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SFRA Review (ISSN 1068-395X) is published 6 times per year by the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA) and distributed to SFRA members. Individual issues are not for sale. For information about the SFRA, see the description and application at the back of this issue.

Please submit reviews, news items, letters, etc. to Amy Sisson, SFRA Review, 304 Fairfax Row, Waterford NY 12188; telephone (518) 237-4669; e-mail "sfraamy@aol.com". Submissions are acceptable in any format: hardcopy, e-mail, Macintosh disk, or IBM disk (must be saved as text-only or ASCII). E-mail or a disk are preferred. 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.

Typeset by Amy Sisson on a Macintosh Performa 6205CD. Cover design by David Garcia. Printed by Century Creations, Grand Forks, North Dakota.
The logo shown above was designed by SFRA member Alex Eisenstein for the Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service, presented for the first time at the 1996 conference in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. It has been proposed that this design be adopted as the official logo of the SFRA organization. (Please see the Executive Committee Meeting Minutes and the General Business Meeting Minutes for more information.) Members are invited to comment on the design; please send comments to David Mead or to Amy Sisson c/o SFRA Review. Please note that the true shading of the logo may differ slightly from what is shown here due to the Review's reproduction process; the background behind the ship should be solid black, while the planet should be shaded in a black and white diagonal stripe pattern.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To clarify last issue's announcement about our 1997 conference, the suggested paper topic is just a suggestion, not a requirement. We'll find places for any number of good presentations regardless of subject.

***

Sometimes, the best we can do is grit our teeth and hold on. At least, that's what I kept telling myself while reading Time's recent cover story about Independence Day in particular and "sci-fi" in general. Most reviews I've read agree that the movie is full of dumb cliches, but who cares — it's fun, and it's got great special effects, and it's loud. Yep, that's sci-fi for you...

***
Just after I got back from the SFRA conference, I helped out at a golf outing to raise money for the neighborhood center my wife directs. At the end of the day, watching people linger long into the dusk, I realized that they just didn’t want it to be over because they’d had so much fun — and that I’d felt the same way in Eau Claire. Our 1996 conference contained rather more Executive Committee Duties than usual, but it still was stimulating, relaxing, and generally satisfying. Good sessions, good panels, great conversations with some people I met at Eau Claire and others that I see far too rarely. It was difficult, come Sunday morning, to realize that the whole thing was coming to an end. That afternoon, after it was all over and most people had had to leave, Muriel Becker and I went to a local park where she patiently endured my nostalgic babbling over a collection of antique farm equipment. When we returned to the motel, we found Jan Bogstad and Phil Kaveny about to take Pam Sargent and George Zebrowski out to a wonderful restaurant and inviting us along too. The Tuesday after that (I’d stayed over to talk with a local writer I’ve been researching), I drove to a restaurant in Eau Claire to get lunch before my plane left, and found Phil Kaveny dining there and ready to continue a conversation without missing a beat. So I guess that’s when the 1996 SFRA Conference finally ended for me.

It was a great time. Sorry if you missed it.

— Joe Sanders

CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS/VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

The candidates’ statements appear in alphabetical order for each office. Please complete the ballot enclosed with this issue of the SFRA Review and mail it to David G. Mead, 6021 Grassmere, Corpus Christi TX 78415, USA. Ballots must be received by October 31, 1996 to be counted.

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

If your ballot is missing, please contact Amy Sisson, SFRA Review, 304 Fairfax Row, Waterford NY 12188; e-mail “sfra amy@aol.com”.

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Article VI Section 5 of the SFRA By-laws provides that additional nominations may be made. Please contact Dave Mead if you have any questions about the procedure.

PRESIDENT

Joan Gordon: Having served as secretary of SFRA for two terms, I feel prepared to take on the big job. By now, I have intimate knowledge of the work to be done and how to do it. If elected, I will continue Joe Sanders’ excellent record of developing a working relationship between our organization and others: not only IAFA, but NESFA, for instance, and others of the serious fan organizations. I would also like to see us take a more active role in encouraging graduate student participation, perhaps including special encouragements for presentations at our annual meeting.

Milton Wolf: It would be an honor to be elected President of SFRA. If I were in the position, I would continue to seek joint ventures with other organizations similar to our upcoming joint conference with Eaton. In particular, I would like to assist more of our members in getting published, especially in quality publications. Toward that end I would strive to ensure that those publications which SFRA generates are academically of a high calibre. Since SFRA will be publishing two anthologies in the near future: 1) Visions of Wonder scheduled for October 1996, and 2) an anthology for high school/junior high scheduled for more than a year from now, I intend to see that many of our members have an opportunity to contribute to these volumes and their later editions.

Also, I am very interested in promoting SFRA membership by 1) developing a group of SFRA mentors who work closely with new members, especially during their first year, assisting new members to realize fully the value of SFRA membership to their careers and the many opportunities available to them; 2) aligning SFRA with even more relevant publications that either come with membership or which are offered at reduced rates; and 3) enlisting the best and brightest young people, both from the USA and abroad, to join SFRA — even offering scholarships and other incentives (e.g., like waiving the registration fee, etc. for the annual conference, providing an airline ticket, placing foreign guests with other SFRA members who live near the conference).

I’m proud to be a member of SFRA and would like to contrib-
ute my skills to an organization that has done a great deal for me. Thanks.

VICE PRESIDENT

Elizabeth Cummins: I am pleased to have been nominated and would like the opportunity to serve an organization which has been so vital in the development of my research and career. A major priority for SFRA is both maintaining and increasing the membership. We must be able to bring together a significant number of teachers, scholars, and writers in order to fulfill our educational mission of stimulating research and classroom teaching. SFRA has done an excellent job of providing a number of ways for this interaction to occur (the newsletter and review, the annual conference, the on-line discussions).

Having served as treasurer and vice-president of SFRA in the past, I know what a strong organization this is and would be pleased to contribute to its growth.

Adam Frisch: I have been a member of SFRA and a regular attendee at the national meetings since the 1978 conference at Northern Iowa. If elected as Vice-President, I will do my best to increase SFRA membership. I will certainly continue recent outreach efforts to members of IAFA, PCA, SFFWA and other organizations. But I also believe that the effective use of new resources such as e-mail and the proposed SFRA homepage on the Web, as well as creative ideas such as "mentors" for new members or for first-time conference attendees, can help keep SFRA a vital and growing international organization. I have a strong loyalty to our association, and I would like to contribute whatever I can to help SFRA grow and prosper.

TREASURER

Michael Levy: The treasurer is usually the first officer of the SFRA that prospective members come in contact with so it is important that the position be held by someone who is both personable and efficient. Basically, I like helping people and am just obsessive enough to make sure that things get done on time. I also have an eye for detail and moderately good computer skills. On the down side, I did receive a C in Calculus in college.
I'm a Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Stout and was Co-Director of the 1996 SFRA conference. My interests include political sf, children's sf and fantasy, multicultural literature, gender studies, and book reviewing.

Joe Marchesani: As a candidate for SFRA treasurer, the best standard that I can set for myself would be to sustain the level of efficiency and organization established by Bob Ewald. Since I retired last year after six years as the treasurer for a much smaller caucus of the CCCS, I appreciate what Bob has done and the work involved. Over the years, the SFRA has benefitted me professionally and personally. Being your treasurer would allow me to make some return for those benefits.

SECRETARY

Wendy Bousfield: To the position of Secretary, I would bring experience in writing and editing, a knowledge of electronic information sources, and a love of speculative fiction. Since the 1940s, when I smuggled home Weird Tales and other pulps, I have been a voracious reader of science fiction, fantasy, and tales of terror. My doctoral dissertation examined the fiction of Edgar Allan Poe in the light of the Gothic novel, tale of effect, and other contemporary genres. After a series of one-year positions in university English departments, I earned an M.A. in Library Science. I have lectured on the development of science fiction collections to library school classes. I am presently a reference librarian and English language and literature bibliographer at a large research library.

I am a regular contributor to the SFRA Review and value the stimulating e-mail correspondence I have had with other SFRA members. I would welcome the opportunity to increase my involvement with this organization.

Carolyn Wendell: I am honored to have been asked and am pleased to run for the office of Secretary. SFRA has been a source of friends, fun, intellectual support, and ideas for 22 years now. Since the organization has given me so much, I am more than willing to serve in whatever capacity I can. My strongest qualifications, besides my fondness of SFRA, are my sense of organization and reliability. And, since my science fiction course just got chopped from twice a year to once a year because of short-sighted administrative budget and enrollment goals, I am concerned about the impact of
tight economic times on course-offerings. SFRA is the obvious place to offer support and strategy.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS/UPDATES

**Fiona Kelleghan** has changed her e-mail address from “Keleghan@umiami.ir.miamLedu” to “kelleghan@umiami.ir.-miami.edu” (the only difference is adding another “1” so it matches her last name correctly).

**Milton Wolf** has a new phone number and e-mail address: (702) 784-6500 ext. 285; “sfwolf@admin.unr.-edu”.

[Hyphens are line breaks, not part of the e-mail addresses. — Ed.]

SFRA MEMBERS & FRIENDS

**Elizabeth Anne (Betty) Hull** is running for Congress as the Democratic Candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, Illinois 8th Congressional District.

SFRA members **Diane Miller** and **Bob Blackwood** will soon be merging their memberships — they recently got engaged. Diane and Bob met at the 1994 SFRA Conference in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

**Michael A. Morrison** is in Australia on a Fulbright Senior Scholar Grant from late May through July 1996. He is collaborating with Australian National University’s Research School of Physical Sciences on research in electron-molecule scattering, as well as giving talks around Australia about courses on Science in Contemporary Culture, which he regularly teaches at his home base, the University of Oklahoma.

**Chuck Gannon** has been extremely busy recently: he got married last year, he and his wife **Andrea Trisciuzzi** are expecting a baby in January, and the entire family will be travelling to England as Chuck has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship and will be a Visiting Scholar at the University of Liverpool from September 1996 to June 1997. Chuck will complete the independent research for his doctorate in SF literature (at Fordham University) by studying originals of British periodicals that published SF stories. He will also be
working closely with Dr. I.F. Clarke, who was one of the early Pilgrim Award winners. Chuck writes:

"I have been told — by both SFRA members and members of the Fulbright Commission — that this is the first time a full Fulbright has ever been awarded for study in science fiction (I think a few travel grants have been awarded in the past, but I'm not sure). The importance of this, as I see it, is that this is another positive reading from the omnibus cultural barometer that indicates that science fiction — and the study of it — is now being accorded a degree of academic respect that is equal to other literary forms. About time, I think. (I cannot say whether it helped or hindered my project that I am also a new writer of SF myself [next publication upcoming in the High Technology Wars II anthology], but I may have the opportunity to find out in the coming months).

"I would be happy to send further details, and also, to act as a point of contact for SFRA members who wish to learn more about Liverpool University and/or investigate the possibility of joint activities. Some such activities may already be in the works. For instance, the head of the SF program at Liverpool (David Seed) indicated that it is possible that Veronica Hollinger might be dropping by early in 1997. Consequently, if I can be of use as a liaison between the largely North American SFRA membership and either member or non-member SF scholars in the UK, I would be glad to do so. If circumstances permit, and if the University of Liverpool is so inclined, we might be able to put together a mini-SFRA seminar at Liverpool in the coming year."

LETTERS

An open letter to Peter Brigg, in care of SFRA Review:

If you had provided a real-space address as well as an electronic one, I could have kept this quiet, but I don't yet have a modem; and perhaps this is the best way to do it after all.

An attempt to make a Hainish Chronology is noble, but doomed. I realise that if I were Isaac Asimov or had a properly ordered mind, everything in my "Hainish" cosmology and history would fit together, but I'm not, and I haven't, and it doesn't.
There are obvious and major discontinuities among the books which cannot and should not be glossed over by an ingenious but highly artificial date-line. For example: in the early books (through *Left Hand of Darkness*) people all over the Ekumen use mindspeech; it isn’t mentioned in later works. It just doesn’t seem to exist any more. The Shing show up in *City of Illusion* and then drop out, apparently without effect on later history.

A notable screw-up of this sort has been brought to my attention recently: Werel is the name of the world in *Planet of Exile*, there scrupulously defined as Gamma Draconis III (and thereafter referred to as Alterra). I forgot that I had used the name, and used it again when I starting writing about the two planets in the stories in *Four Ways to Forgiveness*, Werel and Yeowe. The two Werels are not the same planets, not the same people. One runs into these interesting coincidences when cosmos-hopping... perhaps it is a case of linguistic convergence... perhaps the Hainish of the Fore-Eras called all planets weorleth, from which derive the Alterran and Voe Dean *Werel*, the German *Welt* and English *world*, the Sethrithia ollt, etc.... I can make lots of excuses, but the fact is, after thirty years, I forgot.

I think it is a mistake to assume that NAFAL flight was replaced by churten transilience. Last I knew, churtening was clearly an unreliable mode of getting across a laboratory, let alone interstellar space. I think the Anarresti and Terrans are still fiddling with it but the Hainish, a people of considerable patience and caution, have probably decided to drop the whole thing. If I find out more, I promise to report.

You are probably right that “The Matter of Seggri” encircles *The Left Hand of Darkness*. I tried to make it do that; but I wouldn’t trust any of your sources, if I were you.

Yours truly,
Ursula K. Le Guin
Unreliable Narrator

*Peter Brigg’s response:*

Three things come to my mind in response to Ursula Le Guin’s letter. First, I want to be absolutely on record that I am not accusing her of being Isaac Asimov. I do not confuse my divinities. Second, I am now beginning to see the conser-
ervative wisdom practiced by some of my fellow academics when they choose dead authors for their subjects of study.

Third, and most important to my mind, there is a Le Guin cosmos. I, and millions of others, have been enjoying it for over thirty years. We hail the creation unfinished, heartily wish it will remain unfinished for the longest of times, and recognize that in a cosmos driven by the tandem team of deep heart and brilliant mind such minor matters as dates and places are purely pedantic concerns.

Yrs in haste (Amy gave me 48 hrs.),
Peter Brigg

[Note: The paper to which the chronology was an appendix will appear in Extrapolation soon (Summer '97, I think). Humbly enough, it deals with the nature of this cosmos.]

EDITORIAL

Greetings from upstate New York! Paul and I are busy and happy in our new home. Between us we are working four-plus jobs (to pay off the move from California!); I am a legal secretary by day, a Princeton Review instructor by weekend/evening, and a writer/editor/reviewer by... the rest of the time. Paul is working at a World of Science store as well as pursuing his graduate work at RPI (where they are very excited by the recent NASA announcements about possible evidence for life on Mars).

There are a few things that should appear in this issue but were left out due to length and time constraints: Forthcoming Books, several directory updates, and one or two reviews. They'll get top priority in the next issue.

By the way, those members whose e-mail address does not appear in the directory (because their listings have been recycled year after year) should send their e-mail address to Bob Ewald (ewald@lucy.findlay.edu) so it can be included in next year's directory listing.

Happy Reading,
Amy
The 1997 SFRA Annual Conference will be held June 23-26, 1997 in conjunction with the 19th Annual Eaton Conference on Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature, aboard the Queen Mary, docked at Long Beach, California.

Our roster of guests is still tentative at this early date, but we have some "Confirmed or Semi-Confirmed Guests": writers Brian W. Aldiss, Gregory Benford, Sheila Finch, Howard V. Hendrix, and Kim Stanley Robinson; Michael Cassutt, writer and former producer of The Outer Limits and Strange Luck; David Pringle, editor of Interzone and St. James Guide to Fantasy Writers; and a host of familiar faces from previous SFRA and Eaton Conferences, including Arthur B. Evans, Donald M. Hassler, Frank McConnell, and Eric S. Rabkin.

The overall title for this joint conference will be "Worlds Enough and Time: Exploring the Space-Time Continuum of Science Fiction and Fantasy." The SFRA track of the conference will focus on "Space" - the problematic relationship between science fiction and space fiction, the ways we conceptualize space, stories of space travel and alien worlds, space voyages in fantasy, connections between fictional space programs and the actual space programs, and space travel as a metaphor for explorations of human problems on Earth. The Eaton track of the conference will focus on "Time" - the ways we conceptualize time, attitudes toward time, time as protagonist in science fiction and fantasy, theories of and stories about time travel, alternate worlds, and disparate timestreams, and stories about time stopped, time moving at different speeds, or time moving back-

(continued on page 18)
CLARESON AWARD CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service, instituted by SFRA on June 25, 1995, seeks nominations for 1997. The award is “given for outstanding service activities — promotion of SF teaching and study, editing, reviewing, editorial writing, publishing, organizing meetings, mentoring, leadership in SF/fantasy organizations (such as SFRA, World SF, etc.), and so forth. Scholarly achievements (books, essays) will be considered as secondary for the purposes of selection” (SFRA Review 219, p. 21).

The 1997 Committee (Muriel Becker, Alice Clareson, and Charlotte Donsky) requests your nominations before January 1, 1997. Mail your suggestions for consideration to Charlotte Donsky, 1265 South Clay, Denver CO 80219 or telephone Muriel Becker at (201) 226-0853.

CALL FOR INFORMATION

I am working on a book-length comparative survey of 19th-century SF/F in Brazil and abroad, and am interested in any data concerning scientific romance outside the English-speaking world, as well as essays and theoretical works about “self-other” relationships in SF/F. I hope to make contact with researchers whose works view SF/F through post-colonial and/or Native American literary production.

I am also preparing a new, non-profit, amateur issue of the English-Portuguese anthology of speeches published during the SF Symposium in Rio de Janeiro in 1969. I am interested in contacting the following persons or their heirs: Sam Moskowitz, Robert Bloch, A.E. van Vogt, Poul Anderson, Luis Gasca (Spain), John Brunner, Alfred Bester, Wolf Rilla, Frederik Pohl, J.G. Ballard, Jacques Sadoul (France), and Harlan Ellison.

Finally, I am working on an essay on Brazilian cyberpunk (tupinipunk) and am interested in essays dealing with different responses to globalism, multiculturalism, and internationalization in SF. Reviews of international SF books and stories set in or concerned with Brazil would also be welcome. I can
be reached at the following address: Roberto de Sousa Causo, Rua André Dreifus, 109/163 - bloco 2, São Paulo-SP, 01252-901, Brazil; phone/fax (011) 871 3646.
— Roberto de Sousa Causo

SCIENCE FICTION FESTIVAL IN COPENHAGEN

On October 12-13 the Danish Science Fiction Circle will launch the “Fabula 96 - Futures in Time” festival at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen. We are planning a cornucopia of activities: author presentations, talks, panels, readings, films, a bookmarket, a writer’s workshop, a multimedia program, and hopefully a theater performance. Among our guests are Brian Aldiss, Harry Harrison, Betty Anne Hull, Sherryl Jordan (New Zealand), Sam Lundwall, Frederik Pohl, Bruce Sterling, Danish writers Inge Eriksen and Svend Aage Madsen, and many others. The festival will have scholarly as well as popular aspects. A special feature will be sessions where frontline scientists meet science fiction writers. Fabula 96 will be open to the public at a modest entrance fee, and is part of the Copenhagen Cultural Captial of Europe 96 program.

For more information: Johan Heje, Hedelyparken 7, st.tv., 2670 Greve, Denmark, e-mail “johan_heje@fc.sdbs.dk”.
— Johan Heje

1984 — NOW TIMES THREE

Until recently the only film version of 1984 available on video was the 1984 film directed by Michael Radford and starring John Hurt as Winston Smith and Richard Burton as O’Brien. This version is available from Movies Unlimited (1-800-4MOVIES) for $12.99 plus shipping. Now two much older versions have surfaced. Video Search of Miami (305-279-9773; e-mail vsom@aol.com) lists both the 1954 BBC TV version with Peter Cushing as Winston, Andre Morrell as O’Brien, and Donald Pleasence as a Newspeak lexicographer, and the 1956 film directed by Michael Anderson with Edmund O’Brien as Winston and Michael Redgrave as his tormentor, oddly called O’Connor. Both are $25.00 plus shipping to VSOM members who have paid a $10.00 membership fee. Moore Video has also released the Anderson film, available from Facets Video (800-331-6197) for $29.95 plus shipping. I have
seen the VSOM tape of the Cushing film and the Moore version of the Anderson film. Both have adequate picture quality; some of the dialogue in the Moore tape is very faint. The Moore tape has the "I love Big Brother" ending; I don't know if the VSOM version of the Anderson film has the alternate "Down with Big Brother" ending.

— Michael Klossner

LOVECRAFT BIOGRAPHY

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of H.P. Lovecraft: A Biography by L. Sprague de Camp (reviewed in SFRA Review #223 by Earl Wells), and are having trouble finding it at your local bookseller, you can order it by calling Barnes & Noble at 1-800-843-2665.

— Earl Wells

PUBLISHERS' ADDRESSES/ ORDERING INFORMATION

Arkham House, PO Box 546, Sauk City WI 53583
Ballantine Books, 201 E 50th St, New York NY 10022
Counterpoint, PO Box 65793, Washington DC 20035
Dufour Editions, PO Box 7, Chester Springs PA 19425
Four Walls Eight Windows, Box 548, Village Station, New York NY 10014
Howlett-West, Stephanie, 1100 Sylvan #153, Modesto CA 95350
Hyperion Press Inc, 47 Riverside Avenue, Westport CT 06880
Indiana University Press, 601 N Morton St, Bloomington IN 47404
Jazz Police Books/Wordcraft of Oregon, PO Box 3235, La Grande OR 97850
Kent State University Press, Marketing Department, PO Box 5190, Kent OH 44242-0001
Routledge, 29 W 35th Street, New York NY 10001-2299
St Martins Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010
Syracuse University Press, 1600 Jamesville Avenue, Syracuse NY 13244-5160 (315-443-5547)
Tachyon Publications, 1459 18th St #139, San Francisco CA 94107
TOR Books, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York NY 10010
1997 SFRA Conference Information

(continued from page 14)

wards. A more detailed Call for Papers, and final conference information, will be mailed to SFRA members and other potential guests:

We are hoping that, with all of space and time to wander through, many people will find interesting things to say. Our tentative conference schedule, along with a few panels and Keynote Addresses, has room for 33 20-minute SFRA papers on “Space” and 22 30-minute Eaton papers on “Time.” That schedule may be drastically changed depending on the number, contents, and qualities of the proposals we receive. Please note that we will also consider paper proposals outside the theme of the Space-Time Continuum, so do send your proposals.

Proposals for SFRA papers dealing with any aspect of “Space” should be sent to:

Gary Westfahl
The Learning Center
University of California
Riverside, California 92521
lncrgw@ucribm.ucr.edu

Proposals for Eaton papers dealing with any aspect of “Time” should be sent to:

George Slusser
Rivera Library
University of California
Riverside, California 92521
slus@ucrac1.ucr.edu

The deadline for proposals will be April 1, 1997, so you have a considerable space of time to develop your ideas.

We are working very hard to get everything finalized, and to make this the best SFRA Conference — and the best Eaton Conference — ever! And we hope you'll be able to attend!

— Gary Westfahl
The 27th Annual meeting of the Science Fiction Research Association was held June 20-23, 1996 at the University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire, in, oddly enough, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The theme of the conference was Science Fiction and the Writer-Editor-Critic. In line with this theme, the conference’s Guests of Honor were noted writer-editor-critics Pamela Sargent and George Zebrowski. Other invited guests included novelists Frederik Pohl, Eleanor Arnason, and Joan Slonczewski; editors David Hartwell and James Frenkel; and critic David Ketterer. A final invited guest, futurist and former Sperry Univac scientist Earl Joseph, was unable to attend due to illness. Other sf writers present included Steven Burgauer, Carroll Brown, Sandra Lindow, and Eric Heideman. Also in attendance were SFRA President Joe Sanders, Vice President Milton Wolf, Secretary Joan Gordon, and Immediate Past President David Mead. Treasurer Robert Ewald was unable to attend due to illness; SFRA Review Editor Amy Sisson missed the conference due to her recent marriage and on-going transcontinental relocation. Conference Co-Directors were Michael Levy and Janice Bogstad.

The conference began on Thursday afternoon with author readings and panels. There was also an art show featuring talented local painters and sculptors, including SF cover artist Erin McKee. The Opening Ceremonies at 7:00 p.m. featured a thought-provoking speech by Guest of Honor George Zebrowski entitled “The Writer-Editor as the Genuine Custodian of Science Fiction”, which argued that the non-writer-editors who currently dominate the field simply aren’t capable of doing the job in the way it needs to be done. Frederik Pohl, one of the writer-editors praised by Zebrowski, followed with a humorous but thoughtful speech entitled “A Modest Proposal for Science Fiction.”

Friday featured paper sessions on Alternative History, H.G. Wells, SF and Gender, the Fiction of Eleanor Arnason, and Community and Religion in SF, among others. There were many impressive papers, including Susan Eisenhour’s essay
on C.J. Cherryh's feminism, Virginia L. Wolf's piece on Joan Slonczewski, and Peter Lowentrout's examination of "The Yearning for Community in SF." Also of considerable interest were Slonczewski's presentation on "Science Fiction and Biology", David Hartwell and Milton Wolf's discussion of the new SFRA Anthology, David Ketterer's special paper on Frankenstein, and a panel discussion of the conference theme which included guests of honor Zebrowski and Sargent as well as Lois McMaster Bujold and David Hartwell. The buffet luncheon included a well-received SF trivia contest dedicated to the absent Neil Barron. Friday evening featured a widely-praised ribs and chicken picnic at the local nature preserve and observatory, followed by a lecture by University of Wisconsin—Eau Claire astronomer Bob Elliot on recent astronomical discoveries. The Hubble photographs were particularly impressive. A few hardy souls stayed late for a look through the telescope.

The Saturday morning panel on the World Wide Web was particularly impressive. There was another paper session on SF and Gender, as well as sessions on SF and Children, Alien Life, and the conference theme of SF Writers, Editors, and Critics. Among the more impressive papers were those read by Joan Gordon on Carol Emshwiller, Carol Stevens on "Contextualizing Feminist Anger in Charnas and Le Guin", and Darren Harris-Fain on "Harlan Ellison as Critic and Editor". Also of value was the panel on "The Effect of New Scientific Breakthroughs on SF", which included Joan Slonczewski, Eleanor Arnason, and Frederik Pohl, the latter a highly appreciated, last-minute replacement for Earl Joseph.

The food at the Saturday evening banquet was excellent, though there were some complaints that no dessert or liquor were provided. In response, the conference co-directors both noted that they were dieting and non-drinkers to boot. Criticism was heard about the banquet hall being both too cold and too warm. There was also some grumbling about the fact that the winner of the Pilgrim Award, David Ketterer, was revealed in the program book, rather than being left as a surprise. In response, one of the conference's co-directors was heard to mumble something about how no one told him it was a secret. Following Ketterer's erudite acceptance speech, the Pioneer Award for the outstanding critical essay of the year was presented to an absent Brian Stableford. His hilarious acceptance speech, read by David Hartwell, was one of the high points of the conference. Alice Clareson then pre-
sented the first annual Thomas D. Clareson Award for service to the profession to Frederik Pohl. Following the Awards Ceremony, Pamela Sargent gave a thoughtful Guest of Honor Speech titled “Are Editors Necessary?”

Sunday saw things winding down, with much of the morning devoted to the SFRA Business Meeting. Due to the large number of strong papers submitted, it was necessary to schedule a last paper session that morning as well, and it turned out to be one of the best attended events of the conference. Fred Erisman’s paper on “Robert Heinlein’s Primers of Politics” was particularly well received. The conference closed Sunday afternoon with an Open Discussion of the conference theme which went on for several hours.

Despite a variety of minor problems, the 1996 meeting of the SFRA in Eau Claire seems to have been regarded as a success by most participants. The panels and paper sessions were generally excellent. The Guests of Honor, George Zebrowski and Pamela Sargent, were unusually available to conference participants. The conference T-shirt, the book auction and used book sale (staffed by Phil Kaveny, Bookseller), and the retail book sales table (provided by The Little Professor) all proved popular. Rumor has it, however, that immediately following the conference, the Co-Directors left town, one headed for England and the other for Santa Fe, New Mexico.

— Michael M. Levy

MINUTES OF THE SFRA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

June 20, 1996, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Present: President Joe Sanders, Vice President Milt Wolf, Secretary Joan Gordon, Immediate Past President Dave Mead. Absent, and missed, were Treasurer Bob Ewald, who is recovering from knee replacement surgery, and Review Editor Amy Sisson, who is in the process of moving.

The meeting opened at 9:00 p.m. with the officers’ reports. Joe Sanders gave the President’s report. Daryl Mallett states the Pilgrim/Pioneer volume will be out later this summer. At the meeting between IAFA and SFRA officers this March at the International Conference on the Fantastic, Len Hatfield offered to help set up a web page for the two groups. Wolf
suggested making an announcement at the general business meeting to find other knowledgeable people for this project.

Milt Wolf's Vice President's report followed. Wolf plans, along with David Hartwell, to plug the college-level SFRA anthology at July's American Library Association Meeting. Kathleen Doherty and Patrick Nielsen Hayden at TOR will work with Wolf and Muriel Becker on another SFRA anthology targeted for junior and senior high school students.

Joan Gordon gave a brief Secretary's report. All mailings went out on time. At the ICFA meeting, it became apparent that IAFA feels it can benefit from our contacts with publishing.

Bob Ewald gave his Treasurer's report through the medium of Dave Mead. SFRA is in good financial shape and no dues increase is needed for 1997. Memberships are constant. Science-Fiction Studies has asked for a raise, which would not be onerous for our budget. We have already spent next year's conference budget to give Gary Westfahl an early start. Office expenses have decreased considerably. Last year we spent $2295 on the Reno proceedings volume Imaginary Futures, but have only received royalties for $107.60 so far. No expenses have yet been submitted for the Pilgrim volume by Daryl Mallett, but there is a grant for $3362 in encumbered income to cover that. We have shared our royalties on the Harper's anthology with Martin Greenberg, et al., except for a recent payment of $967.12, to be disbursed later.

Dave Mead, in his own persona, gave the Immediate Past President's Report. He announced the preliminary slate for the upcoming election, as developed with the help of Pete Lowentrout and Veronica Hollinger: President — Milt Wolf and Joan Gordon, Vice President — Liz Cummins and Adam Frisch, Secretary — Wendy Bousfield and Carolyn Wendell, and Treasurer — Mike Levy and Joe Marchesani. He then asked a question — Who gets all the historical objects and stacks of paper? This question remains unresolved.

Under old business, Gordon and Wolf will represent SFRA at this year's MLA convention in Washington, D.C. They should distribute membership flyers there. Wolf gave news of the 1997 SFRA conference to be held on the Queen Mary in Long Beach, CA, and hosted by Gary Westfahl. Brian Aldiss will be guest of honor and Gregory Benford, David Brin, Kim Stanley Robinson, and Tim Powers may attend. Diane Miller will host the 1998 conference in Phoenix. We need an East
Coast conference in 1999: among the possibilities, New York with Joan Gordon or Boston in conjunction with Readercon.

Under new business, several motions passed: (1) That we determine usable compatible accounting software for our Treasurer and legally acquire it upon the recommendation of our present Treasurer; (2) That the nominee slate above be recommended to the general membership, with any additions from them; (3) That we increase the subsidy to *Science-Fiction Studies* as recommended by our Treasurer. Also under new business, Wolf announced David Hartwell’s offer of reduced subscription rates to members, thus expanding his subscriptions and benefiting us in two ways — the reduced rates and a $1 per subscription contribution to our general fund. We discussed some of the concerns about implementation, including a new data base for the Treasurer, and alterations to the present membership form and flyer. This offer will be presented to the general membership. Sanders reported that Alex Eisenstein has donated his design for the Clareson Award plaque and suggested it become an official SFRA logo. Mead suggested that we put the graphic on display for the upcoming year (perhaps on those new flyers) and then bring it before the general membership to vote on adoption at next year’s meeting. The penultimate activity of the executive board meeting was a discussion of committee membership. On the Clareson committee, Alice Clareson stays and two new members are needed. For the Pilgrim, Steve Lehman and Lynn Williams stay and one new member is needed. The Pioneer committee retains Diane Parkin-Speer and Diana Pharaoh Francis, needing one more member. A number of suggestions were made and the President should find willing members during the conference. Finally, we discussed the agenda for the Sunday business meeting and adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Gordon, Secretary

**MINUTES OF THE SFRA GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING**

June 23, 1996

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

The meeting opened at 8:45 a.m. with the President’s report, during which President Sanders announced that we are researching setting up an SFRA web page. Len Hatfield, Janice
Bogstad, and Tom Cain all volunteered to work on the implementation. New members for the three awards committees were determined. The new committees are as follows: Clareson Committee — Muriel Becker (chair), Charlotte Donsky (new member), and Alice Clareson (continuing); Pioneer Committee — Len Hatfield (new member), with Diana Pharaoh Francis and Diane Parkin-Speer (continuing); Pilgrim Committee — Janice Bogstad (new member), Steve Lehman (chair), and Lynn Williams (continuing).

The Vice President's report followed, with Milt Wolf announcing the SFRA college and junior/senior high school anthologies for TOR. He also noted that membership has remained steady and proposed more mentoring for new members and developing more publishing options as well.

The Secretary's report followed swiftly, with Joan Gordon reporting on the congenial atmosphere of the meeting with IAFA. She requested that any nominations for the international scholars' fund be sent to her.

Dave Mead delivered Bob Ewald's Treasurer's report, which exactly duplicates the report given to the Executive Board Meeting on June 20, 1996.

Dave Mead then gave the Immediate Past President's report. He announced the preliminary slate for new officers, as noted in the Executive Board Meeting report, and invited new nominations during new business. Further nominations will be invited in the Review.

Joe Sanders, in a second example of role-playing, gave Amy Sisson's Review Editor's report. She has a new address but her e-mail address remains the same. Joe suggested brainstorming on the possibility of an on-line version of the SFRA Review. Among the responses from the members: Bogstad pointed out it would give SFRA wider exposure and contribute quality reviews to on-line dialogue. Betty Hull said it would make the Review more available to libraries since print periodical space is at a premium. Diane Miller voiced concern for ease of access and wondered about distribution of disks. She suggested putting past issues on-line. Carol Stevens observed that electronic publications are now standard and approved. Lynn Williams asked whether incentive for joining SFRA would be lost. Milt Wolf said that hard-copy subscriptions generally increase with on-line exposure. Muriel Becker wanted to make sure hard copies would still be pro-
duced. David Hartwell suggested reconsidering the physical format of the hard copy. Adam Frisch said the move to online is inevitable given technological progress. Janice Bogstad warned that we should be careful of the editing process, including copyright laws. Hull said it might be tempting to move exclusively to on-line and that would be a loss.

The meeting then moved to Old Business. Milt Wolf reiterated the news about the 1997 conference in Long Beach, to be co-hosted with the Eaton Conference. He added that there will probably be a workshop on how to do web pages. Diane Miller, who will host the 1998 conference with Bruce Farr, in Phoenix, noted that the area has many fan resources they plan to use. She suggested using promotion money to advertise in the next Worldcon program (1997). Joe Sanders announced that he was planning to bid for the 2000 or 2001 conference in Cleveland with the motto “Cleveland: Why the Hell Not?”

Under new business, the executive board displayed Alex Eisenstein’s logo for the membership to consider and use on a trial basis for the next year, voting on adoption at next year's meeting. Len Hatfield is planning to set up an electronic chat server. Dave Mead pleaded for more nominees for officers and for volunteers of all sorts. He declared that we needed an ongoing supply of angels like Amy Sisson. Charlotte Donsky led a vote of thanks to the conference committee.

Still under new business was Janice Bogstad’s conference report. Although they had a relatively short lead time, the University was very helpful in personnel and in backing any losses. We had 63 fully paid members, with 76 people attending all together. The committee had to promise the $500 seed money to the university but, according to Phil Kaveny, the book auction will bring in about $100. We got lots of deals from the motel and T-shirt sales went well. The guests of honor were great. Among the suggestions for next year: another T-shirt sale, expanded book auction and book sales, possibly using member-donated books, having a hospitality suite and allocating money for that purpose. Finally, Tom Cain requested the return of the Gernsback award for worst opening line of an SF story.

David Hartwell made his announcement about making the New York Review of Science Fiction available at a reduced rate to members. The motion to accept this proposal carried

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unanimously. The executive committee will allow Hartwell to use our directory to circulate a flyer.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Gordon, Secretary, SFRA

THE THOMAS D. CLARESON AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

The Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service to the profession was presented for the first time at the SFRA Annual Conference in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. The Clareson Award Committee was chaired by Alice S. Clareson; the remaining committee members were Arthur O. Lewis and James Gunn. The award was presented by Alice Clareson to Frederick Pohl, who accepted the award with a brief tribute to Tom Clareson.

PIONEER AWARD PRESENTATION SPEECH

This is probably a good time, early in the life of the Pioneer Award, to reiterate the award's purpose. Although the Pioneer is intended to recognize the best critical essay published within a given year, not all critical writing about sf or fantasy is eligible. No analysis of a single work or the works of a single author is considered by the Pioneer committee; instead, the award is intended for essays that deal with larger issues, more general topics. The activity of scholarship resembles a conference like this one: There are programming tracks that attract small groups of people with specialized interests, but there are also gathering places where specialists can mingle with others to share common ground. The Pioneer Award honors essays that explore that common ground.

A good critical essay shows us things we hadn't noticed before and prepares us to approach new works with fresh attention. The Pioneer Award committee is looking for essays that help us re-examine things we have taken for granted while pursuing our different interests. Such an essay challenges and disturbs us. It makes us ask or re-ask fundamental questions about our reading.
This year, the Pioneer Award committee, Diana Pharaoh Francis, Diane Parkin-Speer, and myself, discovered several fine essays that are worth recommending for your attention. I'll list the three runners-up alphabetically, then describe the winner in more detail.

Karen Cadora's "Feminist Cyberpunk", in the November 1995 issue of Science-Fiction Studies, impressed the committee by dealing with a large scope of fiction and theory. Focused on the cutting edge of research, Cadora points at where feminist science fiction studies can and will go.

Elana Gomel's "Mystery, Apocalypse, and Utopia: The Case of the Ontological Detective Story", in the same issue of Science-Fiction Studies, is a lovely, tight analysis of an sf subgenre that Gomel calls a "combination of St. John the Divine and Sherlock Holmes," showing the power and the limits of human problem-solving.

Gary Westfahl's "Wanted: A Symbol for Science Fiction", in the March 1995 issue of Science-Fiction Studies, does an especially good job of re-asking a fundamental question: Can we identify the essence of sf so that it be represented visually? That appears simple until one looks through the past attempts and realizes that, no, none of them is quite right...

The winner of the Pioneer Award for 1995, however, looks at an even more basic issue. Those of us who are sometimes puzzled by students' questions about how to wind up a piece of writing know the Freshman Comp tricks such as restating the thesis of an argument, but beyond that the whole issue sounds simpleminded: When someone stops writing, the thing's done. This year's Pioneer winner appreciates that the problem is more complicated than that. When we talk about the "end" of a story, we are indicating that we like a feeling of completeness when the words stop. The type of satisfying ending usually varies with the type of story. However, this year's Pioneer Award winning essay points out, "there is no typical science-fictional climax." Rather, science fiction has "taken aboard" typical endings from other genres, but those endings have begun "to mutate as soon as they were relocated, in spite of the conscious and concerted attempts made by editors to preserve them."

The essay traces the development of sf, from stories that simply restored the characters' original situation ("normaliz-
ing”) or greatly improved the characters’ lot (“eucatastrophic”), to a more genuinely sf search for understanding in which characters learn “a proper respect for the scientific method, and... to place their own lives in the context of what science had revealed about the true size of the universe and the actual time-scale of its history.” The essay also discusses how editors, hired to produce popular entertainment, resisted this kind of exploration, with the result that writers learned to use contorted endings to conceal conceptual breakthroughs in more conventional-appearing stories.

In more recent sf, the essay discusses the use of new eucatastrophic devices such as psi or cyberspace. It also compares the attitudes toward enlightenment and power found in contemporary sf and mundane fiction, in a typically forceful passage:

The principal defense which serious-minded sf writers can (and do) offer against criticisms of irrelevance is... that the questions which seem so all-important today as the knights of serious mundane fiction battle against the commonsensical dragons of popular mundane fiction might well become so utterly unimportant in the technologically-transformed future that it might not matter what answers are discovered, proposed and proved today...

Defending sf in this fashion does not, of course, invalidate the sterling work which is done by the best mundane fiction, nor should it diminish our opinion of the heroic efforts made by the most accomplished writers engaged in that activity. It should, however, help to highlight the fact that there are worthwhile endeavors which even the most serious mundane fiction leaves undone and which serious sf writers might aspire to, if and when conditions in the literary marketplace allow them scope to be serious.

And thus, the award-winning essay concludes, conventional standards of satisfying completeness do not apply in sf, where the ending of a story may properly be both unsettled and unsettling. In fact, “Any science fiction story which does not annoy at least half its readers ought to be reckoned a failure; any science fiction reader who ends a story feeling comfortable and satisfied ought to throw it away and go looking for something that will mock, insult, and disturb him.”

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When one begins to quote from a lively essay like this, the temptation is simply to go on quoting — but SFRA members deserve the chance to absorb this essay’s ideas themselves, while enjoying the reading of it. Knowledgeable, passionate, witty — this year’s Pioneer Award winner shakes us out of comfortable preconceptions, as sf does itself. This is how Brian Stableford answers his own question “How Should a Science Fiction Story End?”, an essay first published in the February 1995 issue of The New York Review of Science Fiction.

— Joe Sanders

PIONEER AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

I am honoured and delighted to accept the Pioneer Award for my essay “How Should a Science Fiction Story End?”.

If all psychotherapists were capable of agreeing about anything at all (which, inevitably, they are not), it would probably be the contention that one cannot cure an addict by rewarding his addiction, and it gives me considerable pleasure to note that SFRA feels able to ignore this dictum. What, after all, would be the point of a Science Fiction Research Association whose members were content to bow to the dictates of conventional wisdom?

I have to confess, alas, that there is little hope left of overcoming my addiction now. Time — which is, on occasion, every bit as perverse as the best science fiction — has provided its own reward simply by allowing me to live to the age of 47 without ever having gone hungry, been shot at, suffered any serious illness or been born female. As I have been ludicrously overfond of observing at every possible opportunity during the past eleven months (but will have to stop saying very soon), I have long been acutely aware that both Charles Baudelaire and Oscar Wilde died in abject misery at the age of 46, and have thus held fast to the conviction that anyone who reaches 47 is way ahead of the game.

Some unkind people, on hearing this modest joke, have pointed out that my own achievements do not come remotely close to those of St Charles and St Oscar but I have done my level best to counter such criticisms. After my American agent refused even to try to sell my own version of Les Fleurs du Mal on the grounds that it was anodyne, eccentric and

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recherché I excised 39,000 words from the manuscript and managed to sell it as a novella, and I scripted all Oscar Wilde's dialogue in *The Hunger and Ecstasy of Vampires* without stealing a single line from Whistler. Whether these humble offerings might, at the end of the day, be acceptable as Art it is not for me to say, but I have done my level best to suffer for them.

I am particularly grateful that my ruminations on the enigma of how to end a science fiction story should have found favour with the judges, because I am painfully aware that my preoccupation with that question has never lived up to the high ideals of academic objectivity. Although the essay in question pretends to be an exercise in philosophical analysis it is really a crude attempt to argue that the way I end stories is actually preferable to the way that the vast majority of my editors and readers think they ought to end. In a way, I wish that such arguments weren’t necessary; perhaps I would have had a more successful career — and, come to that, a nicer life — if only I had been able to believe in the aesthetic propriety of the endings favoured by the majority. I cannot account for my perversity in this matter, nor have I ever felt sufficiently guilty about it to want to change — and if all psychotherapists were capable of agreeing about anything at all (which, inevitably, they are not) it would probably be that people who don’t want to change are unlikely to do so.

As luck would have it, I finished my latest science fiction story — a three-decker novel entitled *Genesys* — mere days ago, so its end is still fresh in my mind. I wouldn’t wish to spoil the climactic revelation for any reader brave enough and tenacious enough to slog through the entire 560,000 words (although no one here is likely to do so for the simple reason that no one bought US rights to the bloody thing) but it will do no harm to tell you how I parted with it.

It always seems so terribly impersonal to commit one's brainchildren to the post that I carried it in by hand to my publisher’s offices, which are sited in an eponymous building called Random House, just across the Thames from MI6 headquarters. Having obtained entry to Reception (which is itself a difficult task) I said “I’ve got a manuscript for John Jarrold in Legend Editorial.”

The receptionist looked at me with deep disgust and said: “We don’t accept parcels here. You’ll have to take it round the back of the building to the post room.”
"Oh," I said, apologetically. "Could you possibly ring John and ask him if he'd like to come down and collect it?"

"All right," said the receptionist, pointedly refraining from reaching for the phone and deepening her expression of disgust by a further order of magnitude, "I'll accept it this time. Just don't do it again."

Some writers of my acquaintance might have taken this as a rude rebuff, but I try to remain sanguine at all times, so I consoled myself by conjuring up imaginary examples of the truly spiffing dialogues which might be generated by this bold reinvention of that fine old English institution, the Tradesmen's Entrance. ("Yes, Miss Collins, I know the court ruled that we had to honour the contract, but you still have to use the back door just like all the other trash-pushers who supply our raw materials.")

Because I am not actually present in the flesh I have no idea how well this speech is going down, but I expect that I can cover all eventualities by saying that if everyone is sitting in stony silence I apologise for going on at such great length, but if everyone is splitting their sides with laughter I apologise for cutting it short. If all psychotherapists were capable of agreeing about anything at all (which, inevitably, they are not) it would probably be that the only way to achieve a conventional happy ending is to spend huge sums of money on psychotherapy, but my advice to you and to everyone else in the world is not to bother. Science fiction stories don't need endings like that, and nor do we.

Thank you.  
— Brian Stableford  
(presented by David Hartwell)

PILGRIM AWARD PRESENTATION SPEECH

This year's choice for SFRA's Pilgrim Award, honoring career contribution to the advancement of science fiction scholarship, will surprise no one. Our Pilgrim has been contributing in a variety of significant ways to science fiction criticism for more than twenty years. His first book was New Worlds for Old: The Apocalyptic Imagination, Science Fiction, and American Literature. Published in 1974, it was instrumental in moving sf scholarship beyond the early stage of descrip-
tive survey on to a more sophisticated criticism that related sf to mainstream fiction instead of treating it as an entirely separate phenomenon. Since then, David Ketterer has with enviable regularity produced books that have enriched science fiction scholarship in a number of ways.

In 1979 two more of his books appeared: The Rationale of Deception in Poe, which included discussion of Poe's proto-science fiction stories, and Frankenstein's Creation: The Book, The Monster and Human Reality. In 1984, he made the science fiction of Mark Twain readily available to us, collecting it together with a 40-page introduction and 80 pages of explanatory notes. Three years later came Ketterer's Imprisoned in a Tesseract: The Life and Work of James Blish, one of the few really substantial literary biographies of a contemporary science fiction writer.

British-born and educated, David Ketterer built his reputation as a scholar largely with work on American literature. His career has been in Canada — at Concordia University in Montreal. Perhaps his most distinctive contribution to sf scholarship came with the publication in 1992 of the book that created some sense of a Canadian tradition in science fiction and fantasy. Earlier, there had been only the recognition that an occasional writer like A.E. Van Vogt or Phyllis Gottlieb happened to be Canadian, though their work was widely considered to be part of American sf.

Ketterer's Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy traces Canadian writing in these genres from pioneering work in the mid-nineteenth century through the international impact of Gibson's Neuromancer, Atwood's Handmaid's Tale and Vonarburg's The Silent City. Ketterer chronicled both French and English Canadian contributions to the field. The task he set himself was anything but simple, writing about both science fiction and fantasy texts produced in both of the largely separate literary worlds of French and English Canadian writing, and coping with issues of national identity of writers like William Gibson, Spider Robinson, and Elisabeth Vonarburg, who moved to Canada from the US or France as young adults before they established themselves as writers. Writing with characteristic integrity, Ketterer did not force these different strands of Canadian writing into a monolithic "Canadian sensibility," nor did he settle for a descriptive survey. Instead, he described Canada's spatial and temporal "otherness," reinforced by the human other in Canada's cultural mosaic,
and concluded that this sense of otherness tends to create science fiction and fantasy that is at its best "open-minded, tentative, considered, balanced, tolerant, critical, subversive, and richly ambiguous."

Much the same can be said of Ketterer's own work on science fiction, with its perspective on a largely American-defined genre that is informed by the otherness of his British education and his experience of living and working in Quebec. Certainly, it is open-minded, considered, balanced. It is also wide-ranging and profuse. In addition to his books, Ketterer has published over a hundred articles and reviews, mostly on science fiction, plus a couple of dozen encyclopedia entries on sf writers. He has been part of the history of one of our most important journals, contributing to the first volume of Science-Fiction Studies and to many more volumes since. All of this adds up to an oeuvre that is among the most impressive bodies of work on science fiction produced by anyone to date. And since there is no hint that the pace or significance of his work is likely to diminish in the near future, we have every reason to expect yet greater enrichment of science fiction scholarship as our Pilgrim extends his critical explorations of the literature on into the twenty-first century.

— Susan Stone-Blackburn
(presented by Lynn Williams)

PILGRIM AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

"Martians Past, Present, and Future"

First of all, thank you. Thank you, Lynn, for your generous remarks (and Susan and Steve for your parts in composing them), and thank you, SFRA, for honouring me with the Pilgrim Award.

My career in SF scholarship began the year that the SFRA and the Pilgrim Award were inaugurated at the Secondary Universe Conference in New York in October of 1970. At that conference J.O. Bailey, the author of Pilgrims Through Space and Time, received the first Pilgrim Award and I gave a paper entitled "New Worlds for Old: The Apocalyptic Imagination, Science Fiction, and American Literature". Four years later, an expanded and revised version of that paper became the first chapter of the book of the same title.
Although my academic work in SF was substantially enabled by that first SFRA conference, my enthusiasm for SF had been sparked in the 50s when I was a child and adolescent growing up in a place called Southend-on-Sea on the Thames estuary in England — "Sarf-end" in the local "estuary English" accent. I read Wells, Wyndham, Heinlein, Clarke and others during that period and saw a number of early American SF films — I recall badgering an uncle when I must have been about nine years old to take me to see Superman and the Mole Men (1951) and The Man from Planet X (1951) which were both classified as "A" for "Adult" films (i.e., anyone under the age of fourteen could not be admitted unless accompanied by an adult). But, like the great mass of British youngsters who were switched on to SF at that time, I was particularly inspired by three very English products: Frank Hampson's "Dan Dare: Pilot of the Future" serials in a high-minded boy's comic called The Eagle, the three Journey into Space BBC radio serials by Charles Chilton about the adventures of one Captain Jet Morgan on the Moon and Mars (1953-55), and thirdly, the second and third of Nigel Kneale's Quatermass serials on BBC television: Quatermass II (October-November 1955), and Quatermass and the Pit (December 1958-January 1959). (This very "boys' own" list betrays, of course, a good deal about the sexist character of the times.)

In retrospect, it is apparent to me that the last of these mass market manifestations of SF — the remarkable Quatermass and the Pit — was the direct source for what I believe to be of most value in New Worlds for Old — the notion that an SF plot can effect what I call a "philosophical apocalypse." For six weeks over the 1958-59 ratings Christmas and New Year period the nation was transfixed as Professor Bernard Quatermass grappled with the mysterious and terrifying events that transpired in the vicinity of Hobbs Lane, south-west London. You may not have seen the original television serial but some, or perhaps most of you, will be familiar with the much inferior film version that was released eight years later, in North America under the title Five Million Years to Earth (1967). I still possess a copy of the television script that was published by Penguin books in 1960.

The essential plot goes like this. In the course of excavating a building site, workers come across fragments of a pre-historic skeleton which, reconstructed, appears to be that of the "missing link" between ape and human being. Then, beneath the skeletal remains, an artifact is discovered that is
initially thought to be an unexploded World War II bomb. The truth, when it is finally revealed, is indeed explosive. The artifact is a spaceship from the dying planet Mars which crash-landed on a prehistoric Earth some five million years ago. That explains how come the artifact was discovered in a strata below the “missing link” remains. It is eventually realized that, in the interests of survival, the insectoid Martians (represented by the corpses in the spaceship) had made use of genetic engineering to transfer their cultural mind-sets and patterns of behavior to the apes they found running around. We, then, are at least the psychological descendants of Martians and hence our bellicosity. Hence also the poltergeist activity, including demonic possession associated for centuries with Hobbs Lane, clearly so named to suggest “hobgoblin” and a familiar name for the Devil.

I was familiar with the kind of SF which indicated that things would be different on other planets or different in the future. Here was a story which presented the idea that our present reality was, in fact, very different from what it was presumed to be. Our understanding of what it is to be a human being has been in error. In the concluding words of Professor Quatermass, “We are the Martians. If we cannot control the inheritance within us... this will be their second dead planet!” (188; ellipsis in text). Thus, as it is put on the inner front cover blurb of the Penguin Books script, Quatermass arrives at “a new and alarming conception of the very nature of humanity.” Here is the “philosophical apocalypse” concept that I elaborate in the third part of New Worlds for Old under the heading “The Present World in Other Terms.” A philosophical apocalypse requires a conceptual breakthrough of such magnitude that the nature of human reality is fundamentally altered. While writing New Worlds for Old, I decided that there were essentially three ways in which this might be achieved. (1) The nature of what it is to be a human being might be re-conceived. Darwin does this with his theory of evolution. Foucault’s end-of-man hypothesis does this, and so does Quatermass’s fictional conclusion. (2) An unsuspected outside manipulator who, to adapt the Bella Lugosi line, “pulls the strings” is identified — some kind of god perhaps, or alien, or aliens like the Martians of Quatermass and the Pit. Or (3) the nature of reality itself might be redefined. A radical change in the nature of reality would of course be an immediate consequence of a changed notion of the human or of the unveiling of an outside manipulator, but there are ways in which our consensual reality
might be more directly subverted. Generation starship stories and writers of a philosophical bent like Phillip K. Dick provide many examples. In Quatermass and the Pit, a religious or supernatural reality, implied by the name Hobbs Lane and the hellish image of the pit, is replaced by a purely material reality. Like much of Nigel Kneale's work, Quatermass and the Pit is a secularized version of demonic possession.

Clearly, my three categories of philosophical apocalypse are best visualized as three linked or overlapping circles. But I seem not to have made it sufficiently apparent that the complete system, or anatomy, set up in New World for Old, like an unravelled puzzle ring, involves seven linked or overlapping circles, overlapping in such a way that each one overlaps all of the others. While emphasis might suggest placement in a particular circle, a work of SF will always distribute itself in at least two and possible all seven circles. (Moreover, where these circles overlap and where they don't allows — if one is so inclined — for the theoretical discrimination of 170 phases of SF.) The three philosophical apocalypse circles all reveal “The Present World in Other Terms” and together constitute the third form of that radical impinging “otherness” which I see as distinguishing what I call the “apocalyptic imagination” or the “apocalyptic mode.” Each of the three “Present World in Other Terms” circles overlap with my first and second forms of “otherness”: visionary “Other Worlds Out of Space and Time” (often forms of Heaven and Hell) and “Other Worlds in Space and Time,” the latter often satiric and taking the form of eutopias and dystopias. These five circles, each overlapping the other four, constitute the apocalyptic mode or imagination and each one overlaps with the two other major nodes of literature which are not my concern in New Worlds for Old: the “mimetic” circle and the “fantastic.” I should point out that what in 1974 I called the “fantastic” mode, I now term the “hermetic.” The apocalyptic and the hermetic are both modes of the fantastic as that term has come to be embracingly understood in critical discourse. An apocalyptic other world, or otherness, exists on a literal level in a credible and therefore consequential relationship — whether on the basis of rationality or on the basis of religious or supernatural belief — with the consensual “real” world. A hermetic other world, or otherness, is apart from the consensual “real” world on a literal level — the relationship with the real world is incredible and non-consequential, without allegorical decoding.
Many things, of course, have changed in and outside the world of SF since New Worlds for Old was published, and this seems like a good opportunity to suggest how my 1974 anatomy might accommodate some of those changes. My theory of an apocalyptic mode placed SF within a much larger category that included all forms of visionary literature and a portion — but a portion only — of what is today commercially labeled fantasy and horror. The apocalyptic mode includes SF — whether literary or paraliterary — and what might be viewed as “allied” literature or paraliterature. It is an embracing category that clarifies how it is that SF can segue into mainstream literature and vice versa. In recent years much attention has been focused on the way in which SF — and some fantasy — segue into postmodern literature and vice versa. Postmodern literature is now seen as especially allied to SF.

New Worlds for Old argues that the structure of SF and many of its themes (like demonic possession in Quatermass and the Pit) amount to the displacement and secularization of religious concerns. The basic structure and some of these themes are to be found in the Book of Revelation. For example, the Marxist or socialist structure of bad times followed by good times that some critics have explored in works of dystopian and eutopian SF might be regarded as a secular displacement of the days of the Antichrist followed by the Millennium in Revelation. Another example is the desire to escape the fallen, corporeal, “meat” world in William Gibson’s SF which implies that “cyberspace” is a secularized realm of transcendence and salvation. Computer technology promises a ghostly form of life after death. Now, as ever, SF deals with both physics and metaphysics.

In various places I have hinted at the importance of death in SF. These hints add up to the main development of my theoretical thinking about SF since the publication of New Worlds for Old. In this connection, I don’t want to be morbid but there is a downside to receiving the Pilgrim Award — one is likely to be at least in one’s forties or fifties (my case), or older, and thus, in terms of statistical probability, nearer to one’s death than one’s birth. In writing about the future, the SF author is inevitably writing about the locale of her or his own death. Consequently, the theme of death, including ways to circumvent it — what I have called the “textual shadow” of the dead SF author — finds its way into much SF. It is surely relevant to note that H.G. Wells wrote his early SF master-
piece while he thought he was dying of tuberculosis, and that
the French word for death is part of the names “Moreau” and
“Morlock.” Death for the individual is indeed, for that per­
son, the end of the world and hence, it may be claimed, the
apocalyptic tenor of Wells’s prototypical work of SF, The Time
Machine. To talk about the “textual shadow” of the dead SF
author is another way of explaining why it is that SF treats
the displacement or secularization of religious issues. It is
the job of religions to confront the appalling reality of death
and the compensatory possibility of an unknown reality be­
yond.

How have my three types of philosophical apocalypse fared
in the last 22 years? Has our understanding of reality been
radically redefined in SF during that time? Has our under­
standing of what it is to be human? Have any outside ma­
ipulators been unmasked? The answer in each case is “yes.”
And in each case, “cyberpunk” — barely dreamt of when New
Worlds for Old was published — has been responsible.
Cyberspace is both a realm of transcendence and a new de­
definition of reality. If the virtual reality potential of cyberspace
becomes truly indistinguishable from non-virtual reality, then
any reality may be virtual. Donna Haraway’s cyborgs and
Scott Bukatman’s “terminal identity” point to ways in which
our conception of what it is to be human has been radically
revised. Our electronic “bodies” encompass the globe. As
for unsuspected outside manipulators, two overlapping con­
tenders have been proposed — shadowy multinational cor­
porations and Gibson’s “gods (or devils) from the machine”
— a pantheon of voodoo-like, magically-created, computer­
born entities.

Finally, having moved from the past to the present, I’ll con­
clude with the future. There’s been much theoretical talk
about the end of the future — the future’s imploding into the
present — and the concomitant end of SF. To an extent the
upcoming turn of the century and turn of the millennium
has blocked the future. The year 2000 and other dates in the
twenty-first century (notably 2001) have been iconic of the
future in SF. Consequently, from our present temporal per­
spective, the impending year 2000 signals the arrival of the
future and the end of SF. I submit that once we have passed
that hurdle, time will resume its forward flow and things will
be understood very differently. What John Angus Campbell
calls a “rhetorical epoch” will have ended and another will
have begun (see “A Rhetorical Interpretation of History”.

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Rhetorica 2 [1984]: 227-66). Postmodernism, I predict, will not long survive the millennium’s turn. But I hope that all of us in this room will survive into the twenty-first century. And perhaps a few of us, thanks to spectacular medical advances, may live to see the turn of that century. Certainly, SF holds out such possibilities. But while, most probably, the twenty-first century will contain our deaths, it will also contain the arrival of Martians. I am not talking about Wells’s octopoid Martians, or the insectoid and human Martians of Quatermass and the Pit. I am talking about Ray Bradbury’s Martians — the startling and consoling redefinition of human beings that concludes The Martian Chronicles. At some point in the twenty-first century — perhaps late in that century — a human being will be born on Mars and that person will be a Martian.

My crystal ball is hazy about other matters. I hope the SFRA will be around in 2096 and that someone that year will be stepping up to receive the Pilgrim Award. But whether that will be the case or not, right now — in 1996 — I am very grateful.

Thank you.

— David Ketterer
THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING
by Edgar V. McKnight Jr.


What does science fiction, a forward-looking genre focusing primarily on technological innovation and social change, have to do with a body of literature originating in the twelfth century that takes its subject matter from the even more distant past of post-Roman Britain? The most obvious connection between Arthurian literature and science fiction lies in a mutual association with fantasy, a genre with roots deep in the soil of medieval romance, and one to which science fiction, for all its obvious differences, seems inextricably linked. But the connection goes deeper than that between items of merchandise on a bookstore shelf, or even a common acquaintance with Tolkien. The theme of traveling into the past, a science fiction staple, was virtually invented when a certain Connecticut Yankee suddenly appeared in King Arthur's court; and at the opposite extreme from Mark Twain's darkly pessimistic retelling of the Arthurian legend, much of science fiction shares with the myth of Camelot a powerful utopian element that distinguishes the latter from many superficially similar tales of sword and sorcery.

But what do Poul Anderson, John Brunner, and Pat Cadigan, to name only a few of the many science fiction writers who have used Arthurian themes and settings in their work, find in the legend of Arthur that attracts them to it? Perhaps the same thing that attracts them to science fiction: empty space. The modern world, and modern history, have been too thoroughly mapped to accommodate any literary work that does not reflect an undistorted image of reality. The fiction writer in search of a broad canvas upon which to write a particular tale, the more imaginative elements of which might contra-
dict some obstinate facts about the real world, has two choices: to set it in the future, or to set it in some past era about which our historical knowledge is limited. The most obvious example of such an era, for most readers, is the one we call the “Dark Ages,” and the most notable figure from that era, about whom we know the least, is King Arthur.

The extent of our knowledge about the historical Arthur is summarized in a recent essay entitled “Looking for Arthur” by Marylyn Jackson Parins. Her conclusion, that the question of Arthur’s existence cannot presently be answered, comes as no surprise; but the earnestness with which Arthurian scholars have debated the question in recent decades is quite remarkable, and that debate is the true focus of the essay. “Looking for Arthur” is the opening chapter in King Arthur: A Casebook, the first volume in a new series on Arthurian characters and themes from Garland Publishing, edited by Norris J. Lacy. Subsequent volumes are devoted to Tristan and Isolde, Lancelot and Guenevere, Arthurian Women, Merlin, Gawain, Perceval, and the Grail. If the secondary characters of the Arthurian legend inspire essays as interesting as Parins’s and many of the others in this first volume, then it should prove to be a valuable series indeed.

Arthur is unique among great literary figures in that, unlike Shakespeare’s Falstaff or Ian Fleming’s James Bond, he has no definitive textual incarnation, but has instead been subject to an ongoing process of transformation over the centuries, unanchored by any single depiction. T.H. White’s Arthur in The Once and Future King, for instance, is clearly a modern reinterpretation of the traditional figure, but there is no “original” source against which to compare him for authenticity. For centuries Arthur has been an immediately recognizable figure to an international body of readers, yet a storyteller is free to reshape him into a chivalric hero, an ambitious tyrant, an ideal ruler, a foolish cuckold, or a feeble old man, without fear of contradicting any established conception of the character.

This ongoing process of reinterpretation is clearly delineated in many of the fifteen essays contained in King Arthur: A Casebook. The second essay in the collection, “Dux Bellorum/ Rex Militum/Roi Faineant: The Transformation of Arthur in the Twelfth Century”, by Barbara N. Sargent-Baur, examines Arthur’s metamorphosis from the war leader described in Geoffreys of Monmouth’s Historia Regum Britanniae to the

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courtly ruler of Chretien de Troyes's romances. Fanni Bogdanow's "The Evolution of the Theme of the Fall of Arthur's Kingdom" traces King Arthur's development in the thirteenth-century Vulgate and Post-Vulgate cycles, from a flawed monarch who is ultimately responsible for his own defeat to an idealized ruler overwhelmed by forces beyond his control.

Edward Donald Kennedy, the editor of this first volume in the series, has chosen to offer an international perspective on the legend of Arthur, sprinkling translations of several French and German essays among the contributions of British and American scholars. Four essays, including Raymond H. Thompson's concluding "Conceptions of King Arthur in the Twentieth Century", were written especially for this book, and another seven were first published in the 1980s. Significant contributions from past decades have not been ignored, however. In an essay first published in 1957, and translated by Kennedy from the original German, Karl Josef Holtgen discusses the theme of "King Arthur and Fortuna" as it developed from the thirteenth-century Mort Artu, in which the figure of Fortuna plays a completely arbitrary role in Arthur's downfall, to the fourteenth-century Alliterative Morte Arthure, in which she acts only as an emissary of the divine will, to John Lydgate's fifteenth-century Fall of Princes, in which Fortuna is motivated by her envy of Arthur, the exemplary Christian ruler.

While most of the essays in the book are devoted to a scholarly examination of the many medieval representations of Arthur, a handful look at more recent examples of Arthurian literature, and in these the scholarship is enlivened by questions of interpretation. The two essays devoted to nineteenth-century depictions of Arthur, for example, take opposing viewpoints of the character's place in the construction of Victorian gender roles. In "The Female King: Tennyson's Arthurian Apocalypse", Elliot L. Gilbert claims that what some condemn as the "almost maidenly Victorian monarch" of the *Idylls of the King* is an inevitable product of the era, while Debra N. Mancoff argues in "To Take Excalibur: King Arthur and the Construction of Victorian Manhood" that the figure of Arthur as depicted by Tennyson, as well as by a number of nineteenth-century painters, sculptors, and illustrators, served to define a model of masculinity for the entire culture.

Individually, each essay in *King Arthur: A Casebook* offers some special insight into the character of Arthur as it was
given form by the literature of a particular era. Collectively, these essays give the reader a spectacular view of the historical development of one of the world's great literary figures. This collective view is enhanced by Kennedy's generous introduction to the volume, in which he gives an overview of King Arthur's role in more than a thousand years of literary history. In addition, the book includes an eight-page bibliography of Arthurian reference works and selected studies concerning King Arthur, to serve as a guide to those whose interest in the subject has only been piqued by the essays in this volume.

Foremost among the useful reference works mentioned in that bibliography is The New Arthurian Encyclopedia, also from Garland Press. Originally published in 1991, it is now available in an updated paperback edition that includes a thirty-six page supplement covering works produced in the five years since the first edition, as well as a handful of older authors, such as F. Scott Fitzgerald and Nathaniel Hawthorne, whose slight contributions to Arthurian literature had previously been overlooked. The work of five editors, including Norris J. Lacy and Geoffrey Ashe, and well over a hundred contributors, The New Arthurian Encyclopedia is a compendium of information about Arthurian works, authors, characters, and themes from the Middle Ages to the present day. International in scope, it includes entries on works written in Latin, French, German, English, Italian, and the Scandinavian languages, as well Japanese, Greek, Yiddish, and Hebrew.

In addition to entries ranging from "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight", "Gottfried von Strassburg", and "Morgan le Fay" to "Monty Python and the Holy Grail", "Walker Percy", and "Popular Culture" (all of which are made easily accessible by an alphabetical index and a list of entries by category), The New Arthurian Encyclopedia also includes a complete chronology, beginning with the Roman withdrawal from Britain in 410 and concluding, appropriately enough, with the publication of Gene Wolfe's Castleview in 1990. The book also features a full-page map dotted with such Arthurian place names as Glastonbury, Tintagel, Winchester, and Stonehenge. Although Camelot is, sadly, not on the map, the encyclopedia entry on the subject mentions that it is sometimes identified with Cadbury Castle, a landmark that is clearly marked.

A quick glance at the authors listed under the category "Modern Literature in English" reveals the extent to which
Arthurian literature and science fiction are intertwined; Poul Anderson, Thomas Berger, Robert Bloch, John Brunner, Pat Cadigan, C.J. Cherryh, John Crowley, George Alec Effinger, John M. Ford, Henry Kuttner, Brad Linaweaver, Fred Saberhagen, Robert Sheckley, Theodore Sturgeon, Michael Swanwick, Harry Turtledove, Gene Wolfe, and Roger Zelazny are only some of the more notable science fiction writers included in the book. Other familiar names, perhaps more often associated with fantasy than science fiction, include Marion Zimmer Bradley, Guy Gavriel Kay, Andre Norton, Mary Stewart, and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro.

_The New Arthurian Encyclopedia_ is a beautiful book, with abundant black and white illustrations of films, paintings, woodcuts, and illuminated texts; even the current paperback edition would make a wonderful coffee-table book were it not so likely to be flipped through again and again. But the proper place for this book is on a reference shelf, right next to _The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction_. There it will be consulted frequently, not as a repository of arcane knowledge about obscure and ancient legends, but as a vital source of information about an ongoing literary tradition, as relevant to the twentieth century as it was to the twelfth.
IMAGINATIVE FUTURES

The Proceedings of the 1993 Science Fiction Research Association Conference is now available from Borgo Press. Learn why the Sci-Fi Channel, as well as NBC and CBS affiliates, covered part or all of the SFRA conference held in Reno, Nevada.

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The last few years have seen several useful books on animation — Hal Erickson’s Television Cartoon Shows (1995), Helen McCarthy’s Anime!: A Beginner’s Guide to Japanese Animation (1993, reviewed in SFRA Review #218) and Trish Ledoux’s and Doug Ranney’s The Complete Anime Guide (1995), which I hope to review in these pages soon. More valuable than any of these, however, is Bendazzi’s Cartoons, the most complete international survey of the field.

Of 412 pages of text, only ninety-six are devoted to American production. Only twelve of these pages cover Disney and thirty-seven describe other commercial studios. The rest of the American chapters describe the work of early pioneers, independents, and the avant-garde. About 300 pages cover work done in dozens of countries, from Cuba to Kazakhstan to New Zealand. For each country, Bendazzi examines both commercial animation (if any) and elite productions. The author, who refers to “Disney’s sin, a pervasive realism,” prefers non-commercial, non-realistic, non-narrative and experimental animation. Almost all the films which interest him are shorts; he declares that “animated feature films are rarely major artistic achievements.” Bendazzi has only four pages on the enormous world of television cartoons and only twelve on Japan, the world’s most prolific producer of feature-length animation. Several major Japanese features and even some Disney features are omitted. This would be a fault in a formal history of animation, but Bendazzi claims his intention is not to write a history but “to fill the void of knowledge on the subject and to give an interpretive introduction to little known filmmakers.” Here he succeeds.

Bendazzi’s heroes include early pioneers Emile Cohl and Winsor McCay, Soviet Alexander Alexieff, Canadian Norman McLaren, German American Oskar Fischinger, Czechs Jiri Trnka and Jan Svankmajer, and Yugoslavia’s (now Croatia’s) Zagreb Studio. The fifty-four pages of indexes list about 2,000 artists and perhaps 3,500 film titles. Bendazzi necessarily has only a few words of description for most titles, but cumu-
latively Cartoons reveals an enormous amount of work unknown to most film enthusiasts.

A substantial share of the films are fantastic. Besides hundreds of fairy tale and folklore films from many cultures, Bendazzi notes such tantalizing unknown films as Ever Been Had? (British, 1917) about the last man on Earth, “with an extremely elaborate plot for its time and a disturbing atmosphere”; a Soviet Munchausen (1928) and an Italian Munchausen (1941); a Soviet New Gulliver (1935); The Birth of the Robots (British, 1936); a 1939 MGM short Peace on Earth, in which animals celebrate after mankind has destroyed itself; a 1932 French Night on Bald Mountain, eight years before Fantasia; SOS (Italian, undated), in which a scientist discovers that women are extraterrestrials; and Fisheye (Yugoslav, 1979), a horror film in which fish take revenge on a fishermen’s village. It is interesting that Nazis, Soviets, and Americans seem to have been equally addicted to fairy tales. I must point out, however, that I cannot agree with Bendazzi’s dismissal of the Fleischer Brothers’ series of Superman shorts (1941-1943) as “insignificant”.

Anna Taraboletti-Segre’s translation from the Italian is generally commendable, though she calls Goofy “dull” when she surely meant “dull-witted.” The volume includes a short chapter by Robi Roncarelli on computer animation, a twelve-page multi-lingual bibliography of books and periodicals, and 95 color and 150 black-and-white illustrations.


—Michael Klossner


H.G. Wells led a multiplex life, and it is fitting that multiple biographies have been required to do justice to him. There are now at least five important biographies of Wells (including one published during his lifetime by Geoffrey West, and not including Wells’s own extraordinary 1934 Experiment in
Autobiography, with its posthumous appendix known as H.G. Wells in Love). The 1973 biography by Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie remains the standard, the one that is both the most comprehensive and the most readable. Anthony West, son of Wells and Rebecca West, published H.G. Wells: Aspects of a Life in 1984, a book remarkable for its personal insights into his father, its venomous denigration of his mother, and biases that make it at once a thoroughly readable and highly unreliable tourbook. In 1986 David Smith’s monumental H.G. Wells, Desperately Mortal appeared — the most scholarly and richly detailed of Wells’s biographies, though too turgid and miscellaneous in organization to displace the MacKenzies for most readers.

And now comes yet another Life of Wells, this one from the former leader of England’s Labour Party and a devout disciple of Wells’s politics. Michael Foot was one of the young to whom Wellsian ideas made a profound appeal in the early and middle decades of this century, and the great strength of HG is in its capture of the charismatic qualities of its subject. Foot is a passionate believer in Wells and Wellsianism, and in this respect his biography is most like David Smith’s similarly partisan portrait. He defends his subject against charges of anti-feminism, racism, authoritarianism, sentimental optimism, and septuagenarian gloom. And for the most part his defense is both eloquent and persuasive. Much of the power of Foot’s argument comes from letting Wells speak in his own words, and often in texts that are no longer widely read. Wells’s famous quarrel with the Fabian Society and his falling out with Beatrice Webb over both sexual and ideological politics is dealt with at length and with sympathetic insight on both sides. Foot cites a powerful passage in Wells’s 1943 obituary on Webb that neatly delineates their differences while articulating his own lifelong consciousness of class: “She went down to the poor as the saints do; I came up from the poor in a state of flaming rebellion, most blasphemous and ungainly. Beatrice wanted to socialize the ruling classes and make them do their duty. I wanted to destroy them.” While some readers might quarrel with the editorial decision to allow excerpts from Wellsian novels and essays to run on for three or four pages at a time, the advantage of Foot’s method is that the reader is convinced that quotations are not selectively trimmed to fit a thesis, but is rather presented as part of the contextual unfolding of Wells’s often complex positions.
There are few strikingly new pieces of information about Wells in Foot’s account, but some familiar propositions have been given fresh and memorable statements with details both pungent and convincing. From beginning to end, Foot places Wells in a line of English writing defined most prominently by the quartet of Defoe, Swift, Sterne, and Percy Shelly — a tradition that combines reportage, pamphleteering, discomforting satire, formal and stylistic experimentation, radical critiques of culture, and an essentially comic spirit. Foot makes the case that Wells belongs in the company of these humanists, moralists, and men of letters, and he soundly rejects the notion that Wells was more a propagandist than an artist, or that works like *New Worlds for Old*, *The Open Conspiracy*, and the *Outline of History* are in some way less imaginative and artful achievements than *The War of the Worlds* or *The First Men in the Moon*. When Foot points out the obvious — that the author of *The Drapier’s Letters* and *The Conduct of the Allies* is inseparable from the author of *Gulliver’s Travels* — a reader immediately grasps the parallel and its implication: that Wells has been pilloried for the versatile marriage of politics and art, of universal vision and writing to the moment, that literary historians have celebrated in Swift. This biography reminds us that all of Wells is of a piece, that there is a splendid, indeed admirable, coherence to the vision, the passions, and the career.

*HG* gives relatively little direct attention to Wells’s science fiction of the 1890s, and Foot’s infrequent literary analyses are sometimes dubious (as when he disagrees with V.S. Pritchett’s dismissal of Weena in *The Time Machine*, whom Foot would like to think of as “the one enduringly sympathetic character whom the Time Traveller encounters”). SFRA members may, therefore, come away disappointed if they go to this biography for the goods on Wells’s early fiction. Foot is neither interested in nor particularly skillful at exegesis. But his work will serve the interests of science fiction readers and scholars in much the same way that the writings of W. Warren Wagar do: by providing a rich intellectual and political context for understanding the origins and aims of Wells’s literary creations. Because a single biography of Wells can never be enough, this new foray belongs in the collections of every library and on the shelf of anyone interested in the fiction, ideas, utopian desires, and prophetic utterances of one of the great imaginations of the past century.

— Robert Crossley
Books have been collected for centuries, and with the books came bibliographies of all types, catalogs, price guides, auctions, and the entire paraphernalia of the book trade. Fantastic literature began to be collected with the arrival of the specialty pulps, and hundreds of dealers worldwide cater to this market today. Determining the market value of books and related materials (manuscripts, proofs, autographs, etc.), particularly in a somewhat marginal field like fantastic literature, has always been difficult, as I discovered when I began to price my own modest collection.

The essential tools of any collector include carefully compiled descriptive bibliographies that identify first and other significant editions of the most often collected authors. Bleiler's original 1948 checklist attempted to list only first editions but did not include the points necessary to distinguish such editions. It was not until 1979 that the antiquarian dealer L.W. Currey demonstrated his formidable bibliographic knowledge in *Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors: A Bibliography of First Printings of Their Fiction and Selected Nonfiction* (G.K. Hall; now available only from the compiler, Elizabethtown, NY 12933, for $68.50 delivered). His frequent catalogues are valuable supplements to his bibliography and have been influential in setting prices, especially for fine books in fine jackets, although he occasionally includes reading copies in his catalogues. Also useful, although it has to be used with extreme caution, is *The Science-Fantasy Publishers: A Critical and Bibliographic History* by Jack L. Chalker & Mark Owings (3rd edition, 1991, plus supplements).

Price guides have appeared over the years, such as Jeff Rovin's *The Science Fiction Collector's Catalog* (1982), but they have consistently been amateurishly compiled and usually ignore the crucial effect that condition has on price. For all kinds of books, *American Book Prices Current*, now annual, is a standard. Published for just over a century, each volume derives its information from materials that sold for at least $50 (today; less in the past) in auctions by 37 auction galleries in the US, UK, Germany, Australia, and Canada, including all the well-known ones like Sotheby and Swann. The listings are in two sequences: (1) includes autographs, manu-
scripts, documents, letters, typescripts, corrected proofs, signed photos, and signatures; and (II) includes books, broadsides, maps, charts, and uncorrected proofs. Each item is described in considerably more detail than Howlett-West provides here, and the prices shown are actual selling prices, not the asking prices in H-W. The ABPC entries are printed on two columns on a 5x7 inch trim size page, quite legible but using all the page, unlike the 8 1/2 inch columnar format of H-W, which is easy to consult but wastes a lot of space, as well as devoting most of its space to a great many minor writers whose books simply happened to be listed in the indexed catalogs but who are not likely to be of much interest to most collectors. Further, Howlett-West does not indicate why she chose these 29 dealers, some of whom are well known in the fantastic fiction field, but many others (I would guess) of whom are minor. A major, unexplained omission is L.W. Currey. The list of abbreviations cites (and misspells) Curry Notation A and B but provides no explanation of what this means.

Some knowledge is required to use this guide effectively. Take Neuromancer for example. Ace published this as an original $3.95 paperback in mid-1984, with Gollancz issuing the first hardcover edition that fall at £8.95. In mid-1986 Phantasia issued the first American hardcover edition in both a trade and a signed, numbered, boxed edition ($18 and $45). The Easton Press 1990 subscription edition, unpriced but selling for about $40, is listed as $40. Uncorrected proofs of the Ace are listed at $375 in VG+ condition. A 1994 Ace reprint is shown as $18, which strikes me as grossly overpriced. The Phantasia edition is incorrectly described as first hardcover and first U.S. in two listings. These descriptions were taken from the dealer catalogs, and they're wrong and misleading.

If you have a fair number of books that you think are "collectible," particularly if you're considering selling them or need an estimated value for insurance purposes, should you buy this price guide? I'd answer a qualified yes. You don't know if dealers really got the prices they asked. And, as the compiler readily admits, a great many collectible items never appeared in the catalogs Howlett-West happened to index (the older, really scarce stuff in particular). Special collections librarians can probably skip this guide and rely on standard tools.
I sent a copy of the preceding review to the compiler, who provided some useful information in her prompt reply. She's the head buyer for a 100,000+ volume used book store in California’s central valley and has 11 years experience in the antiquarian field. She knows and uses the works I cited but says her own guide has more limited goals. It's designed for a smaller non-specialist dealer who needs to quickly judge the relative value of books offered for sale or to price books, from relatively routine stuff (where H-W is useful) to rarities (where only long experience is a reliable guide). She tried to record prices from at least three dealers for many titles (in some cases, a dozen listings are included for a given edition). Since rarities are, by definition, uncommonly listed and dealers necessarily stock a lot of relatively routine books, she deliberately listed these, most of them priced in the $5-$50 range. She's been to auctions and notes, accurately, that some titles are bid up excessively, thus cautioning the potential buyer that knocked-down auction prices can be misleading. And dealers often think they can get more than they paid at auction and thus mark up books still higher.

As for the omission of the Currey catalogs, she says he graciously declined. I don't think dealer catalogues are copyrighted, so using them for a price guide should not require permission, only acknowledgment. But some of Currey's catalogues are massive — more than 7,000 listings in a few, which is more than a third of H-W's total listings. I still recommend them as a useful supplement.

Howlett-West plans to issue future editions of her price guide, incorporating suggestions she's received from nitpickers like me.

— Neil Barron


Colin Manlove's *Scottish Fantasy Literature: A Critical Survey*, originally published by Canongate Academic in Scotland, is now available in the U.S. from Dufour Editions. That is good news for American scholars who can now purchase this book for themselves (or have their libraries order it) more easily than before. For although the number of Scottish
fantasists is not great, there are some important names on the list.

In his introduction, Manlove provides both a brief overview of his survey and defines those characteristics he finds important in, and sometimes peculiar to, Scottish fantasy. He argues, for example, that the Scots' culture draws heavily on Germanic and Norse traditions, that there "is something violent, even gleefully savage, in many Scots fantasies" (p. 6), that the influence of Calvinism is strong in Scots writers, that most Scots fantasies tell of an inward, not an outward, journey, etc., making a solid case that there is such as thing as Scots fantasy.

The remainder of the book is a historical survey of Scots fantasy from the beginnings to the present. Those beginnings, Manlove suggests in the second chapter, lie initially in folk tale and ballad, especially in such Scots ballads as "Tam Lin" and "Thomas the Rhymer". He then traces those beginnings up through James Macpherson, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns, and (albeit briefly) Byron. This chapter moves quite quickly, and I would have liked more discussion of Macpherson.

The next eleven chapters deal primarily with 13 major Scots writers, of whom Thomas Carlyle, George MacDonald, Robert Louis Stevenson, "Fiona Macleod", Andrew Lang, J.M. Barrie, and David Lindsay will be the most familiar. However, Manlove's discussion of James Hogg, Margaret Oliphant, Neil Gunn, George Mackay Brown, Alasdair Gray, and Margaret Elphinstone are important as they fill out the continuum and bring the study up to the present.

Because there are so relatively few major writers, Manlove is able to deal with each one in detail and make substantial and substantive comments about his or her major work. In addition, he is able to compare the work of the writer being discussed with that of writers discussed in previous chapters as well as with that of non-Scots fantasy writers. In other words, he places each writer within the continuum of Scots fantasy and, to a lesser extent, within the continuum of fantasy in general.

Colin Manlove, winner of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts annual award for scholarship in 1989, is an important voice in the field. Although a highly special-
ized and tightly-focused book, *Scottish Fantasy Literature* is a significant contribution to the study of the fantastic in literature and will hold its own place quite nicely beside other Manlove works, from *Modern Fantasy: Five Studies* (1975) to *Christian Fantasy: From 1200 to the Present* (1992). Highly recommended.

— C.W. Sullivan III


Leonard Nimoy spends much of this new autobiography dispelling the belief — generated in part by the title of his 1975 book, *I Am Not Spock* — that he resents the character who made him famous. As in the first book, Nimoy creates dialogue between himself and Spock in an effort to articulate his relationship with the Vulcan he portrays.

For *Star Trek* devotees, *I Am Spock* covers mostly familiar ground: the genesis, airing, and cancellation of the original series; the varying degrees of success of the six films featuring the original crew of the *Enterprise*; a brief mention of Nimoy's reprisal of the Spock role in a two-part episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*; and his decision to forego an appearance in *Generations*, the film featuring the *Next Generation* crew and the death of Captain Kirk.

Of most interest in the *Star Trek* sections of the book are Nimoy's feelings about the death, resurrection, and rehabilitation of Spock in, respectively, *The Wrath of Khan, The Search for Spock*, and *The Voyage Home*, as well as Nimoy's stints as director of the latter two films. He treads lightly over his disagreements with *Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry, and emphasizes his friendship with and respect for William Shatner, *Trek*’s other big star. Nimoy is also generous in his discussion of the disastrous fifth *Star Trek* film, *The Final Frontier*, which was directed by Shatner.

Of course, Nimoy has other notable credits to his name. He touches on his post-*Trek* role as Paris in *Mission: Impossible* and in a series of stage performances, including Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, the title character in Camus's *Caligula*, and the lead in *Equus*. He wryly notes that many reviews of his work have contained references to Spock and/or *Star Trek*, more popular in syndication than it had ever been during its original network run.
Nimoy reminds readers that even after he began playing Spock again on the big screen, he has continued to pursue other projects, most notably Vincent, a one-man show in which he portrayed Vincent Van Gogh's brother Theo; the role of Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir's estranged husband in A Woman Called Golda, a television movie starring Ingrid Bergman; and the lead in Never Forget, a cable movie based on the true story of Mel Mermelstein, a Holocaust survivor who persuaded a U.S. court to legally recognize the fact of the Holocaust.

Moreover, with the success of Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home, Nimoy found himself in demand as a director. He followed the smash hit Three Men and a Baby with the critically-praised but less successful film The Good Mother starring Diane Keaton.

Though short on details about Nimoy's personal life, I Am Spock is full of both Star Trek lore and tidbits about other actors, producers, and directors Nimoy has been involved with. Many well-chosen and wittily-captioned photos are sprinkled throughout the volume. The device of relating a dialogue between Spock and Nimoy is cloyingly overdone in spots, but Nimoy's thoughtful discussion of his craft as both an actor and a director, as well as his analysis of his complicated relationship with the logical Vulcan, are must reads for any Star Trek fan.

— Agatha Taormina


Miss Hurter, a young woman in Henry James' short story, "The Death of the Lion," is, in contrast to the celebrity hunters that flock around him, the ideal reader of the (fictional) novelist, Neil Paraday. Long before Paraday became a literary lion, she had read all his works; their nuances and interrelationships are an integral part of her consciousness. The tragedy of the story is that a jealous critic prevents Miss Hurter from ever making the novelist's acquaintance.

Reading Conversations with Anne Rice, I thought of the James story, for Michael Riley seems just such an ideal reader — with the happy difference that, as longtime friends, Riley
and Rice have engaged in dialogue for many years. Riley knows Rice's books intimately and makes thought-provoking connections among them. During their conversations, Riley suggests to Rice dimensions in her work of which she was unaware. Riley brings out her sense of humor, and their mutual trust creates a climate in which Rice engages in fruitful introspection. Rice comments on her own creative process, the sexual elements in her novels, the influence of her Catholic upbringing, and the state of contemporary films and publishing.

While Anne Rice is candid about a period of excessive drinking and the devastation she experienced after losing a child to leukemia, she is exceedingly reticent about her relationship with her husband, Stan. Early on, Rice says that Stan, as a high school student, was an outspoken atheist who made her question her strict Catholic upbringing. He is, she says, the model for Lestat. However, except for intriguing hints — to Stan's experiencing a period of depression, for example — her husband is almost completely absent from this book. Since quotations from Stan Rice's (in my opinion) bad poems appear as epigraphs to many of his wife's books, I was frustrated not to learn more about him.

Rice resembles that other phenomenally successful writer of the supernatural, Stephen King, in being a regionalist. Just as King's life and work are rooted in Maine, Rice found that returning to New Orleans gave a tremendous impetus to her writing. Her "memory accelerated" and her "vocabulary doubled or tripled." Participating again in a close extended family led to Rice's rediscovery of the centrality of family in her thinking and, in turn, to her fictional creation of the Mayfair clan.

Rice is exceedingly self-aware about her own creative process and the preoccupations that have shaped it. Since books and the printed word play such an important role in her novels, it will come as no surprise to her fans that Rice is a voracious reader. In preparation for each novel, Rice devours memoirs and travel books to acquire a feel for how language was used in a particular time period. Rice consciously works toward a greater spontaneity in writing, attempting just to "let it go and point... my abilities like a fine hose in a certain direction" (p. 36). The sado-masochistic Beauty trilogy, written rapidly while their author was in the grip of an obsession, was a necessary stage in loosening up her writing process.
Rice discusses at length the erotic preoccupations that shape her work. Though Rice's religious upbringing discouraged precocious sexual experimentation, she became convinced early on that no aspect of sexual expression was dirty. Interestingly, Rice reports that her readers are far more tolerant of transgressive sex on the part of her male characters than similar behavior by females. Before the publication of Belinda, she gave in to criticisms by making the female teenage protagonist older and sexually less outrageous. Rice's interest in transgressing sexual taboos is, of course, integral to the compulsive fascination her novels exert. Rice expresses puzzlement at the wide spectrum of lifestyles among her readers: housewives, the dying, gay men, hardhats — all can be equally caught up in the world of her books.

In her dialogue with Riley, Rice addresses her ambivalence toward Catholicism. She attributes her love of spectacle to her childhood in the Catholic city of New Orleans. There, Rice learned the Catholic habit of charity and was horrified by the lack of compassion she observed in feminists and liberals elsewhere. Rice attributes her "spiritual urgency," her "inability to forget about good and evil" (pp. 146-7) to her experience as a Catholic. However, rejecting the church and coming to believe instead in the "wisdom of the flesh" led her to "rewriting the history of the Catholic church" (p. 145) in her novels.

Like Stephen King, Rice maintains that film is a greater influence on her work than literature. Rice describes the many years of negotiations before the film Interview with the Vampire came into being. She and Riley discuss at length ways in which the film enhances and also subtly changes the book. Though Rice's response to Neil Jordan's production was largely positive, she deplored what she saw as "almost an Irish hatred of women" and its depiction of sex as repulsive.

This illusion of eavesdropping on a spontaneous conversation is, of course, a tribute to Riley's skill as an editor. Riley has distilled tapes of conversations carried out over a year and a half into thematic sections. Listening in on Rice's and Riley's wide-ranging dialogue was so exhilarating to me that, again and again, I have found myself quoting their insightful observations on such subjects as book reviewing, the process by which a novel is transformed into a film, and the culture of sadomasochism. I highly recommend this book not only to Rice fans, but to anyone who appreciates stimulating dialogue.

— Wendy Bousfield

*To Write Like a Woman* collects ten essays, an introduction, and three letters that provide a sharply focused look at Russ's paramount concern: the options for women in fiction, with a more particular concern regarding science fiction. All of the essays are reprints; all but one appeared between 1971 and 1981, a decade when Russ's fiction effectively used science fiction as a vehicle for feminist concerns. The collection is divided into two parts. The pieces in Part One appeared in SF-related publications, four of them in *Science-Fiction Studies*. The selections in Part Two, all with feminist concerns, range from a Gregg Press introduction to a personal letter.

In the introduction to the collection's title piece, an examination of gender identity in the work of Willa Cather that was published in 1986, Russ identifies herself with "those who have disabilities that limit their energy, their time, or their ability to produce copy quickly." Like the most recent text in the collection (a letter written as a response to an article in the *NWSA Journal* on "The Yellow Wallpaper" in 1988, but printed here for the first time), this title essay indicates that Russ's concerns have remained impassioned and her expression of them acute however her disability may have constrained her output.

The collection makes clear Russ's distaste for jargon, especially that of literary criticism, and for mystification of any kind, because she sees both as verbal formulations that muddle the clear analytical thinking that must precede effective action. In a culture that she knows as intrinsically sexist and homophobic, she points out how such jargon helps to isolate literature from the more oppressive realities of its social and economic context. Among the virtues that attract her to science fiction is its potential for operating outside the expectations of academically valued literature and for engaging itself more directly with the implications of this social and economic context. At the same time, she recognizes that much science fiction does not fulfill this potential. In "Amor Vincit Foeminam: The Battle of the Sexes in Science Fiction", for example, she skewers the male writers whose domineering females are conceived irrationally and delineated implausibly.
In Part Two, the defects Russ sees in such poorly written science fiction become the more general defects of our culture. More traditional literature provides the specific examples. After pointing out, for example, how our common narrative structures exclude women as protagonists, she notes how writers such as Virginia Woolf, who have developed alternative structures for their fiction, have been devalued for shifting their ground. “Recent Feminist Utopias” views works like The Wanderground as the reverse of the bad science fiction cited above. Other pieces analyze the narrative strategies of writers like Mary Shelly and Willa Cather for working around a literary mainstream that did not suit their sensibilities. The three letters that conclude the collection are corrective pieces, meant to counter misinterpretations of “The Yellow Wallpaper”, lesbianism in feminist criticism, and one of Russ’s own stories, “The Autobiography of My Mother”.

To Write Like a Woman offers readers a convenient introduction to Russ as a literary critic and an essential formulator of feminist sensibility in science fiction. Her insistence on the social reality that surrounds a text and informs its meaning should provoke further discussion at a time when so much post-modern and post-structuralist criticism seems to reduce a text to smoke and mirrors. At the very least, this collection should provide a benchmark for the ways in which science fiction has been evolving for the last twenty-five years.

— Joe Marchesani


Released in November 1995, W.A. Senior’s Stephen R. Donaldson’s Chronicles of Thomas Covenant is a comprehensive study of Donaldson’s series. W.A. Senior has thoroughly essayed the major critical works on fantasy in order to arrive at an objective evaluation of Donaldson’s work. After summarizing the usual, or supposed, characteristics of epic fantasy, Senior notes that Donaldson’s first departure from those characteristics is that the series is clearly adult fantasy, signaled by its pervasive and escalating violence. In addition, the Covenant books use a large, rather formal vocabulary, often requiring the reader to consult a dictionary. Finally, Senior notes that in spite of those departures, Donaldson does use the story as a parable or allegory for the modern world.

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After dealing with Donaldson’s unusual uses of epic fantasy conventions, Senior analyzes the use of the leper, Thomas Covenant, as the hero. This, in itself, is an accomplishment worth noting since leprosy is still viewed as a horrendous disease probably denoting moral uncleanness as well as being supposedly highly contagious. Senior’s analysis points out the risks — many readers are repulsed by the character and have difficulty empathizing with him. The disease isolates Covenant in the “real world” and makes it difficult for him to believe in the fantasy world where he finds himself. This complicates life for both the character and the reader. Covenant cannot adjust to being in the fantasy world, and as a result of his leprosy-induced caution, he is unable to warm to the people there or to participate in the action — he takes the epithet “The Unbeliever.” Covenant’s inability to accept the fantasy world reminds readers that this is a story and complicates their “willing suspension of disbelief.”

For Senior, Donaldson’s major achievement comes from the way he has worked within the fantasy tradition while reversing most of its conventional characteristics. In addition to the psychological effects of his leprosy, Covenant is not particularly average — he is the uncommon common man — and he is reluctant to take part in the action so he has little, or more often negative, effect on the lives of the people he comes into contact with. In spite of having subverted or reversed nearly every convention or characteristic of epic fantasy in some fashion or another, Senior believes Donaldson has successfully led readers to “experience” (even if they don’t fully understand it) the parallels between the fantasy world and modern western society.

Next, Senior explores Donaldson’s debt to H.R.R. Tolkien. Many have accused Donaldson of having borrowed rather too liberally from Tolkien; Senior draws a different conclusion, believing the two have noticeably different views — Tolkien wrote from the British past and Donaldson writes from the American present. His examples reinforce his conclusions.

Senior then goes on to examine Donaldson’s use of myth. This is another area where Donaldson reverses the conventions of epic fantasy — Covenant is not of high, but hidden birth, nor does he follow the usual educational process for a fantasy hero, and most importantly, he is not elevated “either to the godhead or to ideal humanity.” Senior concludes
“In fact, he ends up where he began, no richer or poorer, no more or less powerful, except in spirit and will to survive.”

In the fifth and sixth chapters, Senior examines the themes of narrative, structure, knowledge, life, and death. In each case, there is a departure from the “normal” handling found in most epic fantasies. Senior is assured that he has a grasp on Donaldson’s intent because he conducted two separate interviews with Donaldson, which are included in appendices in the book.

The first six chapters of the book deal with the original trilogy, but Senior does take a cursory look at the Second Chronicles of Thomas Covenant in the final chapter. In the first note to that chapter, Senior admits that the “brevity of the chapter” means that he has not dealt adequately with “the issues and complexities of the Second Chronicles”; however, he sees a similar pattern in the Second Chronicles — the reversal of the expected. Thomas Covenant is a somewhat changed man in these books and the Land is changed as well. In addition, the issues confronted in the second series are internal rather than external, so while Thomas Covenant is still not the typical epic hero, his attempts to be responsible and save the Land constitute a reversal of his behavior in the First Chronicles. He is not successful, however, because the rules have changed and he is no longer able to predict what needs to be done.

Senior’s arguments are convincing. Donaldson’s detractors will probably not agree, but Senior offers ample evidence to make his arguments and evaluations worth considering. Whether one agrees with his conclusions or not, Senior’s scholarship is solid and his view of the Chronicles provide an interesting analysis.

— Sherry Stoskopf


In her review of *Science Fiction Audiences* in *Foundation* 64, Frances Bonner writes, “Of the fingers of one hand on which the good and useful book length studies of media sf
can be counted, the thumb and one other finger are already allocated to the authors of this new study.” As annotator of sixty books and magazines in the film/TV/radio chapter of Neil Barron’s Anatomy of Wonder 4 (1995), I cannot agree that the field is as barren as Bonner claims, but I concur with her endorsement of Tulloch’s (and Manuel Alvarado’s) 1981 Doctor Who, the Unfolding Text, one of the most sophisticated studies of a popular TV series, and of Jenkins’ 1992 Textual Poachers, an exciting introduction to the world of “activist fandom” (reviewed by me in SFRA Review #204 and by Karen Hellekson in #205).

An active fan and a leftist, Jenkins refutes claims by other leftists that mass culture fans are “duped, drugged consumers”. In Textual Poachers and in four chapters (one co-written by Greg Dancer) on American Star Trek fans in Science Fiction Audiences, he establishes that committed fans are critical of their favorite shows, consider themselves more “loyal” to the “true” values of the program than the mercenary production staff, and use the show as raw material for their own creative efforts. Jenkins considers three elite Trek fan groups — feminists whose fan fiction “rewrites Star Trek, moving away from the action-adventure elements and towards a greater focus on the characters’ psychological and emotional lives”; MIT students who prefer the first, hard-SF series to the Next Generation’s frequent anti-technology stance; and the Gaylaxians, a gay fan club of which Jenkins is a member. All three groups are dissatisfied with elements of Trek (MIT students with scientific errors and Luddism; women and gays with Trek’s timidity in dealing with “their” issues) but all three watch and discuss the show endlessly. Each group searches out and finds part of what it wants in Trek, and is philosophical about what it dislikes and what it wants but does not find.

In five chapters (one co-written by Marian Tulloch), John Tulloch finds that Australian and British Doctor Who fans are also highly critical of the show they can’t stop watching. The major Australian DW fan club for years had an “official policy of opposition to the production staff,” including a “Sack-the-Producer” letter-writing campaign directed against John Nathan-Turner. With typical Australian egalitarianism, they scorned both Nathan-Turner and star Tom Baker for self-aggrandizement at the expense of the series and its fans. Whovians speak of a past “golden age” of the series, of “all-time low” episodes, of “unforgivable” offenses and “insults

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to the intelligence,” yet they continue to find the series “cerebral” in comparison to the mere thuggery of American SF on TV. Tulloch himself calls Doctor Who “sexist and undemocratic” but finds it interesting that “radical intellectuals” can overlook these faults and endorse the show from a variety of left-wing, anti-American, and pacifist stances, even though support for those positions is usually only faintly apparent in Doctor Who. Like Trekkies, Whovians are dissatisfied but fascinated.

Jenkins calls active fans a “powerless elite” — elite due to their incredible erudition and commitment but powerless compared to the producers and the mass audiences who determine the fate of the show. In both Textual Poachers and Science Fiction Audiences, he examines elite fans but not mass audiences. One could not prove by reference to Jenkins that the casual television fans are not “duped, drugged consumers,” the stereotype from which he rescues active fans. Tulloch, on the other hand, studies both elite (the “official” fan club) and casual (Australian high school and college students and housewives) Who fans. The non-elites are far less erudite, articulate, sophisticated, and political than the activist fans, but they are capable of criticizing aspects of the show. Tulloch sniffs that “a clearly articulated feminist discourse is not yet available to these [high school] girls” but they and other non-elite fans easily acquit themselves of being in a duped stupor.

Jenkins opined in Textual Poachers that non-fans cannot study fans. Fan materials are ephemeral; fans distrust non-fans. However, if only fans can investigate fans, the objectivity of the investigator is in question. At any rate, today it is possible to spy on fans by “lurking,” or reading but not participating in Internet discussion groups. For months I have lurked unsuspected on the Xena: Warrior Princess Netforum (http://www.mca.com/tv/xena), enjoying an entertaining mix of women and men, lesbians and straights, adults and youngsters, naive and sophisticated fans, all talking in a self-referential insider slang almost indecipherable to the uninitiated.

Science Fiction Audiences suffers from an excess of theory and academic jargon but the empirical evidence presented is of great interest. This collaborative book is less important than the authors’ previous, separate works but is recommended to those interested in fandom, audience studies and genre television.

— Michael Klossner

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Judged on the basis of its own announced purpose — to display and teach the art of writing science fiction — Robin Scott Wilson’s anthology of twelve stories followed by author commentaries, Paragons: Twelve Master Science Fiction Writers Ply Their Craft, cannot be called a success. Only eight stories qualify as science fiction, even by the loosest definition, and the stories hardly represent the full range of possibilities in the genre — there are, for example, no stories involving space travel. Wilson’s introductions about the elements of fiction — “Plot”, “Character”, “Setting”, “Theme”, “Point of View”, and “Style” — provide pretty much what one would get out of any creative writing text or class, with little about the peculiar demands of science fiction (and the pieces are, Wilson announces, only “minor rewrites” of the introductions in his similarly structured 1973 anthology, Those Who Can: A Science Fiction Reader). And, considered as tutorials on the craft of writing fiction, the authors’ commentaries are rarely helpful; when they happen to discuss how they wrote the stories, it usually comes down to: I thought about this, I wanted to deal with that, then I decided to throw in this, out of nowhere came that, and somehow it all worked out. The implication that each story demands its own writing process may be accurate enough, but that hardly qualifies as useful advice to the neophyte writer.

Yet his charming and occasionally self-deprecating language suggests that Wilson himself doubts the educational value of this project; strikingly, his introduction features a long quotation from John W. Campbell, Jr. stating that writers are most effective when they deliberately ignore other people’s advice! So one could see the pedagogical framework of Paragons simply as a pretext for a collection of superior stories and stimulating essays; and judged by those expectations, Paragons is clearly a success. Further, its publication at this time seems to invite a reconsideration of the role played by Wilson in the modern history of science fiction.

While Hugo Gernsback and John W. Campbell, Jr. — who helped to create the modern genre — had more interest in literary values than is generally acknowledged, they did envision science fiction as a literature primarily focused on scic-
ence, dedicated to providing scientific information, offering scientific ideas, and exploring the possible implications of new scientific developments. By the 1950s, a few dissenting voices were emerging — editors H.L. Gold and Anthony Boucher, reviewers Damon Knight and James Blish — who foreshadowed the full-blown “New Wave” revolution of the 1960s promoted by Judith Merril, Michael Moorcock, and Harlan Ellison. While these people had more interest in science than is generally acknowledged, they did regard science fiction primarily as a form of literature that happened to employ exotic devices and environments. In other words, science was no longer the central element; they felt that science fiction writers should try to be scientifically accurate for the same reason that historical novelists should try to be historically accurate, but it was not a major concern in writing.

In potted histories like this one, Wilson is rarely mentioned as a major New Wave figure, but he has arguably had the greatest — and the longest-lasting — influence. Merril, Moorcock, and Ellison found themselves editing jobs, briefly influenced the field with their editorial pronouncements, then abandoned proselytizing for other activities. In contrast, Wilson took the position that “If we want science fiction to be superior literature, we have to train writers,” so he helped to establish the annual Clarion workshops, where talented newcomers could be taught by experienced science fiction writers. Though Wilson’s Clarion-related publications — three anthologies of student stories along with *Those Who Can* — were not successful, the workshops themselves, now split into Clarion East in Michigan and Clarion West in Washington, continue to this day, and they have trained a large number of today’s major authors, including four contributors to *Para- gons* (James Patrick Kelly, Pat Murphy, Kim Stanley Robinson, and Lucius Shepard).

From one perspective, the Clarion workshops deserve nothing but praise. Of course, science fiction writers should strive to meet high literary standards, and new writers can benefit from the advice and instruction of experienced writers. Reading today’s science fiction magazines, and comparing the stories to those in the magazines of the 1960s, one observes noteworthy improvements in their literary quality, and the direct and indirect influence of Clarion was a major factor in those improvements.
But the Clarion workshops have attracted criticism as well as praise. On a personal level, some resent the perceived "Clarion Mafia" of former instructors and students who allegedly enjoy opportunities and connections denied to those who never joined the club. The key Clarion technique — having stories reviewed by other writers — may impose conformity and stifle originality; Harlan Ellison, for example, gleefully relates how his now-classic story, "Repent, Harlequin! Said the Ticktockman", was savaged in a workshop led by Knight. While Ellison was stubborn enough to resist this unhelpful feedback, other, less willful writers might succumb to it. More broadly, a vigorous emphasis on literary quality, and a corresponding de-emphasis of scientific content and ideas, can lead to stories which may be excellent fiction but do not seem to be excellent *science fiction*.

Consider Nancy Kress's "The Price of Oranges", one of two stories chosen by Wilson to exemplify mastery of "Plot." While there is much to admire in the story's sophisticated examination of attitudes towards progress, its plot was discomfiting: a sweet, simple-minded old man discovers that walking through the back of his closet in 1988 leads him to a warehouse in 1937. Where did this time machine or portal come from? Since it coincides with two artificial structures in different time periods, this cannot be a spontaneous natural phenomenon; someone must have constructed it. Undoubtedly the previous occupant of the man's apartment. But if he left the apartment voluntarily, he would have turned off or dismantled his time machine first; if he left involuntarily, surely the remarkable powers of its closet would have been noticed by the landlord while cleaning out the apartment for the next tenant. Also, there are several logical reactions to news of a time machine in someone's closet, ranging from "Let's talk to the scientists at the university" to "Let's make some real money out of this," that never occur to any characters — giving Kress's story the aura of an idiot plot. So, while "The Price of Oranges" passed muster in the workshop at Sycamore Hill (as Kress reports), it would be found wanting in a workshop consisting of, say, regular *Analog* readers.

Is this nerdish nit-picking? To Clarion regulars, probably. But to Wilson's considerable credit, *Paragons* includes writers who do not embody the Clarion philosophy, whose comments offer grounds for other criticisms of "The Price of Oranges." Greg Bear notes that "Most of my stories draw the lives of characters within larger characters, exploring how
individuals react to change within a larger setting. Science fiction stories at their most ambitious model changes in nations, in cultures, even in species and worlds.” An unambitious science fiction story examines one person who finds a time machine in his closet, resulting more or less in a fantasy (the resemblance to C.S. Lewis’s *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* is overt); an ambitious science fiction story examines a world where K-Mart sells “Make-Your-Closet-a-Time-Machine” kits. Bruce Sterling praises Stanislaw Lem’s view that “science fiction would be better off abandoning narrative and character entirely, rather than debasing the enormous majesty of SF’s natural thematics with outworn narrative kitsch borrowed from pulp thrillers, bastardized fairy tales, and outworn pre-industrial myths” and says that “Lem ranks with Olaf Stapledon as a monumental refutation of the notion that science fiction writers are storytellers.” “The Price of Oranges” is an excellent *story*, a nicely modernized fairy tale, but lacks “the enormous majesty of SF’s natural thematics.”

While reading *Paragons*, I noticed something else about the Clarion approach to science fiction. As noted in Sterling’s delightful “Appendix: A Workshop Lexicon” (the only feature of the book that might really help novice writers), Ursula K. Le Guin’s essay “Science Fiction and Mrs. Brown” laments the general scarcity of “the common, everyday little person” in the genre. But Mrs. Brown is well represented in *Paragons* by Kress’s grandfather, the laundry workers in Kelly’s “Monsters”, the boxer in Shepard’s “Beast of the Heartland”, and the bored housewife of Karen Joy Fowler’s “Lily Red”, while protagonists with intelligence tend to be adolescents (Bear’s “Sisters”, Robinson’s “Glacier”, Pat Cadigan’s “Pretty Boy Crossover”) or madmen (Joe Haldeman’s “Feedback”, John Kessel’s “Buddha Nostril Bird”). Taking too many creative writing classes inculcates the belief that it is childish to write about capable people who take action to improve the world. Nonetheless, some science fiction unfashionably insists that such people do exist, will exist in the future, and are worth writing about. But you would never know that from reading *Paragons*.

I offer these observations not to be polemical (*please*, no impassioned letters of protest from Nancy Kress fans!) but to illustrate the unannounced value of *Paragons*: your reactions to its stories and essays will function as a litmus test to show where you stand in a long-standing debate about the

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nature and purposes of science fiction, and they will stimulate you to reexamine what you believe about science fiction and why you believe it. If education means making people think, not telling people what to think, then *Paragons* is an educational book, and its publication reaffirms Wilson's status as one of the great educators of science fiction.

— Gary Westfahl

In Harvest of Stars (1993) and The Stars are Also Fire (1994), Poul Anderson began an ambitious project. The tale of how a private corporation and its visionary CEO, the symbolically named Anson Guthrie, defeat Earth’s repressive, left-wing government and secure outer space for humanity successfully combined many of Anderson’s traditional themes with an able handling of such cyberpunkish tropes as virtual reality and nanotechnology. As the story unfolds, Guthrie, now a personality download, leads a desperate expedition to Alpha Centauri to found a colony free from Earth’s repression. Later, on Earth, a World Federation evolves, controlled by the Teramind, an artificial intelligence. Under its guidance Earth achieves peace, but also stagnation. The strongly libertarian citizens of Luna have been forced to join the Federation, though some form a rogue colony on the asteroid Proserpina. Generally successful, Harvest of Stars and its sequel are marred only by occasional long-windedness and by Anderson’s use of his fiction to ride contemporary political hobby horses.

Harvest the Fire is pretty much free of those faults. A mere novella, it has been plumped up with big print and twenty-four pages of fairly dull illustrations by Vincent Di Fate. The story is set far enough in the future to rule out discussion of extraneous twentieth-century political issues. Other problems do beset the book, but more on those later.

As the tale opens, the protagonist, a pilot named Jesse Nicol, bemoans the fact that he’s a mediocre poet. His genome was tailored to give him the talent to write great verse, but he hasn’t accomplished anything substantial. The high point of the book occurs early on, when Nicol visits a virtual-reality simulacrum of Jorge Borges to discuss his problem and then decides to seek inspiration in space. Meanwhile, on the Moon, a plot is afoot. Lirion, a leader of Proserpina, is negotiating with Venator, a personality download who represents the Teramind, for more anti-matter, but the Teramind has decided to shut down the solar system’s only source of that commodity. At this point things get both complex and familiar. We learn that Lirion, a Heinlein-style rascal statesman, expects his negotiations to fail, and is actually on the Moon
to meet with the Underground and steal the anti-matter. To do this, however, he needs a spaceship pilot who can withstand high accelerations. Urion therefore entraps Nicol using a seductive young woman, drugs in his food, and a framed murder charge. If this sounds melodramatic, that’s because it is. Nicol learns the truth just in time, and then, refusing to believe either Urion or Venator, makes his own terms, thereby assuring both his happiness and his success as a poet.

This isn’t Anderson at his best. The space-opera plot is predictable and the characters are unattractive. Nicol is little more than a selfish, immature crybaby. Urion may have the best interests of his people in mind, but he acts like a thug and dresses like a character from a Flash Gordon serial. Venator, the personality download, potentially the most interesting character in the story, unfortunately spends most of the book locked in a closet on Urion’s spaceship. An equally serious problem involves language. At his best Anderson is a master of what Ursula Le Guin calls “the language of Elfland,” the slightly elevated tongue of heroes and myth. Here, however, it just doesn’t work. Anderson’s elevated prose makes Nicol’s poetic funks seem all the more juvenile, and the quasi-Shakespearean language of the Lunarians is hard to read with a straight face. This sounds like a harsh judgment, but consider this scene in which Urion advises two cronies on how to behave in front of Nicol:

Lirion addressed Seyant: “Remember, be not too blatant. Watch for my signal to quell yourself, lest we overdo.”

The other scowled, offended. “I understand. Have I not already been working with him?”

A trill sounded. Seyant stiffened. Hench gripped the arms of his chair.

The coolness of a skipper came upon Lirion. “Admit them,” he directed the door.

Even the best writer is allowed an occasional dud line, but much of Harvest the Fire, unfortunately, is written in this kind of language. Over the years I’ve read a lot of Anderson’s fiction and I count such classics as Tau Zero and The Boat of a Million Years among my favorites. This story just isn’t in their class. Readers who are already familiar with the series may want to read this book to find out what happens next, but I wouldn’t recommend it to anyone else.

— Michael M. Levy

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Clarke has produced several earlier bibliographical works dealing with tales of the future, prophesies of wars, and similar matters, e.g., *The Tale of the Future... 1644-1976* (1961, 1972, 1978), *Voices Prophesying War 1763-1984* (1968, 1992), and *The Pattern of Expectation, 1644-2001* (1979), and has established himself as the pre-eminent scholar in the field. In this collection he presents sixteen examples of what he has been writing about, "a return journey to the future as it used to be" (p. 1). He goes on to place these works in the context both of history and of numerous similar tales that found their way to publication in the 43 years before the beginning of the Great War, World War I. Developing technology, the idea of progress, fiction as vehicle for promulgation of ideas, all came together in the second half of the eighteenth century in the tale of the future. In one of the most interesting such works, the anonymous *The Reign of George VI, 1900-1925* (1763; 1972, edited by I.F. Clarke), the utopian future is brought about by the victorious monarch's twenty years of war leading to conquest and rule over Europe, North America, and much of the rest of the world, but the wars are still fought as in the eighteenth century — technology has not yet begun to play a significant role. Only a few years later in similar works the skies were filled with balloons and planes, the seas with submarines and steamships, and the land with monster artillery, changing the face of warfare forever. When combined with the constant perturbations of diplomatic maneuvering and nationalistic posturing, there was a constant threat that the next war would be fought with different weapons, for different goals, and probably without mercy.

Prior to "The Battle of Dorking" there had been tales of the future, some of which described wars to come. But it was the lightning-fast German conquest of France in 1870 that caused the English in particular to worry about "the new kind of warfare" that led to "national nervousness" (p. 13). "Dorking" was an immediate success: six reprints of the magazine version (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, May 1871) in less than a month, a pamphlet published in June that sold 110,000 copies by July, an attack on its "alarmism" by the Prime Min-

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ister in September, and new concern on the part of the com-
mon man, both in England and elsewhere.

As the pun in its title demonstrates, Clarke’s introductory
“The Paper Warriors and Their Fights of Fantasy” is both schol-
arily and witty, and it is, from a literary point of view, the
best writing in the book. Most of these stories have little
literary quality in the usual sense of the term. They are for
the most part narratives of technological wonders, spiced with
a few minor attempts at characterization and scenic descrip-
tion. Exceptions are the progenitor of them all, Brigadier Sir
George Tomkyns Chesney’s “The Battle of Dorking”, Sir Arthur
Conan Doyle’s “Danger”, and to a lesser extent Frederick
Britten Austin’s “Planes!” (which reads very much like The
Red Badge of Courage) and Jack London’s “The Unparalled
Invasion”.

“The Battle of Dorking: Reminiscences of a Volunteer” is
told to his grandchildren fifty years later by the Volunteer
himself. This approach gives an immediacy and clarity to
the events of the lightning invasion that destroyed the Brit-
ish Empire and left England, stripped of its colonies, impov-
erished by the huge reparations exacted, and barely able to
sustain its population, many of whom like the Volunteer’s
grandchildren are departing for other more prosperous lands.
All this could have been prevented, the old man says, if his
country had not been so shortsighted, so sure that they lived
in a “commercial millennium,” never recognizing that all the
country’s wealth came from overseas. “A nation too selfish
to defend its liberty could not have been fit to retain it” (p.
73); in these circumstances the valiant efforts of the narrator
and other barely-trained, ill-supported militia quickly col-
lapsed before the disciplined German invaders.

The other fifteen items in the collection, ten British, two
American, and one each translated from French, German, and
Swedish, deal for the most part with similar easy conquests.
They are worth reading for their then-new approach to war.
A common note is that the defeated nation has failed, for a
variety of reasons (apathy, penny-pinching, lack of foresight,
and even downright stupidity on the part of politicians, mer-
chants, and the military), to anticipate the ease with which
the enemy is able to use new methods of warfare to his ad-

tantage.

Individual stories range from Albert Robida’s “La Guerre
au vintième siecle”, with a French superhero who personally
takes part in victorious submarine, ironclad, air, biological, and chemical warfare, to “The Secret of the Army Aeroplane” by A.A. Milne (later of Winnie the Pooh-fame), a light-hearted foiling of a German spy-plot by a couple of Bertie Wooster-like characters. Other, more realistic stories deal with the fall of an over-extended empire; sneak attacks by the carefully prepared against the woefully unready; the forerunners of tanks against trenches; dreadnoughts against obsolete warships; submarine tactics, including starving the enemy by torpedoing food-supply ships; quickly devised anti-submarine tactics to win the day; joint action by western nations to wipe out the “Yellow Peril”; total war against civilians; old style armies of men, horses, and artillery easily defeated by relatively weak airpower; division of the loser’s lands by the victors; and the “triumphant progress... approaching perfection” (p. 280) of indiscriminate bombing of soldiers, civilians, hospitals. The details are different, but many of the methods predicted became part of warfare in World War I and later — but few paid attention at the time.

Similar projections of wars yet-to-be have continued to appear up to the present day, e.g., such best sellers as General Sir John Hackett’s The Third World War (1978) and Tom Clancy’s Red Storm Rising (1986), and such less successful works as Floyd Gibbons’s The Red Napoleon (1929) and Norman Spinrad’s Russian Spring (1991). As with the stories in this book, subsequent history has proven them wrong — so far. With these earlier prophesies Clarke succeeds in showing why such fiction is worth reading.

— Arthur O. Lewis


Paul Di Filippo’s Ribofunk collects eleven previously published stories and two new works, all of which reflect Di Filippo’s conviction that biology has as much potential to inform and inspire science fiction as physics or astronomy. Still, while Di Filippo’s stories are on the whole more successful than not, with few exceptions they remain noteworthy more as thought experiments than as fiction.

The science fiction elements of Di Filippo’s stories generally relate to biotechnology, particularly genetic engineer-
ing. Of the various novel technologies in *Ribofunk*, transgenics or splices are most central. Genetically engineered creatures of varying intelligence and abilities, splices are private property intended to serve as slave labor. Without access to the dietary supplements manufactured by their parent companies (provided to each splice via the creature's lawful owner) splices die. Throughout the collection, splices fill a variety of roles from companion-domestic and bodyguard to lie detector and sex toy. A particularly intelligent rogue splice named Krazy Kat serves as the collection's one recurring — if shadowy — villain. Convinced that humanity's treatment of splices is unjust, Krazy Kat seeks to use a violent terrorist agenda to free all splices. Although Krazy Kat is a villain who turns up repeatedly, the most interesting splices Di Filippo offers here are not genetically engineered comic-book-style super villains, but instead the characters from a children's book given life in "McGregor."

Although several stories in *Ribofunk* touch on the injustices perpetrated against splices, "McGregor" does the most to make clear the extent of that injustice, and, in doing so, manages to reveal a great deal about how splices live under the legal and moral limitations humanity imposes on them. Even granting the fact that Di Filippo has the advantage of canned righteous indignation on his side — after all, he does set forth the starting premises of his fictional world — the story's novelty in concert with its moral outrage lends it an eerie effectiveness. Set in a biological Disney World where Beatrix Potter's animal characters are intelligent, living creatures who perform daily shows for park visitors, "McGregor" goes behind the scenes after closing time, both depicting the abuse the park's sadistic Mr. McGregor heaps on the bioengineered animals and contextualizing that abuse relative to the unexceptional, everyday injustices that the splices face. Into this ugly setting returns an escapee, the park's former Peter Rabbit, now a cigarette-smoking, militant, armed member of the splice-slavery abolition movement, intent on leading the other splices to freedom. McGregor, whose fifty-one percent human genome gives him legal status denied to the park's other "workers," recalls the skewed logic of racial percentages that was so recently a reality in South Africa. It is the one percentage point of human genome above fifty that allows McGregor to exercise his tyranny and inspire Peter Rabbit to revolutionary frenzy. More generally, though, it is the wild juxtaposition of characters from children's literature — who are given real-world, grownup drives and per-
versions — with capitalist economics, biotechnology, and semi-Marxist revolutionary zeal that makes the story effective.

The collection’s second standout is “Cockfight”, an equally intriguing but far more lighthearted story whose appeal also derives partly from its premise, which is something of a surprise in a science fiction collection. “Cockfight” concerns a Texas-born redneck and ecohazard cleanup worker who ends up dueling with a dangerous opponent who very much wants to kill him. Although the duel itself is brief, much of the story’s interest derives from the buildup to the fight. Just as importantly, though, the story succeeds because Di Filippo creates an authentic voice for its narrator. Despite the man’s failings, he ultimately comes across as an engagingly sympathetic tough-guy figure in a society that is both intriguingly novel and surprisingly familiar.

Di Filippo also makes good use of his one recurring protagonist despite the fact that he is a stock character. Three first-person stories written in the hard-boiled mode concern the same unnamed Boston private detective who first appears in the previously published “The Boot”. In the collection’s two new stories — “Blankie” and “The Bad Splice” — the character has joined the Unit for Polypeptide Classification and Monitoring, better known as the Protein Police, a position that deals exclusively with crimes involving genetic engineering and biotechnology. Least noteworthy of these three stories is “The Bad Splice”, which features the former P.I.’s run-in with Krazy Kat in a competently conceived but altogether unexceptional story. Far more successful are “The Boot” and “Blankie”, two successful homages to Raymond Chandler’s brand of hard-boiled fiction.

More parody than homage, “The Boot” is Di Filippo’s one brief nod to chaos theory in the collection. In it the narrator attempts to recapture stolen prototype biotechnology that could allow the thief to make a fortune by using chaos theory to predict the outcome of various games of chance. The plot’s pace brings the reader from novelty to novelty fast enough to both maintain and build interest, even though the details do not always hold up to close scrutiny. More impressive than this entertaining story is “Blankie”, which not only echoes Chandler’s narrative style but also chronicles society’s seamy side as Chandler so often did. Here, the detective tracks down a pervert who is systematically sabotaging a company’s child-minding, semi-live blanket, making it into a death trap.
for the children it babysits. In “Blankie” Di Filippo uses Chandler’s model to especially good effect, partly because the story’s more serious subject matter leads him to take the narration (and hence, its events and characters) more seriously but also because he pays greater attention to the elements of biotechnology that the story involves. As a consequence, Di Filippo more fully interests the reader in the story, its fictional biotechnology, and, finally, the society and characters it depicts. In other words, Di Filippo better instills that ever-elusive sense of wonder.

Clearly, when Di Filippo’s short stories work, they work partly because of their novel subject matter. At times, though, this novelty shades almost imperceptibly into gimmicks — and gimmicks in fiction either work well or they fail. At times, many will find Di Filippo’s fiction tiresome, mainly due to an over-reliance on tricks that simply don’t work. For instance, “Big Eater”, another Krazy Kat story, is told by a narrator who suffers from a Tourette-like syndrome that causes him to speak in rhymes. The result, after 25 pages, is predictable. The story has merits, but to appreciate them readers must exercise considerable patience with an artless rhyme scheme. A more or less representative section of the story gives an impression of how it reads:

The projex had been old when I was a tad; now they looked ancientoer than Adam’s NAD. Unsmart buildings lined dingy streets; hustling nonfranches littered the plazas of geocrete. Each had a scam or a story to tell; a tale of woe or something to sell. (p. 74)

Here, Di Filippo’s narration is especially (although admittedly purposefully) jarring. Purposeful or not, though, the prose rankles. The same problem crops up at other points in the collection, whether or not intentionally.

In “One Night in Television City”, for example, a teenage narrator’s attempt to join a gang called The Body Artists offers ample opportunity for Di Filippo to interest and intrigue his readers through his attention to setting, minor characters, and fictional biotechnology — and, in the author’s defense, he is highly successful here. At the same time, though, the story’s narration tends to detract from rather than build on the story’s strengths. Consider the story’s opening paragraph:
I'm frictionless, molars, so don't point those flashlights at me. I ain't going nowhere, you can see that clear as hubble. Just like superwire, I got no resistance, so why doncha all just gimme some slack? (p. 1).

Beneath the excess verbiage, the reader can discern the narrator's basic point, but does the excess verbiage serve any useful purpose? Unlike science fiction writers who define their created terminology smoothly in the course of their stories or present idiosyncratic narrative voices painlessly, Di Filippo has trouble in both areas. As the story's opening suggests, he goes wrong not by offering too much too soon, but by offering too much that is too contrived to no good effect. Whether or not the character in question might reasonably be expected to speak an English that relies on excessive 1990s- and/or technology-based figures of speech ("clear as hubble" and "like superwire"), Di Filippo's short fiction gains nothing and loses at least a little by having him do so. The same no-gain-some-loss situation applies more generally to the collection as a whole because characters so often conceal the point of their dialogue or narration behind unnecessary distractions.

On the whole, then, Ribofunk is a readable but not particularly exceptional collection. Nonetheless, Di Filippo's best stories here are entertaining and thoughtful enough to recommend them, and even the collection's lesser stories have redeeming points. Although Di Filippo does not consistently construct engaging whole stories, both his minor characters and the backgrounds against which he sets his tales are objects of considerable interest. The briefly glimpsed characters, the fringe groups, the criminal movements, the technologies, and the subcultures remain noteworthy. In virtually every story, these various background elements command interest — even if only for one reading — at least for their entertainment value.

— Jeffrey V. Yule


If you believed that you were a person who had no secrets, how would you feel if events suddenly began to indicate that your life was all a lie? Molly Travers, heroine of Lisa Goldstein's Walking the Labyrinth, is just such a person. When
a private investigator involves Molly in a quest to find some missing family members, Molly discovers her connection to a troop of famous Vaudeville magicians, the Allalie family (read "all a lie") who specialize in educating people about the nature of the illusions that underlie all apparently mundane experiences. Furthermore, there is a mysterious house in England with an unexplainable basement labyrinth that seems to transform to match the hidden psychological issues of each person who walks the maze. Has something evil and deadly happened in Molly’s family history? Why is Molly being followed by a flat-capped man? Why did that man suddenly become a corpse? What happened to the missing pages from the book Molly’s grandmother wrote? Eventually Molly finds the answers to these questions along with a deeper understanding of herself and her relationships with others.

Although the tone of the novel is that of a summer mystery/romance and deceptively light, Goldstein is no lightweight thinker. Winner of the American Book Award for her fine Holocaust novel, *The Red Magician* (1982), Goldstein explores human issues through what critic John Clute calls a “magic-realist looking glass.” Her protagonists tend to be alienated from mainstream life. Molly Travers is obviously bright, spunky and liberated, but has never found much of a goal for herself, and has moved and changed jobs frequently. As the novel begins, Molly is locked into a self-destructive relationship with Peter, a handsome and charming journalist who only seems to be interested in himself. Certainly Molly is ripe for a paradigm shift in consciousness. Goldstein adeptly describes the changes Molly undergoes as she walks her own emotional labyrinth.

The labyrinth is a setting common to magic realism through which the nature of power and powerlessness can be explored. Several of Goldstein’s previous novels and stories have been set in urban labyrinths — neighborhoods, streets and buildings that seem to change drastically without notice. In *Amaz*, the mythical third-world setting of Goldstein’s novel *Tourists*, there is no rational way to go from place to place, and the daily news is told with a deck of cards. The city itself seems to have a life and will of its own that must be considered in any personal decision. Like other Goldstein characters, Molly learns a lesson about power and finds that the terrible minotaur at the center of the labyrinth is herself and her own selfish desires, those dangerous emotions that would force others to give up their free will and do her bidding.

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When Callan, Molly's grandfather, asks her what she has learned, she responds, "I learned that illusion is a way to truth. That illusion can reveal truth, a deeper truth. That there are things beyond or beneath or on the other side of what most people — of what Peter thinks of as reality. I learned... Oh, God. I've made another turning of the labyrinth."

Goldstein is a writer who, from the beginning, has challenged her readers to rethink their own labyrinthian realities. Walking the Labyrinth is an enjoyable shove in the right psychological direction. Recommended.

— Sandra J. Lindow


Panda Ray is aimed at young readers but will be of interest to adults as well. It takes place in a fantasy universe, the main dimension of which is contemporary Earth. Ten-year-old Christopher Zimmerman is the youngest child in a three-generation family of aliens whose purpose on Earth is never made clear. The family's main priority is to blend into the human population of a small Pennsylvania town, but Chris finds himself ever more strongly tempted to exercise his special powers and to hint about them to his human classmates.

Chris's childish rebelliousness coincides with enough hints of other alien activities to bring the FBI into the area, looking for these people, about whom they seem to know a good deal. Two agents come to Chris's school, asking about children who have been telling especially imaginative stories — shortly after Chris has told his friends that he has seen Shakespeare and knows him to have been a transvestite.

Chris has picked up such knowledge by traveling with his similarly rebellious grandfather, who has turned his bathroom into a mathematically designed interdimensional vessel. There are six dimensions into which they can travel:
The present; Was (the past); Where (space); Will Be (the future); and Isn't (where nothing is stable, as in a dream). The seventh dimension, What, is known to exist, but Gramps knows no one who has traveled there.

When Debra, Chris’s mother, learns of these travels and the stories that threaten to expose them to the authorities, she decides that Chris must be scooped out, his alien powers taken away so that he will become a typical human. Warned of this, Chris flees with Gramps, hiding in other dimensions, where his mother pursues them. Their flight eventually takes them to Panda Ray, a wise and mysterious being who seems to understand the workings of this complex universe. He places Chris alone in the Sea of Isn’t, the dream dimension where nothing is stable. This proves to be a testing world for Chris, and he learns how human knowledge of his presence on Earth threatens to convert him into a destructive force. Eventually returning to his own time and place in Pennsylvania, he tells his sister, Kaelin, that he has learned he is a kind of atomic bomb, and therefore must keep his nature secret from humanity. He returns, like the Ancient Mariner, sadder and wiser, though only a little older.

Clearly, the outlines of this tale are familiar, and will remind readers of C.S. Lewis’s *The Chronicles of Narnia* and similar works. Nevertheless, Kandel’s conceptions are original, and the telling is delightful and often humorous, such as Panda Ray’s blending of Genesis creation story with *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Ray points out that in fact woman was made before man. Such passages make this short novel a good candidate for family oral reading to children ten or older.

— Terry Heller


The poetry in Sandra Lindow’s *A Celebration of Bones*, her third collection, is clearly the work of a poet experienced at her craft. Although in the title poem, “A Celebration of Bones”, the bones are her own, revealed as “[a] triumph of efficient design” (p. 9), the bones of the title are, for the most part, the bones of the dead or the extinct. In particular, Lindow is fascinated by the fossilized bones of dinosaurs, as in “Sau­rian Bones”. But it is not the bones themselves, nor even the
dinosaurs, that are the true subject of her poetry, although their presence constantly informs the poems, so that fossilization becomes more and more a metaphor for the suspension in which even the most recent past is held. What engages her most specifically and most deeply is the interaction of the past and the present as the bones are revealed to the curiosity of the paleontologist/poet. In "Deep Tides", for example, Lindow explores how the evolutionary determinants of the human past, such as the presence of the Moon and its associated tides, affect the living. In "Continental Drift" and "The Paleopathology of Bones", geological theory becomes a telling metaphor for the nature of the relationship between lovers. It is where this engagement holds the balance of past and present most truly in equilibrium that the poems are strongest.

There are a few weaker poems in the collection. On the one hand, for example, in "Short History of Paradise: A Pantoum", the ingenuity of the form defeats any engagement with the subject: the balance is tipped over by too much poetic skill. In "Dinosaur Parents" the juxtaposition of Lisa Steinberg's death with the fossil discovery of a possibly cannibalistic dinosaur species tips the balance over by too much feeling. But these weaker poems are a minority.

The poet is not, moreover, always well served by her editor. The artwork makes the book very pretty, but it distracts from the poetry. There are too many footnotes (Lindow should trust her readers to look up any words they do not know), and they should be at the bottom of the page. Lindow should insist that her poems stand by themselves: their presentation is, after all, what the book is for.

Every poet loses equilibrium now and then: Lindow is no exception. But she is more often in balance than not. Revealed in these poems are the finely tuned sensibility, the respect for language, and the engagement with the subject that are the hallmarks of a genuine talent.

— Patricia Monk


Not only is this book wonderful to hold and to look at, it is a pleasure to read. The cover's slightly matte finish enhances
the full-color illustration of the collection's title story, "Synthesis", and six more stories feature marvelous black and white illustrations by Elizabeth Bourne. Header and title designs are elegant and distinctive, without being overwhelming. But the deepest joy comes from the stories themselves.

All nine tales presented in this volume were originally published in Asimov's over a five-year stretch, from 1990 to 1995. Not having read them individually, I cannot speak as to their impact as stand-alone pieces, but as an ordered collection they are very powerful indeed.

The lead story, "Water Bringer", is apparently a low-key, somewhat trite tale of a misfit in dystopia. This future Earth suffers from a massive pre-Ice Age drought, and the characters are feeling the brunt of ecological change. The setting (dry, out west) and protagonist (a boy named Jeremy with a secret teleprojective power) bring to mind Zenna Henderson's "People" stories. The similarity ends there, though. The title of the story is deliberately misleading, as one hope after another is shown to be as empty as the river beds. Yet this story begins the threads of forgiveness, second chances, and self-reliance which binds all of the stories into a thematic whole.

Each of the nine is a snapshot of the same future from widely different locales, with "The Rain Stone" the only story taking place near the initial venue. "Second Change", for example, is plausibly set near the South Pole. Rosenblum takes care to orient her readers to Marsbase Down via a helo trip from McMurdo. In addition to setting, the same helo trip establishes the primary character traits of the protagonist, Dr. Reba Scott. Rosenblum's skill at this sort of efficient storytelling is so great as to be almost invisible. The author provides a plethora of details of the world as we know it as well as some of the world as her characters know it in order to create a mundane background against which to place on fantastical element per story.

"Synthesis" and "Entrada", for instance, feature a semi-standard computer-based version of virtual reality. If the fantastical element is not the miracle of wetware/hardware interfacing, it is the near-miracle of characters coming to terms with each other and their milieus without the intervention of a magic talisman. In fact, every story in this collection, even those with overtly fantastic elements, renders the fantastic inconsequential, peripheral.

*SFRA Review* #225, page 84
Readers come to understand during the course of "The Centaur Garden" that Ailene, the eponymous centaur, is the product of genetic manipulation no less than is the protagonist himself. Lonzo has been engineered to automatically analyze a person's pheromones and unconsciously secrete matching biochemicals. Both Ailene and Lonzo transcend genetics to discover what it means to be human.

"Flood Tide", perhaps the least fantastic tale, is the apparently plain story of a father and son participating in a sailboat race. They have been estranged by their mutual past and must negotiate a truce during a gale when their on-board navigation system goes down. As with all of Rosenblum's stories, this one is more meaty than it seems. The author has a distinctive voice and a grasp of the human condition that transcends genre. Recommended.

— Diane M. Poirier


This collection of stories and poems by Richard F. Searight, edited by his son Franklyn, is the second of three volumes intended to gather all of Searight's work. Much of the material is previously unpublished. Searight was a contemporary and friend of H.P. Lovecraft, and much of his work shows similar influences and themes.

The introduction by the editor is followed by six stories and twelve poems by the elder Searight. Only the title story (Weird Tales, 1934) and two of the poems have been previously published. "The Fire Shapes" is very much in the style of Lovecraft, even to the setting. Of the other stories, only one can be considered to be SF, one is a heroic fantasy, and two are contemporary, with no SF or fantasy elements.

The poems cover a variety of subjects: some have fantastic elements, one is sheerly romantic, and two have unusual subjects (the self-explanatory "Ode to Malted Milk", and another poem inspired by a pamphlet on harmonizing colors in men's accessories).

SFRA Review #225, page 85
The material is dated, but well-written. This small volume is an excellent footnote to the history of the genre, and is worth pursuing by those interested in weird fiction.
— W.D. Stevens


The introduction to this volume is by Elinor Mavor who, as an editor for Amazing Stories back around 1980, discovered one of Wightman's stories in the slush pile. Her attention was caught by the opening line of that story (which unfortunately is not included in this collection), and she began not only buying his stories for Amazing but recommending his work to other editors. For this, we owe her a vote of thanks. Her success is evidenced by the fact that, of the ten stories here, seven were published in Fantasy and Science Fiction and two appeared in other magazines. The remaining story has apparently not been published before.

The stories cover a broad range of subjects, and are difficult to classify. Mavor says that Wightman's specialty has been in satirizing technology and, indeed, that is evident in many of the stories. Others are not so easily categorized. "King of the Neanderthals", for instance, is a gem which manages to include ideas on the invention of logical thinking, the persistence of dogmatic beliefs, the reluctance of people to embrace change, the fragility of human gratitude, and a number of other ideas all wrapped up in an excellent story with believable and interesting characters. Many stories have bizarre settings and strange characters, but all make a point about people and the way they exist under strange circumstances.

Two of the stories are related, using the same setting and some of the same characters, but can stand alone. All of them provide unusual and original ideas. The bulk of the material was published between 1984 and 1990; one story was published as recently as 1994. Perhaps the appearance of this book will encourage the publication of yet more of Wightman's material.

— W.D. Stevens

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