

Janus

Becoming AURORA



Janus

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

A four-issue subscription to *Aurora* is available for \$6.00 within the US or \$8.00 outside the US. All subscriptions requested at former rates will be credited at the current rates. An issue returned because you failed to notify us of your change in address reduces your subscription by one issue. An accepted contribution (including a letter) increases your subscription by one issue.

Back issues of *Janus* and the program books for WisCons 3 and 4 are available for \$2.00 each, except \$4.00 for *Janus* 12/13 and \$5.00 for photocopies of *Janus* 1, 2, 3, 8, and 14. Include \$1.00 per order for postage and handling.

WHY YOU GOT THIS ISSUE

Issues delivered by mail have a letter code on the mailing label. Here's what it means: C = you contributed; M = you were mentioned or reviewed; S = you subscribe, and your last issue is indicated by number; T = we trade; and X = some other reason.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Janus is published by SF³; the Publications Committee consists of Susan Balliet, Christine Bloczynski, Janice Bogstad, Jeanne Gomoll, Dennis Hackbart, Neva Haycraft, Steven Vnicent Johnson, Philip Kaveny, Hank Luttrell, Diane Martin, Richard S. Russell, Georgie Schnobrich, and Peter Theron. /// Printed by the Brian Yocom Co., Madison, WI. /// All of the opinions in *Janus* are those of their authors and/or artists and are not necessarily reflections of the policies or opinions of the publisher. Any resemblance of any fictional character, written or depicted, to any real persons, living or dead, is coincidental. /// Copyright © 1980 by SF³. All rights revert to the original authors and artists.

SF³, Box 1624, MADISON, WI, 53701

Janus is becoming Aurora

The 19th issue of the magazine published by SF³ will be re-titled *Aurora*. The contract between SF³ and Jan Bogstad regarding use of the name *Janus* will not be renewed after December 31, 1980. We expect to continue to publish the same high quality magazine, and think the new name more accurately reflects the feminist nature of our endeavors.

We regret and apologize for the disruption of continuity to libraries and collectors. To keep things simple, we will continue our numbering system. All of *Janus*'s subscription and consignment responsibilities will be assumed by *Aurora*. Changes announced in *Janus* 17 as to the collective management of the magazine remain in effect, and are succeeding with gratifying efficiency. We hope you will continue to give us your much-appreciated encouragement and support.

Utterly coincidental—but poetically appropriate—were the findings made by Voyager 1's flyby of Saturn this November. It seems that no inner moon Janus appeared when the Voyager looked for it. (Janus was discovered about the time our magazine was originally named four years ago.) Instead, there were two new moons in approximately the same orbit, although neither intersected with that of the phantom Janus. We hoped to learn the names of these moons for possible use as our new magazine name, but a Pasadena scientist told us that the naming would occur in March next year at an international astronomical conference. Should the Madison SF group's zine ever split again, we predict astronomical catastrophe.

...

Theme for Next Issue

The theme for *Aurora* 19 will be connected to language and science fiction. We want to cover a broader range of communication than the word "language" implies, so the theme will be "More than Words". Articles could be on any of the many stories with themes emphasizing non-verbal or telepathic communication, as well as those dealing with language. We are looking for cover art that ties in. The deadline for preliminary cover drawings/concepts, as well as articles, is February 1, 1981. We are especially looking for book, film, and visual arts reviews. Interior art should be submitted by March 21, 1981. Please query before submitting any work (drawn or written). Send a SASE for a tentative table of contents and contributor's guidelines.

...

New Moon to Appear in March

Because prelims for her doctorate in comparative literature have been scheduled for late January, Jan Bogstad has had to postpone the publication of her magazine, *New Moon*, until March 1, 1981. Contributions of a political, feminist, or financial nature are welcome. Write to her at Box 2056, Madison, WI 53701.

...

Errata

The illustration on page 31 of *Janus* 17 was erroneously attributed to Mary Bohdanowicz. The artist was actually David D. Johnson.

...



ARE YOU ON THE MOVE?...TAKE HEED!—



SF³ Goes to WorldCon

About 20 Madison fans attended Noreascon in Boston. On Saturday morning we held a special Madison Science Fiction Group meeting. Due to the tremendous amount of other programming and the hard-to-find rooms, the event was unfortunately not well-attended. MadSTF members appeared on other program events, too. Hank Luttrell participated in one of the "Timebinding" series of panels, on fandom during the 60's. Jan Bogstad was on the panel, "Technology for Androgenous Futures". Jeanne Gomoll consulted with program chair Tony Lewis on feminist programming in general, as well as moderating "Post-holocaust Themes in Feminist SF". And, along with Greg Rihn, she presented "The Dead Cat Through History" slide show to a packed house. Greg was also chief projectionist in one of the two film rooms. Bill Hoffman, Vicky Loebel, Carl Marrs, and Julia Richards entered the masquerade with beautiful costumes representing Starbuck, Moon, Sparks, and Arienrhod from Joan Vinge's novel, *The Snow Queen*. Joan was particularly impressed with Bill's portrayal of the evil Starbuck when the quartet made a surprise appearance at a Vinge panel the next day.

If Hank Luttrell and Diane Martin had been paid overtime for the hours put in at the 20th Century Books table in the dealers' room, they would have gone home rich. As it was, the table (and the room as a whole) did very well. In fact, Hank has moved his store to larger quarters. The new address is 2501 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705.

Jan Bogstad Speaks at Conference

In September Jan Bogstad, with Barbara Emrys of Chicago, presented a panel on women and SF at the Chicago Women Writers' Conference. They discussed science fiction not only as literature, but also as a way of exploring alternative futures, and as a means of networking to bring women writers together.

Madison Programs at WindyCon

At WindyCon, Phil Kaveny moderated a panel called "Mass Marketing of Science Fiction". Panelists were guest of honor Robert Sheckly, fiction editor of *Omnif*; Sandra Turner, fiction editor of *Playboy*; Algis Budrys, science fiction critic and author; and Michael Resnick, jack of all genres.

A lively discussion took place, covering some of the exciting changes that have taken place as science fiction moves out of the ghetto and into the mass market.

Greg Rihn stood in for Jeanne Gomoll and presented what may be the last showing of "The Dead Cat Through History" slide show. As was the case at earlier showings, the audience reaction was mixed, with some people being very enthusiastic while others were quietly disgusted. With all this exposure, Jeanne is getting tired of the show and tentatively plans to replace it next season with a new slide show, "The Dead Cute, Trite Unicorn, and Other Over-used Fantasy Images, Better Dead". Suggestions and submissions are welcome.

Highlights of Special Programs

We've continued to hold special monthly meeting at the university, in Union South on the last Wednesday of each month while school's in session. The September meeting featured a slide

show and talk by Steven Vincent Johnson (artist guest of honor at upcoming Wiscon 5), showing the progression of his work over the past five years. Afterwards Richard Russell led a discussion of the 1979 Hugo nominees. In October everyone brought a trick and a treat. We entertained ourselves by demonstrations of rope twirling, juggling, and physical prowess while eating candy and listening to a recording of the radio play of H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*. In November, Richard Russell showed space slides and played excerpts from "The Planets", by Holst, as we discussed Voyager 1's flyby of Saturn.

Continuing Events

The Book of the Month Circle will resume meetings on the third Thursday of each month, after the holidays.

The Tolkien Society continues to meet on the third Sunday of each month.

The WisCon Committee will meet Sundays, January 11 and 25, and February 8 and 22, at the home of Russell & Martin, 2506 Kendall Ave., Madison, WI 53705. Phone 231-2916 (days) or 233-0326 (nights) for more information.

SF³ Annual Meeting

The SF³ annual corporation meeting was held in September. The following officers were elected, and committee chairs appointed:

President—Perri Corrick-West

Vice President—Janice Bogstad

Corresponding Secretary—

Christine Bloczynski

Recording Secretary—Richard Russell

Treasurer—Diane Martin

Convention Committee—Karen Jones
and Diane Martin, co-chairs,

Perri Corrick-West, deputy chair

Media Production Committee—

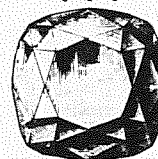
Susan Balliet

Program Committee—Philip Kaveny

Publication Committee—Diane Martin

Resources Committee—Neva Haycraft

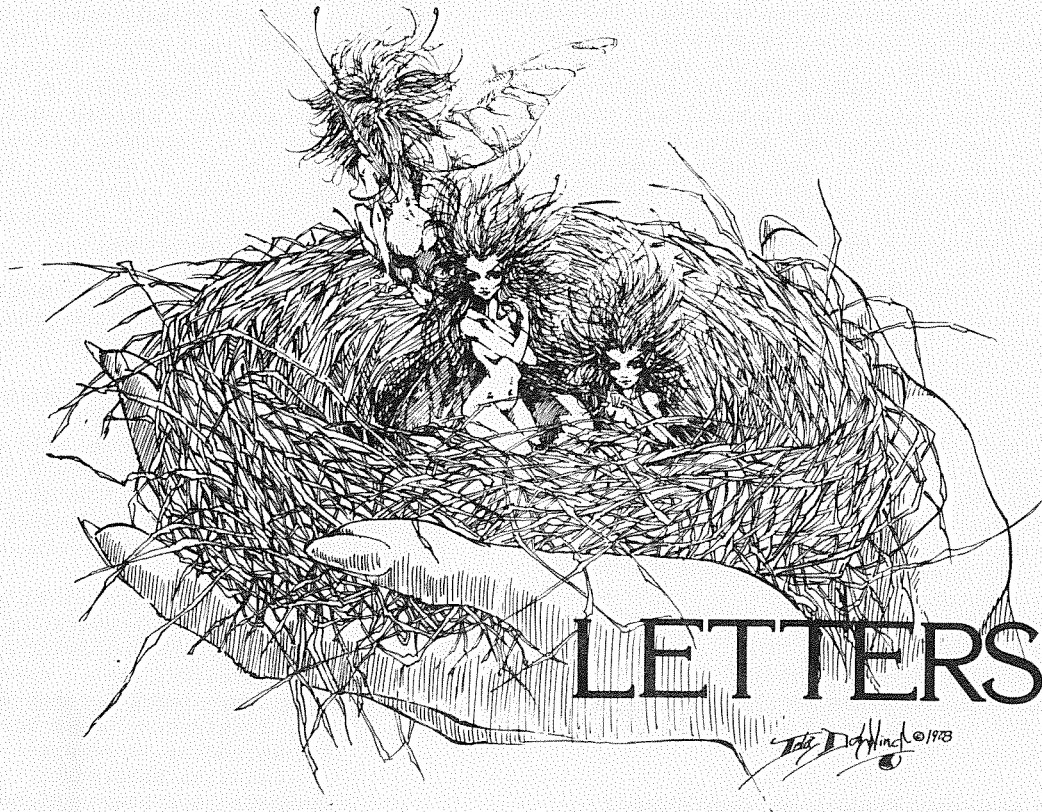
Copies of the minutes are available on request (enclose a SASE).



Susan Wood Dies

We were shocked and saddened to learn of the death of Susan Wood, November 12, 1980. Susan was an assistant professor at the University of British Columbia, and a long-time SF fan. She touched our lives in many ways, and we will miss her.

Susan's collection of Canadian literature is being kept intact at UBC-Vancouver for research purposes, as it contains many rare books and first editions. Her science fiction collection was willed to a friend, but has been sold with the proceeds going to a memorial scholarship at Carleton University in Ottawa. All other monies will go into this fund at her request so that students can continue her interest and enthusiasm in the literary field. [Courtesy of Elsie Wood, Susan's mother]



[Write to Janus % SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI, 53701. Include your name and address on the letter itself. Unless you specify otherwise, each letter (1) is assumed to be publishable, and, if published, (2) is subject to editing, (3) will be listed under your name, and (4) will be listed under your address.]

Welcome to Post-Holocaust America

Loren MacGregor
1614 Fell St. #5
San Francisco, CA
94117

...welcome to the world of post-holocaust America, in which the Holy Book is issued by *Reader's Digest* and no one can read it (and

not just because of the style, either); in which transit buses broadcast erotic thoughts to passengers at night; in which people fuck in the daylight, in the streets, and then get up, arrange their clothing, and leave, because to actually talk to one another is a violation of laws of privacy and individuality; in which people carry on stoned conversations, endlessly repeating the same things, without noticing.

The post-holocaust novel is an incredible teaching tool (Anyone for a debate about whether fiction entertains or instructs?) and a good way for a writer to explore how s/he feels about societal changes: how would a drastically lowered population affect the role of women; what would we do if all our natural resources of crude oil were consumed in a war? These are, of course, basic SF questions, and the presence of the pre-existing catastrophe makes it easier to concentrate on the answers rather than first exploring those questions.

It requires, I think, much more imagination to write a successful post-holocaust novel than to write a standard SF story, simply because there are so many things to consider. (I once wrote an article in which I started with the sentences, "Assume that all the world's oil resources are depleted. What happens? Well, first of all, rock bands go bankrupt....") Even small changes have enormous implications... and to write a good post-holocaust novel you have to know pretty accurately how the world of today works. That's why so few such novels are successful, and also why the successful ones are so refreshing, even if—or perhaps because—they are frequently grim....

More on "The Rape Patrol"

Kurt Cockrum
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[In Janus 17's letter column] Avedon Carol made an important point when she said, "Asimov was wrong when

he said that 'violence is the last refuge of the incompetent.' It is the first choice of the incompetent; it is the last refuge of the desperate." Violence is repellent to any thinking person; so at least I would like to think. But if the psychopath or "incompetent" who resorted to violence is taken out of the picture by some expeditious means (these days, rarely by due process of law), the people who do the "taking out" are at least still alive to do that kind of soul-searching....

All I know is TANSTAAEA (There Ain't No Such Thing As An Easy Answer). At least I'm still alive....

Gregory G. H. Rihn
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I'm sorry that
Jessica Salmonson [*Janus*
17 letter column] felt
she had to read my com-
parison of rapists to

"niggers" in an inverted manner.... The thing is that from the point of view of the rape patrol, a rapist is the same as a "nigger" from the point of view of a Klansman—a subhuman beast who may be exterminated on sight and without guilt—and without due process. Vigilantism is fascism, no matter who the victims are [nor] how "deserving" the persecutors/prosecutors feel they are. Liberation for rapists? In the final analysis, perhaps no one is more in need of liberation from the twisted trap of his torturous thoughts than the rapist. Liberation for women must lead to the liberation of men if it is a true liberation—liberation from misunderstanding and fear. A rape patrol is not likely to lessen fear and mistrust between men and women.

A better question is that of who begat the rapist's violence. No, not the victim. The true begetter of the violent act was the one who taught the rapist, consciously or unconsciously, implicitly or explicitly, that violence was an acceptable outlet for his hate, fear, and frustration, and that women were "deserving" victims. In all probability, the genesis of any human acts of violence could be traced back...through an unbroken line of teachers, wars and murders, beatings and rapes, back to the day the first human being raised its hand against another. It is up to each of us to break the chain, if we can....



The Camel Seen As a Horse

Genny Dazzo
88 Van Sicklen St.
Brooklyn, NY
11223

I must admit I was
really impressed with
Janus 17. I have never
believed that a committee
could get together to pro-

duce anything better than an individual could. (Maybe this just shows I'm from New York.) I was very wrong.... I'm not a fanzine fan, but with the quality of some of the fanzines I've read lately this is going to change....

[Actually, *Janus* has been a group effort for some time. The new committee structure formalized and reaffirmed what had already been happening. —Diane Martin]

Messages from Maia

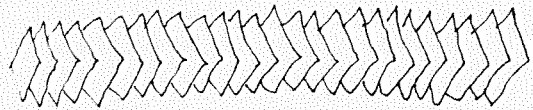
Maia

801 S. 18th St.
Columbus, OH
43206

Faanishness is fun,
but it's so nice to read a
fanzine that gives me some-
thing—in this case, many
things—to think about. I

particularly enjoyed the review of *Messages from Michael* ["You Don't Have To Call Us Michael" by Karen Jones in *Janus* 17]; it sounds as if the ideas in it are very similar to ideas in other "messages from" books, in particular the Seth books. I decided long ago that I didn't need to worry about the source of the messages, as long as the ideas proved useful. Perhaps they are really coming from nonphysical entities, or perhaps that "gimmick" is the only way of attracting attention....

Thank you, by the way, for publishing the letter [from Robert Frazier] mentioning that "The Dinner Party" would be in Boston during worldcon. I did see it, and it was worth the three-hour wait! Incidentally, the book on the embroidery should be published this month....



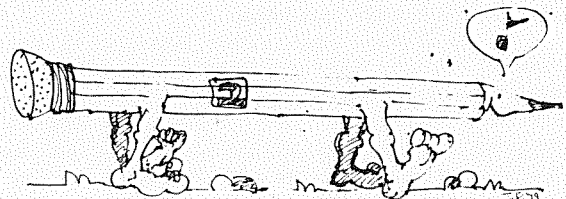
"Rappacini's Daughter" Not a Hoax

Alex Eisenstein
6208 N. Campbell St.
Chicago, IL
60659

...a pox* on Stu Shiffman, who leads everyone to believe that "Rappacini's Daughter" on *American Short Story* is another of his hoaxes ["Celluloid Fantasia", *Janus* 17]. It is indeed an excellent film, and of special interest, I believe, to feminists. It treats of love and selfishness and ego, and is exquisitely wrought, spare and sensuous all at once. It shocked me at the end, made my heart leap, my moral identities reel and twist. I loved it. Best film I've seen in—well, since *Carrie*. Be sure and catch it if/when it repeats, or get it for a con.

WAHF's

[We also heard from Suzy McKee Charnas, Ahrvid Engholm, Forlaget Bactrianus (a company), Robert Frazier, Gil Gaier, Hal W. Hall, Joan Hanke-Woods, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Phyllis Ann Karr, Gayle N. Netzer, Mike Rogers, and Lois Wickstrom.]



*A mild pox.

Excerpts from "When it Changed: Lesbians, Gay Men and Science Fiction fandom" by Pat M. Kuras and Rob Schmieder. Originally published in *Gay Community News*.

This was our first worldcon, and we were overwhelmed by the numbers: of fans, writers, and pieces of information. The Sheraton/Hilton complex where the convention was held resembled a huge living computer. The attendance of about 6000 broke all previous records for these conventions, and we saw just about all of our favorite SF writers at some point in the week-end.

Our first impression of the convention participants was dominated by the flamboyant costumes that seemed to be everywhere. During the discussions that went on at the convention it became obvious that we were in the midst of a strange mix of people who had been drawn to science fiction for radically different reasons. Many of the costumes betrayed a sexist sensibility that for many years was at the heart of almost all SF, and this sensibility was still very much alive at Noreascon 2.

However, we also encountered many gay people, feminists, and progressives of every stripe. These people were at the convention because present day science fiction has much to offer them. Science fiction is a fiction of ideas, and ideas coming from the minds of the new writers more and more concern progressive analyses of social issues. Progressivism is now almost taken for granted among SF writers and fans alike. This is still a recent development, however, and we were surprised to see so much political debate within the organization of the convention and in the convention programming. Fans are looking at SF from a more political perspective, and publishing fan-zines with strong political identities.

The progressive focus of this year's convention was perhaps best symbolized by its choice of Damon Knight and Kate Wilhelm as guests of honor. This pair have, in their separate fields, been trailblazers for forward-looking science fiction.

Saturday afternoon, we found our way to the press room, where we had our first encounters with homophobia in science fiction. The Tufts student making out our press passes said, "You don't really want me to put *Gay Community News* on these, do you?" To our retort, "Of course!" he responded with, "Well, if I were gay I sure wouldn't want to let anyone know about it." He then apologetically handed us a "special gift" along with our press kit—the 1980 *Fairies* desk calendar.

"The Closed Open Mind: Homophobia in Science Fiction Fantasy Stories" panel was possibly the first with an openly gay topic to be held at a worldcon. Around 200 fans attended the panel, more than attended most other small panels at the con. The participants in the panel were Elizabeth A. Lynn, Samuel R. Delany, Jerry Jacks, Norman Spinrad, and Frank M. Robinson.

The panel began with introductory statements by all the panel members. Lynn led off by saying that she felt the problem with gay and



Kate Wilhelm and Damon Knight

lesbian images in SF was not that they were awful, but that there are so few of them; SF is dominated by straight male WASP characters, and the absence of gay characters is matched by a dearth of women and people of color in SF. Delany disputed the notion that there are no awful characters, saying that there is, in fact, a long history of homophobic characterizations, and named as one of the more salient the Baron Harkenden in Frank Herbert's *Dune*.

Delany went on to discuss the notion of a dichotomy between allowing the writer full artistic freedom and the expectation that SF was a progressive genre of which one could demand a commitment to social and political responsibility. Spinrad came out in favor of "artistic freedom" in such a dichotomy, saying that "oppressed groups shouldn't tamper with freedom of expression, as they have more to lose than the majority in any clampdown on such freedom"—a familiar liberal cliché. Robinson then attacked this position as being unrealistic, and cited the history of censorship of gay material by straight editors, and the crying need of gay people for positive images in fiction. Jacks reinforced Robinson with a short history of homosexuality in science fiction, and the two most widely used homosexual formulas: the monosexual culture, which eagerly embraces the arrival of a member of the opposite sex; and homosexuality used as a mark of villainy.

Lynn explained that there are covert as well as overt rules for what may be written. Delany pursued this, saying that our cultural conditioning, which is heterosexist, determines the mind-set we bring to our writing, which is therefore straight, and that we can only break out of this by unrelentingly analyzing the unconscious, culture-conditioned components of our writing. He described *The Left Hand of Darkness* [by Ursula K. LeGuin] as an example of the "doomed homosexual relationship" plot, which ends with one of the lovers dying. "True artistic freedom," Delany said, "comes only with the abandonment of such clichés.... Narrative conventions victimize artists." Lynn echoed this sentiment with her insistence that the tension between the unconscious and the conscious must be explored

Noreascon Two

by the writer of worthwhile fiction.

Sunday afternoon we visited the art show, which took up most of a large hall on the upper floor of Hynes Auditorium. Going through the thousands of paintings, drawings, sculptures and artworks in other media was exhausting and not very rewarding. Most of the artists exhibiting were amateurs, and will likely remain so; and amateurs and professionals alike showed little imaginative range. Spacemen, moonscapes, unicorns and armored characters abounded; art that deviated from the iconographic and conceptual clichés of standard SF illustrations were rare.

Sunday night the presentation of the Hugo awards, one of the two highest honors given to science fiction works, took place in the Hynes Auditorium. We got there early in order to get a good seat, and were rewarded with a ringside seat for the procession of famous writers who quickly filled the reserved section.

One of the more hotly contested awards was that for best fanzine. The winner, Boston's *Locus*, was booed by a large segment of the audience; there is widespread sentiment that the publication can no longer be considered an amateur publication. *Janus* and *Thrust* were also nominees.

The gay party (announced in the convention newsheet, *Lobster Tails* as being for "gay men, lesbian women, and friends of the preceding [sic]"), took place in a two-bedroom suite.

With Seattle fan Denys Howard, we shared our pleasure in seeing so many lesbians and gay men at the convention. There is a kind of merging point between gays and SF fans—we're both considered odd, outcasts from society at large. Also the press has a knack for bringing the two groups together by way of some insensitive oppression. Denys said that SF fans usually distrust reporters, who have a tendency to misunderstand fandom and focus on its more "bizarre" aspects. Indeed, earlier that day, *The Boston Globe* had run an article on the convention, one that stressed the masquerade of the night before and failed to mention all the other events (films, panels, etc.). The fans were disappointed. There's an interesting parallel in these media misrepresentations: how many times have we been equally disappointed by lack of coverage at gay pride week activities, coverage that usually consists only of brief, filmed footage of drag queens?

Marion Zimmer Bradley talked about the new paperback edition of her non-SF gay novel, *The Catch Trap* which she reported is selling well in this "less closeted" edition. (Publicity for the hardcover edition was subdued and avoided mention of the dominant gay theme, whereas the paperback deals straightforwardly with the gay material both in the jacket illustrations and the blurbs.) She also spoke to us about gay life in the thirties and forties (one of the outstanding features of the novel was

her convincing rendition of this era) and her involvement in the early *Daughters of Bilitis* journal, *The Ladder*, dating from that time.

Marion, unlike most *Ladder* contributors, wrote lesbian short stories under her own name.

Delany followed up on some of the ideas he had tossed out at the homophobia panel. We talked about Ursula LeGuin's treatment of gay characters; in addition to the no-win plot of *The Left Hand of Darkness*, she included in her major novel, *The Dispossessed*, a gay character who was remarkable for embodying all the most depressing stereotypes of gay "pathology", and who, everyone agreed, was best forgotten. Delany made the interesting point that the main reason most gay characters in SF are failures



is that there is usually only one of them in any given work. Shown outside of the context of relationships with other gay characters, it is impossible to show them as fully developed people, and obviously a gay surrounded by straight characters is going to be a mess. This is paralleled by the traditional treatment of women in SF; a succession of female characters relating to one man does not equal a series of female characters, but rather one male character.

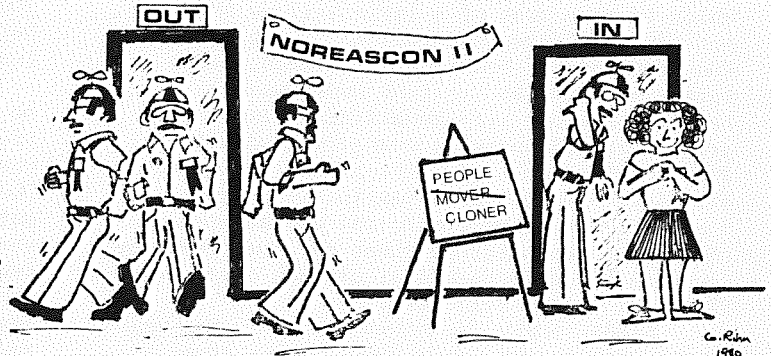
Monday afternoon's panel entitled "Fairy Tales, Myths and Feminism" was the most exciting panel we attended; the debate was lively and informed, with extensive and enthusiastic audience participation. The panel was moderated by Sandra Miesel, a fantasy/SF editor for Berkeley/Putnam. Panel members included writers Patricia McKillip, Melissa Ann Singer, Anne Laurie Logan (an editor, with Avedon Carol, of *Harlot*, a feminist fanzine); Ellen Kushner, an editor recently turned writer (the feminist fantasy anthology *Basilisk* was due to be published in October); and Anna Vargo, a convention worker who also happens to be widely read in the field.

Implicit in the discussion was that, though most fiction contains plots based on mythic archetypes, this is much more obvious in science fiction and fantasy, which bear a closer superficial resemblance to the myths upon which they build and the fairy tales from which they are historically descended.

As this was a statedly feminist panel, one of the goals of the discussion was to find ways in which SF can serve feminism. It was generally agreed that it is impossible to create new archetypes (this is not the same as saying fiction cannot explore in new directions; it means that there are no new plots under the sun). Therefore, it was proposed that writers search for archetypes containing feminist values in cultures other than the "egocentric, adolescent, Christian, Medieval, European value system" (Kushner) that has produced most of our fairy tales.

The panelists were pressed to come up with examples of SF and fantasy writers who had broken out of this mold. An oral reading list

ensued, but the name that was reverted to again and again was that of the prolific but neglected writer, Andre Norton. Norton's most famous novel, *Daybreak 2250 AD* uses Native American myths. Native American, Asian, and African myths—with strong women, emphasis on emotional and social relations, and deemphasis of male dominance and power-wielding—appear throughout the body of Norton's work.



"WE'VE SOLVED THE VOLUNTEER SHORTAGE"

McKillip said that although gender-role reversal was ultimately a counterproductive ploy, at present time it is socially useful. It is simply social reality that strong women have had to identify with strong male archetypes, and transforming these male archetypes into female characters in fiction can be beneficial. Such a mechanical device is also a useful spur to the writer to examine the myths she is using; McKillip concluded that when one is a woman there is "nothing more lovely than the pronoun SHE."

We were left with the feeling that, if all SF and fantasy writers were as conscious of the materials they are dealing with as were the six panelists, there would be considerable hope for SF to act more and more as a medium for progressive social values. The question of how homosexuality can be treated seems still to find its best answer in Delany's earlier assertion that only by the questioning and even abandonment of traditional plot—can we break through to an understanding and portrayal of ourselves that is truly free.

The Wisconsin Science Fiction Convention

**WIS
CON**

Co-sponsored by SF³

and the University of Wisconsin-Extension

GUESTS OF HONOR:

AUTHOR

CHELSEA QUINN YARBRO

FANS

BUCK & JUANITA COULSON

EDITORS

DON & ELSIE WOLLHEIM

CRITIC

CATHERINE MCCLENAHAN

ARTIST

STEVEN VINCENT JOHNSON

Convention Facility: Wisconsin Center//Hotel: Madison Inn

For more information write

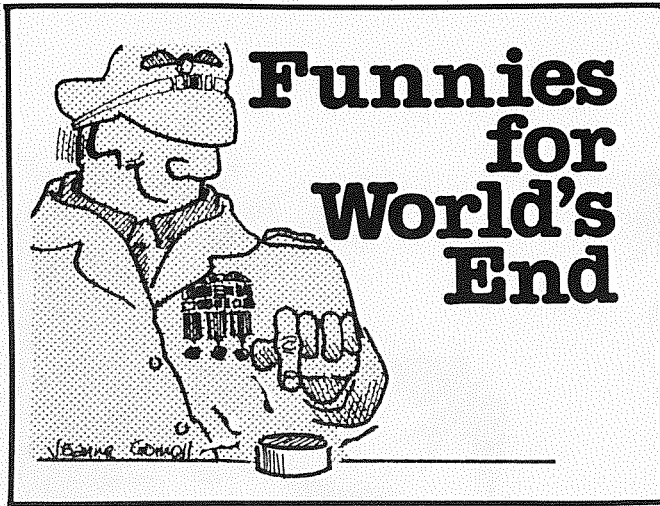
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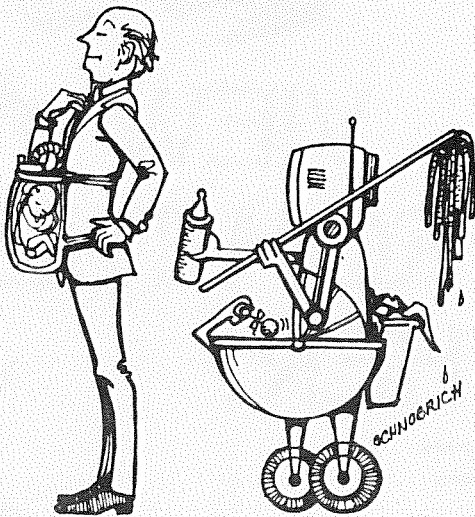
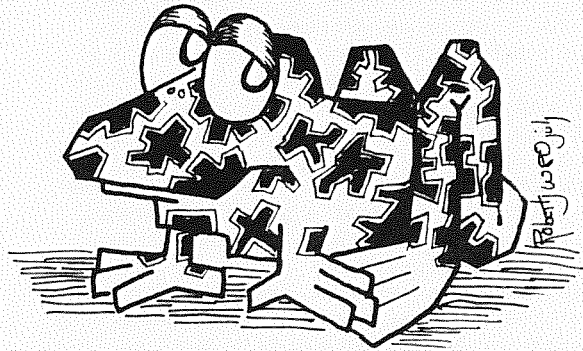
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I BELIEVE THE GODS ARE HAVING ONE ON ME.

IN MY LAST LIFE, I WAS A FL...

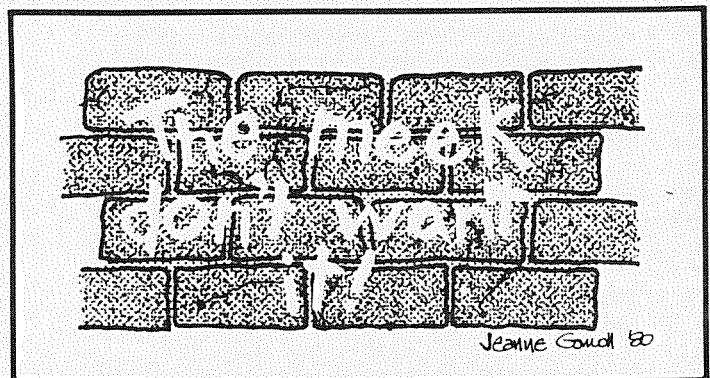
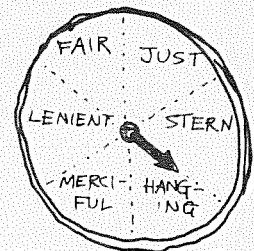


Stu Shiffman: What's in the upcoming issue of *Janus*, Jeanne?

Jeanne Gomoll: We're doing our special "Post-Holocaust" issue.

Stu Shiffman: Oh, you're printing World-Con reports, huh?

THE JUDGE IS

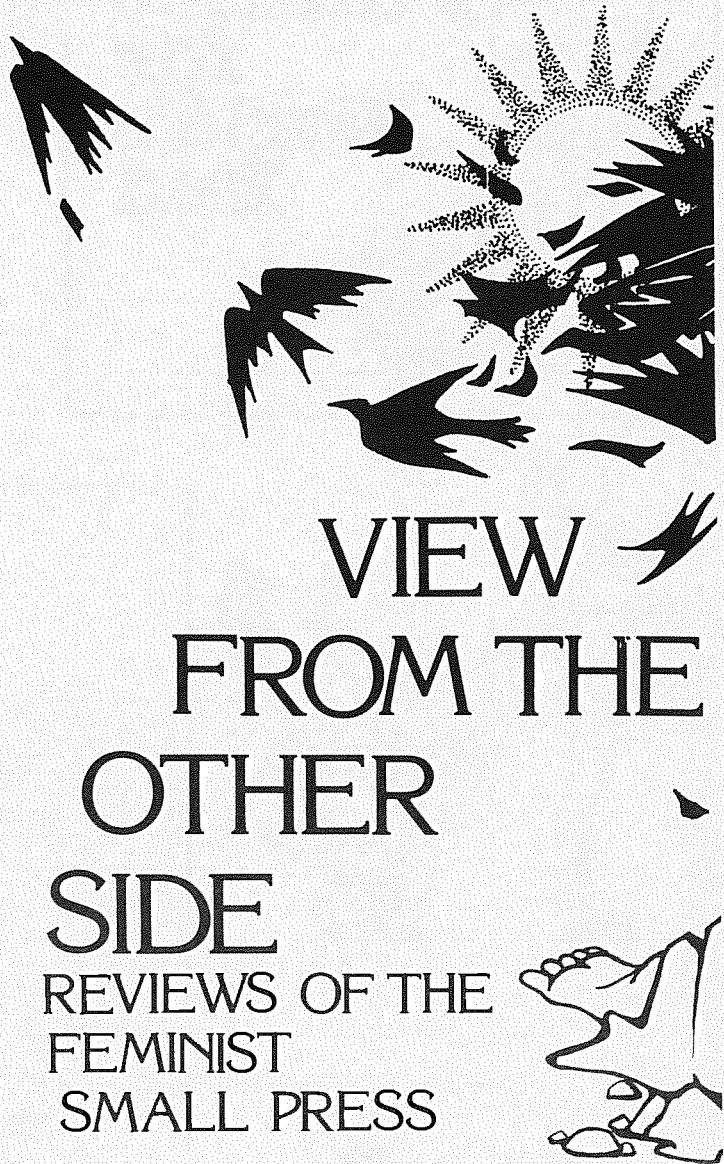


Before leaping into a new set of reviews, I'd like to share something personal, related to the small-press though not to feminist publishers. About a year ago I gained acquaintance with a small-press publisher in Missouri who took an interest in my writing and wanted to publish a small book of poems, collected from various sources, mainly fanzines. Our correspondence and ensuing friendship turned out to be brief indeed, for the man was dying of cancer. I had recently finished an as-yet unsold novel called *The Vital Flame*, which is largely about a character dying of a genetic disease, who is intensely frightened of death. I explored my own feelings about death and dying in that book, though no concise understanding or emotional feeling surfaces. It isn't something I find scary or awful, though it's hard to lose friends. It seems so utterly natural that it can't be an all-bad experience, dying. Anyway, losing a friend before hardly getting to know him had gotten me thinking about these things again.

Knowing that he was dying, Willard was swift to get my chapbook into print. I'm the last person he published; he saw the proofs before he died. I received my payment-copies in the same mail as I received the funeral announcement. If I make the deadline with this column, you'll be hearing about the death of Willard Firestone in the "end of the world" issue of *Janus*. For most of us, the end of the world will consist of the simple act of dying. Perhaps our science fiction fantasies of world catastrophe are more a wish not to die alone, rather than any prophetic vision. In any event, the booklet Willard published is a very limited edition, but may still be in print if you write soon. It's a simple, unpretentious set of verse called *The Dark Crusader and Other Poems of Horror and the Supernatural*. I try to be more joyous than sorrowful, that my booklet was this gentleman's final earthly project.

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Happier news: The Canadian magazine, *Room of One's Own* will release a special science fiction issue this fall. The guest editor for the issue was Hugo-and-a-half award winner Susan Wood, so we can expect something as much connected to the fan press as to the feminist press. Many of the contributors are familiar to SF and fanzine readers: Debbie Notkin, Joan Hanke-Woods, Elinor Busby, Wendy Adrian Shultz, Eleanor Arnason, Vicky Poyser, Jeanne Gomoll, and myself. My prediction for this volume is that it will be something more traditionally science fiction/fantasy than we've received from the "science fiction and other fantasies" issue of *Chomo-Uri* (reviewed here previously) and in other special SF issues of women's magazines. Whether this is good or bad, or just different, may be an item for political debate among feminists; but in terms of literate, definably SF writing and criticism, the connection with the SF community is undoubtedly a boon. I won't be able to review this issue when it comes out since I'm a contributor; but my sight-unseen prediction is that it'll be worth getting.



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Pandora, the magazine of role-expanding science fiction (to quote the colophon), has dropped the dubious logo "a femzine" and has taken on a more attractive, very nearly professional appearance. There is the possibility that the magazine is folding, and potential contributors should query first. But back issues are available, and feminist SF fans ought to get them while they're available. The current issue includes a minor work by Janrae Frank, who contributed to my anthology *Amazons!* and who is currently at work on a second novel about the Sharaun amazon empire (to be published by Starblaze Books).

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Named for a concept in Monique Wittig's classic feminist fantasy work *Les Guerilleres*, the magazine *Feminary* has grown from a generalized literary magazine to a journal emphasizing the lesbian vision of women in the South. The latest issue (Vol 10, No. 3) illustrates the



Jessica Amanda Salmonson

uniqueness of the Southern radical woman (which is potentially expressed in a single word: "caring") through stories, poems and essays. Susan Ballinger interviews the women of Ladyslipper Music, the largest distributor of feminist albums and tapes in the South. Liz Hill writes on what it is like to be a woman in the coal mines. Diana Rivers—whose work I've previously praised in an issue of *Womanspirit*—provides an earthy narrative consisting largely of remarkably insightful exchanges between narrator and lover. There's a lot more, including a short, poetic piece by Mary Franke, "Taking Another Mary Home," which captures too well a feeling of sorrow in this difficult world.

More than any other literary magazine from the feminist presses, *Feminary* is an honest, emotionally real magazine whose contributors seem to have actualized feminism in their art, rather than intellectualized it in apart-from-reality theories. A literate, raw, immeasurably important journal of interest to women, Southern or not.

Camera Obscura is billed as "a journal of feminism and film theory". I detect little-to-zero feminism; and as a film journal, I could recommend a dozen which are more interesting, better written, and certainly more accessible. It may be of interest to enthusiasts of films no one outside two or three major cities will ever see, discussed in a vocabulary taken from the largest thesaurus on the market. For example, to quote from Raymond Bellour's essay on Hitchcock: "It is this quasi-somatic effect, then, that resists citation and operates simultaneously through the two processes of identification which transfix the spectator: identification with the camera, identification with the object (the perpetual dialectic between being and having: identification and object-choice)." I suspect the "Obscura" of the magazine's title refers more to the prose style than anything else. Film fans, particularly feminist film fans, will be disappointed in this journal.

A new "cycle" of *Lady-Unique-Inclination-of-the-Night* is available, consisting largely of papers delivered at a Santa Cruz Goddess Symposium. The essays range, as usual, from academic to personal, with some Famous Women contributing: Z. Budapest, Anne Kent Rush, Marge Piercy, and others. Various issues of Goddess history and faith are covered: the Goddess and Jungian thought; spiritual healing and moon meditation; virgin Goddesses of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Jainism (of India); Africa's "Antbear Maiden"; Basque Goddess worship; and more. This magazine appears very rarely, but each Cycle is a treat. Highly, highly recommended.

The newest issue of *Conditions*, number six, is trade paperback size and still only \$3. It contains a lot of material and is more or less a "typical" little-magazine—but written entirely by women, most of whom are feminist. This issue also includes an index of the first six issues.

The diverse contents includes a critical analysis of the Asian American issues of *Bridge*; and interview of a "dyke" from the 50's who has been through an awful lot getting to 1980; among the short stories is a piece by Sauda Jamal called "A Mother That Loves You", which, while experimental in style, captures magnificently the mundanity of surviving the day; an excellent overview of lesbian characterization in recent mainstream (generally "potboiler") novels such as *Kinflicks*, *Loving Her*, *Ruby*, *The Women's Room* and so many others which have tried (with varying degrees of success) to portray lesbianism in less obnoxious manners than in the 1960's, when lesbian novels were hot shit (even Marion Zimmer Bradley wrote them) and derogatory as hell. Among the gobs of poetry, "Holy Relics" stands out, being part of an epic poem about St. Teresa with visions of Catholic ghoulishness: "A fifth time they dug her up . . . a gaping hole where her heart had been/ ripped out to be placed in a reliquary", a genuine practice. Also included is an essay on lesbian poet Sophia Parnok (1885-1933). There's more; the issue is gigantic. Notable about *Conditions*

is the large number of women of color who contribute (#5 was a special Black Women's Issue). This is unfortunately a rare case in the feminist small press, which is dominated by Caucasian women.

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Addresses:

The Black Crusader and Other Poems of Horror and the Supernatural, W. D. Firestone Press, c/o H. L. Proser, 1313 S. Jefferson Ave., Springfield, MO 65807. \$1. per copy.

Bridge, special *Asian American Women* issue: *An Asian American Perspective* (Vol. 6, No. 4; Vol. 7, No. 1), PO Box 477, Canal St. Stn., New York, NY 10013.

Camera Obscura, PO Box 4517, Berkeley, CA 94704. \$3. per copy.

Conditions, PO Box 56, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, NY 11215. Subscription 3/\$8; single copy \$3.

Feminary, PO Box 954, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. \$3. single issue (includes postage); \$6.50/3 issues.

Lady-Unique-Inclination-of-the-Night PO Box 803, New Brunswick, NY 08903. \$4 single issue.

Pandora, Lois Wickstrom, editor, 1150 St. Paul St., Denver, CO 80206. \$2.50 per issue.

Room of One's Own, Growing Room Collective, PO Box 46160, Station G, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6R 4G5. \$4 for F/SF double issue.

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Addendum:

As "View from the Other Side" has been reviewing mainly little- or literary-magazines that have feminist focuses, other kinds of feminist small press projects haven't been covered. This is partly because I don't have much to say about them; they're not as interesting to me personally, although to others they might be more important. One area of feminist small press is the newsprint/newspaper format. These tend to get their news incestually from one another, are poorly written, and the news is old by the time it comes to you. On the other hand, though it may be old news, it may also be news that has been overlooked by other radical (and certainly by mainstream) news sources. Three recommendable newspapers are *Big Mama Rag* (50¢ sample issue; 12/\$6) from 1724 Gaylord St., Denver, CO 80206; *Off Our Backs* (60¢ sample; 12/\$6); and especially *New Women's Times* (50¢ bi-monthly, 24/\$12), this latter including *The Feminist Review of Books* as an insert. Another sub-specialty to surface are the academic, university-associated feminist journals which are academic in the strictest sense and therefore dry and dull like most specialized, scholarly journals. They're also extraordinarily expensive, aimed as they are at feminist academicians who are either paid enough to afford the price or can charge a subscription to a purchase order number. The best of three I've seen is *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* (\$11/3 issues), University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309. Volume 2, Number 3 is a science fiction-oriented issue for \$3.50. Regional newsletters and poetry chapbooks are other sub-sections of feminist

small presses and I may cover these next time around.

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After three installments of this column, I'm beginning to feel I've run out of things to say about the "same old stuff". The point of "View from the Other Side" was to introduce women in fanzine fandom to a whole other area of small press publishing, and the cumulative effect of three columns has surely achieved that by now. I'm not convinced there should be a fourth installment.

o o o

Finally, and sadly, I must report the demise of my own fanzine *Windhaven*. The publication of this was taken over last year by Ikesdatter Press (Box 5172, Seattle, WA 98105—if you want to write and complain) who have proven incapable of keeping their agreement with me (to publish regularly) or to subscribers. I also have not been able to recover mailing lists from them so that patient subscribers can be contacted. I must warn everyone to send no more money to Ikesdatter Press; and if you already did, please send me a photocopy of your cancelled checks and I will make what amends I can by honoring *Windhaven* subscriptions with my personal publication *Naginata*, a little journal covering amazon heroic figures of history, mythology, and modern heroic fantasy.



Harmonica

The siren, the doghowl, jets, converged to
a chord,
diverged; the woman looked back
where her life was, so complicated and ordinary
as to be unusable, over it like the bellying
white scarf of vapor in an open freezercase,
usable dreams.

The hearts of the city's stones glowed,
glass flowed in its streets.
Impure glass cooled, crazed, cooled, clouded
in strata;
what had not vaporized, the streets preserved;
slant- and crevasse-stricken, they set flawed.

When she walked on them in later years
—bald bodies, bones, melts of metal, bubbles
and stones—
and read, clear through, the opalescent
palimpsest
she heard huge music hone and train
wo-waaarr-oh
through all the city's shrewdly bent new reeds.



Camillia Decarnin

Hey, Lillith!

by Gayle N. Netzer

Not having much to do lately, I've been reading a lot of science fiction. Probably that's why I'm not surprised when I find myself in the middle of this ruined city. Science fiction is like that, you know—awful things happen, millions of people come to a sticky end, but the main characters just carry on, cool and collected. Of course, very few are middle-aged females, which is what makes this story different.

Anyway, I'm perched on a chunk of concrete looking around, when this weird broad appears out of nowhere.

"Hello!" she chirps.

Now, much as I hate to admit it, I'm on the wrong side of fifty. She's even older—stringy neck, frizzled white hair, the whole bit. Bright, black eyes, though. They make me uncomfortable, so my hello back is chilly. Not that it fazes her any.

"Are you alone?" she wants to know.

I don't bother answering. After all, what else have I been since my divorce? So she plunks herself down beside me and announces that her name is Lillith.

Lillith? "Oh, yes!" I say brightly. "Wasn't Lillith Adam's first wife? The one there was all that talk about after he married Eve?"

"I'm afraid so," she winces. "Of course, that was a long time ago! Now, why I stopped by was, some of us ladies have been getting together....."

There's a gleam in her eye, but I ignore it. Why the hell would I be interested in a bunch of old ladies? She reads me correctly.

"Just give me a call when you're ready, dear," she murmurs, fading back into the landscape.

I settle back and fume. What does she mean, ready? And this business of being Lillith! Although if she really is, this would be the place to show up. To calm myself I speculate about the funny-colored clouds and zig-zaggy skyline. What happened this time, I wonder? A few minutes later the Professor comes trotting by so I ask him.

"Just the usual!" he puffs cheerfully. "Earthquakes, tidal waves, giant insects. Oh, yes, and a few H-bombs! Did away with practically everybody, of course. That's why I'm in such a hurry! I have to find a beautiful girl so I can start rebuilding civilization!"

I bridle a little. "A beautiful girl? Why do you need a beautiful girl?"

He squares his shoulders and pulls in his stomach. "Rebuilding civilization is hard work! I'm gonna need lots of coffee and sandwiches. To say nothing of after hours recreation! For the good of mankind, of course!" He eyes me challengingly.

I eye him back. Six hairs plastered across a bald spot, baggy eyes, a good start on



"You and I must be about the same age," I muse. "How about me?"

"You!" he squalls. "You're middle-aged!"

"There's a good twenty years left in me," I point out. Besides, you and I have a lot in common, same generation and all!"

This does it. The Professor's face turns a gorgeous shade of purple. "Buzz off, sister!" he snarls. "Got important things on my mind now!"

Off he stomps. I can still see the seat of his pants flopping in the distance when this young guy comes loping up.

"And what do you have on your mind?" I ask. If I sound snappish it's because I am.

He throws himself on the ground and dazzles me with a magnificent set of teeth. "Oh, I'm just tagging along after the Professor! That beautiful girl is liable to show up any time and I want to be where the action is!"

I perk up a bit. "Are you planning on taking her away from him?"

"Of course not! I'm going to give the old boy a hand with civilization. Eventually another slightly less beautiful girl will come along, or else the Professor's eldest daughter will reach puberty. Either way, I can't lose!"

The snappish feeling returns. However, there he is, right in front of me, so, not having anything else to do, I look him over. Nice vee of hairy chest. Interesting bulge in the appropriate place.

"Look," I say thoughtfully. "As long as you have to wait anyway, maybe you and me....."

He sits up and stares. Then he grins. The grin turns into a guffaw. He gets to his feet and rocks back and forth.

"You and me?" he gasps. "You've got to be putting me on!" Shaking with laughter, he staggers off after the Professor.

I watch until he is out of sight too. The chunk of concrete is getting harder and harder. I slide off and pry open my mouth. It takes a while but finally I get it out:

"HEY, LILLITH?"



Out of Context:

POST-HOLOCAUST THEMES IN FEMINIST SCIENCE FICTION

Jeanne Gomoll

The science fiction story which takes place amid the wreckage of a world nearly destroyed by war, pestilence, or natural disaster is not new. The Biblical tales of Noah or the persistent stories of ancient catastrophe on an island called Atlantis, provide ample evidence that the theme has fascinated storytellers for a long time. This type of story took on a new twist, however, after the industrial revolution. The stories no longer had to be set in times long ago, and moreover, were not about the angry response of an offended god punishing a guilty humanity. After weapons of sufficient destructiveness had been invented, storytellers were confident of humanity's ability to destroy itself and the world without divine intervention.

In H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1898), capitalism—with all the problems it creates by dividing society into classes—is seen as the culprit which destroys human civilization. More recent stories like Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* (1957) imagine an atomic war obliterating life on Earth. Through the miracle of modern science and technology, the holocaust theme becomes not only a modern fantasy but a modern reality. For evidence we have only to look as far as Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Bangladesh, Chile, Tehran, Wounded Knee, Vietnam and Cambodia, or Wiriyamu (Mozambique). Modern writers who examine fictional worlds that survive holocaust not only warn of the

real potential for such an event, but are aware that holocausts occur even now as the fiction is being constructed.

The modern post-holocaust story should not be read as merely a warning. There are probably as many reasons these stories have been written as there are meanings to be derived from them. Some of the more interesting motives and meanings arise with a feminist consideration of post-holocaust fiction. Obviously, feminist science fiction writers have not invented the post-holocaust theme. They are, however, doing something different with it than has been done before. As pointed out by some of the participants of the worldcon panel transcribed elsewhere in this issue of *Jamus*, that difference may derive from a point of view that women do not often share with men in this culture, a point of view that makes holocaust more real and less romantic than the kind which male authors have frequently described. Another source for the surprisingly recurrent use of the post-holocaust setting in science fiction stories by feminist authors might be women's relatively powerless role in society. Integrated into a power structure primarily as victims, women have understandably indulged in dreams about the sabotage of the hierarchy that victimizes them. Like any victimized group, women are likewise less deluded by the facades of an abhorant system hiding its weakening foundation. The whites of Capetown (by way of analogy) can and indeed

want to believe the censored media of South Africa which tells them that the "black problem" is being overcome and that civil war can be avoided with the "black homeland scheme". Blacks dying of starvation in these containment camps have no such illusions and certainly no need to believe the media lies. For women as with the blacks of South Africa, the awareness of potential holocaust is more immediate for their lesser needs for rationalizing illusions.

It is interesting to read what Sigmund Freud wrote about the behavior of disinfranchised women in his book, *Civilization and its Discontents*.

Furthermore, women soon come into opposition to civilization and display their retarding and restraining influence—those very women who, in the beginning, laid the foundations of civilization by the claims of their love.... The work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men, it confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimations of which women are little capable.... His constant association with men, and his dependence on his relations with them, even estrange him from his duties as a husband and a father. Thus the woman finds herself forced into the background by the claims of civilization and she adopts a hostile attitude toward it. [Emphasis added]

No wonder. Freud spoke of the disparity between women's self-estimation and the low regard which society shows for her as something that causes a reprehensible personal neurosis. He blamed women's attitude, not an inequitable society, for her dissatisfaction and uncooperative behavior. Like the theme of post-holocausts, this is nothing new.

Thus, the post-holocaust theme takes on new meanings in the hands of feminist SF writers:

Feminist science fiction writers voice women's sense that the foundations of patriarchal culture are not as secure as its primary (male) beneficiaries tell themselves. They write of the immediacy and terrible potential of holocaust.

Feminist science fiction writers voice horror concerning the reality of a holocaust. They usually do not write about the end of the world as if it were a romantic opportunity to bring to life a nostalgic version of their favorite historical era.

Feminist writers, along with all artists representing disaffected groups in our culture, sometimes express their anger and funnel their frustrated energies into visions of a fictional world that has been ripped asunder and given a new start.

Besides the connections between real lives, real holocausts, and their fictional representations, there is another, more abstract source for post-holocaust themes in feminist science fiction: that of the blank canvas. Rather than inventing a new, alien world with different mores, customs and kinds of behavior, the author can start out all over again from a familiar world whose history is known. She is not constrained to deal with how we get from here to there. The reduction of human culture to its

basic elements, the paring down of the complexities of contemporary economy, is a metaphorical device. The emphasis is not really on the simplification of a society and culture by disaster, but upon human relationships. The question is not, for these authors, What is the world like? but, What are women like? What are women like when taken away from the socialization processes that now quilts—restricting and hiding—women in contemporary society? The author sweeps away all the familiar props, drags the homey backdrops off backstage, uncorsets her actors from role-defining costumes, and then directs a stark white light to be focused upon the empty stage. She then finds strong, interesting women in her imagination and pushes them out onto the stage and watches to see what they do and who they become. It is a way to take women out of context.

Suzy McKee Charnas has said that her use of "the Wasting" as a background for her post-holocaust world of *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines* was just such a device that enabled her to take women out of context, out of our world, in order to examine their probable behavior in a more oppressive (*Walk*) and in a more open setting (*Motherlines*). Holdfast of *Walk* is a city built by the survivors of a devastating holocaust; Charnas uses it to portray, in microcosm, the exaggerated state of victimization of women by men that exists for us. The extensive plains of *Motherlines*, on the other hand, provide the freedom for the extrapolated versions of today's feminist alternatives that are being experimented with by women who reject patriarchal culture. By providing the setting and opportunity, Charnas allows her imagination to run free and follow the growth and struggles of an Amazon, separatist community.

Charnas has recently announced that she is postponing the writing of the third and last novel of the series (to have been called *Holdfast Harrowing*). This book is intended to deal with the confrontation of the hierarchical, sexist men of Holdfast and their slave Fems, with the Riding Women and Free Fems of the plains, providing a synthesis between traditional sexist culture and feminist separatist philosophy. Charnas writes that such a synthesis seems an unlikely reality anytime in the near future: "Considering the way things are likely to go in the next decade or so, specifically with regard to the hard-won and now imperiled gains of women and non-whites in America, I don't think anybody who was not insane could actually write that book [*Holdfast Harrowing*]. Someday, maybe, I hope." [letter, November 6, 1980]

In James Tiptree, Jr./Alice Sheldon's short story, "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" and in Joanna Russ's novel *The Female Man*, the holocaust in question is a horrible, selective disease that affects only men. Surviving humans are all female. In these cases, holocaust is more than simply a device to clear the stage. The visions of holocaust are themselves clearly references to the stage of rage and sense of need for extreme change that many women feel during their lifetimes, a sense that leads some women to come together and create a separatist community.

Sally Gearhart's *The Wanderground: Stories of the Hill Women* is another such a novel. The

Hill Women are largely descendants of those women who escaped from the cities when the New Witch Trials began and after the Earth had rebelled against men's rape and destruction of the land. Male engines of power, their guns, their penises, their bulldozers, cease to function outside of their cities. Rape, war, the mining of the Earth's resources becomes impossible; the cities become bastions of male arrogance and privilege, and only within the city walls are women still men's sexual and domestic slaves. Outside the cities women develop women-centered, healthy communities. Gearhart's metaphorical use of her post-holocaust society develops as the reader understands the espionage network between male and female cultures (aided by the "gentles"—men supposedly sympathetic to the Hill Women). She seems to agree with Russ and Tiptree/Sheldon concerning the improbability of easy coexistence between strong women-centered communities and men, however raised their consciousnesses. Liz Lynn's short story "Jubilee's Story" is another story that belongs in this group for its portrayal of the confrontation of members of an all-women community and the post-holocaust remnants of a patriarchal family group. The synthesis that Charnas postpones describing in the sequel to *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines* is one firmly declared impossible by authors Gearhart, Russ, and Tiptree/Sheldon.

Nevertheless, there are stories in which authors use the holocaust metaphor to clear the slate and make way for a society in which synthesis does occur and in which equitable relationships between the sexes are possible. Marge Piercy's novel, *Woman on the Edge of Time* is one such book. Piercy reminds us often during the course of the novel, however, that this is dream stuff, fantasies to-be-hoped-for. The utopian post-holocaust world portrayed in *Woman on the Edge of Time* is the dream world into which protagonist Connie Ramos escapes to from the horror of her captivity in a New York mental institution. (The utopia of the novel is the imagined, personal response of the protagonist to her very real and personally defined holocaust.) During her journeys in the dreamworld, Mattaposette, an alternate universe that might be only if we work to create it, Connie is warned that no food she eats there will actually nourish her body; that she will eventually always have to return to the painful reality of Bellevue. Fantasies can never be life-sustaining in the long run.

Other synthesizing novels have been written by Vonda McIntyre. *The Exile Waiting* and *Dreamsnake* both take place in the same world which has been nearly destroyed in a manner left purposely vague by McIntyre. There are radioactive craters and there is evidence of ancient contact with aliens, but mainly the manner of holocaust remains a mystery and seems, for the author, an opportunity to set the stage in a way most appropriate to her ideas and story. The women and men in her world have more or less reached an equilibrium: injustice has less to do with roles determined by sex than by wealth and social status. Traditional 20th century sexist stereotyped behavior has largely disappeared.

John Varley deals with the dichotomy of the sexes in a different way, neither separa-

tist nor synthesis. The holocaust that creates the background in Varley's "nine worlds" stories and his novel, *The Ophiuchi Hotline*, is an alien invasion that devastates human population; the only survivors are those who happened to have lived or were able to escape to the planets or satellites of the Solar system on which there were human bases. With the help gleaned from information broadcast by beings somewhere in the Ophiuchi constellation, human civilization—what remains of it—has been revolutionized. One of the major changes in society is that sex changes (along with all medical techniques) have been enormously simplified, so that everyone is able to change their sex at will. Nearly everyone has both conceived and fathered a child. Without the assumptions and biases of sex role distinction fostered by lack of experience, relations between the sexes are very different than in our society. Varley's holocaust differs from many of those previously discussed, in that his Earth is not a wasted one (only an abandoned one), its survivors not reduced to subsistence survival. In one way, it is a more drastic holocaust than any of the other stories thus far discussed in that humans lose the Earth entirely, but in relevant terms the culture that survives is still a complex, technological one, simplified only in the respect that current ideological and nationalistic politics have not continued after the alien invasion and takeover of Earth.

Holocaust reduces human technology and communication apparatus to rubble; humans that survive do so on a subsistence level. Relatively few feminist authors deal with this situation as realistically as Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. In Yarbro's *False Dawn*, for instance, women's rights and equality of the sexes are not of primary importance to protagonist Thea. The world is wasted by war, pollution, disease, radiation poisoning, and lawlessness, and the only matter of importance is survival; being a woman only makes that all the more difficult. Even though most post-holocaust stories by feminist SF writers take place in worlds that allow little more than subsistence communities, or at most, sub-technological economies, Quinn Yarbro's bleak no-exit perspective is not shared in many other writers' fiction.

Many other women SF writers have dealt with the post-holocaust themes in their work. Doris Lessing has dealt almost exclusively with this theme in the course of her last five novels, *The Four-Gated City*, *Briefing for a Descent Into Hell*, *Memoirs of a Survivor*, and the first two novels of the *Canopus in Argos* series [see reviews of *Shikasta* in this issue of *Janus*]. Kate Wilhelm's novel *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* considers a post-holocaust scenario in which cloning technology provide the answer to human survival. Pamela Sargent's *Watchstar* develops the idea of real and total communication among the remnants of a civilization that has long fallen into decline. Joan Vinge's *The Outcasts of Heaven Belt* is about the survivors of a destructive war between two societies whose different mores (based on varying expectations of relationships and power between the sexes) cause them to tragically overlook their basic interdependence.

In the books I have discussed, it seems

If writers now-a-days tend to treat post-holocaust themes as opportunities to discourage efforts for far-reaching change, this only reflects, I think, the general feeling among people of this culture that things are pretty bad and can only get worse if they are tinkered with too much—unless they are changed back to the way they were in some previous golden age, which of course never existed.

—Suzy McKee Charnas
private correspondence

that the question of the particular kind of catastrophe is less important than its usefulness as a stage-setting device in stories whose primary thrust seems to be to work out innovative social structures. Authors seem aware that the potentials for self-destruction are endless and that holocaust most potentially will derive from a complex interaction of many elements stemming from environmental meddling by humans. This is in stark contrast to the more familiar post-holocaust stories written by many earlier SF writers like Chrichton (*Day of the Triffids*), H. G. Wells (*War of the Worlds*) and others, who described the world's end with a single, gimmicky catastrophe. The aliens take over. The bombs drop. A deadly germ escapes from the laboratory and infects all breathing beings.

The important elements of most post-holocaust stories by feminist authors is the manner in which their characters evolve upon the empty stage. Vonda McIntyre has developed some impressive women characters amid the chaotic, barren landscapes of *The Exile Waiting* and *Dreamsnake*, women who make bold decisions and act upon their principles. Almost as if they exist in corners of the same Earth, far removed from one another, the characters and settings of Suzy Charnas' novels *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines* are of the same material as McIntyre's. I can almost imagine the meeting of Snake and Aldera when, in the course of their wanderings afield, their paths cross...

Over and over again, the blank canvas, the empty stage provides authors interested in giving the strong, heroic women of their imagination the space to move and live. All that is necessary is room and space; a removal of senseless constraints. If the image of a world nearly perishing by the bomb or pestilence or pollution is too shocking and not comprehensible as an artistic device to achieve an empty stage, remember that the changes that women promote bear as earthshaking a charge (on a Richter Scale of social change). Our anger and our expectations make the holocaust metaphore

an apt one.

What does it mean when predictions of societal doom become widespread among social planners and philosophers and contemporary artists? Warnings should be carefully heeded and examined for just what they purport to be, that is, warnings. But there are other interpretations, as is clear by the theme's frequent use as a metaphor instead of a prediction. A sense of holocaust in the arts can also be seen simply as a hope, or an expectation of drastic change in society's future. Such a mood contributes in a positive sense to the liveliness of the arts. Given the sense that present reality is at best illusionary, basic assumptions, fundamental moral codes can (and must) be reexamined. Last minute repair work may not be enough; real disaster may still occur. But the process of awakening to the facade of an inadequate existence, and the clear-eyed examination of tradition makes for exciting times. And good art. Thus even as a culture is failing and perhaps heading for real holocaust, and even as decadence is portrayed and proclaimed by that culture's artists, a remarkable thing is happening. The arts and any other portion of society that attempts to make the necessary changes and revitalizes and contorts its old ways of thinking — experiences a rebirth. Extraordinary, healthy, life-giving things happen.

Many women are warning of societal disaster if we do not reconstruct the foundations of this sexist society in a way equitable to all women's and men's needs and potentials. Many of us are pessimistic about the possibility of success. The holocaust goes on now. The holocaust approaches and its shadow already haunts our nightmares. But the very nearness of potential disaster can't help but empty stages in the minds of many thinking humans. The foundations of our culture are only backdrops that can be wheeled backstage. We can—and must—start again with drastically different assumptions about ourselves and our world.

That's what science fiction does best.
That's what feminism strives toward.

Is it possible for any writer with any feminist consciousness or experience in dealing with feminist issues to imagine a future otherwise than "post-holocaust"? That is, in light of the resistance to change which is built into patriarchy, how could it not crumble catastrophically; and how could its opponents survive except by creating a separate community?

Kate Robinson in *Do Not Go Gentle
Into That Good Neighborhood 2*
(for A Women's Apa)



BOOK REVIEWS

Shikasta

by Doris Lessing

Knopf, 1980

365 pages, \$10.95

Gene DeWeese

The full title of Doris Lessing's book is *Canopus in Argos: Archives. Re: Colonized Planet 5, Shikasta. Personal, Psychological, Historical Documents Relating to Visit by Johor (George Sherban), Emissary (Grade 9) 87th of the Period of the Last Days*. In her introductory remarks, Lessing implies that it is science fiction. She even has high praise for SF as a genre and points out that it is a mistake to segregate SF from so-called serious fiction, and cites an SF classic, Stapledon's *Last and First Men*, as a prime example. I couldn't agree more.

However, *Shikasta* is not really science fiction, at least not to me. True, it is full of the furniture of science fiction—galactic empires, reincarnation, aliens among us, planetary intelligences, etc.—but it is treated as pure fantasy, almost as a fable. It is also exceedingly serious and, compared to *Last and First Men* and many other excellent SF novels, surprisingly unimaginative and predictable.

But, then, Lessing's purpose is apparently not to stir the reader's sense of wonder. Instead, she seems intent on delivering a series of lectures and mystical speculations about

humankind's inherent violence and irrationality, profusely illustrated with examples of that violence and irrationality in the form of individual biographical and psychological sketches. The lectures and speculations, though sometimes interesting, usually go on too long. Four pages, for instance, are used to explain why, given the pitifully short human life span and other handicaps, the "generation gap" is not only understandable but inevitable. The character sketches—the best parts of the book—are too often cut short, even though there would seem to be enough material for complete novels in many of them.

The story itself is simple enough and is derived largely from the Old Testament. Many thousands of years ago, the Galactic Empire of Canopus took Earth, then known as Rohanda, under its wing and decided to bring primitive humanity up to the standards of the Empire. To "guide" humanity through this upgrading process, Canopus imports a race of giants and sends observers of its own to Earth. Things go wrong quickly, however, when a certain "beneficial alignment of the stars" is lost, breaking the flow of SOWF ("substance-of-we-feeling") between Earth and the Empire. As a result, both humans and giants "degenerate" rapidly (humans originally were twice their present size and had lifespans in the thousands of years), and Rohanda's name is changed to Shikasta, "the damaged one". The giants and the Canopus Empire are helpless. The flow of SOWF is soon replaced by unspecified but evil emanations, which are fed upon and encouraged by the inhabitants of the criminal planet Shammatt of the rival Empire of Puttoria. The end result of the degeneration is Earth of the 20th Century, the "period of the last days" of the title.

For those who are not overly familiar with such ideas from reading too much science

fiction, or for those who have not yet come to the conclusion that far too many humans are selfish, bigoted, cruel, and thoroughly irrational in their dealings with each other, *Shikasta* can be highly recommended. Also, those who have already come to that conclusion and enjoy having their convictions analyzed and reenforced at great length will probably like it. For most others, however, *Shikasta* may be hard, slow going.

NOTE: This review appeared, in a slightly different form, in the *Milwaukee Journal*.

Shikasta

by Doris Lessing

Knopf, 1980

365 pages, \$10.95

Jeanne Gomoll

Doris Lessing is writing science fiction. Of course, this is no surprise to those of us who enjoyed the fantastic elements of one of her best-known novels, *The Four-Gated City*, as well as more extensive uses of science fiction in *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* and *Memoirs of a Survivor*. All three novels share a common vision of our world as chaotic, unconsciously on the brink of self-destruction. In *The Four-Gated City*, Lessing hints at the possibility that certain people, labeled "insane" in our culture, might survive such a world-wide catastrophe, and, with others of their kind, establish a humane post-holocaust society. In *Memoirs of a Survivor*, she examines in detail the plight of such a person now bound in our society. In *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*, the protagonist turns out to be an emissary from another planet (Heaven?) who must be born into a human body in order to contact and help us, but who, in the process of growing up on Earth, forgets too much of his real identity and cannot survive Earth/Hell's pressures. He dies in an institution for the insane.

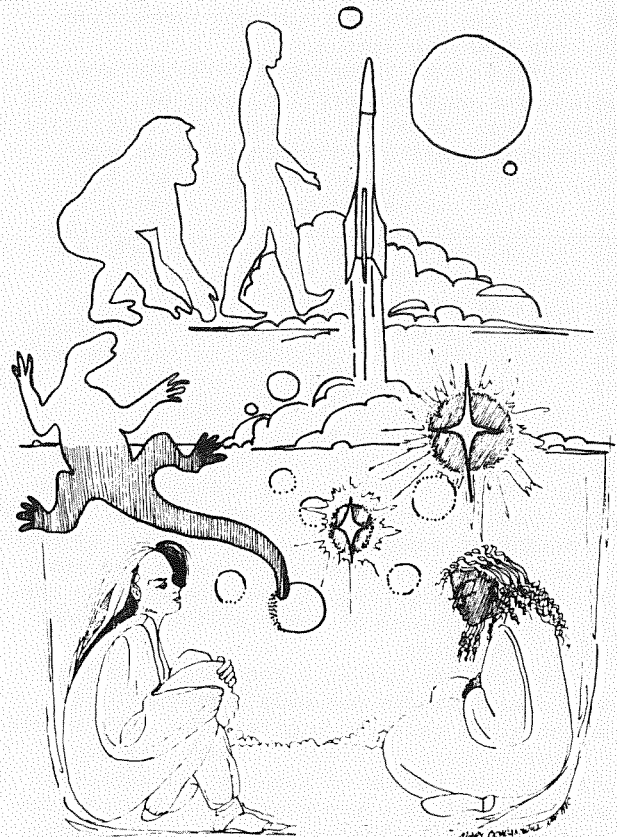
Shikasta takes nearly the same plot device as *Briefing*, though more elaborate, and describes the visits to Earth made by an Emissary Johor from his world, Canopus. Shikasta is Canopus's name for Earth. It means "the hurt, the damaged, the wounded one". As in *Briefing* our world bears the same relationship to Canopus as Hell does to Heaven. Unlike the protagonist in *Briefing*, however, Johor succeeds in his task, retaining a vague hold on his memories of Canopus and its spiritual truth. But Lessing persists in presenting a vision of the world as one that cannot long survive in its present condition, rushing headlong into destruction. Johor's "success" consists not in averting the holocaust which is foretold early in the book,

but in preserving the spirit of certain individuals, so that they will perhaps survive and aid in the world's eventual resurrection as a healthy post-holocaust society.

A fascinating element of *Shikasta* is Lessing's connections to the traditions of science fiction. She has come to some of the same conclusions and discovered many of the same techniques that have become familiar in the science fiction field, without having much contact with modern SF. In a preface to the novel ("Some Remarks"), Lessing says that something she calls "space fiction", "with science fiction makes up the most original branch of literature now; it is inventive and witty; it has already enlivened all kinds of writing..." She says further that,

It is by now commonplace to say that novelists everywhere are breaking the bonds of the realistic novel because what we all see around us becomes daily wilder, more fantastic, incredible. Once, and not so long ago, novelists might have been accused of exaggerating, or dealing overmuch in coincidence or the improbable: now novelists themselves can be heard complaining that fact can be counted on to match our wildest inventions.

British literature has never excluded SF or fantasy from its mainstream, so there is more likelihood of overlap between fantasy and mainstream writers than occurs in American letters. However, it seems clear from some other comments on SF that Lessing is familiar with very little modern SF beyond authors such as



Wells, Stapleton, or Huxley. Lessing belongs with a group of writers—such as Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, John Barth, Peter Beagle, and Marge Piercy—who use some techniques and themes of science fiction while working primarily in mainstream literature. For these writers, SF is a tool for modern mythmaking.

Lessing's tenuous connection to the traditions of science fiction is made clear in *Shikasta*, by its use of Biblical mythology to describe the prehistoric genesis of human culture. At times, in fact, Lessing's plot resembles one that might have been concocted by Erich Von Däniken. Lessing says that her subject matter is the gigantic struggles of galactic empires, a "realm where the petty fates of planets, let alone individuals, are only aspects of cosmic evolution". Much of the novel is a report, written in appropriately dry bureaucratese, on the very early history of Earth/Shikasta which we know of only from garbled versions reported in *The Bible*, *The Koran*, and other religious scriptures: the first "seeding" of Earth by the Canopians, the disaster that caused the bond between Earth and Canopus to break, the destruction of the cities, and the loss of paradise. In *Shikasta* Lessing improvises fictional explanations for our myths of long-lived ancestors, giants, Noah's flood, and the appearance of visionaries who have preached throughout history that mortal life is but a preparation for another more spiritually satisfying one. In a sense, Lessing sees all of our history as that of a post-holocaust world, one that is experiencing merely the last sputters of the disaster that began with the fall from grace, or our lost connection with the Canopian vision.

Though these elements in *Shikasta* are reminiscent of Von Däniken's theories, Lessing's writing most certainly is not. Her writing is experimental, using a fragmented form: the story is told from numerous viewpoints and with various voices, emphasizing vignettes rather than developing one individual character or following through on one person's development. Considering her massive subject—the whole of Earth/Shikasta's history—this style is appropriate. And unlike Von Däniken, Lessing does not actually seek to explain myth, but to explain through the use of myth.

This technique of myth-making is central to the work of many science fiction writers who identify themselves as feminists. However, in the case of *Shikasta*, the technique is not being used to convey a feminist message. Though the plight of women gets some attention by Johor in his reports, the problems between the sexes are seen as insignificant when compared to the overriding problems of human selfishness and lack of community.

Lessing has set up a remarkably complex world that includes not only Earth/Shikasta and the great galactic empires, but many levels of consciousness/existence. There are, for instance, the worlds of Canopus and Earth/Shikasta, as well as a Canopian ally, Sirius; and the enemy empire, Puttoria, with its criminal planet, Shammat. There are also spiritual levels or "zones" on Earth/Shikasta itself, that are described much like floors in a build-

ing, but apparently coexisting in tangent dimensions. So complex and varied is this background that Lessing promises four more novels in this series, which is called *Canopus in Argos*. The second volume is *The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four, and Five*, which Lessing calls a "fable or myth". And indeed the tone of that book is much different from *Shikasta*'s bureaucratic jargon.

Shikasta is sometimes dense reading, but I recommend it to science fiction readers interested in what mainstream mythmaking writers are bringing to the field, as well as to anyone who admires the work of Doris Lessing.

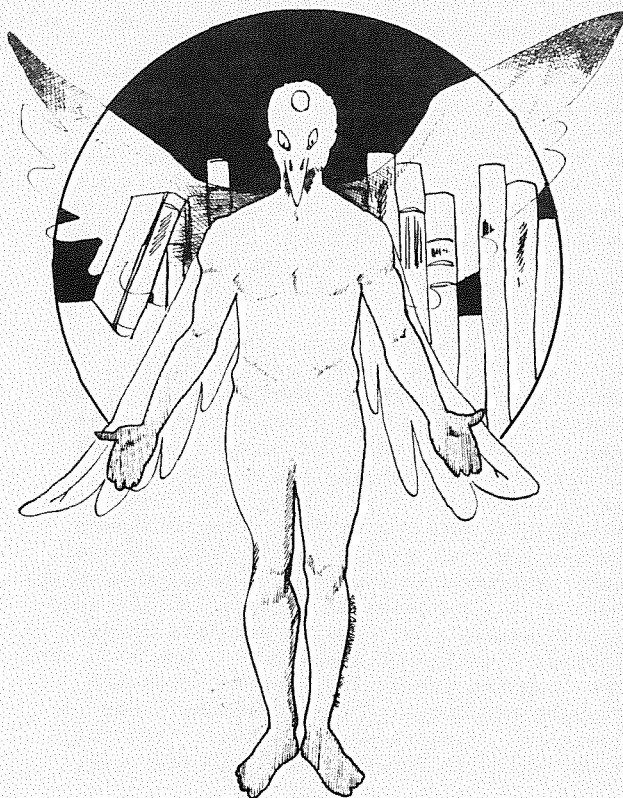
Mockingbird

by Walter Tevis

Doubleday, 1980
295 pages

Loren MacGregor

The traditional science fiction holocaust is one in which everything has been reduced to rubble. The writer can then build on the rubble, creating a society either in juxtaposition to or as a mirror image of our own. This allows the freedom to envision change and to write about the results of that change without the exposition needed to explain how it came about. The tacit assumption in nearly every story of this type is that, given the initial destruction, drastic changes will come about. The world



may become more repressive (*Walk to the End of the World*, by Suzie McKee Charnas), new cultures may become dominant (*In the Ocean of Night*, by Greg Benford), or there may be the creation of an entirely new, divergent form of high technology (*Dreamsnake*, by Vonda McIntyre). Whatever the premise, mutability is a major factor.

But in *Mockingbird* the holocaust has happened and changed little; the Empire State Building was destroyed, for example, but was then rebuilt, the same size as the original, "from a nearly timeproof synthetic material called Permo-plastic". The country, like the plastic Empire State Building, is vast, awesome, spectacular, and empty. Everything is either permanent and unchanging or broken and irreplaceable. In one section of St. Louis shirts are made too large and without pockets because a cat has crawled into the mechanism and died. An automated factory produces thousands of defective toasters because one part has fallen out of alignment and blocked a conveyor. At the other end of the factory an idiot robot tests each toaster and discards it. Periodically another idiot robot comes by, removes the toasters, and places them into a bin, where they are stripped into components, recycled, and remade once again into defective toasters, which are then discarded. The process is endless and is endlessly replicated in factories across the nation.

In Tevis's earlier science fiction novel, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, he concentrated on accidental martyrdom and an incidental messiah; a similar concentration is evident here. There are three main characters: Robert Spofforth, Paul Bentley, and Mary Lou Borne.

Spofforth is a tall, handsome black man with indigo earlobes. Sexless and ageless, he is actually an android, a living body with a vanadium brain copied synapse by synapse from the mind of a "brilliant and melancholy engineer named Paisley." He is the last of a series of nearly-human robots, lacking genitals—"To avoid distractions," one of the engineers said—and programmed against suicide. He is confused, despondent, and bitter, and is the highest authority left in the country.

Bentley is an innocent and naive professor of pornography from Ohio who has taught himself to read through a series of film clips discovered while he was doing research for a course in porno. Reading is by this time a lost art, a crime against the recommended qualities of Inwardness, Privacy, Self-fulfillment, and Pleasure.

Borne is a survivor, a street-wise woman who is living an independent, drug-free existence in the shell of New York City.

The novel focuses on the details of their lives together and separately in a world that is rapidly decaying into rubble. Many of the scenes are memorable for the incongruity: groups of people immolating themselves in the booths of a Burger Chef; Bentley's I'm-OK-You're-OK dialog with a telepathic bus (A "Metallic Intelligence, with Kind Feelings"), an eight-passenger vehicle that soothes and psychoanalyzes its riders; his encounter with a religious group whose holy book is a *Reader's Digest* condensed version of *The Bible*. But Tevis's most audacious attempt is to tell two-thirds of the story as first-person narrative by illiterates, who gradually learn to read

and write as the story progresses. It is through this audacity that we realize Tevis's two complementary but separate messages: with bitterness, sardonicism, and wry wit, we are told that the holocaust may already be in progress, that things will continue to get bad until they get worse. But we are also shown through the combined innocent faith of Bentley and the strong survival instincts of Borne, that the worst is still surmountable. It is this secondary message that eventually transcends the bitterness and ultimately offers hope.

Z for Zachariah

by Robert C. O'Brien

Dell/Laurel Leaf, 1978
188pp, \$1.50

The Colony

by Mary Vigliante

Manor Books, 1980
190pp, \$1.75

Diane Martin

I've always loved post-holocaust science fiction stories. Maybe it's because they reflect my rage toward this patriarchal society where women are oppressed and seldom allowed to feel they are making a valuable contribution to it—all the Important things are done by men. Or maybe it's because the first science fiction book I ever read was *Star Man's Son* (aka *Daybreak-2250 A.D.*) by Andre Norton. Maybe these two reasons are related. Growing up on a farm in a small northern Wisconsin community, it was heartening for me to read about a young person like Fors in *Star Man's Son* doing something exciting and important (and, above all, something forbidden by the adults in his society) and being successful. Never mind that Fors was a teen-age boy. Teen-age girls have been adept at changing their sex—mentally—while reading science fiction long before John Varley began writing about it. It's one of those little thought gimmicks that we did automatically, not realizing the sociopolitical implications until we were much older. It's something girls had to do, if they had any self-respect, because most of the main characters in science fiction when I was growing up (and, to a lesser extent, still today) were male. And unless you were ultra-conditioned by our patriarchal society, you didn't want to

be a second banana in your daydreams the way you already were in real life. (If you were that conditioned, you probably weren't reading science fiction at all.)

Now things are different. More and more SF stories have female main characters—sometimes even stories written for young adults (a librarians' euphemism for "teen-agers"). Science fiction can provide young adults with excellent role models, showing them how to be adventurous, free-thinking, independent, and... male. Female heros (as opposed to the word "heroines", which has an unfortunate melodramatic connotation) are rare in SF. In fact, female characters in general are rare. How many books have you read or movies have you seen where the male characters out-number the females significantly? Count 'em sometime. You'll be amazed.

With female SF heros so scarce, it's always gratifying to come across them. *Z for Zachariah* and *The Colony* provide us with an interesting study in two contrasting types of female heros, one skillfully idealized and one appallingly realistic. These two novels also reaffirm a theme common to many post-holocaust stories: when the trappings of 20th Century social values are destroyed in the holocaust, women's rights are among the first casualties. I don't know why this should be so, but it has been written about by both men and women authors as a natural result of the holocaust, as expected as earthquakes, pestilence, or nuclear fallout.

Ann Burden, the young hero of *Z for Zachariah*, is slightly too good to be true. The novel, written in diary form, shows us a person who faces new and difficult situations with calmness, with logic, and without despair. The average person would probably quail at the prospect of running a farm completely alone, when all contact with the outside world has been cut off after a nuclear war. But Ann raises chickens and cattle, chops wood, fishes, and grows food for herself and the farm animals. She's able to augment her food and other supplies from a little general store nearby.

After living alone for over a year, Ann notices a small column of smoke that comes closer every day. She deduces this is the campfire of someone approaching her valley. Not knowing what sort of person this might be, she digs up her garden, removes all signs of habitation from her house, and moves into a hidden cave where she can observe the stranger without being seen. Because, she observes, "There are worse things than being alone."

The stranger is a man. When he develops radiation sickness from swimming in polluted water, Ann decides to take a chance and reveal herself. For many weeks the man, a chemist named John Loomis, is an invalid. Part of the time he is delirious. From his ravings Ann learns that he got the special radiation-proof suit he'd been wearing when he came to her valley by murdering a colleague. This naturally makes her suspicious of him, but she still does not want him to die. She takes care of him as best she can, praying for him at the local church when she doesn't know what more she can do for him.

Miraculously, Loomis recovers. And as he

recovers, he begins to take charge. He persuades Ann to plant more extensive crops, and to use a tractor (something she didn't want to depend on, since there was only a limited gasoline supply in the area). He tells Ann that her going to church is a waste of time; she should work to get the crops planted. Ann goes along with him, somewhat against her better judgement. Then one night he tries to rape her. Ann escapes back to her hidden cave. There she analyzes the situation: "When he was holding my hand [just before the attempted rape], I could tell that he was taking charge, or possession—I do not know how to put it. He was trying to control me, just as he had, in his own way, controlled the planting, the use of the gasoline, and even my going to church."

For about a month Ann hides out in the cave, which she has kept stocked with provisions. Gradually, Loomis's plans become clear to her. He hides the keys to the tractor, padlocks the store, locks her out of her own house, attempts to train her dog to capture her, and in a last effort, shoots her in the ankle. Ann realizes they are at an impasse. Loomis can see no way to co-exist peacefully; he wants to control her. Ann will not live with that, but her options are limited. Her final decision to take Loomis's radiation-proof suit and leave the valley, instead of staying to civilize him so they can live happily ever after, is characteristically brave.

O'Brien uses simple diction and an unsophisticated vocabulary to show that the narrator is young. He gives her a way of getting at the heart of a situation, describing her perceptions with graceful clarity, sometimes tinged with an unconscious irony. The title of the novel comes from a picture book called *The Bible Letter Book*, from which Ann learned her alphabet. "The last page was 'Z is for Zachariah', and since I know that Adam was the first man, for a long time I assumed that Zachariah must be the last man."

16-year-old Ann Burden has wisdom and presence of mind far beyond her years. She is not a typical teenager, or even a typical adult; she is an idealized version of the kind of human being we can only strive to become.

In contrast, Sunny Anthony in *The Colony* is far from idealized. At the beginning of the novel she goes on a fishing trip in the Catskill Mountains to decide whether she should give in to her macho husband's ultimatum to give up her feminist ideals and become a tra-

Based on my own experience in writing pamphlets and teaching for New York State Civil Defense, I consider [Mary Vigliante's] post-holocaust books to be reasonable extrapolations. If anything, they are optimistic. The hard truth is that there is no defense against nuclear war, and both standard anti-aircraft and current high-technology anti-aircraft techniques will not be 100% successful. These are no medical methods of curing persons damaged by nuclear war, and the social fabric as we know it cannot survive an all-out nuclear war.

—Larry Patterson
Editor-in-Chief, Manor Books
private correspondence

ditional wife, or to leave him. After four years of marriage, she doesn't see much chance of reaching a compromise. But she decides, finally, to make one last try.

On the way home she notices there is no other traffic, and only static on the radio. Then she begins to find cars and people. The people are all dead. Reconstructing it afterward, she figures the cause must have been some kind of biological weapon that dissipated quickly.

For about six months Sunny travels up and down the Eastern Seaboard without finding any other people alive. One day, near collapse from a badly infected cut on her forehead, she is captured by a group of people who call themselves "The Colony". She is nursed back to health by a dowdily dressed woman named Ruth, who explains that The Colony is a group of survivors living in the Catskill Mountains. Ruth says that her husbands found Sunny while on a hunting trip. The mention of plural husbands naturally leads to some questions. From Ruth, Sunny learns that there are many more men than women in The Colony, and the situation is not pretty: "She learned how [the men] dominated and brutalized the women who had the misfortune of wandering into the place. She was told how they justified this in the name of religion. Ruth had been here almost six months, and from the sound of it, it had been a living hell. Her life had been a round of beatings and rapes."

Sunny is horrified and immediately makes plans to escape. But it isn't possible. Her four new husbands, all young and seemingly well educated, demand that she become a slave to all their physical needs, a drudge by day and a sexual outlet by night. They whip her whenever she objects to the way they treat her. At first she objects strongly and frequently. She is beaten bloody with a leather belt every time. She is constantly watched, locked in her room, or tied up. There is no opportunity for escape.

She thought she'd be different from the timid, middle-aged Ruth, but she finds she isn't. The only way she can survive is by going along with everything the men want her to do. In



About the Authors

O'Brien

Z for Zachariah, by Robert C. O'Brien, was first published in hardcover by Athenium, and then by Dell in a Laurel Leaf paperback edition. Both of these are young-adult presses. When I saw that *Z for Zachariah* was copyrighted by "Sally Conly", I thought, "Ah hah! Another female writer using a male pseudonym." But research proved that O'Brien died in 1973, before the novel was quite done, and it was finished from his notes by his family. O'Brien is a pseudonym for Robert Leslie Conly, a native New Yorker who worked for over 20 years as a writer/editor for *National Geographic*. Sally Conly is his wife. As O'Brien, Conly is well-known as a writer of quality children's SF. His other books include *A Report from Group 17* (1972), and *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* (1971), which was a Newbury award winner.

Vigliante

The Colony, by Mary Vigliante, is the first of two novels about a post-holocaust world. The sequel is called *The Land* (1978). *The Land* takes place about 300 years after *The Colony*. By this time the women have thoroughly turned the tables on the men. These two books are marketed by Manor Books as a mini-series, *Aftermath #1 and #2*. She has two other books from Manor, *The Ark* (as Jarl Szydlow) (1978), and *Source of Evil* (1980). She also has published *Silent Song* (1980) with Everest. Vigliante lives in New York State with her husband and infant daughter. Her husband's last name is Szydlowski. She has a B.A. in anthropology, worked for several years for the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, and is now a fulltime writer and mother.

time she even becomes fond of them, in love with at least one. Her husbands plant flowers for her. They take her for walks. They make gentle love to her. They apologize while whipping her.

The novel is mainly introspective, concentrating on Sunny's attempt to analyze her situation, much as Ann Burden does. But Sunny's thinking is more confused. The beatings and the hocus-pocus religion have a brain-washing effect. Sometimes she has moments of lucidity, where she wonders how a liberated 20th Century woman could be caught in such a predicament. Because any hostility toward the men is punished, her anger at these times turns inward. She berates herself for giving in to the men, and for not being able to escape. And when her escape plans fail, because she is too weary and sore to think clearly, I blamed her, too! "Dummy", I said, "You shouldn't have built that fire. I would have realized that." But would I have? Vigliante creates a breathtaking sense of involvement, and the reader comes to the sobering realization that in a

similar situation, many women, even most women, would have been forced to behave in a very similar way.

The ending of the story, where Sunny takes back a measure of control with the help of a shotgun, yet decides to remain in The Colony, evokes mixed emotions. Not because her decision is admirable, but because it's made understandable how circumstances might make it the most pragmatic (though not "politically correct") choice.

From a technical point of view, and for sheer pleasure of reading, I found *Z for Zachariah* to be the better book. The language flows smoothly, the hero is attractive, her actions admirable, the story uplifting. In contrast, *The Colony* has some definite rough spots where language is concerned. There are clichés and trite or awkward phrasing. The protagonist is infuriatingly human, arbitrary, forgetful, and confused. The story is distressing and frighteningly realistic.

I recommend them both.

Nuclear Nightmares: An investigation into possible wars

by Nigel Calder

Viking Press, 1980
168 pages, \$10.95

Philip Kaveny

Nigel Calder, British popular science writer and author of such titles as *The Key to the Universe*, *Spaceships of the Mind*, and *Einstein's Universe*, has turned his attention to oppressive and compelling realities in his most recent book, *Nuclear Nightmares* (subtitled "An Investigation into Possible Wars"). In his introduction he tells us why:

While consulting a number of scientists about how human beings might move into space and create worlds without end in the solar system and the Milky way, I found their boundless optimism about these things shot through with a deep pessimism about whether the mother planet would survive. Plainly my own self-indulgence in *Spaceships of the Mind* would have to be compensated by a further study of warfare. The centenary of Albert Einstein's birth was an excuse for putting it off and I allowed myself more months of escapist fun in rethinking the popular exposition of his ideas. Relativity is almost as tricky as nuclear deterrence, but at least they don't roast your children alive if you flunk it.

Though Calder's analysis is both complex and brilliant, I can reduce it to a single sentence: Nuclear war is a real instrument of na-

tional policy that has evolved from an unthinkable catastrophe to an imminent probability for the 80s and 90s.

Calder shows us that the reasons for this are manifold. They range from the evolution of technologies which might make a preemptive strike by any of the several first class nuclear powers a possible prudent strategy, to the proliferation of nuclear hardware which makes the weapons available to almost a score of different countries, many of which are at questionable levels of political stability.

In his book, Calder offers no way out. Perhaps there is none. As Russian troops poise on the Polish border and fight to deadly standstills in Afghanistan, and Iranian jets strafe Iraqi nuclear reactors, I turn to a single line from W. H. Auden's "September 1, 1939":

"We must learn to love one another or die."

World War 3

ed. by Shelford Bidwell

Prentice-Hall, 1978
208 pages, \$14.95

Richard S. Russell

One of the ways the world can end is not with a whimper but with a bang. Editor Shelford Bidwell and the other 10 contributors to *World War 3* are military and diplomatic experts who discuss this possibility in almost clinical terms:

(1) Who? In the beginning, almost anyone. (Chapter 5 is entitled "World Flashpoints".) At some point, to be considered a world war, it will involve the only two legitimate global superpowers: the United States (US) and the Soviet Union (SU). Ultimately, every living being will be affected.

(2) Why? By miscalculation. Either the US or the SU will overestimate how far it can push the other one, and a grizzled hand will reach for the big red button.

(3) Where? Again, almost anywhere and, in the end, everywhere. But the place where the stakes are highest is Europe, specifically Germany (again).

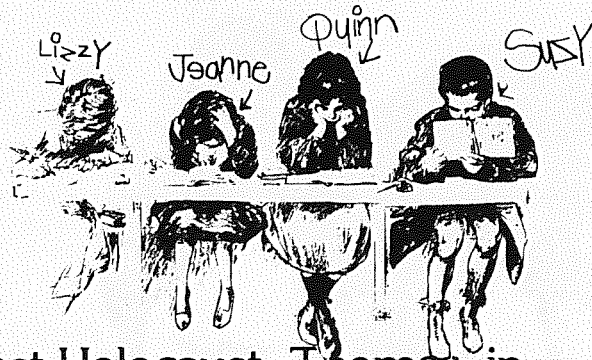
(4) How? Probably a conflict that starts off as limited conventional warfare and escalates to the use of "tactical" battlefield nuclear weapons, then to intercontinental missiles.

Part 1 of the book, "The Rivals and the Weapons", is the more informative. It contains technical information which appeared to be exactly up to date when the book was published in 1978. Part 2, "Into the Abyss", is the more interesting. It's a narrative description of one possible scenario for the start of WW3; it concludes with a grim chapter on the limited possibility that anything will survive.

The book contains useful illustrations and maps; it's not unduly technical. The contributors are former military people but not militarists. It should be updated and reissued regularly.

“NO SUCH THING AS TEARING DOWN JUST A LITTLE”

25



Post-Holocaust Themes in Feminist SF (transcript of the panel at NoreasCon 2)

Elizabeth Lynn, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro,
Suzy McKee Charnas, & Jeanne Gomoll

Jeanne: We're not going to say that the theme of post-holocaust futures is new with women writers or with feminist writers, but it is interesting to look at the reasons some women writers have taken up the theme. I've come up with three possible reasons:

One: to wipe civilization as we know it off the face of the earth and start anew on a blank canvas.

A second reason involves any revolutionary group's relationship to society. A group that has little to lose through the destruction of that society—because it's not integrated into the power structure except as victims—will tend to see a holocaust or the break-up of society as it is, as maybe not such a bad thing.

A third reason is the possible connection to a phenomenon that seems to pop up in so-called "decadent" societies, societies that have gotten too rich and fat, and are collapsing under their own weight of corruption, chauvinism, and self-absorption. It has been historically common to see the artists of those cultures criticized for having lost touch with universal standards, for having helped bring the state of art to a degenerate level.

I see two paradoxical things going on at this point: The first is that the state of the arts while a culture is declining has most often not been in a state of decline itself. Rather, in many instances, as the political and economic climate of a culture grows more and more constricting and depressed, the arts have positively flourished. The other paradoxical thing is that I suspect that it is partially the decadence of the society itself, and the sense of impending catastrophe, that frees some artists from traditional definitions of what is "good" art, and produces a re-birth—or at least a lively change in the arts.

I'd like to see if any of these three authors see aspects of these ideas in their own motives for writing works that might be called post-holocaust fiction.

Liz: Post-holocaust themes are traditional in science fiction. We're all familiar with the story-line, "They dropped the bomb. Now what will we do?" Those are very common plots, and not necessarily written by women.

These are plenty of stories like that written by men. I think that the thing that makes stories on that theme that are written by women different is that women approach the whole idea of survival somewhat differently than men do. There's been a kind of traditional attitude that goes "Ah! We will go now and rebuild civilization!"

Coming back to Freud's statement, (which was crap, but had a kernel of interesting ideas) when he points out that women are hostile to civilization—Well, I don't think that women are hostile to civilization; I think that women are hostile to patriarchal civilization—for good and obvious reasons. I think men should be hostile to it, too. It's extremely debilitating and scary, and it's time for it to go away. But I don't personally approve of [dropping a bomb on it], since I'd probably be under one of the bombs.

As you say, It is very tempting to start with a "blank slate". However, if everything has been destroyed, you have to look at the hierarchy of survival. The people who are going to survive are the people with the power to make decisions about who gets food and water and medical supplies and other things like that—people who are not traditionally, in this culture, women.

I wrote a couple pieces about post-holocaust situations. In one of them I found myself postulating an essentially fantasy city off in the sea beds someplace where people were doing interesting things. But I don't really believe that, if in fact there is going to be a holocaust, there is going to be much hope for civilized survival. I think you go back to the most basic interactions: "You have food. I want food." Waap! I hope I'm wrong.

In the other story I wrote, "Jubilee's Story" in *Millennial Women*, I was trying to see, if in a not-too-desperate post-holocaust situation, what would be the differing responses of people in a patriarchal society, men and women both, to people who were trying to find alternatives to that culture. I came up with some basic differences in socialization. Competition vs cooperation. It was an explorative story.

Quinn: I'm going to be a wet blanket.

Liz: I thought I just did that!

Quinn: Oh no. You were nice.



Look, I don't know if any of you have taken the time to read any history, but there's one thing that history teaches us again and again and again: Once you have a holocaust, even a little mini-holocaust, like an invasion of Vandals and Huns, the first thing that happens is any small rights that you may have had for anyone but the physically strongest are gone, kaput, zowie. You do not see them again. If you want to be reduced to a state of chattel again, my female friends and most of my male friends, the best thing you can do is to get yourself a holocaust, even a small one. You're going to find out how it feels to earn your bread on your back. The advantages and legal protections of women in Imperial Rome have yet to be equalled in the world today. Think about that: Rome fell 2,000 years ago. Women in Rome had more control over their bodies, their lives, their estates, their businesses...

Suzy: If they weren't slaves.

Quinn: No, all women. That included slaves and free women. There was an awful lot of legal protection for everyone, including slaves. If it could be legally proven that a Roman slave had been abused by a master (and yes this law was tested, and yes the decisions were made in favor of slaves), and if the master's abuse had lessened the slave's value, the slave could sue the master, be pensioned for the rest of his life, freed—and there could be no claims made on any descendants of that slave. Boy, did that give you a lot of muscle power! I think there are unions today that would like to have that arrangement with General Motors!

Think about that before you say, "Oh well, let's just tear down a little of it". There is no such thing as tearing down just a

little of it. And you are apt to be the first person to be victimized by the results. I am not saying it's a wonderful system, but tearing it down is the most pyrrhic victory you can wish on yourself. I don't want a holocaust. I don't want even a teeny-weeny holocaust. I worked very hard for all those 38 years for what I've got and the thought of having to give up all that effort for somebody else's whim makes me so fucking mad.

Now I'll let Suzy talk.

Suzy: I think we should be talking about two kinds of holocausts here. One is the fantasy holocaust, which is a dramatic device. Two is the real thing, which is a very, very dramatic device. I find the fantasy holocaust extremely useful for a blank slate. I know that when I wrote *Motherlines*, in particular, what I was thinking of was giving myself all that blank canvas, in terms of history specifically, so that I would not have to quibble about all the historical gobbledygook that has accumulated around the historical possibility of Amazons. I wanted to shelve all that and deal just with the concept of a pastoral female people. I hoped to answer a question asked by the husband of a good friend. Some years ago when I described this concept, he asked, "There are no men in this story—where is the dramatic tension going to come from? Now we all know, but let me tell you, I felt this little quaver of fear, wondering if it were going to work out.

I'm very fond of the idea of how as a fantasy element, a holocaust makes a lot of other things possible. However, you see before you someone who without these glasses is legally blind. And I have no guarantee that my teeth are not going to go bad. I am not anxious to live in a world in which there is no medicine or glasses, because I wouldn't survive in it very long.

"...I think that some kinds of survival are damned idiotic. Do you want your children to live in the Old Stone Age? Do you want them to forget how to read? Do you want to lose your teeth? Do you want your great-grandmother to die at 30? That's obscene"

—Joanna Russ
We Who are About To

At the same time I also agree that the present system stinks! It happens to be very beneficial to me right now, but I don't much like it as a concept, as a construct. And I would like it to go away. I think an awful lot of writers in science fiction would like to see it go away, but a lot of opposition comes from knowing pretty well what would happen if everything went kaboom.

It's kind of schitzzy. On the level of invention it's a marvelous idea; on the level of fiction, it's a marvelous idea; but on the level of where we live, it's not.

Jeanne: I agree with all of you that we should not be promoting a holocaust.

Quinn: We don't have to.

Jeanne: I wonder whether feminist authors or any other group who perceive themselves as

largely powerless, are more likely to be aware of the impending nature of a holocaust. Maybe these stories are a psychic preparation for the task of changing the world once the holocaust happens.

Liz: I tend not to think of science fiction, and especially fantasy, as predictive literature. My particular crystal ball is not really any better than anyone else's. I honestly don't know whether we are heading for a holocaust. Certainly there is a holocaust going on in parts of the world. A good part of the population of Africa is starving at this moment, for god's sake, and pretty much anyone in this room, individually or in aggregate, is helpless to do anything about it.

I can remember at age whatever it was (early teens or something) I became very very conscious that there was a bomb, and I could be hit by it, and the whole world could go up in smoke. It was fairly revelatory when I realized that yes, this could happen.

We could poison the planet, we could destroy the food supply (and probably are). And I imagine that if there are scientists somewhere fucking around with the ocean, none of us is going to know it until one day the algae take over the Earth. So I'm certainly not willing to be predictive about the holocaust. And I agree very strongly with Quinn and Suzy that I have no intentions of attempting to cause it. I should have liked to have been able to alleviate the misery of the people who live on my block, and damn it, I don't even seem to be able to do that very much.

Quinn: I want to point out something that I've become very aware of as I have written a historical novel series:



This is the only generation, ever, on the face of this earth that is able to know within 12 hours when something has happened in a place they have never been, to people they have never seen, under conditions they cannot possibly imagine. Even in the '60s it was not likely that you would see, live on television the same night, children dying of famine in Burma. You do now.

There's always been some sort of disaster (I don't like the word holocaust). But now you know about it. And there's this tendency to want to do something. The questions that come to my mind are "What?" and "For whom?" and "How?"

I can write stories that some people seem to want to read to give them not only some entertainment (I hope), but perhaps a better sense of how we got where we are and a sense of what it was like to live under those conditions. I hope that when you read *False Dawn* you realize that anyone who survived a holocaust would have to live like that, or they would become like the pirates. It's a question of survival.

Suzy: I think reasonably conscious women these days who write about post-holocaust futures have a tremendous advantage over many of the men who write and still do write about post-holocaust futures in terms of "Oh great, we're back in the feudal times. Let's get out our swords and lop off heads and attack castles" and all that bullshit. A lot of those guys, I think, were writing at times when they did not have a readership that was informed by television and news media about what it really means when people start killing each other in the street. I think now, if you're going to take up that subject, you've got to be a little



bit more aware of what is going on.

Liz: Women, like many other people who are writing, have the advantage of—at least on some level of their lives—having been victimized. Normally, this is not seen as an advantage. But in terms of imagining what a post-holocaust future would be like, it is. You have a much more realistic point of view. When you think of the economy, you know who is likely to be doing the work of the economy. The point of view does make a difference.

After the panel, a question and answer period was held. Here are some excerpts:

Denys Howard: This panel isn't what I thought it would be. Over the past few years the women's panel at the worldcon has usually been really excited about the didactic potential of women writing fiction for other women and about the possibility of it being a rallying point and a way to move something larger than just a readership in a certain direction. What I hear here, at this panel, is a defense of the reputations and the establishment of certain authors. The main point of it is, what is the use of the holocaust story right now? I think that it's an avoidance use—that in the absence of any stories about an on-going process of achieving a feminist and humanist revolution, the function of a holocaust story is to demonstrate that the only choice is between the status quo and utter disaster. In that way, women's holocaust stories have an instructional message that says "Give up".

Liz: I don't think that that was what we were saying. I think we use—those of us on the panel and other writers—the holocaust theme to attempt to envision alternatives to current patriarchal society. I think that we are all aware that, yes, a holocaust on one level or another is going on and has been going on through history. This does not mean that you give up. But, looking at what a holocaust does to individuals who are caught in it, I have grown to be less sanguine about the moral capacity of the human race.

Quinn: Denys, I wish that I could believe that my work was important enough that it would make any kind of difference for anybody for anything longer than the length of time that it takes them to read it. Unfortunately, I don't.

Denys Howard: I agree that there are stories using the holocaust theme in a metaphorical sense. However, I think that there's another way that post-holocaust stories are used, and I see that more frequently now. SF fandom is basically economically comfortable white people. That's who we make friends with. That's who the books are written for. That's who we share information about the books with. And the books are aimed at that sort of audience. If we can convince economi-

cally comfortable white people in this country that the only choice we have is either maintaining our own personal safety and integrity within the system the way it works right now, or utter disaster, then I think that the instructional impact of those kinds of stories is to convince us that there is no choice, except to preserve our own personal integrity.

Liz: I agree with you. If you break it down into two choices, obviously everyone is going to say "Neat, I wanna be comfortable; I don't think I'll change; I'm certainly not going to do any kind of political action". However, it's not clear to me that the books do in fact break it down to merely two choices.

Male Voice: I think that recent novels, feminist and non-feminist, have said that there are three choices, not two. There is total disaster for everyone; there is the status quo; and then there is the third choice, political action, social action, any kind of action that helps us to improve our situation—not just for white, middle-class people, but for everyone.

Chip Delany: The problem with the holocaust image as a metaphor is something that limits all of science fiction. It limits what would probably be considered the liberal contingent of science fiction in exactly the same way that it limits what you might call the more rightist contingent. The mistake hinges on a view of the world as much smaller than it is. It's the same kind of conceptual mistake that someone makes when they write *Wheat World*, or *Pirana World*, or *Ice World*. The world is a very, very very big place, much too big and complicated to be definable by a single parameter. Essentially, when you are writing a holocaust story, you are writing *Holocaust World*, most of us, most of the time. You have to get a view of the larger parameters that make something as large as a world function.

Female Voice: Post-holocaust fiction serves to simplify life. All fiction does this. I think this is one of the limitations of fiction. It presents a model of what could be, but it is a simplification, and that must be borne in mind.

Chip Delany: One of the reasons you turn to a holocaust theme as a writer, is because you want to set things up. You suddenly think, "We'll wipe the slate clean" and you find you have this convenient literary convention lying there. So then you can set up your little society. If you want something along a rural line, you can get that by erasing the urban areas. I think it's a good idea to ask yourself specifically, "What is it that I'm erasing?" "Why do I want to get this particular factor out of the picture?" "Is there any way to see the world going in that direction without the holocaust?"

You may end up with something richer, more complex. Realizing that the holocaust theme is a short-cut, you might decide to take the long way around, instead.



PLANET



The beast
breathes around me
going out in comets,
falling back in smoke.
The breath of this planet
flows heavy like a jungle;
the face carved on its sun
is its own melting down
into colors, melting
down into grease.
And beneath this patter
and footfall, the eyes
lighting up in the black,
stretching in the grass,
camouflaged and watching
as the light shrinks in,
watching and shifting,
the part-star tail
twitching.

Our power is behind and below;
haunches are roots, and we
are hunters. Our claws flex,
our tongues drip, muscles stretch
for the stalk and then leap

the hunter of hemispheres listening,
quivering, mountains stiffly holding
like possums to her—string unbreaking,
cord stretching. As far as we can fly
we will carry with us our mother

whose glands expand and quicken
into new animals, whose flow
contracts and grows, whose voice
flickers through space
as static-and stop, who leaves us
to be a shadow leaning large
against her mate.

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A Post-Holocaust Bibliography

Diane Martin

For those of you who might want to read more post-holocaust fiction, here is a list of some of the many novels (and a few short stories and movies) on this theme. Those marked with an (X) are ones I happen to be fond of. Other than that, it's a mixed bag, in no particular order.

- X *Alas, Babylon* (1959), Pat Frank
- Beasts* (1976), John Crowley
- X *Engine Summer* (1979), John Crowley
- Earth Abides* (1949), George R. Stewart
- X *Hiero's Journey* (1973), Sterling Lanier
- X *Canticle for Liebowitz* (1960), Walter M. Miller
- X *Re-Birth [The Chrysalids]* (1960), John Wyndham
- Farnham's Freehold* (1964), Robert A. Heinlein
- The Long Tomorrow* (1955), Leigh Brackett
- Time of the Fourth Horseman* (1976), Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
- X *Breed to Come* (1972), Andre Norton
- Sea Seige* (1957), Andre Norton
- A Secret History of Time to Come* (1979), Robie Macauley
- Redbeard* (1969), Michael Resnick
- Alpha* (1972), Charles Eric Maine
- X *Davey* (1964), Edgar Pangborn
- X *The Judgement of Eve* (1966), Edgar Pangborn
- The Company of Glory* (1966), Edgar Pangborn
- Lucifer's Hammer* (1977), Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle
- 5 to 12* (1968), Edmund Cooper
- The Disappearance* (1951), Philip Wylie
- When Worlds Collide* (1933) and *After Worlds Collide* (1934), Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie
- The Eleventh Commandment* (1962) Lester Del Rey
- X *"The Place of the Gods" ["By the Waters of Babylon"]* (1937), Steven Vincent Benet

- The Martian Chronicles* (1950), Ray Bradbury
- After the Rain* (1968), John Bowen
- Sos the Rope* (1968), Piers Anthony
- Var the Stick* (1973), Piers Anthony
- Neq the Sword* (1975), Piers Anthony
- The Hills Were Liars* (1962), Riley Hughes
- White Lotus* (1965), John Hersey
- X *Ape and Essence* (1948), Aldous Huxley
- The Man in the High Castle* (1970), Philip K. Dick
- Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1969) Philip K. Dick
- Noah II* (1970), Roger Dickson
- The Age of Ruin* (1968), John M. Faucette
- The Heirs of Babylon* (1972), Glen Cook
- Dark December* (1960), Alfred Coppel
- Planet of the Apes* (1963), Pierre Boulle
- Pattermaster* (197), Octavia E. Butler
- The Last Man* (1826), Mary Shelley
- The Long, Loud Silence* (1952), Wilson Tucker
- Shadow on the Hearth* (1950), Judith Merrill
- X *Level 7* (1959), Mordecai Roshwald
- Dark Universe* (1961), Daniel I. Galouye
- Malevil* (1972), Robert Merle
- To Renew the Ages* (1976), Robert Coulson

o The following were also made into movies:

- Damnation Alley* (1969/1977F), Roger Zelazny
 - The Death of Grass [No Blade of Grass]* 1956/1970F), John Christopher
 - I am Legend* (1954) [*Omega Man* (1971)], Richard Matheson
 - X *"A Boy and His Dog"* (1969 [film 1975], Harlan Ellison
- o These are some movies:
- X *Zardoz* (1973)
 - Gas-s-s* (1970)
 - Glen and Randa* (1970)
 - Panic in the Year Zero* (1962)

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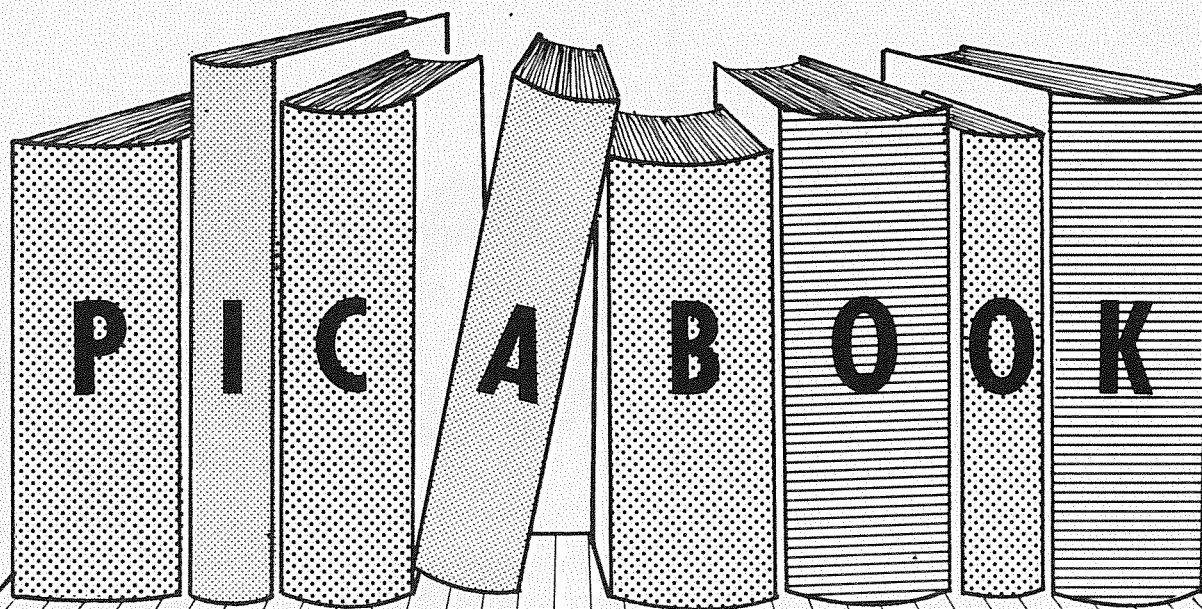
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Artists' gallery

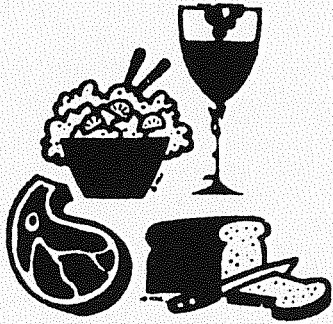
Writers' Gallery

- Suzy McKee Charnas Author of *Walk to the End of the World*, *Motherlines*, and *The Vampire Tapestry*. Charnas was the guest of honor at WisCon 3 in 1978. She lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is trained in the field of anthropology, is an opera enthusiast and is (Quinn Yarbro tells us), a scholar in essence.
- Camillia Decarnin Freelance writer and copy-editor for Chip Delany. Decarnin lives in San Francisco, is an active feminist and a member of the committee which supported the ERA position relative to the Detroit/Chicago bids for the 1982 worldcon.
- Gene DeWeese Author of *Charles Fort Never Mentioned Wombats* (in collaboration with Buck Coulson), *Jeremy Case*, and *The Wanting Factor*. DeWeese lives with his wife Beverly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is a frequent reviewer for *The Milwaukee Journal*, and drives a Checker car.
- Terry Garey Poet and writer. Garey lives in Daly City, California and is the only out-of-Madison *Janus* publication committee member. She participates in poetry editorial decisions and solicits poetry through her small press connections.
- Philip Kaveny Chair of the program committee of SF³ and Chief of Security for WisCon. Kaveny lives in Madison, Wisconsin where he is preparing a play he wrote for production and is actively involved with Madison alternative media.
- Pat M. Kuras & Rob Schmieder Writers for Boston's *Gay Community News*. By chance, they heard of the Worldcon's panels concerning gay men and lesbians, came to report the event and ended up participating in the full range of Noreascon's programs and activities. This was their very first convention of any kind.
- Elizabeth A. Lynn Author of *Watchtower*, *Dancers of Arun*, and *The Northern Girl*. Lynn lives in San Francisco and often attends west coast conventions and even some eastern ones as well—like WisCon.
- Loren MacGregor Publisher of the now defunct *Pacific Northwest Review of Books* and fannish writer and humorist. MacGregor is an ex-Seattleite currently residing in San Francisco where he is working on a novel. He has memorized tens of hundreds of obscure songs and lyrics and will tap dance an accompaniment on request.
- Diane Martin Co-chair of WisCon and treasurer of SF³. Diane lives in Madison Wisconsin with four cats (and two people). In her spare time she works as office manager of a cash register company.
- Richard S. Russell Secretary of SF³ and Pet Bureaucrat of the Madison SF Group. Russell lives in Madison, Wisconsin, preaches metrication and dislikes so-called wasted white space with a passion. He never does anything the easy way when there is a perfectly good hard way available.
- Jessica Amanda Salmonson Editor of *Amazons!*, a collection of heroic fantasy about women; and author of the soon-to-be published *Tomoe Gozen Saga*. Salmonson lives in Seattle and is addicted to coffee houses and samurai films.
- Chelsea Quinn Yarbro Author of *False Dawn*, *Messages from Michael*, and *The Count St. Germaine* vampire series. Yarbro will be WisCon 5's guest of honor in March, 1981. She lives in Albany, California, reads palms, does tarot readings, composes music, lifts weights, and not surprisingly says her essence is that of a warrior.



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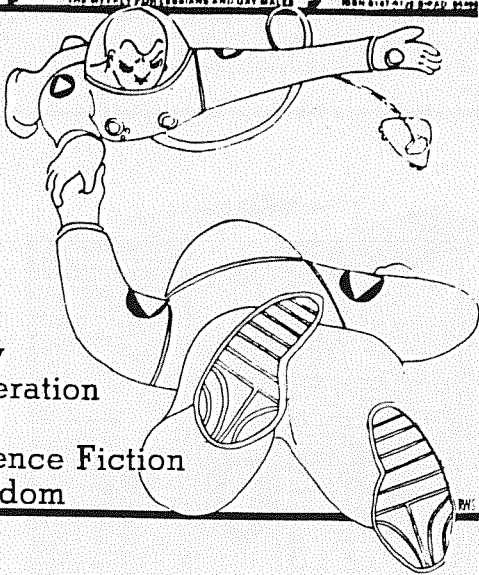
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You bring me the red fire,
call it a flower
expect another flower in exchange—
and what would come from my tortured womb?
Take your fire to someone else
for I am leaving the race.
I will find a clean desert, learn
to be a lizard
and hide from the rain
that reeks
of death.

Terry A. Garey