neil Barron

FANTASY COMMENTATOR DOUBLE ISSUE

Issues 47/48 (V. 8, No. 3/4, Fall 1995) reached me in early January. The issues in each volume are paginated consecutively, and this one runs from 150 to 292, a hefty 8 1/2 x 11 inch issue. If your principal interest is contemporary SF or fantasy, *FC* will strike you as an extended exercise in nostalgia, since few pieces discuss works published since the end of World War II (a comment based on my memory of the past few years). Among the articles you might find of interest are those on R.F. Starzl, Mike Ashley on Homer Eon Flint, editor Langley Searles on Henry F. Whitehead, Moskowitz on the origins of the term "fanzine," plus part 15 of his history of

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pre-Wells SF (Verne and Milne are this segment’s subjects) and part 11 of his history of SF fandom (here he discusses British fandom in the early WWII years), an index to letters in *Weird Tales* and lesser-known pulps, and a justifiably unsympathetic account of a Bradbury speech. Verse and book reviews complement the articles. Price is $5/issue; $35/8 issues (add 75¢ per issue outside the U.S.) from Langley Searles, 48 Highland Circle, Bronxville, NY 10708-5909. This double issue is $10.

— Neil Barron

**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FANTASY GROWING LIKE TOPSY**

John Clute and his contributors to the *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* hope to turn in the electronic manuscript by the end of March. The approximately 3,000 entries, linked by more than 1,500 cross-references, will total close to three-quarters of a million words (compared to about 1.3 million words in the 1993 SF encyclopedia, recently reprinted with corrections by St. Martin’s as a $29.95 trade paperback). Although longer than originally planned, the fantasy encyclopedia is still something of a compromise, says Clute in a letter. “Fantasy has nothing of the neatness of field and boundary of sf, and there is no similarly satisfactory way of laying down a remit as to what is covered, and how to define what selections are in the end made.” If there is a second edition, Clute feels its length will be close to that of the SF encyclopedia in order to do justice to the protean and fluid nature of fantasy. Publication will be in late summer or early fall as things look now.

— Neil Barron

**SF WEB SITES**

A supplement to *Nuclear Holocausts: Atomic War in Fiction 1895-1984*, including many works which were not listed in that volume either because they appeared too late or because I simply overlooked them, is available on the World Wide Web at “http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/nuclear/nhsupplement.html”.

In addition, I have mounted a set of study notes for a number of science fiction works on my pages at “http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~brians/science_fiction/Science_Fiction_Guides.html”.

— Paul Brians

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This is a partial list of the footage available from the 1995 SFRA CONFERENCE; more will be made available as soon as the master tapes are converted to a different format.

“The Atomic Bomb & the END of WWII” (Al Berger)

Opening Ceremonies (Charles Wood, Chair of UND Space Studies; GoH John Brunner; Bruce Farr; Diane Miller; Lisa Mason’s “The Elephant and the Netcruiser”; slideshow from Artist GoH Robert Pasternak)

“Writing Genre Literature” (Jeffrey Carver, John Brunner, Amy Thomson, Ben Bova)

“Are Women Taking Over SF and Why Would They Want To?” (Lisa Mason, John Brunner, Amy Thomson, Lynn Williams, Jeffrey Carver)

“What Makes a Classic?” (Neil Barron, Ben Bova, Frederik Pohl, Donna Camoesas, Batya Weinbaum)

“The State of International SF” (Larisa Mihaylova, Ariane von Orlow, Janice Bogstad, Andrea Bell)

“Sex and SF (Has Moral Decay Hit the Lit?)” (Jeffrey Carver, Eleanor Arnason, Sandra Lindow, Amy Thomson, Margaret McBride)

“Teaching Literature Through Films — War of the Worlds, Blade Runner, Dune” (Robert Blackwood)

“The State of the Art in Teaching SF” (James Gunn, Jeffrey Carver, Margaret McBride, Christian Moraru)

Tapes are $22 each; please send orders to Shawn Miller c/o Diane Miller (1402 4th Ave. N., Grand Forks ND 58203-3145) specifying which footage you want. There will also be a memorial tape of John Brunner, featuring digitized photos by Robert Blackwood and possibly a photo composition of John’s work.
ASIMOV: THE MAN AND HIS WORK
by Agatha Taormina


Isaac Asimov, prolific author of almost 500 books, including a number of science fiction classics such as his *Foundation* series and his robot stories, was also a compulsive correspondent. His younger brother Stanley estimated that Isaac answered about 90% of the 100,000 or so letters he received during his professional career. After Isaac's death in 1992, Stanley, who had just retired from *Newsday*, sifted through the 45,000 or so carbons of Isaac's letters housed in the Asimov Collection at the Mugar Memorial Library at Boston University. In *Yours, Isaac Asimov*, Stanley has collected and annotated excerpts from about 1,000 pieces of his brother's correspondence, and the result provides a delightful glimpse into Isaac's daily life.

Stanley Asimov, who completed this volume just before his own death in August 1995, organized the letters he had chosen into over 50 categories, which detail Isaac's thoughts on all aspects of his life and work, including writing, science, science fiction, politics, friends, his various nonfiction works and columns, and his own personality. Stanley even threw in a smattering of Isaac's limericks.

What emerges from this wide-ranging correspondence is a man obsessed with the process of writing, happily aware of his own ego, confident that his work satisfies his many fans, happy to be successful at what he enjoys most, and absorbed by every detail of the work which he perceives as inseparable from his life. Never known as a prose stylist, Asimov is none-
theless a clear and energetic communicator, and it's fun for a reader to simply browse through this collection to pick out odds and ends about everything under the sun.

There are chapters here devoted to Asimov's love of writing, the sheer quantity of his work, his affinity for his typewriters and later his word processor. Other chapters reveal his relationship with editors, publishers, and fellow SF writers; his favorite books, stories, and authors; and his perceptions of politics, religion, and social issues. Sprinkled throughout are chapters devoted to some of the hundreds of limericks he wrote over the years.

There is no startling revelation here; no one who is familiar with Asimov and his work will be surprised at the portrait of the artist as a compulsive writer that emerges from this collection. What introspection there is focuses primarily on Asimov's perceptions of the importance of his work and his reputation, though the last two chapters do gather some of his correspondence related to his increasing health problems near the end of his life.

A more prosaic picture of Asimov's life work is contained in Scott Green's *Isaac Asimov: An Annotated Bibliography of the Asimov Collection at Boston University*. In late 1964, at the request of Howard B. Gotlieb, the Director of Special Collections at Boston University Library, Asimov began to house therein his manuscripts, bound galleys, copies of correspondence, and both English and foreign language editions of the many books he wrote and edited in his lifetime.

Green organizes this checklist, which he says is accurate up to January 1, 1994 (xiii), into categories for novels, short story collections, poetry, and nonfiction written or co-written by Asimov, as well as anthologies he edited or co-edited, and other books and periodicals in Asimov's personal library. The annotations generally consist of brief synopses of the novels, information on the cover artists, and lists of foreign language editions of some titles. Green provides both a title index and a general index.

Leafing through the material written by Asimov, the reader is struck not only by the breadth of his work, but also by the number of fiction and nonfiction titles aimed at the children's market. The material not written by Asimov consists mostly of titles for which Asimov wrote an introduction or contrib-
uted an essay or short story. There are a few seminal SF titles by major figures such as Ray Bradbury (The Martian Chronicles, The Illustrated Man) and Robert Heinlein (The Green Hills of Earth, The Man Who Sold the Moon), but nothing that would provide much insight into works that may have influenced Asimov's own writing.

Unfortunately, this volume is very sloppily edited. It is full of grammatical errors of the most basic kind (such as problems with subject and verb agreement) and noticeable proofreading lapses. For instance, in one place, famed editor John W. Campbell is referred to as Joseph Campbell. Frequently Green drops words or phrases, or fails to underline titles of periodicals.

Fans of Asimov's many works — his science fiction, his mysteries, his nonfiction, his columns and essays, his limericks — will enjoy browsing through the chatty letters collected in Yours, Isaac Asimov. Green's bibliography, on the other hand, might be useful for anyone who wishes to work with the holdings in the Asimov Collection at Boston University, but a serious researcher will find the annotations only marginally helpful and the editing errors very annoying.
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A Tale of Two ICFAs


All the reviews I've read about conference proceedings and essay collections either begin with or proceed towards self-reflexive statements of some kind which emphasize the difficulty of writing about such works. Now I understand why.

*Modes of the Fantastic* is one of Greenwood's series of volumes which collect together representative papers originally read at the annual International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts (in this case, ICFA-12, 1991). Many of you will be familiar with these volumes, which tend to be composed of such diverse bodies of material that it's puzzling to know exactly how to approach them for discussion.

Certainly, Rob Latham and Bob Collins are not unaware of the potential difficulties posed by such a collection. Each is a long-time participant in ICFA; indeed, Robert Collins is the founder and first director of ICFA. It is clear from their introductory remarks that they have been concerned to construct, from the twenty-five essays collected here, as coherent a collection as possible, essays which are described as "speaking in dialogue on a set of related themes" (xv).

To this end, they have arranged the essays, which for the most part deal solely with fantasy, into six general areas: Politics (3 essays), Technique (5), Race and Gender (6), Nature (5), Religion (3), and Re-visions (3). The opening essay, "The Politics (If Any) of Fantasy", is the text of Brian Attebery's guest scholar address at ICFA-12. Attebery argues that "fantasy itself is heretical" (11), and proceeds to open up the genre to a consideration of its potential for political engagement. As usual, Attebery's analysis is both cogent and thought-provoking, a useful first essay in a collection which
covers a range of related topics: the politics of collage in texts by William S. Burroughs and Kathy Acker (Rob Latham); the failure of representation in cyberpunk (Claire Sponsler; this is virtually the only essay which considers SF in any detail); a study of contemporary feminist fantasy in the Scottish literary tradition (Margaret Elphinstone); and discussions of texts by Ursula K. Le Guin (Tarya Malkki), Margaret Atwood (Leonard A. Cheever), Shakespeare (Frederick M. Burelbach), Gene Wolfe (Lillian A. Heldreth), H.G. Wells (Donald A. Palumbo), and Roger Corman (Mary Pharr).

For the most part, all the essays collected here are well-done and informative. I particularly enjoyed those by Attebery, Sponsler, Heldreth, Palumbo, and Pharr. On the other hand, not all are particularly satisfying. Since they were all originally drafted as brief conference presentations, they tend to focus narrowly on one topic at the expense of breadth and depth. It is also worth noting that only Attebery’s essay cites Rosemary Jackson’s important theoretical work on fantasy as “the literature of subversion”, while none of the essays following cites either Jackson or Attebery himself (he is, after all, one of the more important contemporary scholars of fantasy).

It might be useful to think about what purpose(s) a volume like Modes of the Fantastic might serve. Certainly, it acts to commemorate and to preserve some of the best of the scholarly work presented at an annual conference which is itself diverse, sprawling, and representative of some of the best and the worst of contemporary thinking on fantastic literature, film, television, graphic comics, visual arts, and anything else which strikes its participants as relevant. In addition, the accumulation of such volumes amounts to a large body of essays on any number of specific writers and artists, any number of specific fantastic texts, any number of generic analyses, any number of thematic surveys. Some are excellent, some are dreadful, most are quite intelligent, and a few are surprising and original. The present volume put together by Latham and Collins is no exception, and I had a good time reading my way through it.

The ICFA collections are useful places to go when one is searching out specific information, such as, for example, a reading of forest imagery in George Sand’s La Mare Au Diable (Juliette Gilman), or a discussion of Pauline Hopkins’s Of One Blood as “afrocentric fantasy for a black middle class audi-

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Conference proceedings are, by and large, notoriously discombobulated affairs. Such publications are generally best for "grazing" and can't really be expected to cohere to any single critical standard, agenda, or even topic despite the best of intentions. The "sprawling" 1992 ICFA, to use present editor Joe Sanders's term, is no exception — although as Sanders also points out, this particular collection does fit (or has been fitted) together in some noteworthy ways, and it is the significance of these fits to which I will devote the second half of this review. But before doing so, I would like to present at least a glimpse of the topics and texts under consideration here, more than a few of which are treated for the first time.

The twenty-three essays selected for this volume treat the spectrum of genres (and, to a lesser extent, media) lodged under the banner heading of the fantastic. Given the range of these proceedings, I do not think this is the place to summarize (let alone review) each of the essays individually; any attempt to do so would slight the details of too many arguments as well as consume too much costly SFRA paper and toxic ink. But I will offer the contents in broad strokes, both to demonstrate this volume's range of scholarship and material, and to give potential readers something to graze.

In general, the collection presents new takes on various single works or sets of works, takes concerned chiefly with detailing fantastic art's inner workings and/or its effects on the reader. While most of the takes are derived from close pragmatic interpretations such as thematic or formal reads, a third of the essays are strongly invested in a theoretical paradigm (psychoanalysis is central to five), with about the
same percentage being accompanied by some degree of historical or otherwise contextual analysis. Specifically, topics under consideration include: the instrumental appropriation of fairy tales in contemporary society; the ideological history of Pinocchio; the role of the Cinderella narrative in Jane Austin's novels; the thematics of CBS's Beauty and the Beast; the significance of the co-presence of supernaturalism and rationalism in Catherine Crowe's The Night Side of Nature; the biased shenanigans of Queen Victoria's Alice in Wonderland; the failure of Freudian analysis with regard to the work of Théophile Gautier; post-Freudian reads of Hoffmann and Lem's robot subjectivity; the function of comedy in M.G. Lewis's The Monk; Stephen R. Donaldson's Mirror of Her Dreams and Spencer's Faerie Queen read through Joseph Campbell; a psychoanalytic unpacking of Twin Peaks' final scene; audience analysis gleaned from a close read of the original manuscript version of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight; a consideration of how the presence of "fantastic" elements within fantasies affects the reader's perception of the fantastic; a mapping of the metaphoric significance of "murdering artisans" in uncanny mysteries; the mediating role of fantasy in Anatole France's philosophical/satirical Revolt of the Angels; a critical survey of Sally Johnson's sculpture; culture-as-unifying-metaphor in Le Guin's Always Coming Home; the significance of Sartre's philosophy of history to Kim Stanley Robinson's novella Green Mars and SF in general; the aborted radical subjectivity presented in Susan Cooper's The Dark is Rising; Angela Carter's literary debt to William Blake; Baudrillard's America set against Ballard's Hello America; the New Wave's ambiguous assessment of America; and a metatextual account of the historical progress of modern SF. The essays are brief, averaging nine pages. At times I would have appreciated more scope rather than such tight focuses; that is, less attention is paid to the larger problematics of an interpretive position, or to respective critical debates, than is devoted to the primary job of generating new reads. Nevertheless, the authors do get their points across, and there are of course advantages to the present format given the fiscal state of scholarly publishing in the humanities — the foremost being an impressive amount of coverage in a relatively slim volume. Twenty-three separate topics presented in 212 pages is no shabby number!

Considering this breadth of coverage, it is significant that the volume's editor finds common purpose within this collection. In his brief introduction, Sanders notes that, in the

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main, all the contributions "insist on applicability." I will quote him in full as I think his celebratory statement does represent some overall characteristics of the ICFA collection, namely its contributors' positions on the applicability of both the fantastic and criticism: "This is not "relevance" in the burned-out sense of social protest that some people demanded of literature a few decades ago; however, these essays do talk about how people approach the fantastic, how they enter into it, and how they return from it with refreshed vision for our shared world and with fresh ideas of what we can do here. In particular, these essays stress seeing (or reexamining) representations of human experience, with at least the implied suggestion that people who have learned to notice what is valuable and healthy should be motivated to preserve and strengthen it" (xii).

Given such a stance, it is not surprising that by and large these essays, while at times judgmental, are professedly a-political both in their subject matter and in the various theoretical or otherwise interpretive positions assumed by the authors. Sanders's assessment, well represented in the volume, not only privileges the text or authorial agency as a site of analysis (this is certainly to be expected from a volume of literary studies) but, more importantly, privileges a socially disengaged criticism, individualized modes of interpretation whose gauge is often an untheorized sense of "the world" or notion of "worth." All of which is to say there is very little social or cultural theorizing here.

There are, of course, exceptions to the a-political trend. Richard Wunderlich's "De-Radicalizing Pinocchio" reads the characterization of Pinocchio in relation to its socio-economic context, presenting the historical progress of the character from its origins as a resistant narrative subject capable of negotiating class-stratified society to its present function as a means of ideological reproduction in current versions of the story — it's the only analysis of its sort in the collection, other like-minded essays holding fairy tales to a more romantic standard. Valerie Krips's feminist analysis, "Finding One's Place in the Fantastic: Susan Cooper's The Dark is Rising" also relates narrative subjectivity to a theorized context. It draws from postmodern psychoanalytics to show that while Cooper presents characters who could be read as sites of resistance to the patriarchal social order depicted in the "real world" of her texts, she finally closes off the possibility of that subversion by consigning the fantastic characters to,
strictly, the fantastic and thus reasserting the power of humanist subjects in the real. Krips's is also the only essay of its sort in the volume, other psychoanalytic arguments tending to use the theory to account not so much for a text's social function, but for its significant internal properties. It should be noted that these two essays also fit Sanders's sense of applicability as they focus on how their respective works can empower individual readers, yet it is an analysis derived not only from individual texts but also from a theorized sense of the text's engagement with its social or historical context.

The presence of only two such analyses reflects upon a general absence in the volume of, in particular, cultural studies, feminist analysis, and Marxian Critical Theory — those programs that would begin by recognizing the fantastic as politicized, not privileged or isolated but as a part of a social practice configured around and engaged with things other than, to use Sanders's commonsense phrase, "what is valuable and healthy." This is not to say by any means that the bulk of the essays in this volume have missed the boat — they have not, and are treating topics that have been too often ignored. For instance, William Senior's "Oliphaunts in the Perilous Realm: The Function of Internal Wonder in Fantasy" offers a provocative, strictly formal argument on a subject I can't recall anyone giving too much thought to, and it rings with accuracy. Robert F. Geary's "The Corpse in the Dung Cart: The Night-Side of Nature and the Victorian Supernatural Tale" presents a very suggestive intellectual and literary history in its five and a half pages. It uses the title text as an intermediary between the gothic and Victorian tales of the uncanny in order to account for how these related forms differ, and strike us differently, in their thematic treatments of the supernatural and rationalism. The most closely focused study of them all, Nancy Buffington's psychoanalytic treatment "What about Bob? Doubles and Demons in Twin Peaks", accomplishes precisely what it sets out to do, reconsider the show's final scene and "add yet another twist to the role of the demonic here" (105).

Taken as a whole, I think this volume does succeed in presenting scholarship on certain functions of the fantastic, formal internal functions and what we can loosely call individual, subjective or pragmatic functions, but it fails to provide as rich an offering of theoretical programs or approaches devoted to studying social functions. Given the array of positions within the humanities, I am wary of consistency in any

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conference volume, for it may signify a lack or even omission just as much as it signifies common cause. I thus remain leery of the unifying critical philosophy presented here. To celebrate this volume's consistency is to celebrate the absence of certain schools of critique and embrace a limited sense of "applicability," instead of recognizing an opportunity for new, disparate kinds of scholarship. This observation is not meant to reflect negatively on the individual essays presented here, which taken on their own terms are an able bunch, but rather to lament some potentially lost opportunities and to mark that certain modes of scholarship aren't burned out of our considerations of the functions of the fantastic.

Minding the breadth and often novel nature of much of its subject matter, this volume can certainly be a useful resource for a variety of work. It is certainly recommended for libraries committed to collecting serious scholarship in the fantastic.

— Richard Davis

Sometime in the 1960s, between Yuri Gagarin's first voyage into space and Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon, space travel ceased to be confined to the realm of science fiction, and became a prominent feature of the broader political and cultural landscape. Ironically, even as science fiction was beginning to focus more upon the complexities of earthly existence, a number of mainstream authors were taking space travel, and the American space program in particular, as the subject for their own literary endeavors. In *Fire and Power: The American Space Program as Postmodern Narrative*, William D. Atwill examines prominent works by Bellow, Updike, Mailer, Wolfe, Pynchon, and Delillo, written during or shortly after the Apollo missions, that in some way investigate the impact of the space program upon contemporary society.

For Atwill, the manned space program was not primarily a triumph of science or engineering, but above all a political event, "the most effective display of power in this century, a dispersed, nearly invisible coercion of the souls of people by way of a technological display apparently benign in its application" (7). It is significant that Atwill says only "apparently" benign, for while the space program represents the bright side of the 1960s, the flip side is the dark struggle, both internal and external, of Vietnam. Consequently, each of the narratives he chooses to examine is seen within a political context, as a counter-narrative to the official version or consensus view of events.

A more conventional study of literary depictions of the space program might have been subtitled "The American Space Program in Postmodern Narrative", but Atwill is concerned not only with the use of the space program as symbol or metaphor within various works of postmodern literature, but also with the broad cultural impact of its representation via the mass media. In fact, Atwill argues that it is the media-generated public spectacle of the space program, rather than the nuts and bolts of the program itself, that is of primary
concern to the authors he discusses. It is a unique challenge to describe an event that has already been indelibly inscribed upon the consciousness of the nation by the ubiquitous televised image. As Atwill observes, “Only the most powerfully variant versions of a received narrative are able to defamiliarize one of these public spectacles enough that we can, once again, see that event in all its strange and unique immediacy” (9).

The novels Atwill chooses to illustrate his argument serve his purpose to varying degrees. While Saul Bellow’s Mr. Sammler’s Planet and John Updike’s Rabbit Redux demonstrate the often negative and always highly mediated impact of the space program upon the lives of individual characters, the only sense in which these narratives can be regarded as postmodern is within Atwill’s overarching context of the space program as a kind of postmodern narrative in itself. Conversely, the two works that are most securely ensconced within the postmodern canon, Thomas Pynchon’s Gravity’s Rainbow and Don Delillo’s Ratner’s Star, deal with the American space program only in the most peripheral sense. Pynchon’s novel, set in the closing days of World War II, examines the birth of the multinational, corporate “Rocket State,” while Delillo’s describes the technocratic bureaucracy’s endeavor to decipher what is apparently a message from outer space.

Fire and Power is at its most stimulating in the central chapters devoted to nonfiction accounts of the space program, Norman Mailer’s Of a Fire on the Moon and Tom Wolfe’s The Right Stuff. Mailer’s journalistic efforts, according to Atwill, focus ultimately upon the very impossibility of ever describing an event that is lost in the technological jargon of engineers and bureaucrats. Wolfe, on the other hand, views the antiseptic language with which the official version of NASA’s exploits is told as a deliberate rhetorical strategy, one that is effectively undermined by the astronauts themselves, who borrow the language and iconography of the American West in order to combat the image of themselves as passive laboratory specimens.

Atwill peppers his study with personal anecdotes of his childhood in Cape Canaveral and his response, as an adult, to the Challenger disaster. These do not detract from the scholarly tone of the book, but instead add a uniquely subjective viewpoint to the story of a vast public endeavor that remains, for most of us, nothing more than a series of tele-

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vised images and sound bites. *Fire and Power* is disillusioning, both in that it reminds us of the political context in which the American space program was undertaken, and in its penetration of the rhetoric that obscures the reality of that program's achievements. Nevertheless, the book concludes with a hopeful meditation on the cultural impact of the famous photograph of the earth taken during the *Apollo 8* mission. The capacity to see the earth as a whole, and then act with that knowledge, is perhaps the greatest legacy of the space program.

— Ed McKnight


Like most conference proceedings, the seven papers collected here (out of ten presented) reflect the variegated interests common to any group that meets to discuss science fiction and fantasy. And, as we have come to expect from our British compatriots, they usually sound an educated point of view, provided enough pubs are close by, that reverberates well against established critical benchmarks.

While the title suggests a theme, *Kicking the Reality Fix* is a porous umbrella for sheltering seven loosely connected "suspensions of disbelief." Nevertheless, a few of the essays rise above the quotidian and provide a thought-provoking examination of their subject matter. And, as in *Storming the Reality Studio* (Larry McCaffrey, Editor; Duke University Press, 1992), several insightful remarks are made concerning the cyberpunk/postmodern intersection.

The opening essay by Graham Dunstan Martin, teacher at Edinburgh University and SF writer, deftly expounds the Realism/Modernism critical positions, decrying their inability to act as a vehicle for ideas which, in "polite society, are as unmentionable as VD, and a 'really creative writer' can be identified from the fact that he has no ideas at all!" Martin goes on to champion the multidimensional levels of the fantastic, stating that the "fairy tale is polysemic: it is a metaphor with several real terms; a hammer which hits several nails on the head. It is no objection at all that the hammer is imaginary. For the nails are psychological."

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Perhaps the most engaging essay is "Total Recall: Blue Collar Dreams Can Be Fantastic" by Dr. R.J. Ellis of Nottingham Trent University. This excellent analysis of the hit film starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and directed by Paul Verhoeven will change the minds of many who saw it only as an action/adventure flick of little redeeming value. While many "noir" SF conventions were definitely trotted out (social tensions surrounding environmental and population pollution, dystopian collusions between multinational corporations and corrupt governments), Ellis focuses on the more philosophical implications inherent in Shakespeare's oft-quoted line, "We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is round with a sleep."

The many aspects of reality, encapsulated in the interpretations of appearances (even dreams), presented by fiction, especially SF and fantasy, are well-represented in a work like Total Recall, loosely based on a Philip K. Dick short story. Even academics who are not Marxist-oriented can sympathize with the growing number of disenfranchised Americans who observe, impotently, "The processes by which with increasing frequency and facility industries relocate where labour costs are low or where other commercial advantages (such as the evasion of repressive ecological and environmental constraints) dictate within a corporate decision-making structure in which loyalty to an existing work-force count for little when set against the demand for under-employed people in the USA and more broadly in the so-called Western world."

Ellis demonstrates, with considerable narrative sophistication and intertextual verve, how Total Recall reflects a Weltanschauung of "deep-seated anxiety concerning employment continuity, both amongst the much-shrunken blue-collar work-force, constantly faced by new demand for 'downsizing,' and those whose employment is inter-relatedly dependent upon their prosperity, including those working in parts of the construction and service industries." Indeed, "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale!"

Dr. Kevin McCarron, who teaches at Roehampton Institute, provides an informative essay, somewhat related to Ellis's above-mentioned paper, on cyberpunk, "All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace: Dystopias and Disconnections." McCarron points out that "In Gibson's work, though, it could be argued that the emphasis on such things as prosthetic devices and lens implants indicate not corruption but "con-
sumer desire” [my italics], linked to the great American belief in reinventing the self. For a price, usually a large one, Gibson’s characters can, piece by piece, replace themselves.”

Other essays worthy of note are: 1) Andy Sawyer’s “Swallows and Eddisons”, a conversational history that points out some unexpected connections between the storytelling of Eric Rucker Eddison (known for his The Worm Ouroboros) and the children’s writer Arthur Ransome (1884-1967); 2) Julie Cohen’s “The Cottingley Fairies, or The Possibility of Children’s Fiction”, a paper that meshes some supposedly photographed fairies in 1920 with what seems an innate desire for the fantastic; 3) Andre M. Butler’s “Being Beyond the Body?: Neal Stephenson’s Snow Crash and Jeff Noon’s Vurt”; and 4) Gwyneth Jones’s “The Brains of Female Hyena Twins: On the Future of Gender”, which probably received some comment from the conference attendees as they pub-crawled among the Queen’s Head, The Raj, The Corn Stores, and The Monk’s Retreat. You might want a pint yourself if you make it through all seven of these.

— Milton T. Wolf


Michael Chion’s David Lynch is a thorough study of the sights, sounds and themes of the film and television director who has brought us Eraserhead (1976), The Elephant Man (1980), Dune (1984), Blue Velvet (1986), the TV serial Twin Peaks (1989), Wild at Heart (1990), and many other fine works.

As his works demonstrate, Lynch has always had a taste for the fantastic and the abnormal, a taste often too vivid for the general public. Some have found Surrealist elements in his work; Lynch denies them. But as Chion’s study indicates, Lynch’s themes are in many cases tied not only into his unconscious mind but into the collective unconscious of us all (Chapter V: Lynch-Kit). Chion does not spend a great deal of time going into Lynch’s life — e.g. Lynch started out as a painter. For the most part, Chion incorporates his observations of the man into his criticism of Lynch’s works. He dem-
onstrates, for example, that certain works of Bergman, Fellini, and Kubrick influenced Lynch's work, and he shows us how.

In his commentary on *Dune*, Chion notes Alejandro Jodorowsky’s and Ridley Scott’s separate attempts to make the film, as well as the production problems and their causes which Lynch inevitably faced. If Lynch had obtained more control over *Dune*, the film might have been less costly and certainly would have been longer than the versions which we have seen. Chion’s study reveals the nuggets to be gleaned from this massive failure. For example, the use of the “inner voice” of several characters, a technique often used in comic books, was not well received.

Chion’s analysis of *Blue Velvet* as a fantasy rather than a strange melodrama is very interesting. He points out that the plot does not hold up to intense scrutiny, and the characters seem more nightmarish than real. He makes an observation that deserves consideration: “the script’s extravagant logic in fact revolves around the notion of forestalling Dorothy’s (Isabella Rossellini’s) suicide... It is about a woman collapsing, slipping into the void of a terminal depression.”

As in his *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (Columbia University Press, 1994, Claudia Gorbman, trans.), Chion analyses the sound of the films as thoroughly as the images. Chion’s work in these books and as a film critic for *Cahiers du Cinema* reveals an intention and an ability to treat a director’s use of sound as seriously as a director’s choice of moving pictures.

The full filmography and annotated bibliography make this book worthy of serious reading. Its good translation makes it a joy too.

— Bob Blackwood


British utopian and anti-utopian works of the eighteenth century have for the most part long been out-of-print, almost forgotten, and, except for the writings of Swift, Defoe, and very few others, seldom the subject of scholarly investi-
This well-edited volume makes available seven utopian works published between 1709 and 1802: "The Island of Content, or, A New Paradise Discovered" (underlining indicates abbreviation used in later references); "A Description of New Athens in Terra Australis Incognita"; David Hume’s "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth"; "An Account of the First Settlement, Laws, Form of Government, and Police of the Cessares, A People of South America"; "Memoires of Planetes, or a Sketch of the Laws and Manners of Makar"; William Hodgson’s "The Commonwealth of Reason"; and "Bruce’s Voyage to Naples." An excellent Introduction, bibliographical, biographical, and textual notes, and a "Chronology of [75] main eighteenth-century British utopian and anti-utopian texts" add to the value of this collection.

These seven examples contain a variety of reactions to the continuing problems of poverty, moral decline, political corruption, and social inequalities in eighteenth-century Britain. At one end of the scale are the idyllic retreat to paradise of "Island of Content" and the underground arcadia of "Naples", at the other the more pragmatic, non-fiction proposals of Hume and Hodgson. Only Hume and Hodgson published under their own names. The others were published either anonymously or with pseudonyms; Claeyss attributes "Island of Content", "New Athens", "Cessares", "Planetes", and "Naples" to Edward Ward, Ambrose Philips, James Burgh, Thomas Northmore, and William Bingham respectively. All draw heavily on themes common to earlier utopian criticisms of society, and prefigure the later, often more elaborate utopias of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The five fictional examples all use the common device of a voyage as a means to finding utopia, but they differ in that "Island of Content" and "Cessares" result from abandonment of a corrupt society and search for a better place, "New Athens" and "Planetes" are existing societies discovered by castaways, and the underground society of "Naples" is an accident of mountain climbing while on shore leave.

Although they have in common a general distaste for their own society, the authors of these works differ greatly in selection both of social evils to condemn and of remedies for them. For example, "Island of Content" has an absolute monarchy, but "New Athens" and "Naples" are limited monarchies, and "Cessares" has a hereditary governor of limited powers; in Hume, Hodgson, and "Planetes" elected representatives head the government, and the latter two call for rota-
tion of office. In “New Athens” and “Naples” the oldest citizens control the government (in the latter he is king). In “New Athens”, in Hodgson, and in “Cessares” education is highly regarded as important to the nation, but in “Island of Content” it is held to minimal reading and writing to avoid harm to society. Among other noteworthy remedies are vegetarianism (“Island of Content” and “Naples”), women’s rights (“Island of Content” and Hodgson, whose universal suffrage, however, does not include women), private property (Hume, Hodgson, “Planetes”), anti-Catholicism (“Planetes”), price controls (“Cessares”, Hodgson, “New Athens”), and a tendency to strict control of most, if not all, human activities. The most liberal piece is Hodgson’s proposed Commonwealth, which includes an 18-point “Declaration of Rights” reminiscent in many ways of our own Bill of Rights. The influence of earlier utopian writers — Plato, Lycurgus, More, Bacon, Harrington, Defoe, and Swift come to mind — is easily detected, and the voyage theme links these utopian works with a prevalent approach to utopia of 17th and 18th century writers of several nationalities.

Of the seven pieces in this collection, only one, “Island of Content”, has existed in a modern edition (Garland, 1973) until now. By making them available in a reasonably priced book Claeys has performed a great service to utopian studies. Furthermore, his Introduction, which places these utopias in the context both of other such writings and of the social, political, and economic milieu from which they stem, provides an excellent approach to understanding the eighteenth-century British mind. This is a collection worth having.

— Arthur O. Lewis


Scholars, teachers, and fans of utopian literature will all welcome Carol Farley Kessler’s anthology of nineteenth and twentieth-century U.S. utopias by women back into print. Kessler’s first anthology (1984) was a groundbreaking one that introduced many of us to early utopias by women. This anthology, although very different, lives up to the first’s high standards.

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Kessler's second edition of *Daring to Dream* keeps the thorough and thoughtful introduction, while adding more examples from recently recovered works. Kessler introduces readers new to the field to definitions of "utopia," to the changing characteristics of feminist utopias linked to historical feminism, and to feminist theoretical viewpoints that help to explain gendered differences in utopias. Kessler usefully defines "utopia" not as a model place, but as "a refuge or shelter wherein we may safely envision a changed society" (xv). She sets utopias in historical context, pointing out that marriage reform, not suffrage, was the focus of women's visions of social change in the nineteenth century (xix). She surveys the many literary forms that women utopists adopted, and summarizes the feminist values of utopias by women: constructive use of power, actions based on experience rather than dogma, feelings valued with knowledge, recognition of community effort, the importance of sensuality and the material body, and women's rights to work, education, child care, property, and participation in government.

This edition of *Daring to Dream* includes seven complete utopias and well-chosen excerpts from five novels. The range of vision and form, along with the consistency of feminist values, make a diversified yet coherent volume. Annie Denton Cridge's *Man's Rights* (1870) depicts a gender-reversal world through dream visions where men are the fashionable, under-educated, housebound caretakers of children, banding together to claim their rights. In the excerpt from *Papa's Own Girl* (1874), Marie Howland advocates the industrial palace as utopia, as well as social acceptance of illegitimate children. To indicate the extension of utopia to nonfiction forms, Kessler includes Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's revised marriage service (1874) and Mary Ford's critique of Bellamy and Nationalism (1889). Charlotte Perkins Gilman is represented by "A Woman's Utopia" (1907), which anticipates many of the values of her later *Herland* (women in politics, city planning, community kitchens, professional mothers, child-raising and education as a science), and an engaging dumb male narrator who is a test run for *Herland*'s charming Van Dyke Jennings. New to this edition is an excerpt from the earliest known utopia by an African-American: Lillian Jones's vision of a new African nation of African-Americans returned home, *Five Generations Hence* (1916). Especially interesting is the recently discovered World War II utopia that ends the volume, Gertrude Short's *A Visitor from Venus* (1949), starring a woman aviator who hears a message from Venusians and...
vows to work for world peace. Kessler also represents utopian writers Lillie Blake, Rosa Graul, Winnifred Cooley, Caroline Snedeker, and Martha Bruere.

Compared to the first edition, there are fewer selections and longer excerpts. Kessler dropped those utopias that appeared in full editions in the Syracuse Utopian Series (understandably), but also those that have been printed in other anthologies. I value having more coherent pieces to work with for students, but I do miss the inclusion of the excerpts from Mary Griffith’s “Three Hundred Years Hence” and Mary Bradley Lane’s classic *Mizora*. The reliable, scholarly, and carefully annotated bibliography, useful to guide students into projects of their own, is much more extensive than in the first edition, documenting the many new discoveries of utopias by women in the last decade. I recommend this excellent anthology to you all.

—Jane Donawerth


Stanislaw Lem’s memoir of his childhood between World War I and II in Lvov, Poland offers surprising reading pleasure. One shouldn’t be surprised, I suppose, but as much as I admire and enjoy Lem’s fiction and prose, nevertheless, I did not expect his memoir to be so much fun to read. For those who dream of teaching a college course on Lem, *Highcastle* provides the requisite insight into Lem’s personality and childhood; there are numerous suggestions about the formation of his world view and aesthetics. For those who seek the pleasure of getting to know a writer they like, there is plenty to enjoy, especially humor, though always in the background are reminders of loss: a childhood friend, a neighborhood, an acquaintance, a home, and many objects of personal value that disappeared into the dark maw of World War II.

Lem frames the book with a consideration of the problems of memory, of writing a book about one’s childhood that can adequately capture the feel of being a child. He begins by admitting failure: “I wished to let the child speak... and instead I exploited him” (ix). He ends by characterizing memory
as an alien being within his psyche, recalcitrant, with a stub-
born will of its own. Because memory refuses to grant him
perfect access, he can only fail to let the child speak, for it
too becomes alien, another person that he is no longer, held
prisoner in the memory. Out of this emerges one of Lem’s
main themes in his fiction, the imagination’s insistence upon
creating its own pattern in a universe that refuses to validate
any of the many human attempts to generate an order. Lem
returns several times in the intervening text to the themes of
memory and of the inaccessible absolute system for which
imagination sometimes yearns. Perhaps the high point of
this strand of the memoir comes when he describes how he
occupied himself during hours of boredom in school. He
filled his time by creating complicated documents: passes,
authorizations, drafts, orders. The result was a world peopled
by civil servants who existed purely by the relationships im-
plied in Lem’s fictional official papers, a world represented
solely by its bureaucracy. This world was as infinitely com-
licated as the real world: “I knew no path through the pa-
per labyrinth, but the point was to wander with panache”
(110). Lem sees himself as making a version of post-modern
fiction through a fairly simple process of childish invention,
not self-consciously, but as a spontaneous response to the
conditions of his world. Evoking Kafka’s The Castle, which
Lem never mentions in this book, he suggests one of several
of his title’s allusions. The literal high castle is the grounds
of the ruin which was his favorite playground in Lvov.

As a child, Lem affirms, he was a monster, and he fills this
volume with the humorous details of his monstrousness. He
fell in love with Alexander Dumas, Jules Verne, H.G. Wells,
and many other popular writers; struggled to read Proust;
came to admire Musil, Canetti, and Robbe-Grillet. However,
the main focus of his childish energy was to circumvent the
forbidden: to devour vast quantities of halvah; to penetrate
into his father’s library and study the proscribed medical
books; to invade the otolaryngologist’s examination room and
toy with the curious objects his father had removed from
people’s throats, or assemble the Brüning laryngoscope and
“bravely attempt to retrieve from the hose of the vacuum
cleaner the foreign bodies I had put there” (37). “If you could
somehow concentrate the energy of all the schoolchildren in
the world, you could definitely turn the earth upside down
and dry up all the seas. But first you would have to make
that absolutely forbidden” (61), Lem concludes.
Lem's stories of childhood activities alternate between amusing details and more serious meditations. He tells of years of comparative stability in his middle-class family's life, shadowed by the approaching victimizations, first by the Nazis and then by Soviet Russia. Lem reminds the reader repeatedly but not insistently about the former, while the latter remains unmentioned in this 1975 text. In his last chapter, he evokes briefly the removal of Lvov's Jews as a fairly distant event, though he remembers vividly the suddenly empty streets and shops. His three years of military training proved absurd, clearly no preparation for the coming disasters. He points out that during the training, there was no mention of such a thing as a tank, even though these were common children's toys. Of the approach of the war he says, "Adults and children, we were all made equal by the blessing of ignorance, without which one cannot live" (134).

*Highcastle* provides insight into Lem and his other works, and is an entertaining and provocative book in its own right.

— Terry Heller


When Robert Bloch died at the end of 1994, he left behind a legacy of horror, fantasy, suspense, and science fiction, the likes of which few writers will ever match. One of those writers, Richard Matheson, has teamed up with Bloch's agent, Ricia Mainhardt, to produce this somewhat misrepresented volume. *Robert Bloch: Appreciations of the Master* does contain, as its title suggests, tributes to Bloch from 31 members of the large community of writers, actors, and filmmakers who knew him and were influenced by his work. But the bulk of the book is taken up by 19 stories that span Bloch's 61-year career, as well as one essay and a snip of an unproduced screenplay, and show off the many facets of his imagination that were eclipsed by his renown as "the author of *Psycho.*"

The appreciations range from the sentimental to the self-serving, and yield up a number of wonderful anecdotes. Everyone agrees that Bloch was one of the kindest men they knew, a gentleman whose personal warmth contrasted sharply with the chilling characters he portrayed in his fiction. (Bloch
seemed to savor this irony, and often pointed out how easy it was for him to inhabit the mind of his most famous creation, the psychotic murderer Norman Bates, because he had already spent a lifetime killing characters in his fiction.) The most perceptive appreciation is Randall Larson’s introduction to “The Pin”, which delineates “the absurdity of terror” that one finds both in Bloch’s humorous fantasies and mordant horror stories. The most peculiar comes from filmmaker Mick Garris, who admits he never knew Bloch and suspects that Bloch would not have liked the film “Psycho IV” which he directed. Surely the most interesting is Philip (William Tenn) Klass’s, who discusses Bloch’s professionalism in the context of circumstances surrounding the publication of his tale “That Hell-Bound Train”. The young Klass was working as an interim editor at The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, and had the unenviable task of approaching Bloch to rewrite the story’s ending as per instructions from the magazine’s previous editor, Anthony Boucher. Bloch gladly took their suggestions and completely revised the story. It won the Hugo in 1959.

A number of contributors come close to apologizing for the stories they introduce, as though selecting a story other than one of Bloch’s classics is a sign of disrespect. They need not have. Although not all of the stories collected here are among Bloch’s best, the volume as a whole is much more representative of his output than either The Best of Robert Bloch (Del Rey, 1977), which slighted Bloch’s early weird tales, or the three-volume Selected Stories (Underwood-Miller, 1987), which drew primarily from Bloch’s crime and science fiction in the 1950s and ’60s. “Notebook Found in a Deserted House” exposes the Lovecraftian roots Bloch cultivated in his early sales to Weird Tales, and is that rare contribution to Lovecraft’s mythos that is genuinely scary. “Sweets to the Sweet” shows Bloch doing what he did best in his fiction: hooking the reader with a punchy opening line, and using an economy of prose throughout to set up its final short sharp shock. “The Cloak”, his 1939 vampire romp, is included here, and its importance to his work and modern weird fiction cannot be overestimated. With irreverent glee, it blew the Gothic dust off one of the most cliche monsters in all horror and helped refurbish it for the twentieth century. The story’s humorously cynical approach to its theme was an innovation in weird fiction, and it gave rise to the two strains of writing Bloch is best known for: the screwball comic fantasy of “A Good Knight’s Work” and “The Pied Piper Meets the Gestapo”,

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and the hardboiled horrors softened by puns and O'Henry twists in “Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper”, “Final Performance”, and “The Animal Farm”.

In addition to these stories and the Psycho precursors “I Do Not Love Thee Dr. Fell” and “Enoch”, the book contains “The Dead Don’t Die”, a novella published in the unforgettable pulp Fantastic Adventures. Bloch clearly wrote it for the money, but its crisp characters, vivid details, and imaginative backstory peppered with historical facts make it surprisingly spellbinding for a throwaway tale. Bloch was an endlessly entertaining writer, and there are many more surprises of this sort among his uncollected works. With luck, this volume will inspire some entrepreneurial publisher to begin reissuing all of his short fiction.

— Stefan Dziemianowicz


Anyone who does the least amount of reading about H.G. Wells soon encounters the work of Patrick Parrinder. An indefatigable Wellsian scholar, Parrinder is a worthwhile source of information about the writer who, more than any other author, influenced the shape of modern science fiction. In particular, Parrinder does a good job of placing Wells’s SF, for which he is best known today, in the context of the dozens of other books Wells published in the course of his long career. In Shadows of the Future: H.G. Wells, Science Fiction, and Prophecy, Parrinder accomplishes this task by examining ongoing strains of prophecy, futurism, and parody in all of Wells’s work. In the process, he explores how the early scientific romances and utopian fictions are related to Wells’s political and social criticism and his contemporary novels, which are often dismissed as part of Wells’s “decline” from artistry to didacticism. What Parrinder strives to illustrate here is the evolution of Wells’s ideas within the context of his life and times. He also explores how this development is related to SF in general.

Parrinder effectively covers a lot of territory in a short space. He begins with an analysis of the relationship between prophetic literature and SF, thus establishing Wells as part of
a larger enterprise, and discusses the function of parody within both types of writing. Subsequent chapters in the first part of the book deal with: Wells as prophet; The Time Machine (1895) as a prophetic text; the sense of human “de-thronement” to be found in novels such as The Time Machine and The Island of Dr. Moreau (1896); how Wells’s ideas about history influence his writings; Wells’s efforts at helping to create a new world; and Wells’s utopian leanings. The shorter second part of the book includes a chapter on anti-utopianism in Wells and his relationship to Yevgeny Zamyatin and George Orwell, and one on prophecy and parody in modern science fiction.

The result, perhaps inevitably, is a somewhat disjointed book. Though tied together with several common threads, it reads like a collection of related articles rather than as a unified argument. However, the book is nonetheless eminently readable. Parrinder’s excellent examinations of the backgrounds of Wells’s ideas and his insightful readings of his work make the book a useful resource for any reader of Wells. This is especially true concerning the scientific romances, though the book is also impressive for the breadth of its coverage beyond Wells’s SF. While it is clear Parrinder thinks little of most of Wells’s later novels and of his efforts to combine religion and rationality, he still takes them, as well as Wells’s many nonfiction publications, into account in trying to understand certain themes and ideas in Wells’s work. In fact, Parrinder insists that to do otherwise is to fail to understand the full import of Wells’s varied accomplishments.

Parrinder typically makes no effort to disguise his views, and not all readers of Wells are likely to agree with him on every point. Nevertheless, like any good critic, Parrinder is worth reading even when one disagrees with him, and he offers many thought-provoking observations here on Wells and on SF in general. Examples include his distinction between prophetic fiction and the future histories to be found in much SF; his distinction between futurism and the ambivalence of futuristic fiction; his observations on SF as simultaneously parodic and prophetic; his connections between Wells’s life, the growth of scientific knowledge in his lifetime, and his writings; his tracing of the development of Wells’s outlook from pessimism about humanity’s fate (the result, Parrinder says, of a combination of Romantic leanings and scientific outlook) to a qualified optimism; his analysis of Wells’s favoring of human imperialism (along with contin-
ued evolution) over national imperialism; and the influence of Edward Gibbon and Oswald Spengler on conceptions of history in Wells and in SF, among others. Parrinder's reading of Zamyatin's dystopian novel We (1920-1921) and his overview of the ideas shaping modern SF are also highly interesting.

Despite its lack of total unity, Parrinder's examination of Wells and of modern SF through the lens of specific concerns — prophecy, futurism, utopia, parody — ultimately succeeds in shedding light on elements of Wells's writings and ideas and on the assumptions of much SF that otherwise receive little or no attention. Anyone wishing to gain a better understanding of these subjects would do well to see what Parrinder does with them here.

— Darren Harris-Fain


This sumptuous and useful book is accurately titled. It is an encyclopedia of utopian ideas from "Abbey of Theleme" to "Zamyatin, Yevgeny." Mary Ellen Snodgrass is a professional writer, her prose is clear, readable, and transparent, and the publisher, ABC-CLIO, knows how to package historical information for reference. Utopian studies is an active and growing academic field today, and utopias have always fascinated readers with speculative and visionary minds. While this book is less ambitious than James Gunn's *The New Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, there is no directly competing source of general utopian information in print, so the *Encyclopedia of Utopian Literature* is a useful volume which fills an intellectual need.

Of course, this encyclopedia is not definitive or complete. Snodgrass focuses on literary expressions of utopian ideas and in general avoids historical attempts to make utopian ideals work in intentional communities. Here are no Shakers, no Oneida Colony, no John Humphrey Noyes, though we can find Fourier and Joseph Smith. The choices she has made are generally for the good; one book cannot contain all knowledge. However, despite its 600 pages, this "utopian" encyclopedia misses a lot — especially in recent utopias — and some of her choices are puzzling.

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The major intellectual problem is a blurred focus. Uncertainty about genre is typical of much other utopian criticism too, but a failure to decide what is utopian and what is not makes some odd bedfellows in this book, and leaves many worthy utopias outside the bedclothes entirely. Despite her helpful essay on "utopia," Snodgrass does not resolve — or even recognize the old problem of definition: what does "utopia" mean for her, and especially, what is "utopian literature"? She does not usually distinguish among the utopias she presents, though she does include most types — the eutopia, the dystopia, the satiric utopia, the anti-utopia. She offers little insight into critical utopias and ignores the general critical problems of authorial intention and textual irony. She includes authors (Carlyle, Cervantes, Melville), characters (Aeneas, Gareth, Ernest Everhard), and ideas (slavery, baptism, clairvoyance) that seem only marginal to her subject.

Snodgrass includes many myths, as she should, for they are taxonomically the origins of utopia, but she also offers all sorts of other religious ideas (baptism, Buddhism, syncretism) which are only marginally helpful in understanding utopian ideas. Certainly there is nothing wrong with explaining how baptism or escapism or asceticism appears in utopian thinking, but if you stop for all these (and Snodgrass does) you will have less space to survey the utopias themselves. Where was Snodgrass's editor when she proposed her topics?

This is an ambitious project. Of course there are some errors along with the omissions. I could point at trivial errors of fact: The Twelve Tablet version of Gilgamesh was assembled for King Ashurbanipal about 800 BCE, not 1200; the Land of Cockaigne is not Aristophanes's Cloud Cuckoo Land; Piercy's character Luicente is female, not male (this makes a difference in the story); and so on. But these are inevitable errors in such an ambitious survey. A much larger problem is that her survey is thinnest just where it might be most useful, in our own time.

Among recent utopian fiction she knows only the best selling mass market names: Piercy, Callenbach, and Lowry appear, but many — very many — other recent utopias do not. Missing from this book are not just intelligent recent utopias like Robinson's Pacific Edge and Piercy's He, She, and It, but also 19th-century classics like Wright's Islandia and (even!) Gilman's Herland, as well as 20th-century standards like
Joanna Russ's *The Female Man*, Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, and Niven and Pournelle's *Oath of Fealty*. From ancient times she includes Aristophanes’s marginally utopian *Lysistrata* but ignores his real satiric utopia, *The Parliament of Women*, and so on.

The cause of these lapses becomes evident in her bibliography, which does not mention either of two major resources for literary utopias, Lyman Tower Sargent’s bibliography *British and American Utopian Literature* and the academic journal *Utopian Studies*. Of course, there is no need to recognize academic scholarship in a popular work. But Diderot is dead and an encyclopedia today can hardly be a one-author task. CLIO is a good professional organization and should have encouraged Snodgrass to find help for this project. In an encyclopedia intended for school and college libraries, the absence of so many recent utopias in an encyclopedia of utopian literature will be felt.

Another peculiar absence here is sexual behavior. Just as examples, Snodgrass does not tell us that Gilgamesh is sent on his quest because he is raping his citizens' sons and daughters, and Adam in the Hebrew Genesis is "enticed into a state of unrighteousness" but we do not hear about the traditional connection with love-making; Lilith, of course, does not appear. The houris are entirely missing from the Muslim Paradise, despite the promises in Sura LVI and the rest. For Snodgrass, *Candide* has no sexual farce and Ernest Everhard (*Iron Heel*) gets his name only from his character, not his manly member, while Alex and his hoodlums in *A Clockwork Orange* only "maul" the writer's wife. Perhaps the stories have been censored to avoid trouble in school libraries. The disappearance of sex doesn't matter a lot — utopias are often sexless places — but her suppressions do distort some utopias.

Despite her clear prose, Snodgrass sometimes distorts familiar ideas in a *SocSpeak* (1984) way. For example, her entry for "bestiality" seems to promise a new sexual dimension in utopias, but it turns out to be an essay on class divisions in some utopias. The same distortion appears in the entry for "slavery," where all social inequality equals slavery. Not only are More's criminals slaves (*Utopia*), but also Melville's native women (*Typee*), Orwell's proles (1984), Huxley's deltas and epsilons (*Brave New World*), Haley’s women (*Autobiography of Malcolm X*), and many more. Oppressed classes?
Drudges? Workers? Yes. But slaves? Only if the word has only social rather than legal meanings. Like Lewis Carroll’s Humpty Dumpty, the words Snodgrass explains for us seem sometimes to mean what she wants them to rather than what her readers expect.

The publisher’s note on the slip-cover suggests that this book is aimed at high school and college libraries. That seems about right, with emphasis on the “high school.” It is well written, professionally produced, and intelligent in explaining a very large range of time and ideas. Overall, Snodgrass’s omissions are bearable, and her errors minor.

But there is a larger issue today. If this were an electronic text — no matter what immediate form it took, CD, on-line database, or even clumsy floppies — revision and correction would be easy. But in print for $65, change and updating will not be cheap. In a hypertext format, searches would be easier and connections richer, and upgrading the basic information to new forms would be cheap and relatively simple. Print reference works, especially encyclopedic ones, are obsolete. I don’t know how authors and publishers will be paid — and they should be paid — but we no longer need the printer’s bill, even when it provides volumes as handsome as this one.

— Michael Orth

History too often seems to be the prison house of fiction. Writers who do not evade it altogether find themselves chiseling away within its walls, trying to create a space where art does not conflict with its incontestable authority. So as encouraging as it is when those who are usually outside the walls find a way back in, as many science fiction writers have with the recent growth of the alternative history subgenre, it is perhaps even more so when those who are inside dare to risk disturbing the walls with a particularly bold stroke at the rock of historical reality. Beryl Bainbridge, the author of a string of darkly comic novels that includes *An Awfully Big Adventure* (the basis for the recent Hugh Grant flick) and last year's *The Birthday Boys* (a gripping depiction of Scott's ill-fated expedition to the Antarctic, told from several different points of view), shows such daring in *Young Adolf*, a farcical depiction of Adolf Hitler's apocryphal visit to England in 1912 and of the side-splitting, life-altering traumas he experienced there.

The historical thread upon which Bainbridge hangs her tale is an enigmatic diary entry by the wife of Hitler’s half-brother Alois (who is known to have lived in Liverpool in the 1920s) which may record the future dictator’s arrival in England. Whether the historical Hitler actually paid a visit to his half-brother during the period when he was evading military service in Austria is beside the point, however, for Bainbridge clearly prefers to portray her subject’s character with broad strokes rather than to detail his life with pointillistic precision. When her Hitler is not lying dejectedly for days at a time on his beleaguered relatives’ sofa, he is either fleeing imagined enemies through the streets of Liverpool or inventing the personal characteristics by which he will later be known: combing his hair to one side of his forehead to hide a cut on his brow, accepting a shirt made by his sister-in-law from some brown cloth found in her closet, and finally resolving to grow a mustache so that he will never again (as he must be to escape detection in the novel’s hilarious conclusion) be mistaken for a woman.
Science fiction readers will already be familiar with this sort of historical manipulation for the purposes of revealing the inner life of a historical figure from Norman Spinrad's *The Iron Dream*, in which Hitler immigrates to the United States and redirects his more unhealthy impulses into the writing of intolerably bad (but nevertheless award-winning) science fiction. Mainstream readers, however, may find themselves reminded of Forrest Gump by the profound historical consequences that ultimately arise from the random experiences of a single individual. While Forrest Gump has been criticized for making intellectual simplicity appear virtuous, Bainbridge's novel cannot be condemned for offering Hitler any sympathy whatsoever. All of his misfortunes he brings upon himself, and when they arise we enjoy it, not because of the monster he is to become, but because of the psychotic, self-pitying parasite he is.

— Ed McKnight


According to the editor, these stories were selected or commissioned to explore limmerance, that early state of being in love or lust or both, when two people see each other as perfect — when, in other words, need and obsession are most intensely confused. Apparently we are drawn to other people in the first place because they are different from us but also because they seem to fit our dreams; then, when they express true independence from our fantasies, we are startled and react with horror. At that moment, we are ready to literally love the other to pieces. This is the frame of mind that Shakespeare described, in Sonnet 129, as "purjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame, / Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust."

The writers of most of these stories do succeed in expressing a frustrated adoration that has become intense to the point of mutilation or murder. Unfortunately, that concentration doesn't benefit the stories as stories. The actual writing is usually adequate, except for a few klutzy passages such as "Their love was as lifeless and dead as the cold, rubbbery eggs on his plate." However, the characters don't seem as controlled by their passions as by the writers urgency to make that one point. Too many stories here seem shoved into place,
twisted by the need to reveal the suffering that justifies hurting someone, then gloating about the hurting. It gets monotonous very fast. For the record, there are superior stories by Oates, Soukup, Friesner, and Hoffman that actually consider the book's subject. There's also a very funny story by Carolyn Banks that comes as a welcome relief from the grim angst of most of the book. And there's a story by Poppy Z. Brite that may be sly humor or may just be such outrageous, over-the-top, EC-comics excess that it reads that way. And then there are all the rest.

This isn't a book to read for pleasure. Nevertheless, it may be worth looking at — skipping the editor's point-revealing story introductions — as an expression of an overwhelmingly obsessive, grimly serious part of human experience.

— Joe Sanders


Since the late 1970s, Richard Dalby has been rescuing ghost stories from the obscurity of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century popular fiction magazines and collections in which they originally appeared. Among his numerous anthologies are *Ghosts and Scholar: Ghost Stories in the Tradition of M.R. James* (Crucible, 1987) and *Ghosts for Christmas* (Headline, 1989). This is the fourth ghost story anthology in the Mammoth Book series. The forty stories in this volume are by British, Canadian, and American authors, with one translation from the French. Originally published between 1839 and 1910, they are arranged mainly in chronological order, exceptions presumably made for reasons of variety or thematic juxtapositions.

Sensitive to the fact that ghost stories tend to be variations on a limited number of stock situations, Dalby has chosen stories with various types of ghosts, styles, and tones. This volume combines classic ghost stories (J.S. Le Fanu's "Schalken the Painter", Charles Dickens's "No. 1 Branch Line: The Signalman"; Henry James's "The Romance of Certain Old Clothes" and "The Jolly Corner"); lesser-known works by well-known writers (Harriet Beecher Stowe's "The Ghost in the Mill" and "The Ghost in Cap'n Brown's House"); and stories by once-popular writers who are virtually unknown today (Grant Allen,
Amelia B. Edwards). None of the stories by Dalby's unknowns is on a par with the Le Fanu, Dickens, and James works, but some pleasantly tease the imagination with ambiguities or with intriguing analyses of the mental states engendered by supernatural manifestations. Dalby's *Mammoth Book* is grippingly readable.

Dalby's introduction summarizes the publication history of ghost stories during this time period. Each story has a headnote that gives a brief synopsis of that writer's career and major publications. Dalby's familiarity with the magazines, annuals, and collections which published ghost stories is impressive.

However, because ghost stories are at one and the same time a highly conventional and enigmatic literary form, I felt frustrated that Dalby failed to provide guidance in how to read the texts he has collected. The plots of even the best ghost stories tend to fall into a limited number of stereotyped patterns: ghosts appear to expose or punish a murderer (Anonymous, "Haunted"; Stowe's "The Ghost in the Mill"); to warn a loved one of impending danger (Amelia B. Edwards's "The New Pass"); to act on or respond to erotic obsession (J.S. Le Fanu's "Schalken the Painter"; Robert W. Chambers's "The Bridal Pair"); to replay an event occurring in the past (Frank Cowper's "Christmas Eve on a Haunted Hulk"); or to forecast the future (E. Nesbit's "The Mystery of the Semi-Detached"). The main interest of these stories is found, therefore, less in their stock plots than in their oddly obsessive relationships and in the psychology of the characters who come face to face with inexplicable events. As in Thomas Nelson Page's "The Spectre on the Cart", ghostly manifestations may resemble painful recurring images now described as "post-traumatic stress disorder." In this story, the narrator witnesses the ghostly reenactment of a lynching that he was powerless to prevent. In such stories as Alice Perrin's "Caulfield's Crime" and J.E.P. Muddock's "A Ghost from the Sea", ghosts serve as metaphors for the workings of a guilty conscience.

Ghost stories are generally short and drop fascinating hints about relationships between characters. The mind works on the stories' lacunae, trying to fill in missing pieces and to render congruent an incorrigibly ambiguous or inconsistent pattern. W.C. Morrow's "An Original Revenge", for example, intrigues because the narrator behaves in a way that belies
his pose as a mere observer of a young soldier's haunting of an officer who has persecuted him. The suggestions that Morrow's narrator is not entirely honest either with himself or the reader tease the mind to find in the story a pattern in which all the pieces fit.

Not only does Dalby provide no assistance with ghost story conventions, but he tends to avoid critical or evaluative commentary. While the Mammoth Books are not intended for a scholarly audience, even general readers will be taken aback by stories with stereotyped depictions of shiftless or vicious Blacks, Native American witches, and child-like women. Indeed, Dalby singles out for praise the two writers whose stories are the most out of tune with late twentieth-century sensibilities. In his headnote to Lettice Galbraith's "The Trainer's Ghost", Dalby calls the book from which it was taken one of the best nineteenth-century ghost story collections. Lettice's story concerns a breeder of race horses, threatened by enemies who seek to harm a promising colt. The ghost of a friend, also a horse breeder, returns from the dead to thwart the crime. It is difficult to understand Dalby's enthusiasm for this story: the racing rivals are unpleasant and the ghost behaves predictably. The dialogue, peppered with nineteenth-century racing slang, makes the story hard to follow.

Even more problematic is Dalby's seeming acceptance of misogynist depictions of female characters. Dalby has published several collections of ghost stories by women, most recently Victorian Ghost Stories by Eminent Women Writers (Carroll & Graf, 1989). While his selections and introductions indicate a profound familiarity with the careers of female ghost story writers, he seems totally unaware of feminist critics' admonitions that readers should resist the patriarchal values of earlier literatures. Dalby's praise for "The Ghost-Child", which he calls one of Bernard Capes's "most touching short stories," suggests that his literary sensibility is old-fashioned, to say the least. Capes's gushing, fetishistic descriptions ("she was an opened flower whom he had left a green bud") of a young woman would be off-putting even to those modern readers without a feminist agenda.

If a reader of ghost stories wishes not merely a varied and well-chosen selection of stories, but a lucid analysis of this genre, Victorian Ghost Stories: An Oxford Anthology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) is preferable to Dalby's Mammoth Book. In the introduction, editors Michael Cox

The idea of one author writing the sequel to another author’s work doesn’t pay off. Period. I was going to write “another author’s *famous* work” in the first sentence, but that goes without saying, since the motive for a sequel is a result of the source or pre-text having achieved a certain amount of (lucrative) fame. In the hermeneutic, as opposed to heuretic or inventive, sense there is a difference between a “sequel” and what Umberto Eco calls a “ghost chapter.” A “ghost chapter” requires readers to supply missing or elided information that is necessary for the causal-chronological sequence of the story to make sense.

Heuretically, authors can use the pre-text as a set of instructions or directions for creating a new text, sometimes even exploiting the potential certain “ghost chapters” allow. Authors have written stories about Heathcliff’s missing years from *Wuthering Heights,* or rewritten *Beowulf* from Grendel’s point of view (as John Gardner did), or creatively interacted with the source text (*Tom Stoppard’s Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* vis-à-vis *Hamlet*). No doubt all of these pre-texts’ historical distance, and the decades of critical commentary on them, makes them more amenable to subsequent authors’ creative treason, sometimes called reinvention (but then, none of the above-mentioned texts are properly called “sequels”).

A “sequel,” unlike a “ghost chapter,” is not *necessary* at all. Nor is the author filling out a significant lacuna in the pre-text; indeed, a sequel, paradoxically, can be more restrictive for an author than a “ghost chapter.” The motive behind a sequel is economic, analogous to the reason for scrap-
ing out the rest of the cream from the sides of the jar. Certain authors can be compelled to write sequels to their own work when there is sufficient "popular demand" (but again, it is not absolutely necessary). But when an author writes the sequel to another's, it seems to me that that author is simply a hired gun.

To be fair, I imagine that the position of the author-for-hire when writing a sequel would seem to be a classic instance of the double-bind: close adherence to the original author's style and thematics could lead to the critical charge of slavish imitation; alternatively, should the author radically depart from the pre-text, the result can no longer properly be called a "sequel" at all. A critic's evaluative position, in turn, depends on whether the critic expects imitation or bold re-invention.

To be sure, K.W. Jeter (whose first-written, Dr. Adder [1972], was admired by Dick) has not, really, written a sequel to Philip K. Dick's famous Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? (1968), but rather to Ridley Scott's cult film based on that novel, Blade Runner (1982). Yet he has drawn some material from Dick's novel. As I stated at the outset, I think the idea of an author writing the sequel to another author's work is a bad one. In the case of Blade Runner 2, it's a bad idea gone wrong. Jeter's novel is almost entirely a sequel to the film, building on subtle nuances in the soundtrack and borrowing heavily from the film's imagery. Jeter's Rick Deckard is based entirely on the character as played by Harrison Ford, even down to his mannerisms. If this novel is actually filmed (perhaps Jeter's intent), Jeter has engineered the story so that the filmmakers could use all of the original players, even Rutger Hauer, whose aging the text allows for.

The one substantial borrowing from Dick's novel is Isidore, a veterinarian, and this is by far the most ill-conceived part of the novel, as Jeter gets that wonderful character almost completely wrong. Despite some impressive set pieces (nicely done action, a clever explanation for the collocation "blade runner," a particularly clever twist in a scene with Bryant and Deckard), I didn't much care for the book; there are two murders and a far-fetched ending too many.

I understand that there's to be yet another sequel to this sequel, meaning that there is now most certainly a full-blown Philip K. Dick industry (indeed, "Blade Runner" is a corpo-
rate logo), founded for the exclusive purpose of churning out replicas of Dick's work just as those "printer" creatures, which occasionally surface in Dick's own stories, churn out countless copies of any object placed near them. Alas, I think that there is yet another meaning to the concept "Dickian irony."

— Sam Umland


Ursula K. Le Guin's *Four Ways to Forgiveness* collects four closely related stories, all originally published elsewhere since 1994. They are set on two neighboring worlds in Le Guin's Hainish universe, Yeowe and Werel. About 4000 years before the stories take place, dark-skinned people from the southern hemisphere of Werel conquered and enslaved the lighter-skinned northerners, setting up a master-slave society based on race. Then, 300 years before the present, Werel colonized Yeowe, turning it into a global system of slave plantations. The stories take place during the generation that witnesses contact with the Ekumen, an enlightened federation for the exchange of ideas in Le Guin's vast Hainish universe; the long war of liberation that frees the slaves on Yeowe and expels the masters; the beginning of the end of slavery on Werel; and Yeowe's early efforts to create a just society out of the inherited culture of slavery.

"Betrayals", the first story, takes place near the end of this period. Yoss, a former slave and later a school administrator on Yeowe, has retired to a rural area to become a "soulmaker," which even women are allowed to do since liberation. She meets Abberkam, a disgraced leader of the liberation, also there to make his soul in a meditative retreat after release from prison. She is inclined to despise him, but as she nurses him through an illness and evaluates her own life, she becomes able to forgive him, not only for betraying his cause, but for having been notoriously guilty of oppressing women.

The second story, "Forgiveness Day", concentrates on the complexities of intercultural relations; it turns out to be another version of *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969). Solly is a flamboyantly liberated woman assigned by the Ekumen as an ambassador on Werel. Because women occupy virtually
the same social position as assets (slaves), her presence and behavior are quite disturbing to the culture, and she seems unaware of the complexity of the situation in which she is placed. On the one hand, she is a message to Werel that the subordination of women is based on arbitrary assumptions. On the other, she places herself in almost continuous danger because she does not really understand the mentality of the master-slave society. Teyeo, her bodyguard, is a Werelian military professional whose career has stalled due to his part in an army defeat during the war of liberation on Yeowe. Captured by a resistance group, Solly and Teyeo are imprisoned together, and must overcover their cultural differences to survive this crisis.

“A Man of the People” is a fascinating biography of Havzhiva, who grows up in a pueblo culture on Hain. His childhood village is pre-modern, a traditional culture similar to some American pueblo cultures, in which an overarching mythology connects and gives unity to all aspects of life. He proves a curious boy, however, and soon finds himself outside of his pueblo, studying history in the city. There he encounters modern culture, and comes to the disturbing realization that there are many traditional ways of organizing reality, some good and fulfilling, others not. He passes through this period of adjustment painfully, and eventually finds himself a historian on Yeowe, first intending to study the transition from slavery to self-determination, and then participating in it. Because he is an alien visitor, his participation must not be seen as interference. Le Guin’s account of his activities is subtle and humorous, as she shows him working mainly for the liberation of women, who have been especially oppressed within the slave culture.

The final story, “A Woman’s Liberation”, is the autobiography of Rakam, a woman born into slavery on Werel, daughter of a slave woman and her master. Her story reveals that while slaves created a workable culture and meaningful lives, they were nonetheless trapped in a situation of horror and abuse. When Rakam is freed, she becomes a scholar and teacher. After slavery ends on Yeowe, she migrates to find a culture that must struggle to recreate itself. The “natural” form it first falls into mirrors the slave culture in that women are dominated as if they were slaves. Rakam eventually finds herself working for the liberation of women with Havzhiva and other characters introduced in the previous stories.
At the end of the collection are 20 pages of notes on Werel and Yeowe. Readers who are unfamiliar with Le Guin's works or uncomfortable with her ways of story-telling might start with these; information about pronunciation and sketches of the two worlds' natural and human history will make it easier to follow the stories on first reading.

*Four Ways to Forgiveness shows Le Guin at her best.* The brief summaries above make clear that these stories deal with important themes in our world, such as the clash of traditional and modern cultures, the domination and exploitation of women, and especially the problems of old enemies finding ways to forgive the past and work for their common good. Important as these themes are to all four of the stories, they do not threaten to make the book mechanically didactic. Le Guin always has been an engaging storyteller, and these are among her best stories, delighting as well as teaching.

— Terry Heller


Larry McCaffery is a tireless campaigner for the avant-garde in the stylistically conservative world of SF. *After Yesterday's Crash: The Avant-Pop Anthology* follows an important essay in *SF Eye* (winner of the 1994 Pioneer Award, with Takeyuki Tatsumi), another anthology (*Avant-Pop: Fiction for a Daydream Nation*), and co-editorship of the *Black Ice Books Avant-Pop Series*, along with myriad other enterprises, I'm sure. *After Yesterday's Crash*, published by Penguin Books, should offer wider exposure to the Avant-Pop movement.

What is avant-pop? McCaffery's introduction, itself fragmented, filled with references, footnotes, and lists, illustrates and defines the movement. "Avant-pop combines Pop Art's focus on consumer goods and mass media with the avant-garde's spirit of subversion and emphasis on radical formal innovation," he says. It is a postmodern, deconstructive production and, though he doesn't say so, the artistic spawn of chaos and complexity theory.

This volume consists of McCaffery's introduction and 33 fictional productions, including stories, dramas, and translations from other media. Most were previously published or

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otherwise produced elsewhere and a fair number are excerpted from longer works. Quality and readability (not always concurrent) vary, but the entire volume is thought-provoking and cutting-edge.

The fictive offerings range from the truly revolting, through the painfully whimsical, to the superb. The strongest pieces include Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s “From the Border Brujo”, excerpted from the performance piece Gringostroika; Don DeLillo’s “The Rapture of the Athlete Assumed into Heaven”, also a performance piece; Stephen Wright’s “Light”, from his novel M-31; Susan Deitch’s “x=y”; Harold Jaffe’s “Counter Culture”; Marc Laidlow’s “Great Breakthroughs in Darkness”; “Stone Columbus” by Gerald Vizenor; Curtis White’s “Bonanza”; “Blackouts” by Paul Auster, a play; and Bruce Sterling’s excerpt from Heavy Weather. These share an emotional or ideological commitment not quite po-mo, perhaps, but seemingly necessary to make reading them bearable. They also share thematic and stylistic concerns with fragmentation, chaos, revolution, and conspiracy.

The less successful pieces tend toward spectacular moments of graphic violence which are both disgusting and tedious to read: violence may lend itself better to visual media. Certainly, the three translations from visual media (though, interestingly, they weren’t violent) presumably lost impact in the transfer.

Due to the experimental nature of many of the pieces, and the fact that many are excerpts, this volume would have been well-served by introductory notes to each piece. One often sees this practice in SF anthologies and it would have been welcome here.

Larry McCaffery didn’t invent Avant-Pop, but he was perspicacious enough to name and fete it, and this Penguin volume allows us to share in its serious fun.

— Joan Gordon


Although Naomi Mitchison has a solid reputation as an author of science fiction and many other works, her feminist
utopia, *Solution Three*, first published in Great Britain in 1975, has been long out of print and very difficult to obtain in the United States. Readers interested in feminist or utopian science fiction will therefore be grateful to the City University of New York's Feminist Press for making available this fine edition of an important work. To Mitchison's original text has been added a perceptive Afterword by Susan Squier outlining the career of this amazing woman, a politically active feminist and advocate of birth control as well as a writer. Born in 1897, Mitchison came of a scientific family and was a close friend of Julius and Aldous Huxley, but was herself discouraged from becoming a scientist.

The post-holocaust society of *Solution Three* has been redeemed from worldwide disaster by the influence of two now-deceased leaders, referred to only as “He” and “She.” Although most people still live in artificial “mega-cities” where housing and food are in limited supply, the society is moving to solve its problems. The ruling council has decided to limit population growth by encouraging homosexuality as the norm, and geneticists have developed highly productive new strains of grains, fruits, and vegetables. From this time on, all children born are to be clones of He and She. “Clone Mums” impregnated with fetuses lead pampered lives as they give birth and care for their offspring. However, when the babies begin to “show the signs” of intellectual intelligence at about age three, they are abruptly taken from their Mums and subjected to unspecified but apparently painful experiences in order to “strengthen” them. Sharing the suffering of the original He and She is supposed to make them equally superior human beings.

Is *Solution Three* a utopia? It has many of the classic virtues: it is apparently egalitarian, different races live together harmoniously, and altruism is considered the highest good. Scientists and citizens devote their efforts to improving the natural environment and preventing conflicts. But one sees cracks in the perfection. Heterosexuals are considered “deviants,” not punished but disapproved of and assigned inferior housing. Not surprisingly, one such couple finds that being crowded into a tiny room with their children and having to pretend they are not married interferes with their work! The Clone Mums do not always give up their children willingly, and their fears for them seem justified. More ominously, new viruses seem to be attacking some of the fruits, and the super-productive wheat fields are showing a strange

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patchiness. An oblique reference to John Christopher's 1956 disaster novel *No Blade of Grass* hints at the dangers implicit in monoclonal cultures, which can be wiped out in a single season by a new disease.

On the other hand, *Solution Three* is not entirely a dystopia either, although it seems to be heading in that direction. The emphasis on stability and uniformity and the manipulation of human and plant reproduction are more benevolent versions of Huxley's *Brave New World*. (Susan Squier emphatically denies the resemblance but I think she's missing the point.) As an anti-utopia, a warning against misplaced good intentions, rather than a dystopia, *Solution Three* is even more relevant than when it was written. The earth's population continues to grow explosively. Green Revolution rice and corn have not been the magic cure for hunger that plant breeders promised in the early '70s. Violence is increasing everywhere. And although I think Mitchison would no longer have to explain what a clone is, the moral dilemmas created by cloning, in-vitro fertilization, genetic experimentation, and prenatal testing have created new and unsolved problems for scientists, doctors, and parents.

Mitchison ends her novel on a note of guarded optimism. But her title for another book, *We Have Been Warned*, would have been equally appropriate for this one.

— Lynn F. Williams


In the past few years there has been a resurgence of professionally published fiction following the style or the philosophical underpinnings of the writings of H.P. Lovecraft (1890-1937). For Lovecraft's centenary in 1990, Robert E. Weinberg and Martin H. Greenburg assembled an homage anthology entitled *Lovecraft's Legacy*. Robert M. Price edited *Tales of the Lovecraft Mythos* in 1992, and since 1993 Price has been the series editor of the Cthulhu Cycle Books, a series of collections (eight have so far been published, with several more promised) comprised of Cthulhu Mythos fiction — some new, some resurrected from the pulps — published as companion volumes to the "Call of Cthulhu" role-playing game. Stephen
Jones's compilation, *Shadows over Innsmouth* (1994), includes Lovecraft's classic story "The Shadow over Innsmouth" (written in 1931) and a large number of stories inspired by that tale. Forthcoming in 1996 is another Robert M. Price collection, *The New Lovecraft Circle*.


Now Arkham House has brought out *Cthulhu 2000*, an anthology designed to usher the Lovecraftian story into the new millenium. It is not a collection of new stories, but a reprint anthology of eighteen stories that have all been published elsewhere. Some even come from the anthologies described above: three from *Lovecraft's Legacy*, three from *New Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos*, and one from *Shadows over Innsmouth*, the remainder of the stories being culled from magazines and other anthologies. In essence, this volume collects the very best of Lovecraft-inspired stories published in the last few decades. Not all the stories are slavish imitations of Lovecraft, and in fact, most of the very best stories are in the characteristic styles of their respective authors, with the Lovecraftian elements subsumed into the stories or present in only minor ways.

Standouts in the volume include F. Paul Wilson's "The Barrens", in which extradimensional demons are found working in the Pine Barrens in southern New Jersey; Poppy Z. Brite's "His Mouth Will Taste of Wormwood", a homoerotic and necrophilic tale of ennui in New Orleans; T.E.D. Klein's "Black Man with a Horn", concerning the long-reaching effects of a chance encounter on an airplane; Thomas Ligotti's exquisite "Last Feast of Harlequin", about an academic researching the folk-roots of an obscure festival in a small midwestern town; and Roger Zelazny's "24 Views of Mt. Fuji, By Hokusai", a subtle and futuristic tale of a woman's return to Japan to destroy her former husband, whose consciousness has entered into some kind of cosmic cyberspace. Other unusual but highly entertaining tales include Kim Newman's "The Big

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Fish", a quasi-sequel to "The Shadow over Innsmouth", set in California and written as a Chandleresque hardboiled detective tale. Esther M. Friesner's "Love's Eldritch Ichor" is the tongue-in-cheek story of a romance writer and her publisher. Fred Chappell, in "The Adder", tells of the deleterious effects on a literary text stemming from how near the book is shelved to The Necronomicon, Lovecraft's fabled, fantastically evil volume.

_Cthulhu 2000_ is filled out with tales by other genre heavyweights, including Joanna Russ, Bruce Sterling, James Blaylock, Gene Wolfe, Ramsey Campbell, and Harlan Ellison. The entire collection is a delight, and constitutes ample evidence of the widespread influence of Lovecraft, which no doubt will continue on well into the next century.

— Douglas A. Anderson


For this novel the author seems to draw significantly from her own experience as a modern day voyageur in North America. The fictional heroine is also an expatriate from France living in Quebec in an alternative 1989 and 1990. She moves geographically from a French enclave in Montreal to Quebec City to the small town of Chicoutimi to the remote northern reaches of Hudson Bay. Thematically, Catherine Rymer moves from political intrigue to metaphysical detective work to a confrontation with the ultimate mysteries of existence and death.

Language is not a major theme in the rearranged historical world of _Reluctant Voyagers_. Instead, national lines are drawn between a mystical, religiously oppressive Northern Kingdom and a practically-oriented, politically oppressive Canada. This division recalls the two solitudes of Quebec society before the Quiet Revolution of the early 1960s translated the debate into the linguistic arena. Even such a fundamental conflict, and much else, is ultimately revealed to be fraudulent, fabricated by alien powers for their own incomprehensible reasons.

The alien lake of shimmering orange found by Catherine and her fellow explorers in Hudson Bay seems related to
Stanislaw Lem’s intelligent, ocean planet in Solaris. It participates in the manufacture and manipulation of situations and simulacra, creating effects reminiscent of the fabulous sleight of hand of Philip K. Dick. The barrier encountered between the Northern Kingdom and Canada recalls the division into zones found in Doris Lessing’s The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four and Five. Yet these seemingly derived elements are combined by the author’s genius in a unique, complex, and tantalizing blend.

The protagonist’s struggle to solve the metaphysical puzzle in Part Four is a formidable tour de force. It involves, even entraps, the reader in a series of questions that are probably unanswerable. Nevertheless, this ultimate confrontation with personal death and human destiny cannot be avoided, and Reluctant Voyagers does fight through to a kind of spiritual resolution that is satisfying, even inspiring. Ironically, the closer the author stays to earthly matters, the freer the writing seems to fly.

Jane Brierley’s translation of the original French version published by Quebec/Amerique in 1994 is excellent. It loses little of the lyrical sweep of Vonarburg at her best. However, the next novel might benefit from a generous red pencil to trim and tighten a prose style that occasionally becomes self-indulgent and elusive.

— Steve Lehman
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Fax number: ____________________________

E-mail Address: ____________________________

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

__________________________________________

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Repeat last year's entry ________

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