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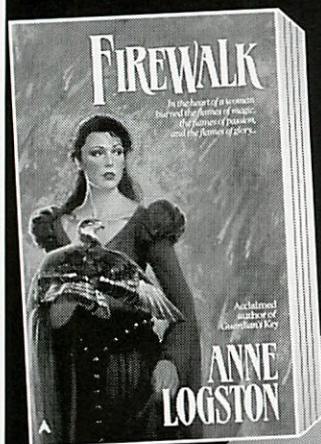
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# NEW

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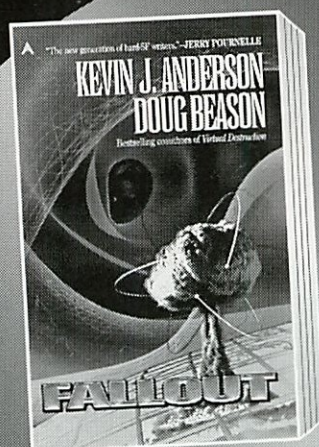
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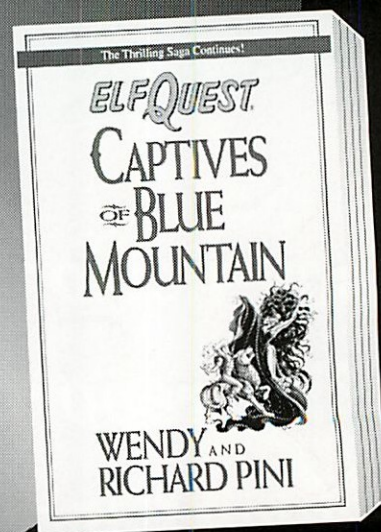
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# Linda Nagata: Choice and Change





Linda Webb was born in San Diego CA, November 7, 1960, but her family moved to the big island of Hawaii when she was 10. She attended the University of Hawaii, where she received a Bachelor's Degree in zoology in 1982; soon afterward she married Ron Nagata, who works at Haleakala National Park on Maui as Chief of Resources Management. They have two children. Her first published story, "Spectral Expectations", appeared in *Analog* in 1987. Her first novel, *The Bohr Maker*, was published in 1995, and won the Locus Award for Best First Novel; her second novel, *Tech-Heaven*, also appeared in 1995. Her latest novel, *Deception Well*, is due from Bantam Spectra in February, 1997.

"Though I was ten years old when we moved to Hawaii, it was still quite a shock: you were on this island, and you couldn't drive off and go camp for a week at a long distance. Now I'm a Hawaiian, and I feel very comfortable there. It's beautiful – especially on Maui. It's got beautiful beaches, wonderful, accessible mountains, it's not too crowded, but it's got a lot of features of civilization. We've got a huge tourist industry, which leads to nice restaurants, nice places to stay. The services tourists demand are really nice for the local population as well. The population of Maui has grown enormously over the last 10-15 years, from 40,000 to 100,000. It's still a five-hour direct flight to the US mainland.

"Living in Hawaii, I like to employ sub-tropical or tropical settings. It's what I know. I like to throw in the plants, the trees, the weather that's near me. It probably seems fairly exotic to people. It doesn't seem exotic to me. I seem to always be trying to get in that direction, no matter how urbanized the story is.

"I also love to play with names and faces and mix them up in ways that don't seem to be 'true.' For instance, one of the lead families in *The Bohr Maker*, their last name is a Filipino combination, and they are described as being blond or red-haired. I look at my own kids, who are half-Japanese. One looks very Japanese, but my son, who has a Japanese name, looks very Caucasian. It hasn't caused me any problems. People see my name, and they expect to see a Japanese face at first. It's a point of confusion that I'm not sure what to do about. This has been my name for a long time. We're far enough along in history that you can't really make assumptions about people based on things like names. I try to use that in my books.

"Basically, I've been writing and taking care of my kids. I've got an understanding husband who puts up with this sort of thing. As for the effect of my having kids, I'm sympathetic to mothers. I like to include women who are mothers, and do other things as well. In *Tech-Heaven*, the lead protagonist has two daughters, and they're a very important part of her life. Even in *The Bohr Maker*, there's a family situation. I like working families, families that care about each other, whether or not they fight.

"I started reading a lot of adventure books as a kid. My father and my older sister were both science fiction readers, and I just started picking up what they left lying around. I read a lot of Andre Norton, and other science fiction adventure books as a teenager, then more or less stopped reading in college, except for summer vacations. My last semester, I started thinking, 'What am I gonna do?', because I wasn't going to graduate school. And I just decided, in that usual smart-alec way, that I could probably learn to write better than some of the stuff being published. Took me ten years, but it worked in the long run.

"I'm real interested in the harder end of science fiction. I like to think about how things would change on different levels; not just getting a spaceship that will go from here to there real quick, but how society would change all the way through, from the way people live together to the way they employ themselves, and the blending of cultures during this entire process. I've always been very interested in evolution – that was something I tried to spend time on in college. Biochemistry was also interesting to me, and nanotechnology seemed almost an extension of these things. They say women tend to write more of the biological-based stories, and nanotech meshes very nicely with that. That's definitely the angle I came in from.

"I first heard about nanotech in *Analog*, in an article reviewing En-

gines of Creation. It just seemed to really resonate with something. It was exciting. I read what I could find on it. Something as radical as that can really change society, change what people are. Looking at it from a biochemical point of view, there's a difference between biological nanotech and the mechanical, but the biochemical viewpoint just makes it seem much more possible. We're here. I really wanted to do something, science fiction-wise, with this idea. *The Bohr Maker* is what eventually came out. It took a while. There was an earlier version of the novel that got some of the nicest rejection letters I've ever seen! But I did a complete rewrite, and it sold shortly after that.

"*The Bohr Maker* wasn't my title. Now, being a little more experienced, I don't think I would have put up with it, but that's the way it turned out. For my next book, *Tech-Heaven*, I liked the title.

"*The Bohr Maker* was about change and dealing with change, the notion that what we are now is not the end state. In the book, each individual is trying to get to a point where they can make their own choices. The big conflict is between the needs of society to more or less slow things down and keep them steady, and the needs of certain individuals to do what they really want to do on their own. I've always been uncomfortable with the idea that evolution is over for us. That looks at things in such a short timescale, it really has no meaning in the Darwinian sense. We feel very comfortable now, and we can keep people alive who would have died in a more primitive state – but that's *now*, and evolution takes place over thousands, millions of years. To say that we're evolved and we're going to stay this way because of our technology doesn't take into account that, whether we have technology or not, there's going to be all kinds of pressures on us, whether they're social or technological. Change isn't going to stop.

"What bothers me a lot is people who say, 'We can't do this, we can't do that. That's playing God' – the idea that certain things are that way, and they're going to stay that way, and nobody gets to re-examine that question. The problem with individual choice is that most societies can't tolerate it. If people get to choose what they want to do and are educated enough to make that choice, a lot of societies just fall apart, right at that point. That was the germ of the idea that started *The Bohr Maker*: a lot of traditional societies have very strict rules, and simply can't tolerate this idea of individual choice.

"Now throughout the world, we're looking at a lot of traditional cultures that are facing this fact and having a very hard time dealing with it. A lot of the fundamentalist movements

are out there saying, 'No, we don't want people to be looking in other directions, because that will destroy the culture we've had for 1,000 years or more.' And it *will*. There's not really a compromising point. The other point of view is, 'That's their culture, that's how they do things.' And yet I always have to wonder, if the people in there *had* an option, would they be doing things that way? Well, some would, some wouldn't. But the ones that wouldn't never get to make that choice. That influenced the society in *The Bohr Maker*.

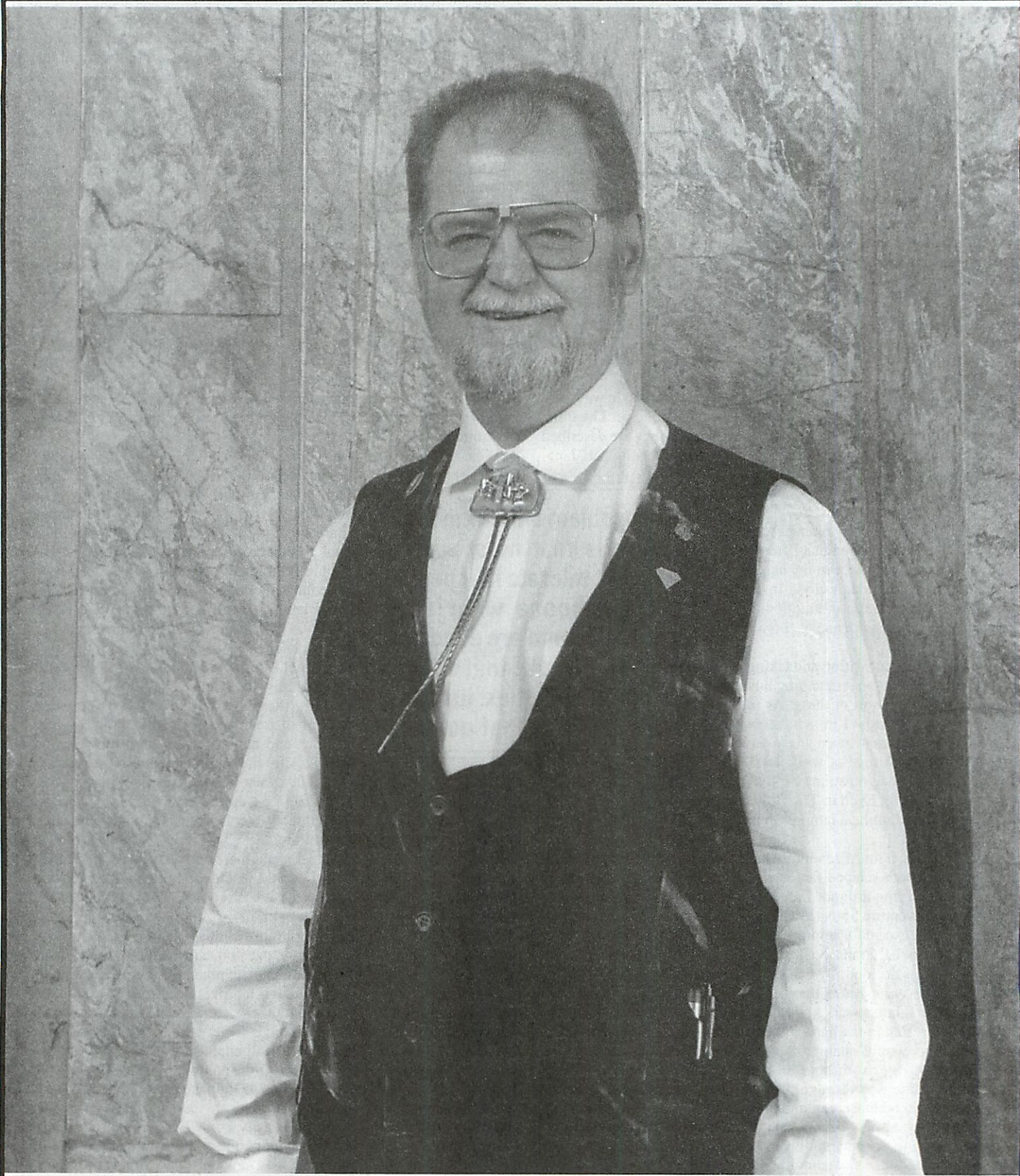
"*Tech-Heaven* started out very simply as this idea of a woman whose husband has been put into chronic suspension, and the question, 'What is she going to do with *her* life?' Though I had planned it as a short story, it grew very rapidly until it was obviously a novel. Here again, I try to look at some ideas of personal freedom, at the choices each one of us may want to make, as opposed to the choices society might want to make for us. For a good part of the book, the lead character is struggling against almost a primitivist movement that says the natural life is what we've got and we need to accept that fact. She's on the opposite side, saying, 'Why?'

"*Tech-Heaven* is a novel very normal on the surface – set almost present-day, with people you could easily know – but at the same time, very radical in a lot of the ideas it puts out and the values it offers. It begins basically in the present time, then moves forward through 30 years, and follows the changing history, politics, environment over that time – economic changes, technological changes. We gradually have nanotechnology arriving on the scene. It's not at a level of magic; it's

*Continued on page 78*



# Larry Niven:



## Painful Fiction



Laurence Van Cott Niven was born April 30, 1938, in Los Angeles CA. From 1956 to 1958, he attended the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, but did not graduate; he finally received his BA in mathematics from Washburn University, Topeka KS, in 1962, then returned to California to do post-graduate work at UCLA, 1962-63. He married Marilyn Wisowaty in 1969.

Larry Niven has been a freelance writer since 1964, the year of his first short fiction publication, "The Coldest Place", in *If*. His first novel, *World of Ptavvs*, appeared in 1966 and began what would become his expansive future history, "Tales of Known Space". He won his first Hugo in 1967, for renowned hard-SF short story "Neutron Star", and went on to win Hugos for short stories in 1972 ("Inconstant Moon") and 1975 ("The Hole Man"), and for a novelette in 1976 ("Borderland of Sol"). *Ringworld* (1970) won both the Hugo and the Nebula for Best Novel. Later books in the series are *The Ringworld Engineers* (1979) and *The Ringworld Throne* (1996). Other important novels include *A Gift From Earth* (1968) and *Protector* (1973) in the "Known Space" series, *The Integral Trees* (1984), and its sequel, *The Smoke Ring* (1987). His best short stories in the series are collected in *Neutron Star* (1968), *The Shape of Space* (1969), *Tales of Known Space* (1975), *The Long ARM of Gil Hamilton* (1976), and *Convergent Series* (1979). His works outside the hard-SF field include the "Warlock" fantasies collected in *The Time of the Warlock* (1984), and he edited fantasy anthologies *The Magic May Return* (1981) and *More Magic* (1984).

Niven is also known for his work with various collaborators, most notably Jerry Pournelle, beginning with their most successful novel, *The Mote in God's Eye* (1974), continuing with *Inferno* (1975) and many other books, including the ambitious mainstream disaster novel *Lucifer's Hammer* (1977) and the alien-invasion novel *Footfall* (1985), plus a sequel to *Mote*, *The Gripping Hand* (1993). With Steven Barnes, he wrote a series of VR novels, beginning with *Dream Park* (1981).

"When I first started writing, and for years afterward, the things I couldn't write about were the things that hurt me. I don't really know why, though it seems natural to me that you don't want to think about what's painful. I was a thoroughly unsocialized person too. Now I can write about what hurts me, and one of the results is, my characters have been getting sick a lot lately! The hero of my next novel, *Destiny Road*, wrecked his knee surfing – I wrecked my knee surfing. Louis Wu in *The Ringworld Throne* had my intestinal plumbing problem.

"But many of my most painful memories aren't of getting hurt, they're social things. In my books, my characters have to work out what to do in strange societies. In *Destiny Road*, the women of Spiraltown don't talk to the men, and the men don't talk to the women. Growing up, you reach a point where you're not talking to your sister anymore. It's still a hell of a shock for my character when he runs into societies along the road, and the women are expecting to talk with him like a human being. He can do that by the time he's 47, but when he gets back to Spiraltown he has to remember he's not supposed to talk to his wife in public. In our own world, communications skills have become very important, because communication has become so easy and universal.

"I turned in *Destiny Road* this summer – about four years late. As it finally evolved, it's set a couple of hundred years after *Beowulf's Children* and *Legacy of Heorot*, same universe. But those were collaborations, and this is a solo novel. Eight years after the world was colonized by two landers and an orbiter mother ship, and a colony was founded on a peninsula they call the Crab, one of the fusion-power landers took off from the colony, moving in a spiral, slowly, leaving a road of congealing melted lava behind it, heading toward the mainland. That's 240 years ago. Now we watch Jemmy Bloocheer grow up in Spiraltown, wondering about that road. He's due to inherit a farm that's right about where the road straightens out, but he kills a man and runs off down the road. He's looking to find out where the road went, where the lander went (it never came back). But he keeps stopping and making a home, wherever he gets the chance. There are communities all down the Crab.

"The book is his life, from age eight to about age 47. It brings him

down the road, back up to the mainland, and eventually back to Spiraltown. I had problems with the book – hence the four-year delay. I think I kept flinching from writing a man's life story; I've never done it before. Look at the rest of my novels, and every one of them covers a few months or a year, and the crisis is over by the time that's done. The characters don't get a chance to develop very much, because not enough time has passed. But this guy in the new book becomes a late-middle-aged man by the time I get him back to Spiraltown. You watch him for all these years.... As for the rest of it, I've done things like the SF elements, the world building before.

"*World of the Ptaavs*, my first book – if I wrote it now, I would certainly spend more time on the characters. But I would never drop letting Pluto catch fire – that was wonderful! I don't think I should rewrite it. I did take seriously a suggestion that came over the Net: rewrite and update *Lucifer's Hammer*. I looked at the notion hard, and it's just plain silly. *Hammer* belongs to its time, was perfect for its time. The mistake I've noticed quickest and most often was taking a successful story, and expanding it into a novel. It almost always is a dismal failure. A good short story, the point tends to be totally lost in the novel.

"I've done three 'Ringworld' novels, but they took me 25 years. The first Louis Wu story was a short story – I got to practice with him first. I have to say I don't have a fourth 'Ringworld' book planned. I never had a third one planned, nor a second. From time to time though, I hope to write new 'Known Space' stories.

"My next project started as a story I wrote because I got mad. I got mad because they burned down half my city! I'm a Los Angeles boy, and there were these South Los Angeles riots. In which some of the survivors are speculating on whose fault it is, and chances are it was the fault of the media. If you could sue the media, you might wind up in control of one of the channels. That story was me letting off steam. The next idea was, move Los Angeles 14,000 years into the past, when magic still works, back to the Warlock's era. Although I opened up the Warlock's world as a shared universe, I can still use it. By this point, the Warlock is dead, but it's the Warlock's era, and the Los Angeles area. Magic doesn't work very well there, because there's a fire god somewhere, who lets loose every so often, and inspired people burn down parts of the city.

"I got a certain distance, and found myself going slower. I talked it over with Jerry Pournelle, and he provided some ideas – he understands liberal Democrats better than I do; I don't understand them very well at all! We came to realize it had to be a collaboration, but each of us had a book to write. Now he's mostly done with his, and I've turned in *Destiny's Road*, so our next book is *The Burning City*. It's a hell of a fantasy, not just a social satire. The characters are never aware at any time that they're in a satire.

"Other projects? A couple of established scriptwriters want to make a film series out of my 'Gil the ARM' stories, and other 'Known Space' stories set in the same time. I'd love to see that happen. And we've got a good, serious option on *The Legacy of Heorot*. That might generate something.

"Some earlier media collaborations didn't quite work out. The 'Ultraverse' belonged to Malibu Comics. I had a novel worked out for them, with a pair of dynamite characters I would have liked to see in the Ultraverse. It was all ready to go, as far as I can push it – because I'm not a comic book person – and then Malibu got sold to Marvel Comics. So that went. I did the 'bible' for 'The Green Lantern' and a novel outline about the youngest of the Guardians, but those didn't work either. There is going to be a limited series from DC for which I'm an unlisted consultant; I did the science background. In the comic book field, things happen from time to time. In the words of George Clayton Johnson, 'I arrived as a foreign prince, and I'm treated with ambassadorial honor.'

"One other project is in the works, so far without a publisher. Aldo Spadoni – an artist who works on computer – and I are putting together a book of his takes on Niven spacecraft, and my text to go with that.

"I try not to have too many plans for books waiting in the stack, and the reason is: a book that's ready to be written always feels like an obligation. The same with a story. It yammers in my ear."



# Major Publishing Changes

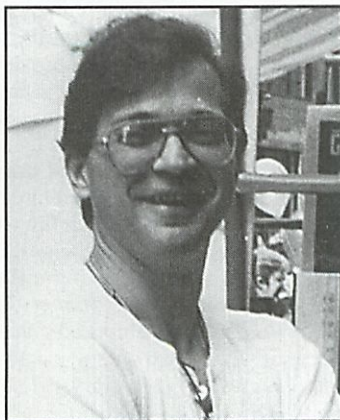
Tom Dupree has left his position as senior editor of Bantam Spectra and moved to Avon as Director of Creative Services, "a new position created just for me." Pat LoBrutto has replaced him as senior editor at Bantam.

In his new job, which he started on January 20, Dupree will "supervise various company writers at Avon of promotion copy, cover copy, marketing, etc., and help develop strategy and new marketing to bring Avon Books to the attention of the public." He will also do some editorial work.

Pat LoBrutto, who has been a



Tom Dupree



Pat LoBrutto

freelance editor since leaving Random House Value Products in 1995, started his new job as senior editor January 9, and is handling much of Tom Dupree's editorial list. He will also take over part of the Western list, including the Louis L'Amour estate, Don Coldsmith, etc. He was

recommended to Bantam Publisher and President Irwyn Applebaum by Tom Dupree.

Tom Dupree was a teenage southern SF fan. He joined Warner as Copy Director in August 1988, and moved to Bantam in 1989 as Copy Chief in charge of cover copy. He became Publicity Manager of hardcover

and trade books in 1990, a senior editor of frontier and historical fiction in 1992, and moved to Spectra in July 1993 as senior editor.

He declared, "In my nearly eight years at Bantam, both the organization and its people have been very good to me, and I will miss them. Now I look forward to a different set of challenges and the company of a splendid team of colleagues, many of whom I knew before! It's great to be back with Lou Aronica, Jennifer Hershey, and others from Bantam. I plan to work hard and have a great time."

Pat LoBrutto, 48, joined Ace in the mailroom in 1969 and left as editor in 1977, when he went to Doubleday. He was part of the Ban-

*Continued on page 76*

## Silverberg SF Anthology Blockbuster

Robert Silverberg has sold a new original anthology, tentatively called **Far Horizons: the Great Worlds of Science Fiction**, to Jennifer Brehl at Avon, via agent Ralph Vicinanza, for a "high" unnamed advance.

The book will be similar to his forthcoming original fantasy anthology, now tentatively called **Legends: The Book of Fantasy**, sold to Elaine Koster at Dutton/Signet last year for a record \$680,000 (see story, *Locus*, October 1996).

Like the fantasy book, with its authors working in their famous fantasy worlds, the new anthology will contain stories by famous science fiction writers set in their signature universes: Arthur C. Clarke will do a 2001 or *Childhood's End* story, Ursula K. Le Guin will furnish a Hainish story, Joe Haldeman a *Forever War* tale, Anne McCaffrey a *Ship Who Sang* story, Orson Scott Card an "Ender" story, Greg Bear an *Eon/Eternity* story, Gregory Benford a tale set in his "Galactic Center" series, Frederik Pohl a "Heechee" story, David Brin an "Uplift" story, and there will be several more.

The book is due by spring 1998, for publication in 1999. The editor describes it as "an end-of-the-century summing up of the state of the art in science fiction."

## 1996 Philip K. Dick Award Nominees

Nominees on the final ballot for the 1996 Philip K. Dick Award are:

**The Transmigration of Souls**, William Barton (Warner Aspect)

**The Time Ships**, Stephen Baxter (HarperPrism)

**At the City Limits of Fate**, Michael Bishop (Edgewood Press)

**The Shift**, George Foy (Bantam Spectra)

**Reclamation**, Sarah Zettel (Warner Aspect)

First prize and any special citations will be announced March 28, 1997 at Norwescon 20, at the Red Lion Hotel/SeaTac Airport WA.

The Philip K. Dick Award is presented annually for distinguished science fiction published in paperback original form in the United States. The award is sponsored by the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, and the award ceremony is sponsored by the NorthWest Science Fiction Society. 1996 judges were T. Jackson King (chair), Kathleen Ann Goonan, Daniel Marcus, Joseph Milicia, and Andrew Weiner. The award is administered by editors David G. Hartwell and Gordon Van Gelder.

## 1997 Nebula Awards Weekend

The 1997 Nebula Awards Weekend of the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America will be held April 18-20, 1997 at the Holiday Inn Crown Plaza, Kansas City MO, with Toastmaster Jane Yolen and Author Emeritus Judith Merrill. Room reservations are \$92 (for 1-4) for reservations made by April 1st, and can be made by calling 1-800-HOLIDAY and mentioning that you are with Science Fiction Writers of America or the Nebula Awards Weekend.

The event is open to all, not only SFWA members.

The banquet price is \$55. Weekend tickets for the parties, without

the banquet, will be available for \$25. There will also be a Saturday all-you-can-eat barbecue lunch buffet for \$11. Nebula banquet checks must be made out to SFWA or Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America, and sent c/o Robin Wayne Bailey, 808 West 39th Terrace, Kansas City MO 64111-4002. The Nebula Awards Weekend website, at [http://www.sfwaweb.org/sfwaweb/awards/weekend\\_1997.htm](http://www.sfwaweb.org/sfwaweb/awards/weekend_1997.htm), includes a form you can print out and mail with your check, as well as information about the Nebula Award and about the Kansas City area.

## 1996 Chain Bestsellers

The following lists, similar to our monthly bestseller list, cover Barnes & Noble/B. Dalton and Musicland sales for all of 1996.

Barnes & Noble/B. Dalton

**Hardcovers**

- 1) **Crown of Swords**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 2) **First King of Shannara**, Terry Brooks (Del Rey)
- 3) **Blood of the Fold**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 4) **Children of the Mind**, Orson Scott Card (Tor)
- 5) **Outcast of Redwall**, Brian Jacques (Philomel)
- 6) **The Ringworld Throne**, Larry Niven (Del Rey)
- 7) **Idoru**, William Gibson (Putnam)
- 8) **Storm Breaking**, Mercedes Lackey (DAW)
- 9) **Encounter With Tiber**, Aldrin & Barnes (Warner Aspect)
- 10) **Otherland: City of Golden Shadows**, Tad Williams (DAW)

**Paperbacks**

- 1) **The Hobbit**, J.R.R. Tolkien (Ballantine)
- 2) **Fahrenheit 451**, Ray Bradbury (Ballantine)
- 3) **Lord of Chaos**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 4) **Stone of Tears**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 5) **Belgarath the Sorcerer**, Eddings & Eddings (Del Rey)
- 6) **The Fires of Heaven**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 7) **The Dragon Reborn**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 8) **The Great Hunt**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 9) **Wizard's First Rule**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 10) **The Shadow Rising**, Robert Jordan (Tor)

*Continued on page 76*



## Copyright Requests For Chinese Translations

Writer/translator Wang Fengzhen wants to introduce American and British SF authors to Chinese readers with a project involving translations of major SF novels.

The novels in question are **Hot-house** and **The Heliconia Trilogy** by Brian W. Aldiss, **Startide Rising** by David Brin, **Stand on Zanzibar** by John Brunner, **Babel-17** by Samuel R. Delany, **The Man in the High Castle** by Philip K. Dick, **Neuromancer** by William R. Gibson, **The Forever War** by Joe Haldeman, **The Moon is a Harsh Mistress** by Robert A. Heinlein, **Dune** by Frank Herbert, **The Left Hand of Darkness** by Ursula K. Le Guin, **Ringworld** by Larry Niven, **Gateway**, **JEM**, and a collection of short stories by Frederik Pohl, and **The Wild Shore** by Kim Stanley Robinson.

Unfortunately, China is not really part of all the international copyright agreements, and there is difficulty transferring money, but his publishers (Lijiang Press and the Children's

*Continued on page 76*

## Marvel Files Chapter 11

The waning of the boom in trading cards and comics, plus in-fighting between the owner and a major investor, have led Marvel Entertainment Group, owner of Marvel Comics, to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, as of December 1996.

According to the Associated Press report, Marvel Entertainment (which also owns various trading card companies, etc.) was a wonder for investors during the early '90s, climbing 16-fold to \$34 (adjusted for stock splits) in the two and a half years after the first stock offering in 1991. By January 1996, the stock value

*Continued on page 76*

## UPC Awards

The Jury for the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya Science Fiction Award for Best Short Novel for 1996 chose the following winners from 130 entries (a new record) submitted in Spanish, English, Catalan, and French:

First prize of 1,000,000 pesetas (about \$7361) went to "Los ojos de un dios en celo" by Carlos Gardini of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Second prize of 250,000 (about \$1840) went to "Helix" by Robert J. Sawyer of Ontario, Canada. Honorable Men-

*Continued on page 76*

# The Data File

**Tomorrow Moves to Net** • The February 1997 issue of *Tomorrow* magazine, #24, the last to appear in print, is out. The magazine is now available only on the Net, at [www.tomorrowsf.com](http://www.tomorrowsf.com) – and, according to editor Algis Budrys, "the next three issues will be free to all." He plans to release approximately 1/8 of the content each week, over a two-month cycle, with material including fiction, a letter column, book reviews, poetry, cartoons, and an art gallery. Budrys notes, "It'll be quite different from the print magazine, not only in content but in looks. The Internet offers much more opportunity." The site will also offer non-fiction, fiction, and audio works by Budrys for downloading. The first Web issue, already partly available online, will have an installment from novel **The Falcon and the Falconer** by Sheila Finch, novelette "Within the Mechanism" by Yves Meynard, plus stories by Rob Chilson, Geoffrey Landis, and others. After the three free Web magazines, *Tomorrow* online will offer some free material, but will mainly be available via subscription, at a cost not yet determined. Existing subscribers can either have their subscriptions extended via the Net, receive refunds, or transfer to *Aboriginal SF*. Submissions of material should be sent by regular mail to *Tomorrow*, Box 1630, Evanston IL 60202; no disks until a story is accepted. Payment remains the same, at a minimum of 4¢ per word, on publication.

**Announcements** • The Intensive English Institute on the Teaching of Science Fiction will be held July 14-25, 1997, at the University of Kansas, Lawrence KS; this year's theme: the short story as presented in James Gunn's anthology series **The Road to Science Fiction**. The Institute will be preceded by the annual Writers Workshop, June 30-July 11, and the Campbell Conference, July 12-13. Frederik Pohl will be a guest during the last two days of the Workshop, and he and his wife, Elizabeth Anne Hull, will be special guests for the Campbell and Sturgeon Awards ceremony, to be held during the Campbell Conference. The Campbell Award for best SF novel of the previous year is chosen by a committee now consisting of James Gunn, Gregory Benford, Paul A. Carter, Elizabeth Anne Hull, T.A. Shippey, Brian Stableford, Robert H. Wilcox, and new member Pamela Sargent (replacing Sam Lundwall, who retired last year). The Sturgeon Award for best short fiction is chosen by a committee with continuing members James Gunn and Frederik Pohl, plus new judge Kij Johnson (replacing Judith Merril). Further information: The Center for the Study of Science Fiction, University of Kansas, Lawrence KS 66045.

The 22nd Annual Williamson Lectureship will be held February 20, 1997, on the campus of Eastern New Mexico University in Portales NM, with guests Melinda Snodgrass and Mike Resnick, along with Jack Williamson. The event will feature a luncheon, signings, and an evening panel discussion. Information: Gene Bundy, Special Collections Librarian, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales NM 88130; e-mail: [bundyg@golden.enmu.edu](mailto:bundyg@golden.enmu.edu)

The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, will hold Cyberfest, a "birthday bash" for HAL the computer of 2001, who (according to its opening scene in the film) "became operational at the HAL plant in Urbana, Illinois on January 12, 1997." Cyberfest will take place March 12-15, 1997, overlapping with the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Cybernetics at the University's Levis Faculty Center (March 8-12).

Planned events include a futuristic technology fair, a presentation on the making of 2001 and showing of the film, a Cyberfest Forum featuring a number of noted scientists, panels on "Disembodied Creativity" with guests including author/scholars Brad Leithauser and Richard Powers, and a CyberGala Birthday Celebration hosted by Roger Ebert and including taped interviews with Arthur C. Clarke and Keir Dullea. Information: [nkohn@uiuc.edu](mailto:nkohn@uiuc.edu) or <http://www.cyberfest.uiuc.edu/scheduleparent.html>; phone: (217) 333-2391.

Ray Bradbury, Andrew Neiderman (author of the current V.C. Andrews books), and Roger S. Baum (great grandson of L. Frank Baum) are among the faculty members for the 1997 Palm Springs Writers Conference, scheduled for April 10-13, 1997, at the Marquis Hotel, Palm Springs CA. For further information, contact Palm Springs Writers Conference, 646 Morongo Road, Palm Springs CA 92264; fax: (619) 322-1833.

**International Announcements** • The Romanian Science Fiction Association is sponsoring "International Science Fiction Camp" Ahanoria '97, Feb. 27-March 3, 1997, at mountain resort Paraul Rece. The camp will offer free accommodations and meals for two attendees from every European country, along with free transportation from Bucharest to the nearest railway station. There will be workshops in literary writing, fine arts, film scripting, and comics, and panels on "Monarchy and SF" and "A Rapid Course of Literary Creativity". Deadline for announcement of participation is February 17. Contact aries@sedona.sorostm.ro

Sean Williams will sign at Infinitas SF/Fantasy Bookstore, Parramatta NSW, Australia, February 20, 5-6 p.m. Simon Brown will sign his new book **Winter** there March 8, 2-3 p.m., and Terry Pratchett will sign at the store July 9, from 4 p.m.

**Readings and Signings** • Joe Clifford Faust signs **Ferman's Devils** at Barnes & Noble - Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh PA, February 8, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. That same day, he will give a reading and answer questions at a meeting of the Pittsburgh Area Realtime Scientifiction Enthusiast's Club meeting at the Carnegie Library - Squirrel Hill Branch, 3-5 p.m.

L.E. Modesitt, Jr. will sign **The Soprano Sorceress** at two Nevada Barnes & Noble stores February 9: Las Vegas (1-3 p.m.), and Henderson (5-7 p.m.). Then come California signings: Crown Riverside, Feb. 10, 6-8 p.m.; Third Planet, Torrance, Feb. 11, 6-8 p.m.; Flights of Fantasy, Santa Monica, Feb. 12, 5-7 p.m.; Borders Books, Mission Viejo, Feb. 13, 7-9 p.m.; Mysterious Galaxy, San Diego, Feb. 15, 7-8 p.m.

Lynn Flewelling will read and sign **Stalking Darkness** at Borders in Bangor ME, February 12, from 7:30 p.m. February 15, she will teach a writing workshop, "Strange Frontiers: Fantasy & Science Fiction", at the Isaac Farrar Mansion in Bangor. For more information, contact the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance at (207) 729-6333. She will also read and sign at BookMarc's Bookstore in Bangor, February 18, from 7 p.m.

S.P. Somtow will read and introduce other authors (not yet named) reading short stories at the Vampire Valentine Day, to be held February 15, from 3 p.m., at Dark Delicacies Bookstore in Burbank CA. For further information, call the store at (818) 556-6660.

Eric Nylund will sign and read from his novels A

*Continued on page 72*



# People & Publishing



Rebecca Ore

## Milestones

What's in a name? Writer **REBECCA ORE**, who is really Rebecca Brown (she used her real name on one early story plus a poetry book), needs to avoid confusion with mystery/mainstream writer **REBECCA BROWN**, "who has priors on that name." The two were recently confused for mailings and announcements, possibly due to Ore's listing in the Directory of American Poets as Rebecca Brown Ore, a listing she has asked to have removed. For e-mail, Ore is RebeccaBrownOre@msn.com, because she could not get a Microsoft listing under just Ore. However, she has a Web site at [www.ctv.com/ore](http://www.ctv.com/ore). She has been getting mail plus requests for signings for the other Rebecca Brown.

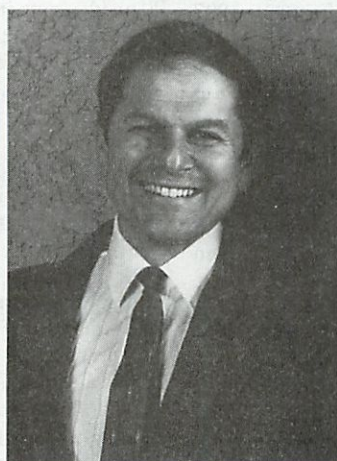
*Locus* reviewer **GARY K. WOLFE** and **ELLEN WEIL** were married New Year's Eve in Chicago. Their accountants cheered.

**BEN BOVA's** *Moonrise* was picked by *Library Journal* as the best SF novel of 1996.

## Books Sold

**ALAN DEAN FOSTER** sold a new "Commonwealth" trilogy plus a new "Pip & Flink" novel to Shelly Shapiro at Del Rey. Foster, along with artists **DAVID MATTINGLY** and **BARCLAY SHAW**, is doing interactive illustrated fiction ("cybertainment") at [www.Magicmaker.com](http://www.Magicmaker.com), with Random House picking up the game rights and Del Rey planning five novellas by Foster as low-priced paperbacks.

**MICHAEL MOORCOCK** sold



Alan Dean Foster

a new non-SF novel, provisional title *The Consumer's Tragedy*, to Jennifer Brehl at Avon. He will also be writing a new monthly comic book, tentative title *Michael Moorcock's Multiverse*, for DC, featuring well-known Moorcock characters such as Elric and Jerry Cornelius, plus some newer characters.

**GREGORY BENFORD** and **GEORGE ZEBROWSKI** sold anthology *Habitats in Space* to Harcourt Brace. Zebrowski describes it as "a history of space colonies in both science and science fiction [with] color paintings, fiction, and nonfiction."

**ALEXANDER JABLOKOV** sold SF/thriller *The Running Father* to Jennifer Brehl at Avon via new agent Martha Millard.

**MERCEDES LACKEY** sold collection *The Tamra and Kethry Stories* to DAW via agent Russ Galen.

**C.S. FRIEDMAN** sold an untitled novel to Betsy Wollheim at DAW via agent Russell Galen.

**MELANIE TEM** sold *There Be Dragons* to Headline Books UK, via Amy Victoria Meo of Richard Curtis Associates; Headline plans to rush the book out in time for the World Fantasy Convention in London this fall.

**SPIDER ROBINSON** sold new novel *The Free Lunch* to Jim Frenkel at Tor via agent Eleanor Wood.

**KATE WILHELM** sold a novel, tentative title *The Good Children*, to Gordon Van Gelder at St. Martin's.

**IRA LEVIN** sold *Son of Rosemary*, sequel to 1967 bestseller *Rosemary's Baby*, to Michaela Hamilton at Dutton after Bantam passed on its option. Dutton also got the original novel and will reissue it from Signet, along with a



Melanie Tem

125,000-copy first printing of the sequel, in September.

**YVONNE NAVARRO** sold *Red Shadows*, sequel to *Final Impact*, plus an unnamed second novel, to Anne Leslie Groell at Bantam.

**DENISE VITOLA** sold three more novels in her "Future Cop" series to Ginger Buchanan at Ace via agent Irene Krass.

**BILL BURKETT**, who wrote one novel in 1964, is back with sales of *Blood Sport* and a sequel to John Douglas at HarperPrism via agent Bob DiForio, former head of NAL.

**MICHELLE WEST** sold the third volume in her "Sun Sword" trilogy to Sheila Gilbert at DAW via agent Donald Maass.

**MICHAEL A. STACKPOLE** sold an "epic" trilogy plus a one-book prequel to Anne Leslie Groell at Bantam via agent Ricia Mainhardt.

**JAKE PAGE** sold another alternate Western history novel to Shelly Shapiro at Del Rey.

**S.M. STIRLING** sold *Island in the Sea of Time* to Roc via Russell Galen.

**ANGUS WELLS** sold *The Guardian* plus an untitled second book to Anne Leslie Groell at Bantam.

**JANE FANCHER** sold *Ring of Destiny*, third book in a series, to Betsy Wollheim at DAW via agent Jonathan Matson.

**DON H. DeBRANDT** sold SF novel *Steeldriver* and sequel *Timberjack* to Ginger Buchanan at Ace via agent Donald Maass.

**WILLIAM R. FORSTCHEN** sold books #7 and #8 in the "Lost Regiment" series to Laura Anne Gilman at Roc via agent Eleanor Wood.

**DORANNA DURGIN** sold fantasy novel *Barrenlands* and a sequel to *Touched By Magic* to Baen



Yvonne Navarro

via Shawna McCarthy of SCG.

**KRISTIN BRITAIN** sold her first two novels, *The Green Rider* and an untitled work, to Betsy Wollheim at DAW via agent Anna Ghosh of SCG.

**JULIE CZERNEDA** sold first novel *A Thousand Words For Stranger* to DAW via Russell Galen.

**IVAN CAT** sold an untitled SF novel to Betsy Wollheim at DAW.

## Books Delivered

**ALEXANDER BESHER** handed in *MIR*, sequel to his novel *RIM*, to Bob Mecoy at Simon & Schuster, and to Little Brown UK and Goldmann in Germany. Beshar, in collaboration with **FRANÇOISE BOLLEROT**, and **PAMELA ENGBRETSON**, has a new digital book available free online: "@: A Virtual Tale of the Coming Millennium". It can be read at <http://www.bookaisle.com>

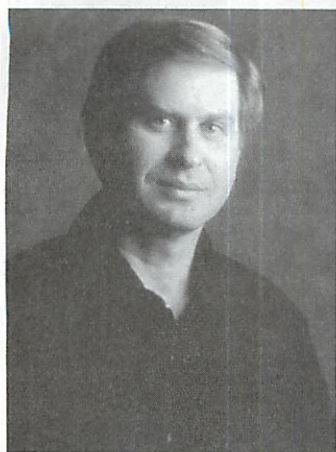
**STEPHEN JONES** turned in original anthology *The Mammoth Book of Dracula: Vampire Tales for the New Millennium* to Robinson Publishing (UK) and Carroll & Graf. It includes stories by Ramsey Campbell, Brian Lumley, Kim Newman, F. Paul Wilson, and others. Jones also delivered anthology *Dancing With the Dark: True Encounters With the Paranormal by Masters of the Macabre* to Faith Brooker at Gollancz; it gathers comments from over 70 writers on "their real-life experiences with the supernatural."

**CARY OSBORNE** delivered *Deathweave* and sold a sequel to Ginger Buchanan at Ace via Irene Krass.

**DAN HOOD** finished a sequel to *Beggars Banquet* for Ace.



# People & Publishing



Alexander Beshler

JOSHUA DANN turned in his second "Timeshare" novel to Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

SHARON SHINN finished *The Hallelujah Files* for Ace.

MIKE MOSCOE delivered *Lost Days*, third in the "First Dawn" series, to Ace.

NANCY KILPATRICK and TOM ROCHE finished an original anthology of gargoyle stories for Ginjer Buchanan at Ace.

CHARLES L. FONTENAY turned in YA SF mystery novel *Kipton and the Caves of Mars* (#11 in "The Kipton Chronicles") to Royal Fireworks Publishing.

## Books Resold

TAMORA PIERCE resold UK paperback rights to her "Song of

the Lioness" quartet to Scholastic Press UK. In the US, the "Lioness" books (*Alanna: The First Adventure*, *In the Hand of the Goddess*, *The Woman Who Rides Like a Man*, and *Lioness Rampant*) will be February paperback re-releases from Alfred A. Knopf.

JOHN PELAN resold rights to his original anthology *Darkside* to Laura Anne Gilman at Roc via Jennifer Jackson of the Donald Maass Literary Agency. It was previously published in a limited edition by his Darkside Press.

Ace bought paperback rights to ROBIN MCKINLEY's newest YA novel from Greenwillow, *The Rose Cottage*.

## Publishing

STALEY KRAUSE has left her editorial job at White Wolf, following the birth of her second child. COLLIN JOSEPH KRAUSE, on December 10. Husband MIKE KRAUSE remains with the company. Fantasy editor ERIN KELLY left several months ago. Publisher STEWART WIECK is now also Editor-in-Chief. ANNA BRANSCOME replaced editor DANA BUCKELEW when she returned to Grad School. Anna is now managing editor of Borealis Legends, and copy editor on all fiction manuscripts. White Wolf is cutting back to two titles per month, and is overbought, so there will probably be no replacements. KIM



Sharon Shinn

SHROPSHIRE, head of promotion, has also left.

JACK McKEOWN resigned as president and publisher of HarperCollins's expanded adult trade group, to which he was appointed last spring. HarperCollins president ANTHEA DISNEY will be acting publisher of the group, and she named DAVID STEINBERGER as president. Steinberger was previously a management consultant at Booz, Allen & Hamilton.

TIM HOLMAN, formerly Publicity Director, is the new Editorial Director of Little Brown UK imprint Orbit, working with Consultant Editor COLIN MURRAY.

PETER RUBER is the new freelance editor at Arkham House, with KAREN GANDER handling in-house production.

## Media

ARTHUR C. CLARKE and GENTRY LEE sold "Millennium", a concept for an original four-hour mini-series, to Scripps-Howard Productions via Scovil Chichak Galen and Steven J. Fisher of the H.N. Swanson/Renaissance Agency. The deal includes "a six-figure fee for writing the treatment, and a seven-figure fee if the mini-series is broadcast on network television." Scovil Chichak Galen also optioned rights to Clarke's *Rendezvous With Rama* to Propaganda Films for a high-five-figure advance against a seven-figure deal.

Film rights to NEAL STEPHENSON's *Snow Crash* sold to Touchstone Pictures and producer Jonathan Zimbert.

After SAMUEL R. DELANY gave it a plug on National Public Radio, *The Stars My Destination* by ALFRED BESTER suddenly

became a big seller in the chains.

GEOFF RYMAN has an interactive novel on the World Wide Web at <http://www.ryman-novel.com>. "253 or Tube Theatre: a novel for the Internet in seven cars and a crash" was scheduled for an official launch January 20th, with a dramatic reading plus demonstrations at Deep End, University of Westminster in London. Ryman in his day job is New Media Manager at Britain's Central Office of Information, heading a team which designs Web sites for government departments.

Film rights to *Blood Music* by GREG BEAR sold to Zide Entertainment for a five-figure option against a six-figure purchase price via Richard Curtis Associates. Zide also optioned a screenplay by Bear.

KEVIN J. ANDERSON and DOUG BEASON sold environmental thriller *Ill Wind* to Adelson Entertainment, for an ABC TV movie via agents Richard Curtis Associates and the Renaissance Agency. The authors did a new treatment for the story for the TV market. Their other environmental thriller, *Ignition*, had already sold to Universal Pictures.

JOHN DE CHANCIE's *Living With Aliens* was optioned by Valhalla Productions, for possible filming as a movie-of-the-week, against a "high five-figure" purchase price. The agent was Richard Curtis.

STAN NICHOLLS sold *Dark Skies: The Awakening*, a novelization of TV series *Dark Skies*, plus a sequel to Simon Taylor at Bantam via the Judy Martin Literary Agency.

Victor Television Productions extended its option on *Carrion Comfort* by DAN SIMMONS, which it is developing for ABC Pictures.

Broderbund chairman DOUG CARLSTON and wife TOMI PIERCE have built what *The New York Times* describes as what "may be the world's first house loosely based on the visuals, sounds, and surrealism of an interactive video game" — none other than "Myst", complete with secret doors, labyrinths, catacombs, and hidden "treasure" (a chest of costume jewelry, down in the depths). The house, "somewhere near Aspen, Colorado," is large but deceptively normal on the surface; you have to go underground to find the real surprises.



Steve Pagel (center) flanked by now ex-White Wolfers (l-r) Staley Krause, Kim Shropshire, and Erin Kelly.



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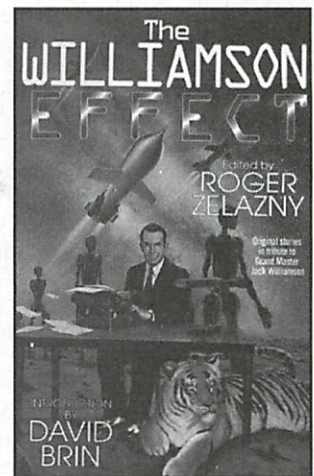
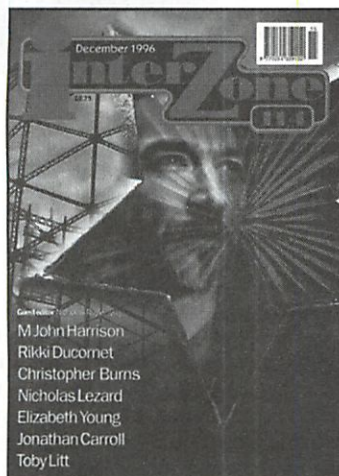
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# Distillations: Short Fiction

Reviews by Mark R. Kelly



*Interzone* 12/96  
*F&SF* 1/97  
*SF Age* 1/97  
*Asimov's* 3/97

## SHORT TAKES

*Analog* 1/96, 2/96, 4/96, 6/96, 8/96, 11/96

**The Williamson Effect**, Roger Zelazny, ed. (Tor 1-312-85748-9, \$23.95, 349pp, hc) May 1996. Cover by Nicholas Jainschigg.

**A Nightmare's Dozen**, Michael Stearns, ed. (Harcourt Brace 0-15-201247-8, \$17.00, 239pp, hc) October 1996. Cover by Michael Hussar.

The December *Interzone* is guest-edited by Nicholas Royle, whose goal is to collect stories that appeal to readers whose tastes aren't limited to particular genre sections of the bookstore. Toward that end he invited several non-genre writers to contribute to the issue. The results, as usually happens in such cross-cultural experiments, are more likely to please general readers with a tolerance or taste for surrealism and whimsical fantasy, than readers looking for the rigor and strengths of well-thought-out fantasy and SF.

M. John Harrison opens the issue with "The East", in which the narrator, Michael, recalls living in London in the late 1980s after the Berlin Wall fell and refugees from eastern Europe began to pour into the west. He makes acquaintance with an old man in a park in Soho who tells stories about his homeland, and about the dangers of being a refugee. But his stories don't quite make sense; his English is technically good, but what he says seems to lack context and reference. After a while, Michael starts disbelieving him, and even breaks into the man's room to learn his real story. What he discovers has a fantastic, even SFnal, aspect to it (as in maybe he's a refugee from some other time or place entirely), but ironically this is less interesting than the story's overall sense of dislocation, the idea that the old man simply cannot shake the paranoia and oppression that he's always lived with.

Jonathan Carroll invents another bizarre

metaphysic in "Alone Alarm". A man despondent that his wife is seeing another man goes to a pickup bar to hang out. There he sees his rival, a man with a prominent Van Dyke, but he can't bring himself to confront him. On his way out of the bar, he's hit from behind, kidnapped in the trunk of his car, and taken to a lonely country road where he meets a group of men who are all — himself. He learns the truth about them, about himself, and about Mr. Van Dyke, which makes his shattered marriage somewhat easier to bear. The whole wonky scheme is more amusing than plausible, though it makes sense at least metaphorically to the way people often compartmentalize their lives.

Christopher Burns is a writer who had stories in a couple early issues of *Interzone* and has gone on to a career as a mainstream novelist. In "Life Afterwards" a man, Alan, sees to the burial of his wife Iris the way she wanted, by sprinkling her ashes into a church garden. Alan has happened to meet another woman recently, and within a few months he is remarried. He starts getting phone calls from Iris, chastising him for abandoning her; Iris claims to be back in their old house, but of course when Alan goes there, the house is empty. What looks like a standard Twilight Zone fantasy, leading up to a predictable moral conclusion, instead ends with a surrealistic riff, without any sort of real conclusion at all in the sense of explanation.

The remaining four stories are by non-genre writers and critics. Nicholas Lezard's "Planet of Shit" provides a cartoon-SF entrance into a Kafkaesque Twilight Zone; the narrator's spaceship smashes into an asteroid (600 light years from Earth), where he discovers an oppressively boring society where it perpetually drizzles and everyone carries an umbrella, all the men are named Clive, the women are named Jean, and everyone drinks something called grach. His explanations of his origin are met with blank stares. The story is an adequate, if unsubtle, lesson in the oppression of conformity.

Elizabeth Young's "The Canon" is more successful, offering some genuine extrapolation into the future of information processing and aca-

demic studies. It's the narrative of a college instructor, Zee, who is disheartened by the ways that students in 2097 can mix and match classics of literature along with critical studies and emendations in order to create new texts to suit their tastes. Giving happy endings to *Wuthering Heights*, and *Lolita*, for instance. Zee decides to do something about it, and arranges an end of term party for her students, at which she shackles to each wrist a balloon containing a quotation from the literary canon and makes a party-game challenge to act out the quote in some way. The story recalls Bradbury stories like "Usher II" — a savage response to philistines who would destroy the literary heritage. But this story too can't resist a surrealistic trill at the end, as if the SFnal extrapolation itself is insufficient for the author's literary sensibilities.

Two final stories are surrealistic fillips. Rikki Ducornet's "Egyptian Gum" stages a generational gap squabble between a mother and children who are the results of a wave of mutability set off by the opening of an Egyptian tomb. Toby Litt's "Zips" follows a writer on a road trip across the US, where his efforts to compose short stories are interrupted by the sounds of zipping and unzipping from the motel room next door. He takes violent, irrational action.

The January *F&SF* opens with an unusual Christmas story from Gene Wolfe, "No Planets Strike". The story's double inspirations are lines from *Hamlet* about how at Christmas nothing bad can happen — "no planets strike" (or, aliens can't attack) — and the legend that animals talk on Christmas Eve.

The narrator is a donkey named Donnie; he and Bully (a bull) are genetically enhanced animals from Earth. Recently acquired by Mango the Clown, they've toured from planet to planet, putting on comedic performances, and have now come to Sidhe, one of the few planets with an intelligent native race, the Beautiful People. This race has altered itself to be more beautiful than humans, and though they welcome humans to their planet, humans are not allowed to leave or to reproduce. When Mango tries to sneak off-



## Distillations by Mark R. Kelly

planet, he is caught, and the two animals are soon on their own. One night a woman in their audience is about to give birth – an illicit human birth – and in an effort to help, the Donnie and Bully break their cover as dumb animals.

It's impressive how Wolfe blends his two points of inspiration, and the familiar Christmas story, with themes familiar from his body of work, such as the Christian underpinnings of "The Book of the New Sun" and the shapechanging aliens of **The Fifth Head of Cerberus**. The result is a perfectly valid science fiction story that cleverly encases the Christmas narrative without being at all didactic about it.

At the other end of the issue is a story that also encases a more familiar story, in this case that of Cinderella. "Longing for Blood" is by Vilma Kadleckova, a Czech writer, and translated by Bruce Sterling and her husband Martin Klima. The setup is a melange of stock fantasy elements. Ashterat is one of the surviving members of the immortal Taskre family, whose destiny is to protect the World Inside from the beasts of the World Outside. Various members of the family have succumbed to one curse or another (father is entrapped inside an ebony clock), so Ashterat and her sister Hildur are in search of a man to insure this protection. The test for a suitable man is to drink a special Potion which will grant the power to travel between worlds; but the effect on unsuitable candidates is to poison them. Now Hildur has succumbed to overambition by turning into a kind of vampire, and Ashterat has had to encase Hildur in a granite coffin.

Meanwhile, there is a foster-sister, Shina, nicknamed Cinderella after a childhood incident. She's a bit batty, and Ashterat decides she should be married off. When she hears the Prince is officially looking for a bride, it occurs to her also that the Palace would be a good place to search for a suitably strong man. And so Ashterat arranges for both herself and Shina to attend the ball.

The story has an outer arc, and satisfactory resolution, quite independent of the Cinderella tale, though the two storylines dovetail neatly. It's difficult to judge the translation except to note that the story is more wordy, sometimes in the sense of being ornate (e.g., "She demanded limpid and crystalline justice for herself and stern and immediate punishment for him..."), sometimes in repetition, than would be expected for contemporary English prose. The necessity of finding a *man* to save the kingdom, so to speak, is a theme that might rub some western readers the wrong way. It's fascinating, though, to see what elements of contemporary fantasy, and of classic myth, are present and recognizable in this tale from outside the English-language tradition.

Carroll Brown's "The King of Seventh Avenue" updates yet another cultural myth, that of King Arthur. The narrator is Max, a roving photojournalist visiting friends in New York. One of them is Arthur, owner of a market, who has always half-jokingly been known as "King of the Britons." Max, anguished by witnessing senseless deaths in a new English war, calls the bluff, and demands to know why Arthur, if he were still alive, wouldn't do something to stop the slaughter. The story addresses both the Arthurian leg-

end, and the larger issue of how people believe what they need to believe. The writing is impassioned, though given to cliché at times – as in "the dark fires I was carrying inside me."

Charles de Lint's "Crow Girls" is a chapbook Christmas story written for friends that is now published for general readership. Heather, a mother with two girls who's decided to leave her husband, feels an enormous void in her life. She commiserates with best friend Jilly over coffee. They notice two dark-haired girls sitting at another table, and something about them makes Heather feel better, as if their mere presence reassures her that good things remain to be experienced in life. It develops that others know about the girls, and have been affected by them, too. The story's occasional origin may explain its haphazard metaphysics; aside from insisting (typical for fantasy in general) that coincidences *do* mean something, there's no overall strategy; the scenes do not make more than the sum of their parts. But it's an emotionally feel-good story.

Linda Nagata's "The Bird Catcher's Children" is an SF story about a renowned sculptor from Earth, Harysen, who's been granted special permission to set up house on the closed world of Weyken. He discovers squatters in the forest there, and finds spying on them more interesting than pursuing his art. There's a father and two children, dressed in feathers from the dinosaur-like birds, avesaur. The father insists to Harysen that he stop spying on them, taking Harysen's photos and smashing his camera. Harysen meekly submits. But when Harysen's own presence in the forest betrays the squatters to the planet's wardens, he's faced with a greater moral burden.

The story seems reasonable in outline but is irritating in numerous small ways: missing explanations, for why the squatters speak such perfect English, why Harysen at one point so quickly assumes the children are dead (when from the story's title the reader knows they must not be), why in the constant rain Harysen leaves his patio doors open (so the birds can come in a wreck the place, of course). And odd anachronistic details of setting: Harysen sits in the "living room" of his manufactured "house" and drinks bourbon. Not to mention the amazing lapse of motivation in the sacrifice necessary for his final decision.

Robin Aurelian's "The Santa Trap" is a fiendish inversion of Christmas in which children fear "Subtraction," the day when Santa comes to take away their favorite toys. Mike and Janie, two children who've discovered they can't fake Santa out by pretending to like other toys, concoct a plan to give him a taste of his own medicine. The story has a macabre appeal in its odd idea, though its mixture of realistic details and absence of any hint of social rationale makes it an odd combination of parable and social satire.

Robin Wilson's "Faster than a Speeding Bullet" involves, as the title suggests, yet another cultural myth (that seems to be the theme of this issue). Joshua Feineman, rich by virtue of a clever software invention years ago, is out camping with girlfriend Rainey Clarke, a county criminologist. He tries to explain why his life is almost but not quite perfect; sure he's rich and has a nice girlfriend, but he wants to do good in the world. Then – unbeknownst to them – a tiny alien spacecraft falls to Earth and embeds itself in the skin of

Josh's neck. While Rainey returns to work to learn that her son has been arrested for possession of a handgun, Josh is at home discovering he suddenly has amazing physical abilities. Later Josh accompanies Rainey and her son to a meeting with a prosecutor, and he discovers a way, a very small subtle way, that he can do good. Wilson is quite a writer, as accurate and precise and authentic as some of the previous writers in this issue are sloppy; one almost feels he is squandering his considerable talents on this pleasant and finely wrought, but ultimately rather slight, riff on the Superman theme.

The centerpiece novella of the January *SF Age* is Ben Bova's "Sam and the Prudent Jurist", another tale in the series about the roving entrepreneur Sam Gunn. This time Sam is pursuing mining in the outer solar system when he is brought up on charges of genocide, accused of destroying the green lichenoids of Europa. In Selene City, Sam faces a panel of three judges, including one in charge of the consortium that has passed all the laws that Sam broke, and a prosecutor, the "Beryllium Blonde," with whom Sam has a history. Sam's defense is a long story that begins with a distress call from the Party Twins, Cindy and Mindy, two girls in a spaceship who provide a much needed (virtual) service to lonely, horny space miners. The courtroom dynamics are not terribly plausible – surely in a real court, or even a TV or movie court, the prosecution would be objecting and interrupting Sam's story far more quickly than they do here – but the tale's a good one, fast paced and fun, and realism is not the intent.

At the far extreme from that story is the psychological intensity of Jack Dann's "Blind Eye", in which Carlos Smlta, a wealthy lawyer and artist recovering from the accidental death of his artist wife, finds himself plagued by spectral visitors who roam through his house and ask him questions about the circumstances of her death. Carlos does feel guilty, though perhaps the death was merely an accident. Then the visitors, who seem to be time travelers, trigger a memory in Carlos that puts matters into a different perspective. The story is both a time travel paradox and a symbolic reification of memory and loss, being more evocative of these things than being entirely clear.

Don Webb's "The Five Biographies of General Gerrahn" is the account of a starving artist, Thomas Dam-Seuh Lasser, whose fortunes change when he discovers that the woman he did a one-night stand with on Angkor III – which ended with her mysterious death – was General Helen Lyndon, a hero in the war against the alien Beletrin. The authorities, convinced he's innocent of involvement, offer him a deal to write her biography. The success of the first book leads to a second, and then further volumes. Webb not only illustrates the need for the idealized war hero, and the way publicity machines can feed upon themselves, he wryly shows how decisions of art vs. commerce affect a writer's life, a situation that Webb himself, renowned in the small press but not exactly a presence on any best-seller list, has probably pondered.

Robert Reed's "Blooming Ice" is set on the

*Continued on page 59*



# Locus Looks at Books

## Reviews by Gary K. Wolfe

**The Best of Interzone**, David Pringle, ed. (HarperCollins Voyager 0-00-648243-0, £5.99, 518pp, pb) January 1997. Cover by Mehau Kulyk. (St. Martin's 0-312-15063-6, \$24.95, 518pp, hc) May 1997. Cover by Mehau Kulyk.

**Unlocking the Air and Other Stories**, Ursula K. Le Guin (HarperCollins 0-06-017260-6, \$22.00, 207pp, hc) January 1996. Cover by Paul Klee.

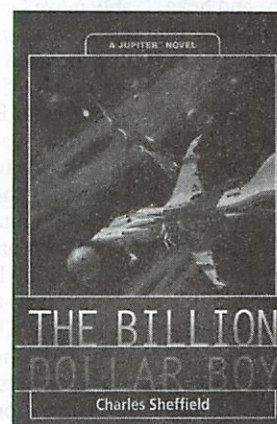
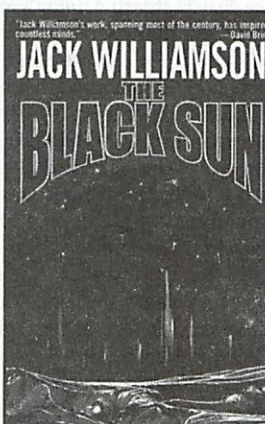
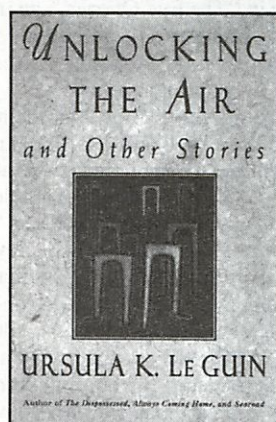
**The Black Sun**, Jack Williamson (Tor 0-312-85937-6, \$23.95, 352pp, hc) February 1997. Cover by Ron Miller.

**The Billion Dollar Boy**, Charles Sheffield (Tor 0-812-53890-0, \$5.99, 255pp, pb) April 1997. Cover by Vincent Di Fate.

**The Dealings of Daniel Kesserich: A Study of the Mass Insanity at Smithville**, Fritz Leiber (Tor 0-312-85408-0, \$18.95, 125pp, hc) March 1997. Cover by Jason Van Hollander.

The last thing you want to hear when you're listening to a panel discussion at a convention is an audience member piping up with a question that begins, "Isn't it true that - ?" Such questions usually bespeak agendas that you'd just as soon not know about, if not outright obsessions. In this case - at an academic SF convention last March - the panel was discussing the state of British SF, and the interruptor clearly wanted it known that the magazine *Interzone* was not only being run by a cabal of surly post-Thatcher liberals, but was out to channel the whole of British SF toward some sort of sour-grapes leftist agenda. John Clute, a former member of *Interzone's* editorial collective and the nominal target of the attack, responded with a kind of medium-high dudgeon as he tried to return to the discussion at hand, but it quickly became clear that there were invisible dotted lines in the room connecting people in various unarticulated alliances. This was ripe stuff for the predominantly American audience, most of whom had not the slightest clue as to what lay behind such passions; many of them barely knew that *Interzone* was a magazine at all, much less a controversial one. Something was up, but what?

Most Americans who do know of *Interzone* are more likely to know it by reputation - comments like the ones from Bruce Sterling and Gardner Dozois quoted in David Pringle's introduction to **The Best of Interzone**, the most recent and most ambitious of a series of anthologies drawn from the magazine: that it almost single-handedly brought the British short SF market back from its deathbed, that it's become a crucial venue in defining the SF of the 1990s, that at its best it is to this decade what *New Worlds* was to the 1960s. (This despite the fact that Dozois seldom includes more than one or two *Interzone* stories in his annuals, which almost certainly contributes to the magazine's low



profile compared with American periodicals.) So what is the real nature of *Interzone* - vital new growth or sour rotting vegetation? Fecundity or feculence? A pale shadow of a '60s myth, or a pretty good magazine?

On the basis of the 28 stories, all from the 1990s, that Pringle has assembled in **The Best of Interzone**, there is evidence neither of effete languorousness nor of political consensus. Nearly all of the stories are energetic, a few are slickly commercial, and throughout there is an undertone of cunning delight simply at what science fiction can do. To this extent, *Interzone* does reflect some of the youthful energy of the New Wave years. It's willing to let a new writer like Timons Esaias (one of a handful of Americans in the book) get by with "Norbert and the System" - with its technological-dependency plot as old as E.M.Forster and its klutzy compound-noun-laden futurespeak (words like "kitchensys") - because of the story's hapless good humor and satiric edge. It will publish Geoff Ryman's "Warmth", a lame boy-and-his-robot tale in the mold of Asimov's "Robbie", not because of any originality of thought or execution, but because of the crystalline clarity of Ryman's prose. And it will still feature a classically haunting Ballard fable like "The Message from Mars", in which astronauts returning from the red planet simply refuse to ever leave the spacecraft.

But it's clear that the major concerns have changed since the 1960s. Virtual reality provides

a humane kind of hospice for dying AIDS patients in Eric Brown's "Downtime in the MKCR", and in a rare post-apocalyptic tale - Nicola Griffith's elegant and painful "Song of Bullfrogs, Cry of Geese" - the culprit is a mutated form of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, which inevitably takes on echoes of AIDS as well. If there are dominant themes in this eclectic and well-balanced anthology, they tend to be themes of biological and spiritual transformation, not of technological anxiety or alien contact. In Graham Joyce and Peter Hamilton's "Eat Reecebread", humanity finds itself threatened by a sudden increase in hermaphroditic births, and responds to the new population in a manner that suggests both Nazi anti-Semitism and right-wing homophobia. (A similar threat from an emerging new class of citizens comes from a growing population of freestanding artificial intelligences in Ben Jeapes's "The Data Class").

Pigs serve as hosts for human infants in Ian Lee's "Pigs, Mostly", and a bioengineered cartoon pig precipitates social upheaval in Eugene Byrne's "Cyril the Cyberpig" (now *there's* an emerging trend in British SF - pigs). A raven embryonically altered for intelligent speech is at the center of Brian Stableford's "The Unkindness of Ravens", a family of literal shape-changers shows up in Ian R. MacLeod's "The Family Football", a middle manager finds himself transformed into a lemur in the distant future of Stephen Baxter's "George and the Comet", and people form spiritual and biological bonds with



their clothes in Richard Calder's "The Allure". Characteristically, Brian Aldiss boils down this ethic of transfiguration to a single powerful image in "The Eye-Opener": an immense, apparently immaterial head appears in the skies all over the world, revealing its secret only in the tale's shattering last line.

If fragility of form is a theme here, a more familiar one – and one that American editors seem equally enamored of – is alternate history, which might be thought of as tales about the fragility of time. Dave Garnett sets "Off the Track" in a post-apocalyptic U.S. devastated by the nuclear escalation of the Vietnam War. Paul di Filippo's "World Wars III", the most enjoyable of the alternate histories, is simultaneously a tribute to Pynchon characters and a speculation on modern history without modern nuclear physics. Kim Newman's "Slow News Day" returns to the old scenario of German victory, and Sean McMullen's "Ring of Green Fire" reaches all the way back to 12th-century England for its alterations. The comically exploited and overdeveloped pasts of Paul Park's "The Tourist" so closely resemble those of John Kessel's novel *Corrupting Dr. Nice* (reviewed last month) that you have to suspect the story was one of the sources for the novel (and indeed Park is acknowledged in Kessel's novel). But perhaps the most interesting variation on history is the always quirky Garry Kilworth's "The Sculptor", less an alternate history than a fantasy fable on legends of da Vinci and Machiavelli.

The Kilworth story is one of many in the collection that are just fun, and I think it is this sense of openness – a willingness to let writers play – that may be the most significant aspect of *Interzone* as revealed in Pringle's collection. Thomas M. Disch's "The Man Who Read a Book", easily the most hilarious piece in the book, skewers the decline in literacy with barely veiled references to some of the culprits. Greg Egan's "Mitochondrial Eve" takes off from recent theories of common genetic ancestors to combine fairly sophisticated paleobiological speculation with barbed social satire. Perhaps the most straightforward pieces of brittle social commentary are Chris Beckett's "The Welfare Man", which counterpoints, with some poignance, the dismantling of the English welfare state and zoos attempting to clone extinct animals; and Mary Gentle's brutal "Human Waste", in which vicious child abuse is disguised by self-repairing nanotech biosystems. These might be the sort of gloomy scenarios that led to the ill-tempered complaint in that panel last year, but they're hardly enough to validate it, or to suggest that *Interzone* is preoccupied with any particular viewpoint. In fact, not much of anything here is what I would call "representative" of *Interzone*, and that may be the collection's – and the magazine's – greatest strength. Certainly it's true that the magazine has its favorite writers (Egan, Baxter, Ryman, Newman, etc.), that it welcomes new fiction by some of its spiritual godfathers (Aldiss, Ballard, Disch), and that it's never going to be mistaken for *Analog*, but if what Pringle has assembled here is any evidence, it may well be the most exciting SF magazine

around.

In the past two years, Ursula K. Le Guin has published two fine collections of mostly SF stories (*A Fisherman of the Inland Sea* and *Four Ways to Forgiveness*), which some readers regarded as a kind of coming home party, reaffirming her identity as a licensed SF writer despite widespread mainstream and academic lionization. But Le Guin is *always* coming home; her career has never been an either/or proposition, and she has somehow miraculously gained more latitude to do what she wants, from more kinds of readers, than anyone else I can think of. Gene Wolfe can write with astonishing brilliance and complexity, but remains all but unknown outside the SF and fantasy community. Kurt Vonnegut can generate a whole academic industry, but has long since tried the patience of the SF world through a kind of cavalier sloppiness of detail. Le Guin, however, can comfortably move from *The New Yorker* to *Asimov's* and back; mainstream readers don't seem to mind that there's a good deal of the fantastic in her work, and SF readers don't much mind that it's full of prose. But publishers have to worry about such things, so HarperCollins wants to make it clear, by the fourth word of the jacket copy, that *Unlocking the Air* is a collection of *mainstream* stories originally published in places like *The New Yorker* and *Harper's*. There follows a brief comment by Le Guin that these stories "aren't science fiction," and they aren't, but does that make them all mainstream? In fact, of the eighteen stories here, three did appear in *The New Yorker* and six in other mainstream venues – but six came from such genre sources as *Omni*, *Asimov's*, and Jane Yolen's *Xanadu* series. And one, "The Poacher", a brilliant variation on "Sleeping Beauty" from the point of view of an intruder in the enchanted castle, has already become a minor classic in the growing fantasy subgenre of fairy-tale redactions. (Another story, "The Wise Woman", also offers a clever reversal on a familiar fairytale archetype.)

The collection is unquestionably of interest to SF and fantasy readers. In addition to "The Poacher" and "The Wise Woman", it includes "Ether, OR", a glowing tale of an ever-shifting Oregon village ("If it doesn't keep moving the malls will catch it") which provides a kind of thematic counterpoint to Le Guin's own classic "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" – only in this case it's the whole town that walks away. "Daddy's Big Girl" is a fantasy (from *Omni*) of a daughter who grows to truly monstrous proportions, becoming increasingly transparent in the process. In "Olders", a dying hero in a mythical land prepares to join his ancestors, who have metamorphosed into a grove of trees. "In the Drought", one of Le Guin's most chilling and cryptic recent tales, describes an unexplained plague of water turning to blood – but apparently only in the homes of gay couples. "The Spoons in the Basement" is Le Guin's version of a haunted-house tale, centered around a set of misplaced apostle spoons. And "Unlocking the Air" returns us to Le Guin's indeterminate Eastern European country of Orsinia in time for the wave of tentative democratization that swept that part of the world in the last de-

cade.

So the collection qualifies as much as a fantasy collection as anything else. But even the most clearly mainstream stories here are recognizably Le Guin. Her anthropologist's fascination with exploring variations on kinship relations shows up in "Half Past Four" and "Standing Ground", a moving tale of a daughter who helps her mother face down protestors at an abortion clinic – and the odd world of the protestors themselves. These stories, along with "Ruby on the 67" (about an old woman on a bus) show Le Guin tracing nuances of character in a tradition worthy of Flannery O'Connor. There are also tales of the ways in which the past haunts the present: not only "The Spoons in the Basement", but "The Professor's Houses" (about a dollhouse that comes to represent a kind of orderliness families never achieve) and "Limberlost", about a poet and novelist who meet at a literary conference on the grounds of what once was a children's camp that the novelist had visited. Other short pieces – "The Creatures on My Mind", "Sunday in Summer in Seatown", "A Child Bride", "Climbing to the Moon" – are little more than narrative prose poems, and on occasion reveal that the usually firmly disciplined Le Guin can fall victim to preciousness.

What is most in evidence, though – and what ought to be of equal interest to both mainstream and genre readers – is Le Guin's overriding concern with the morals and dynamics of storytelling. The nature of tales and their tellers comes under scrutiny in nearly every piece here. "Half Past Four" ends with a section titled "The Story"; "Ether, OR" is structured around the stories of its various inhabitants (and is dedicated to the "Narrative Americans"); "Unlocking the Air" alternately proclaims itself to be a fairy tale, a history, a love story, and various other narrational objects; "Findings" describes a relationship developed entirely through writing stories; and "Olders", "The Wise Woman", and "The Poacher" all feature characters who come to realize they are acting out roles in ancient tales. For Le Guin, story is our most reliable and rewarding way of constructing the world, and this proves equally true of fantasy worlds and the mundane streets with their buses and abortion clinics.

It's so easy to be amazed by Jack Williamson – this year is his seventieth as an active writer – that sometimes we forget to actually read his books, or to recognize what their real virtues are. It's true, as the promotional copy for his new novel *The Black Sun* claims, that he's had enough careers for three ordinary writers, and it's equally true – again as the blurb writers hasten to reassure us – that he's proved remarkably adaptable over the decades, keeping up with changes in scientific theory and succeeding in making his fiction far more credible and hard-edged than it was in his early days as a follower of A. Merritt. But to express astonishment at the currency of his thought seems a bit patronizing, as though quantum theory (which he invokes here as a means of interstellar travel) is somehow the province of a newer generation. What is most appealing about *The Black Sun* is not

*Continued on page 60*



## Reviews by Faren Miller

**The White Abacus**, Damien Broderick (Avon 0-380-97476-2, \$23.00, 342pp, hc; -78559-5, \$12.50, tp) March 1997. Cover by Chris Moore.

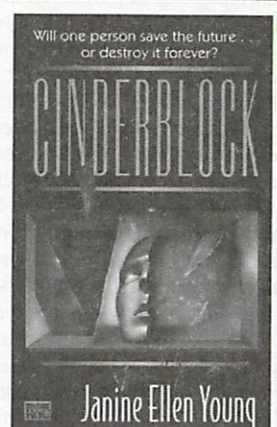
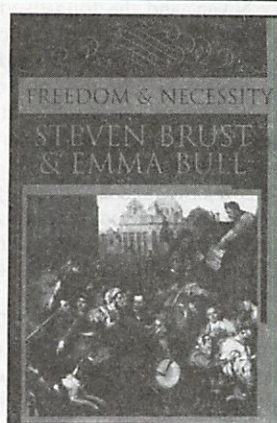
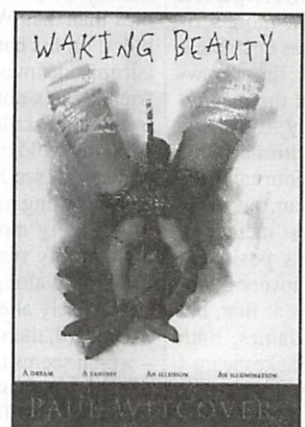
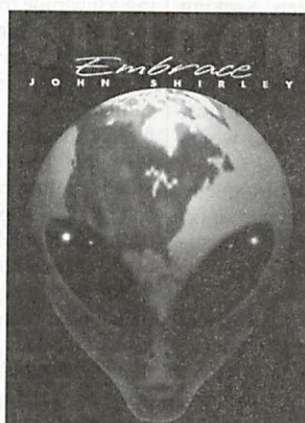
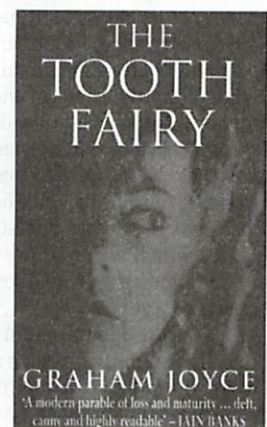
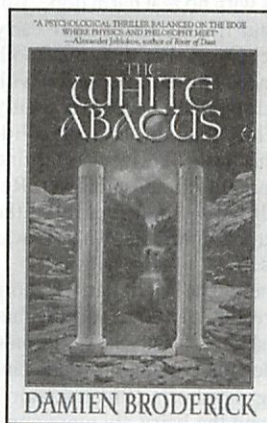
**Silicon Embrace**, John Shirley (Ziesing 0-929480-44-9, \$29.95, 282pp, hc; ltd. ed. -44-7, \$65.00) October 1996. Cover by Paul Mavrides. [Order from Mark V. Ziesing Books, P.O. Box 76, Shingletown CA 96088; 916-474-1580.]

**Freedom and Necessity**, Steven Brust & Emma Bull (Tor 0-312-85974-0, \$25.95, 444pp, hc) March 1997. Cover by G. Wappers.

**The Tooth Fairy**, Graham Joyce (Signet UK 0-451-18435-1, £5.99, 342pp, pb) September 1996.

**Waking Beauty**, Paul Witcover (HarperPrism 0-06-105249-3, \$24.00, 419pp, hc) February 1997. Cover by John Ennis.

**Cinderblock**, Janine Ellen Young (Roc 0-451-45595-9, \$5.99, 293pp, pb) April 1997. Cover by Bruce Jensen.



Shakespeare lifted characters, plots, *et al.*, from history, fable, and other authors, to notable success. Many of this month's writers perform a similar feat with casual panache, whether the result be SF, fantasy, or some wild mingling of genres – but only one challenges Shakespeare head-on. Despite the reticence of the galley blurb (with its offhand reference to “ingenious reinvention”), it's soon obvious to the reader that Damien Broderick's new SF novel, **The White Abacus**, is a reworking of *Hamlet* – *Hamlet* in space.

More specifically, the backdrop is a far-future galactic culture where the Solar System's asteroid belt serves as home to a group of hidebound conservatives religiously opposed both to the wonders of instantaneous “Hex” transport and to the culture of “ai”s (AIs) who get along quite happily with “hu”s everywhere else. Despite these beliefs, Feng, Director of the planetoid Psyche, permits his nephew Telmah (read the name backwards) to complete his doctorate on Earth – at the Free University of Wittenburg.

The initial narrator is Ratio, an ai newly awakened to full consciousness, inexperienced in the ways of the galaxy and deliberately cut off from the full Gestell (interlinked machine consciousness), the better to undertake a mission for his fellows: befriend Telmah, lest the political ambitions of Feng deviously undermine galactic stability ... or something of the sort, since the subtle leaders of the ais don't tell their new recruit just everything. Loyal as he may be, Ratio is appalled at the thought at having to accompany the young hu back to Psyche: “Dazed, I felt as if I had fallen into a historical drama.”

Well, yes. But like his primary inspiration, the author has further tricks up his sleeve. Moments of comedy, for one; things get *very* silly at times, as when a feathered genetic mix shows up as pilot of the slower-than-light vehicle Telmah needs to take for his return home, one Capt. Arthur C. Chicken (I suspect many readers will think of him as Arthur C. Cluck). Unlike *Hamlet*'s pal Horatio, Telmah's new buddy Ratio has a fully developed sense of humor, and can hold his own with this

talent's updated version of the traveling players.

Ratio is also quick to catch on to contemporary matters ranging from the metaphysics of cloning (an asteroid practice linked to belief in the undying, yet vulnerable, soul) to the complex background of asteroid culture before and after the coming of Hex transport opens the way to the rest of the universe. And then there's the timeless, those hidden forces behind both Telmah's tale and that of his species: kill the father, marry the mother. “It was trite to the point of banality,” Ratio observes, “and yet for a million years it had powered the dynamic of hu society.”

What can Ratio do to avert a tragic outcome? Plenty, it turns out, but he also has help. It's here that Broderick veers farthest away from Shakespeare, for the young woman known as The Warrior Rose is a far cry from weeping, crazed Ophelia. Together, she and Ratio manage to rescue Telmah from both a murderer's guilt and a messy death – a feat in which astronomical anomalies also play a part.

To *Hamlet*'s five acts, **The White Abacus** offers six, with a more-than-epilog whose references range from pre-Shakespearean pastoral to post-Shakespearean adventure and SF. (The book has numerous SFnal literary debts, some acknowledged on the dedication page, others in a brief afterword). A wild melange? Perhaps. But Broderick brings the whole thing off in grand style worthy of the master dramatist himself. This is a fascinating, successful experiment. As for what's behind that puzzling title.... Well, I'll leave you to discover that for yourself.

Where Damien Broderick draws on sources

throughout the English-speaking world and millennia of history, the roots of John Shirley's **Silicon Embrace** are emphatically American, from 20th-century UFO-lore to the dangers of increasingly violent (but modern-eclectic) versions of fundamentalism. California in 1917 is particularly lawless, “with the Famine and the new American Civil War, ... the Christian Funs and the Islamic Funs and the Hispanic Nation ripping at each other's scrotums, and in between all the warlords gnawing on the leavings....”

It's at this point that the aliens who have long kept an eye on Earth are finally ready to reveal themselves, with help from what's left of the US government, and they've called in Faraday, an experienced adman, to develop the right spin on their pitch. But then there are the *other* aliens, to whom a human teen named Anatole becomes oddly important. And somewhere in between (till several plotlines merge) are alternative-media guy Quinn and his motley companions, a “black dude,” a female neopunk “cultural chimera,” and a humorless “modern Bolshevik.”

A secret Nevada marine base near the center of UFO history/myth will serve as one meeting point for the forces of officialdom, anarchy, and general bewilderment, while an East Coast prison, 21st-century style, will become another focus of action. And then there's the subatomic particle known as the IAMton, with its own wealth of jargon, eventually laid on us by a manic, frowzy tramp called the Street Sweeper....

Like Broderick (and Willy the Shake himself), Shirley deftly mixes wild comedy with human tragedy. There are plenty of SF in-jokes, like the middle-aged Cammo Dude (border guard) called



## Reviews by Faren Miller

Jerry Niven, and the long-lived alien, Seeking One, who admires the recent "Sci-Fi Irony Wave films based on the big Marc Laidlaw revival." At the same time, there are moments of genuine anguish, along with insights into philosophical conflicts (science vs. metaphysics, etc.) which transcend human limits.

**Silicon Embrace** is at once sly, sad, eloquent, gonzo, mystic, surreal, and all-American, mixing the pulpiest Sci-Fi with true literary sophistication. A new gem from John Shirley.

With the collaboration by Steven Brust and Emma Bull, **Freedom and Necessity**, we leave the realms of SF for a trip back to mid-19th-century England (or some alternate near-equivalent) where Marx and Engels dwell in exile, Hegel is a matter of much discussion among the more serious locals, and politics have grown as unstable – both here and on the Continent – as those now-fabled days of the (19)60s. Not that the manner of expression approaches modernity; for this is an epistolary novel, interspersed with narrative passages from various characters' journals (the most novelistic coming from Susan, an early feminist with a conveniently flawless memory).

In other respects, the book seems positively Shakespearean, with its two pairs of lovers: Richard and Kit, darily unwed live-ins at first, but still relatively sedate; Susan and James, both Byronically heroic, as she updates Shakespeare's charming Shrew while he is "a conspirator by trade and by habit... a feral creature passing, for survival's sake, as tame" (in Susan's astute description).

As for matters of *genre* – well, the Bad Guys are both political maneuverers in their own right and believing pagans with plans for a major sacrifice ahead, giving the tale clear overtones of fantasy (augmented by certain semi-developed occult skills in the less skeptical hero/heroine pair). But the primary fascination of **Freedom and Necessity** lies in its eloquence and insight into the four thoroughly complex viewpoint characters – from their political theories, philosophies, and/or scheming to their increasingly passionate romances, amidst assorted wild adventures.

Warning: the narrative isn't quite such a "romp" as the galley blurb declares it to be, what with the sometimes overwhelming mass of soul-searching and Hegel-pondering, along with the reader's share in an experience which Kitty describes as "attempting to solve seven or eight different puzzles at the same time and all without so much as a candle to see them by, while someone is shaking all the tables and someone else is mixing the pieces together" – a dilemma she terms, in very British manner, "rather unfair."

Perhaps so. But the persevering reader, like the determined puzzler, will reap significant rewards from this unusual sojourn in the past.

We're still in England, but back in the second half of the 20th century for **The Tooth Fairy**, which follows Sam Southall and a few of his pals from boyhood through adolescence, along a path marked by madness (or is it?), murder (or was it?), and – not least – the splendidly vivid writing of Graham Joyce. Oh yes, and there's a prominent role for the creature only Sam can see, that strangely androgynous being which he has

dubbed The Tooth Fairy.

Early on, it seems like a prankish pixie, playing a few rude tricks with no real harm done. But by the time Sam and friends reach their early teens, things have changed. For one, the Tooth Fairy (which does indeed have a fascination with canines, molars, and such) has become blatantly female. Staring at her, feeling her very solid-seeming fingers on his flesh, Sam reaches his first understanding of carnality in all its power. Result? "He was paralysed by the vulgarity of the truth, but he understood dimly that what he was afraid of was life itself."

*Life itself* – precisely. The Tooth Fairy is more than the wayward creature of a boy's shifting fantasies; nor does he/she/it fall into the traditional roles of blatantly destructive demon (dark fantasy) or developing psychosis ("mainstream" horror). Both Sam and the Fairy are more complex than that. Whether or not he has metaphoric blood on his hands after one strange, nightmarish episode involving an older bully and both his friends, he's not moving along the route of the eventual ax-killer in **The Shining** or the head-spinning child of **The Exorcist**; any experienced reader can see he's more likely to become that web-spinning modern figure: an author. And the Tooth Fairy moves between our world and its own, a truly strange place which we're allowed to glimpse along with Sam during a vivid flyby so intensely alien it could almost be SF.

Onward, then, to a final surprise in the ending – which seems to come all too soon, after such a dazzling passage toward that unknown realm, maturity. **The Tooth Fairy** is a major work by a masterful writer.

Finally, two works by promising newcomers. The most notable of these is **Waking Beauty**, a first novel in which Paul Witcover explores a realm at once mystically fantastic and gut-deep earthy in its emotions, from eros to stark fear. Civilization lies in the Hierarchate, a man's world where only women can move safely at night, during those hours when the pungent scent of Beauty will draw an unprotected man into the wild forest to his doom. Orthodoxy, the reigning faith, resembles an ornate version of Christianity whose evil foes are not devils but supernaturally female Furies. To men, it offers a seeming paradox of might and vulnerability. As a priest tells young male protagonist Sam Galingale, "in being bound, we men gain power over the women who bind us, [and] in binding, women are themselves bound.... The scent of Beauty...., so deadly to men, is at the same time our most potent ally. This is the great mystery."

Sam is far from a clear understanding of any of this, but other characters have had more time to ponder their world – the emperors who live to be around 200 before going utterly gaga, and (even more notably) the papal-equivalent Ecclesiarch whose careful use of an immortality drug has already brought him through more than two millennia. As for the women, dwellers in the Hierarchate cope as they long have coped in regions ruled by men: subtly, behind the scenes. But there's something new in the air, a whiff of rebellion that touches even the sex that has long been immune to the perilous night-winds of Beauty.

As Sam's one-time fiancée Rose gets caught up in this growing revolt, we get glimpses of a

tract circulated by heretics, a sort of feminist New Testament featuring Viridis, a female Christ figure complete with her own version of Judas. In the heretics' version of religious history, there was a still greater betrayal to come, when men turned against women. As their long-awaited Liberatrix proclaims to a thoroughly illegal public assembly, "Ever since that betrayal, we have been as slaves to men. As property. No more!"

All this takes place in a land whose towns and cities form a hierarchy in themselves, from lowly Arpagee all the way up the alphabet to mighty imperial Quoz (only late in the tale do we discover what became of those now-forgotten cities whose names run R through Z). Strange artists roam the land, the "simularters" – at once puppetmaster and schizophrenic, divided between the network of their "simulars" (figures all named as saints, though seeming hardly saintly at times). Even child-bearing has odd physical limits in the Hierarchate. But what mysteries might lie beyond its borders, in Herwood...?

For all its emphasis on feminist aims and struggles, **Waking Beauty** offers far more than political polemic or a parable of the never-ending Battle of the Sexes. Witcover's mingling of quirky inventiveness and antique religions recalls the work of Gene Wolfe (though with a luster edge), and the plot moves toward a world-embracing glory and enigma where a new Beauty wakes, in fairytale transformed by a bold new writer.

Fairytale elements get a downbeat, science-fictional reconfiguration in another first novel, Janine Ellen Young's **Cinderblock**. Beginning in a decaying future LA run by aristocratic Virtuals, it recalls some of the 21st-century settings of Shirley's **Silicon Embrace**, though the mode of SF is closer to cyberpunk than to UFO-lore. We first meet Alexander, a young man with mysterious special powers, long a prisoner of one scheming power figure, till rebels break him out of his relatively luxurious confinement, along with his latest quasi-nursemaid/co-prisoner – a fellow known as Urban Myth.

Even more virulent than Shirley's New Civil War, Young's Hate Wars have reduced the survivors to a small fraction of the one-time Earth population, and some of them are not quite human anymore. Particularly Ethelred, described as both something like "the offspring of a huge, hideously ugly bulldog and a fat, flop-eared gray bunny," and "a creature the size of a small sports car who can talk." It's said he comes from the same place as his enigmatic female owner/associate Cinder – perhaps "the other side of the looking glass?"

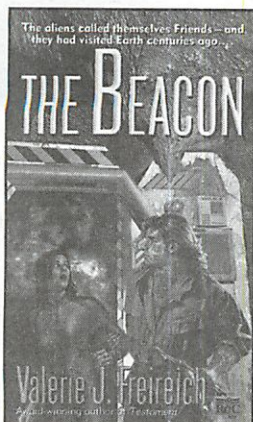
When ex-captive Alexander is drawn into that realm, things get very peculiar indeed. Though a temporarily giant-size Cinder assures him, "Quantum physics can explain all this," later on – accused of being one of the world's destructive myths – she casually cites the link between genius and madness.

For all her own creative talent, Young hasn't quite developed the knack of producing fully believable characters, or solutions as fascinating as the puzzles that precede them over the course of the book. Still, **Cinderblock** can offer some genuinely creative meldings of VR and cyberpunkish grime and anger with the wilder stuff of fantasy and Carrollian high spirits. A worthy debut.

–Faren Miller



## Reviews by Russell Letson



**The Beacon**, Valerie J. Freireich (Roc 0-451-45397-2, \$5.99, 349pp, pb) October 1996. Cover by Barclay Shaw.

**The Fleet of Stars**, Poul Anderson (Tor 0-312-86036-6, \$24.95, 352pp, hc) March 1997. Cover by Vincent Di Fate.

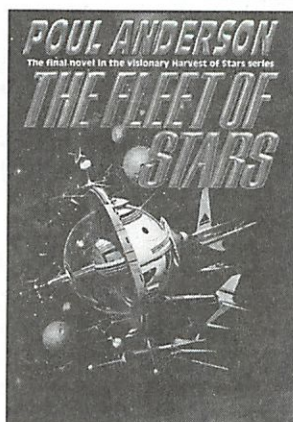
**Celestial Dogs**, J.S. Russell (Raven 0-85487-429-2, £5.99, 264pp, pb) January 1996. Cover by J.K. Potter. (St. Martin's 312-15076-8, \$21.95, 261pp, hc) March 1997. Cover by Richard Fahey.

On being asked to leave the Rex Reed Memorial School of Reviewing and Flackery (without, alas, graduating), I was allowed to keep my free sign-up gift, a simulated sampler, suitable for framing, on which were cross-stitched several Rules of the Trade. Just after "Report To The IRS All Income Derived From Selling Review Copies" is one that reads, "You Will Only Review Books That You Actually Finish." I always have tried to follow this principle, and also its complement, which is not actually on the sampler but was on the final exam: "Any Book That You Actually Finish, You *Will* Review."

Not that I had any trouble with Valerie J. Freireich's third novel, which I Actually Finished and Quite Enjoyed. **The Beacon** represents both a departure from the Polite Harmony of Worlds setting of her first two books and an extension of the themes on which they are built. If I were pitching this appealing mixture of alien psychology, adventure-melodrama, and SF parable, High Concept-wise, I might say that it's a George Turner scenario with an Ursula K. Le Guin sensibility: star-traveling humans return to an Earth that has been, in their absence, devastated and transformed, and as a result of that transformation, their welcome is an uncertain one.

A few generations after aliens kidnapped a handful of humans, Earth was so ravaged by plagues – the "five Great Deaths" – that centuries later its reconstructed civilization is still haunted by the memory of the plagues and subject to outbreaks of disease. And now the Travelers, descendants of the original kidnappees, have come back to establish relations between humanity and the odd interstellar society held together by the aliens they call the Friends:

The Friends had their own instinctive imperatives. Strongest of them was the hun-

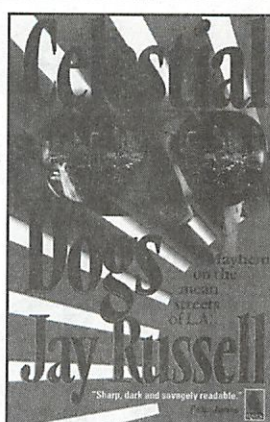


ger to reach out. Humans expanded and conquered; human societies grew. The Friends joined. They embraced and included. Their methods could be brutal, but the intentions differed.

The Friends' starship constitutes a polity of species that would not get along together without the Friends and the paralinguistic singing that communicates emotions more than precise information – a kind of polite harmony. Beatrice Whit and three other Travelers are ambassadors, charged with assessing whether Earth is ready for the kind of contact the Friends desire. When any two of them agree that it is, they will call the starship by activating the beacon of the title, the exact nature of which is one of the puzzles that pulls us through the book.

On Earth the Travelers find a polity of dissimilar survivor-societies, united not by a government but by the Assembly, a machine-mediated meeting of minds that is open to anyone who has had the right neurological connections implanted. This quasi-telepathic Internet combines the functions of communications system, instant library, and town meetings, among others. The closest things to conventional government organizations are the military/police of Independent Defense and the Open Court, whose Judges consider not law but justice and whose decisions cannot be appealed. The Open Court is open because, except for minimal physical privacy, its Judges are so linked to the Assembly that their experiences can be examined by anyone who cares to access the files of the Judges' "dumps."

When Beatrice is kidnapped, Open Court Judge Stefan Acari is drawn into a strange, multistaged intrigue involving the Travelers; the half-rebellious clans of North America; and Kaim Pritchard, a powerful and unscrupulous agent of the Adjusters who oversee the Assembly. Pritchard, driven equally by paranoia about the Friends' intentions and a bitter dislike of aristocrats in general and the Judge in particular, seems as interested in humiliating his old schoolmate Acari as in finding Beatrice. Acari, at first unwilling and then unable to connect to the Assembly for information or support, must rely on his own resources to untangle the riddles of the kidnapping, the real purpose of the Travelers' mission, the sources of Pritchard's enmity, and eventually the hidden agendas within the sup-



posedly open Assembly.

Some of these secrets are revealed early on to us but not to Acari; others will be anticipated by practiced readers. But while Freireich's fondness for maze-of-intrigue plots is almost certainly thematically significant (especially all the puzzling over the motives and loyalties of other people, including lovers or trusted friends), the mystery and thriller aspects of this novel are less important than her examination of communities and the ties that bind – or the corrosives that dissolve them. In the course of untangling the activities of the parties directly involved in the kidnapping, the idealistic and honorable Acari also discovers truths about his marriage, his oldest friend, and his new enemy that affect his understanding of his larger world.

Perhaps the most striking element of the book is its conflation of community and disease into a kind of social-biological *odi et amo*. It would give away too many of the puzzles to say more, but the tensions at the heart of all relationships are also at the heart of Freireich's work. As Beatrice reflects on what her mission will do to the Earth, and Acari deals with Pritchard (and with his failing marriage, and with his loyalty to the Assembly), and the various factions act out their notions of freedom and community, we get a now-familiar mixture of necessary intrigue and reluctant deception, good intentions with bad consequences, friendship edged with disapproval, enmity mitigated by compassion, and love across lines of Otherness.

I always come prepared to enjoy a Poul Anderson story – with the understanding that enjoyment can include strenuous disagreements with someone who knows a lot more than I do and who argues with great passion and conviction. **The Fleet of Stars** is the fourth book (and the third full-scale novel) in the sequence that includes **Harvest of Stars** (reviewed in June 1993), **The Stars Are Also Fire** (reviewed in November 1994), and the novella **Harvest the Fire** (reviewed October 1995). I have written that this sequence represents a long and complex argument about issues that have long been at the center of hard SF, both political matters – individual freedom and social control, security and growth – as well as the more fundamental philosophical questions about human nature and

*Continued on page 61*



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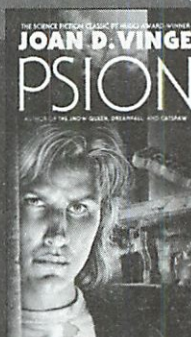
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## Reviews by Edward Bryant

**Brand New Cherry Flavor**, Todd Grimson (HarperCollins 0-06-105233-7, \$20, 344pp, hc) November 1996. Cover by John Ennis.

**Dead Heat**, Del Stone, Jr. (Mojo Press 1-885418-10-8, \$24.95, 188pp, hc) November 1996. Cover by Dave Dorman. [Order from Mojo Press, POB 140005, Austin TX 78714.]

**A Dozen Black Roses**, Nancy A. Collins (White Wolf 1-56504-872-5, \$21.99, 238pp, hc) November 1996. Cover by Timothy Bradstreet.

### SHORT TAKES

**Even the Queen and Other Short Stories**, Connie Willis (Wyrnhole Publishing 0-9648539-0-6, \$17.95, 180 min., audio tape) March 1997. Cover by Connie Lehman. [Order from Wyrnhole Publishing, 6877 Marshall Dr., Boulder CO 80303.]

**Nightcast**, Ronald James (Terminal Fright Audio, \$18.95, 120 min., audio tape) October 1996. Cover by Chad Savage. [Order from Terminal Fright Audio, 117 Racetrack Rd., Box 169, Fort Walton Beach FL 32547.]

Lisa Nova, focal point of Todd Grimson's **Brand New Cherry Flavor**, is nothing if not a child of her times. She's 26, a chubby kid who bloomed into an adult who reminds many observers of the young Nastassja Kinski, and is a knowledgeable woman of the '90s who knows film – and knows it well. She's not one of the Hollywood wunderkind who are unaware that movies existed before Spielberg and Lucas. She even knows who Jane Greer was. When she lived back in New York, her ultra-low budget film written with a friend and directed by Lisa, *Girl, 10, Murders Boys*, stirred a few critical ripples and has been playing at festivals ever since. She moved to Hollywood and got an acting job as the third hooker slain in *The L.A. Ripper*. For a while she's dated married studio exec "what-ever his name was, Lou Greenwood, Lou Adolph, Lou Burke." Lisa figured the liaison would give her a shoo-in to get an assistant director gig with admired director Selwyn Popcorn on a hot new project. No luck. Studio nepotism gives the job to another woman. A touch upset, not to mention broke, Lisa sticks a salad fork into Lou's thigh and stalks off.

What to do? Lisa's got a finely honed instinct for revenge. She recalls her rock musician ex-boyfriend Code's tale of a local dude who will undertake extraordinary missions for a price. And before you can say "Jack Faust," Lisa's in league with Boro, tattooed and ugly, a guy who just may be the present avatar of a mythic Mayan figure who, centuries before, stalked the White Jaguar Mother to gain her magical powers. Lisa's big mistake is not to confirm up front what the price of supernatural aid is.

Hey, she's only human. Lisa's bright, talented, not exactly possessed of a traditional morality, ambitious, sexually adventurous, capable of tapping enormous reserves when required, and rap-

idly steeped in dire trouble way over her head. She's an easy character to love, one of those people you're never sure if you truly do love or you're just obsessing over – and you just can't help it. The passion's too hot and the danger's too intriguing. Pheromone city.

In this, his second novel, Todd Grimson fashions an amorality tale from a seemingly endless supply of astutely observed detail, crazed image, and all-too-accurate Hollywood types. This is a book which Bret Easton Ellis would probably nod at familiarly. I believe there's not a moment at which the reader does not know what the characters are wearing and eating. **American Psycho** featured radicchio with free-range squid. **Brand New Cherry Flavor**'s menu is no less *au courant*.

So is this a Gen X novel of revenge, success, and horror? Well, maybe more a Gen XY tale. At the book's beginning, Lisa thinks she knows how to work with men, and how the rules work. She has a lot more to comprehend:

She remembered learning somewhere along the way, perhaps in reference to the work of some abstract expressionist, the concept of looking at a picture and getting into it beyond the image, beyond the brush strokes, beyond the color, beyond the paint – and she could understand this, how the canvas could affect you irrespective of anything retinal, you looked at it and it passed through you, you retained its essence, beyond anything that was merely there before you...and she had thought that women could look at men this way, experience them without fixating on the mere surface, one might say its "flatness"...but when men tried to see women, invariably the surface qualities served as a barrier to full apprehension, it was very rare when this was not in effect. And so, as a woman, one had to be prepared for this, realistic, one was presented as a more desirable or less desirable commodity in this world, if you pretended not to be aware of this you were simply presenting yourself in yet another, well-traveled way...

Author Grimson owns an even-handed, androgynously open grip on his characters. If the style occasionally and openly makes fun of the cast, the skewers are still well placed and home in on deserving organs. Facile sometimes, but always spot on target. Grimson's particular bent for choosing such details as the catalog of designer drug names suggests a writer who ab-

solutely knows the culture he's talking about, but still is probably a little older than his central character. One suspects Lisa's more his little sister than his fictive alter ego. And the eye for relationship detail seems sanely clear.

Through a morass of avarice and cupidity, ego and friendship, oddball perversions and sexual novelty, shrunken heads, zombies, and jaguar gods, Lisa wends her way. She gamely attempts to deal with magical tattoos that appear on her body like stigmata. She grapples with her impressive new occult power to impose dream sequences on physical-world film stock. Peter Hurkos, who allegedly only managed to fog still film with crude shapes, would die of envy.

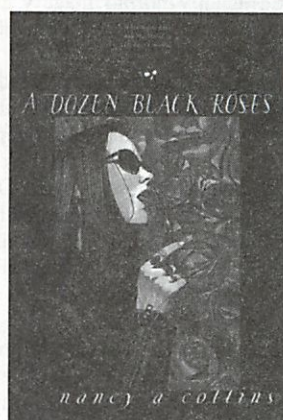
It's a rugged pilgrim's progress. I admired Lisa's piercing her own tongue with forceps and a stingray spine, a basically traditional approach to Mayan legend that made me glad she wasn't a male character about to shove a spine through her penis.

If I had any qualm, it was about Lisa's detached distance. I never know as much about her life as I wish. She's someone *now*, not a hippie, boomer, slacker, or punk. Trying to empathize with her is, to a degree, something like attempting to get inside the head of a cat. It's a great challenge, but not entirely comfortable.

What's scary about the novel is that weaving dark magic into a portrait of pre-millennial L.A. and the world of film seems so perfectly natural. Both the supernatural and the all-too-human monsters fit in right at home.

Cool and funny, visceral and paradoxically detached, **Brand New Cherry Flavor** seizes its subject matter and does it justice. With a vengeance. Lisa Nova's the sexiest, most striking new heroine in dark fantasy since Sonja Blue. Or anti-heroine. Whatever.

Del Stone, Jr.'s got a great holiday gift for any of you who have despaired at ever seeing Skipp and Spector's two succeeding volumes of the Romeroesque zombie stories following the first two **Books of the Dead**. Stone's new novel, **Dead Heat**, is right there in the undead groove, chock full of post-Apocalyptic ultraviolence, giving us a great picaresque adventure winding from Amarillo to the upper Midwest to a Lovecraftian shootout in Death Valley. Stone's got a real zest for fictive violent death, a gift for





## Reviews by Edward Bryant

extravagantly morbid imagery, and a redeeming sense of both hard-edged humanity and mordant humor.

Austin's Mojo Press is a leader in the latest wave of ambitious specialty publishers, taking something of a multi-media approach to comics, graphic novels, and this, their first full-length predominantly prose project. **Dead Heat** is a quite handsomely designed hardback novel, lavishly illustrated in complementary black and white by artists Dave Dorman and Scott Hampton. Stephen D. Smith deserves a specific kudo for the design job here.

Were **Dead Heat** ever to hit the silver screen, it'd require some fancy effects work just for the hero, Hitch – he's a zombie himself, and somewhat the worse for wear. When he was alive, he was a "...simple mechanic with a penchant for motorcycles and pizza with sausage and black olives and a Friday night bowling league." He keeps a photo of his ex-wife in his wallet. After the world-wide viral plague that brought the cannibalistic dead to life, Hitch got ambushed by the zombies. When he awoke, he was a revenant too, but with a difference. Hitch is still sentient. No mindless eating machine, he. As the book opens, he's astride his vintage Harley-Davidson approaching Amarillo, deep in the wilds of West Texas. Attacked by a truckload of armed and uniformed soldiers, he turns the tables with his trusty meathook affixed to a length of steel chain – and discovers he's inadvertently rescued a young woman. Not that she's instantly grateful:

...and when she sees him she faints, just like the women in those 1950s Killer B monster movies.

See that, Hitch? You still got it, kiddo. You can still make the ladies swoon.

He tosses her over his shoulder.

He spits out an earwig that had crawled from between his teeth.

He carries her into the afternoon.

It's tough, parched, immediate prose, much like the physical landscape. When the woman, Dakota, wakes up, she eventually comes to what she perceives is an unholy bargain and alliance with Hitch. She tells him about the latter-day Nazi enclave a crazed scientist has set up in Amarillo, a camp from which she wants to rescue her two foster-children. And Hitch, it seems, has his own mission – and the armed camp has some resources he can use.

From here on in, all hell breaks loose. The narrative is nonstop fireworks. The self-styled Fuhrer of Amarillo has all manner of bizarre anti-zombie weapons, including the awesomely deadly PRG emitter. Even the Fuhrer, a onetime Lawrence-Livermore scientist, has no idea what the abbreviation's for. He'd prefer just to call it a death ray, just as he chooses to call the surrounding armies of zombies the "mortally impaired."

By chapter three, Hitch repairs his own shattered leg with a splint made from the leg-bone of the soldier who just tried to kill him. By chapter five, Hitch is heading north by northeast with a small MIRV H-bomb riding comfortably in the hawg's sidecar. He's not a biker to be trifled with.

In Michigan, Hitch discovers the target he's only beginning to be able to define has already left – and is on the way to California. But he does have a nasty encounter with Santa Claus. Or at least one disgusting incarnation of Good Saint Nick. In Nebraska, Hitch, who has learned to keep his dead body from seizing up in the bitter winter cold by wearing a Sears Die Hard battery pack, encounters a genuinely millennial pack of loons. A rock 'n' roll cult particularly enamored of Nine Inch Nails is slowly rolling a giant effigy across America's heartland. Hitch survives a go-round with them, and heads for his final destination, Death Valley.

He's still got his H-bomb.

No sooner does Hitch get past a crucified singing zombie at the edge of California desert, when he's grabbed off his bike by some airborne creature that looks like a cross between a Japanese movie monster and a classical roc. He realizes the critter is an animated construction sewn together from mass quantities of flayed zombie skins. Fortunately he's rescued by a flight of armed, operational P-51 Mustang fighters. Hitch discovers that Death Valley is a battle zone fought over by a nonhuman creature called the Golem and a bunch of aging humans running the armed equivalent of the Confederate Air Force. The Golem's using a variety of grotesquely engineered beings to construct an immense tower of glass for some unguessed-at purpose.

And then Hitch finally starts to define the relationship between himself and the mysterious inner voice that's ever more apparently been the motive power guiding him. That's when he realizes that more than just a casual wager is resting on the issue of whether he can use his hard-won H-bomb to blow hell out of the Golem's pet project.

Author Del Stone blithely folds a George Romero landscape, an H.P. Lovecraft-toned cosmic background, and Walter Alvarez's asteroid extinction theories into a tasty soufflé. It's just light enough. But poor Hitch! His role is much like Bruce Campbell's in **Evil Dead** – something of a live action Warner Bros. cartoon. The physical punishment is something to behold. Hitch endures it all not because it's a holy mission, but because he's in search of the feelings left behind when he lost his mortality. L. Frank Baum would understand him fully. He's the first – and maybe the last – of a new breed.

And Del Stone, Jr. shows himself to be a worthy addition to that new breed of storytellers who can transmute a gut-munching zombie epic into something more varied and interesting. **Dead Heat's** a painless way to recap the **Book of Revelation**.

In 1989 Nancy A. Collins considerably juiced up contemporary vampire fiction with her debut novel, **Sunglasses After Dark**. To the delight of a highly receptive audience, she introduced Sonja Blue, a no-nonsense contemporary heroine who was the supernatural product of a variety of types of nasty violation. Bearing equal legacies of human and vampire nature, Sonja Blue was continually at odds to define herself. Definitely a vampire, still she feared neither silver nor sunlight. Predatory by nature, she aimed her fearsome nature at other vampires, and em-

barked on a bloody journey of vengeance, searching for the vampire master who had turned her so many years before. That saga continued through **In the Blood** and climaxed satisfactorily last year in **Paint It Black**.

Now Sonja's returned in **A Dozen Black Roses**, a peculiar collision of two fictive universes; the Collins world in which the Earth is overrun with a variety of supernatural species doing their best to live undiscovered among us so that they can continue a Good Predatory Thing, and White Wolf's gaming "World of Darkness" in which a variety of vampire clans embark upon enormously complex schemes to plot, maneuver, and murder their way to success. The essential premises are sufficiently complementary, the fit works pretty well. But I'm not sure the author's heart was fully engaged.

Author Collins acknowledges at the beginning that her influences here include the classic Kurosawa film, *Yojimbo*, and that's readily apparent. A stranger shows up in a town controlled and terrorized by two opposing forces of bad guys. The stranger initially aligns with one side, but secretly sets up a situation in which both sides will wipe themselves out in an apocalyptic climax. In **A Dozen Black Roses** (the vampire symbolic gesture for declaring Jihad, warfare between opposing bloodsucker forces) Sonja is, in fact, referred to as "the stranger" all the way up to the final page.

The scene-setting is evocative. In an old city much like New Orleans, there is a blighted 36-block area of the inner city called Deadtown. The officials don't go there. Tourists would be well-advised to stay away. Deadtown is home to a variety of dispirited humans who have nowhere else to go. It's also a dwelling place for competing gangs of vampires, one led by an Old Guy, the other by an ambitious Young Punk. Each gang has an adjunct group of human gangbangers (*someone* has to keep track of things during daylight when the vampires are sacked out).

The vampires aren't exactly parochial. They're duking it out to see who'll control the Gulf Coast drug trade. The comparatively young and upwardly mobile Esher is busy calculating how best to massacre the forces of the older and dandified Sinjon. Then Sonja Blue shows up, just in time to rescue a young boy from slaughter at the hands of minions of the vampire lord who, obsessed with the kid's beautiful mother, is keeping her in thrall through traditional zombie powder administered by a human lackey who once was an active member of the Tontons Macoute.

Almost against her will, and certainly against her better judgment, Sonja is drawn into a deadly and violent game. The stakes rise; the bodies pile up.

The novel's first two thirds contains a considerable amount of background setup. Collins employs the defensible narrative technique of simply giving us a character's background in a single lump instead of gradually feeding it into the text. Hey, some of that functions just fine. I got a kick out of discovering that the Haitian voodoo dude Obeah made his long, boring watch shifts bearable by tuning in the Sci-Fi Channel and Nick at Nite. That's the kind of humanizing

*Continued on page 62*



## Reviews by Shira Daemon

**Chaos Come Again**, Wilhelmina Baird (Ace 0-441-00369-9, \$12.00, 330pp, tp) October 1996. Cover by Bruce Jensen.

**The Kronos Condition**, Emily Devenport (Roc 0-451-4554-1, 336pp, \$5.99, pb) February 1997. Cover by Donato.

**The Three Damosels**, Vera Chapman (Gollancz 0-575-06340-8, £16.99, 384pp, hc) November 1996.

In *Chaos Come Again*, the difficulties the reader encounters in deciphering realities, while characters hop around alternate universes, timelines, and ever-mutating body forms (not to mention the lead character's inconsistent mangling of English syntax) is more than made up for by the exuberance and inventiveness of the storytelling. Baird gives us a future world where symbiotes endow humanity with shape-changing, telepathic, and personal space-travelling abilities. Daisy Smith – or Desi Smeett as she illiterately pronounces it, is gallivanting around the universe pretending to be an Outrim Bounty Hunter, but is really a medic working under the auspices of Hermes Central – a Federal outworld medical agency. Her main motivation is to fix the messes her former husband has made, and resolve an interdimensional custody battle. To do this she must take Windjammer (Windy), her new starship – a whiny entity that has its own symbiote – and pass into Elsewhen. Or, as Desi explains to Windy:

"The multiverse is like chrysanthemum petals, a whole set of closed loops almost touching. Except unlike petals they ain't all the same shape and color. Classic chaos theory. A jink near the start and things end up different."

"You're talking about other continuums?"

"Yep. Outside. Loops, nearly touching."

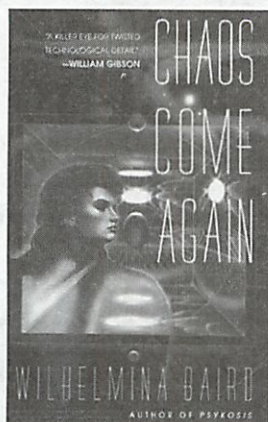
"There's no outside."

"That depend what 'outside' mean. I'm talking multiple sets of dimensions. Besides ours. Elsewhen, which the fricky little quanta flip in and out of. Everything that's possible is possible. We're in this bit. Other petals is what they call out-space. Alternatives. You could go through to them if you pushed hard enough. Just needs energy."

En route to various Elsewhens they pick up Jones, a telepath who works as a reporter, broadcasting his stories directly into his station's subscribers' heads. He misreports some of Desi's activities and gets her into a lawsuit. Then he follows her on her adventures as she meets and aids a sentient planet, encounters mutant plagues, deals with doppelgangers, alien procreation, and an overzealous, hyper-talented child.

This book has great techno-babble, as well as a multitude of inventive descriptions of mutating human bodies. What keeps it from becoming incomprehensible is that Baird has hung all her fancy folderols upon a fairly basic buddy story. Smeett and Jones work well together, even though Desi does keep threatening to space the guy, and Windy serves the clichéd standard function of robotic comic relief.

Although the tone is frolicsome, Baird throws



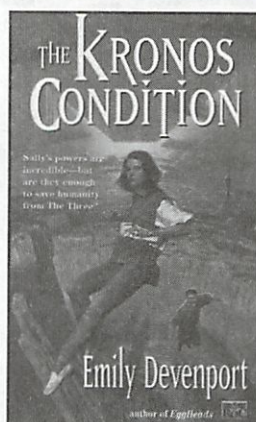
several serious issues into the mix. A recurring theme throughout Desi's adventures is how parents deal with their obstreperous, and frequently damaged, offspring. The development of the sentient planet which has its own maternal issues (as well as a lot of trouble processing human emotions), is cleverly handled. The custody battles between various mothers, fathers, and the infrequent input from the offspring themselves is enlightening, and avoids anything remotely resembling heartwarming.

The world presented is exceedingly harsh. Sexuality can be seen as a method of bartering beauty for commerce, which can lead to disfigurement or death. For all its lighthearted tone, the book questions just what lengths parents will, or should, go to to protect the worldview they want for their children. The novel's ambiguous ending can either be seen as paving the way for a sequel, or as a good argument for infanticide.

Also making use of time/space/reality shifts is Emily Devenport in *The Kronos Condition*. Like *Chaos Come Again* this book features mutants with telekinetic, telepathic, and healing gifts, but Devenport focuses more on the supernatural abilities of children, and less on those of the dysfunctional adults. Written in clear readable prose that would make it well suited to an older YA market – although some of the mind rape scenes are a bit heavy going – the book is primarily a first-person narrative by adolescent Sally. She, along with her five living teenage brothers and sister, comprise the superpowered Kronos children.

These kids were created by the mysterious Philip (who in the current timeline no longer exists), and made to serve The Three, a group of adults who form a powerful psychic Mastermind and use it to control and abuse the children's special abilities. The Three also callously physically and mentally rape and take whatever they want from any humans they cross paths with.

Sally's neural net has created a Secret Mind so it can hide things from the prying telepathy of the Three, who have set Sally and the other children the task of finding the Gate behind which lies fabled Olympus. Her Secret Mind has learned that after finding Olympus, she and the rest of the children will be destroyed. To avoid this fate, the Secret Mind takes everyone on an incredible journey into a strange world where



she must learn to take responsibility for others, live with her own feelings, and find out how to integrate wisdom and love while developing her powers. Sally must fight not only the Three, but also her own siblings, if man's evolution is to take the proper path.

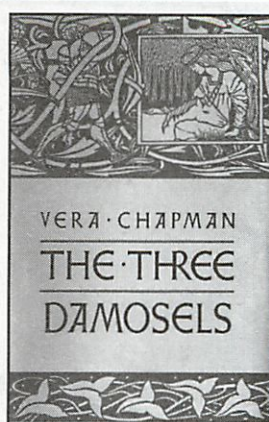
Devenport skillfully mixes myth and science. The children read the genetic makeup of mice and hawks, and Sally is befriended by many historical archetypes including a gifted Neanderthal as well as Osiris, Apollo, and Aphrodite. Devenport gives great flashback and does a good job working in a multitude of time periods. Her strongest suit is building an unpopulated world that is believable from an adolescent viewpoint. This allows the children to experiment with important things: learning to fly, magically making ice cream starting with cows and honey, and growing older by changing their own metabolic functions.

The story moves swiftly, and contains a non-distracting imaginary soundtrack. Ralph, one of the talented Kronos kids, orchestrates the music of famous composers in his head which he broadcasts to the others throughout the novel. Devenport provides a recommended listening list at the back of the book for readers who are interested. For those who may have wondered what it might be like to be an adolescent god in a brand new world, Devenport's book conjures up an inventive playground.

Vera Chapman (who died this year) avoids the trap of focusing on those most over-exposed of all chivalric characters – Arthur, Guenivere, and Lancelot – and instead makes the "three short novels" that comprise *The Three Damosels* about several unsung heroines of the period, heroines who Chapman either cuts from whole cloth (Ursulet) or draws from minor characters (Vivian) of the Court of the Round Table.

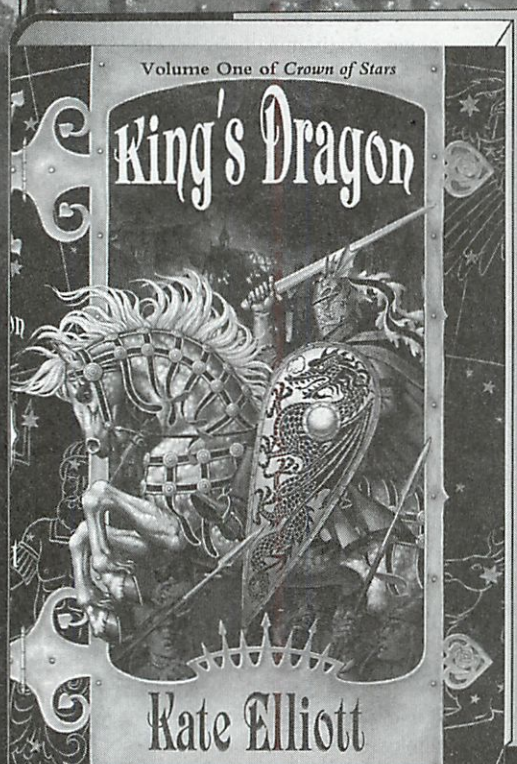
The three books appeared originally as three individual short novels in 1975 and 1976. They're scheduled to become a movie this coming year. In "The Green Knight", Chapman tells the tale of Vivian, Morgan le Fay's niece, a sweet and gentle girl who was raised in a convent. Vivian is taken from her Christian sanctuary as a teenager and brought to the witch's castle. There she becomes an unwilling pawn in Morgan's attempts to roust Arthur from his

*Continued on page 62*





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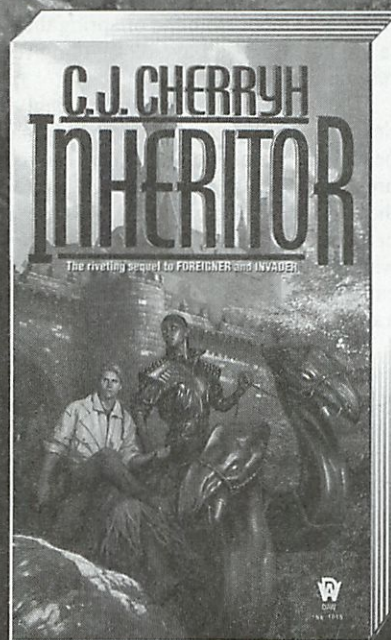
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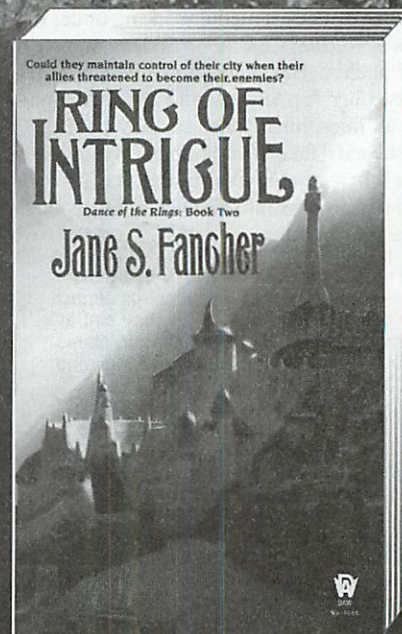
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## Short Reviews by Carolyn Cushman

Steven Brust & Emma Bull, **Freedom and Necessity** (Tor 0-312-85974-0, \$25.95, 444pp, hc) March 1996. Cover by G. Wappers.

This Victorian fantasy is one of the most impressive novels I've read in a long time. It's much more a historical than fantasy, an epistolary account told through letters between four friends and cousins who are interested in philosophy, social reform, and to a much lesser degree, mysticism. James Cobham had apparently drowned months before, but has resurfaced with no clear memory of his accident. In hiding, James writes his cousin Richard, which sets off a series of exchanges between James, Richard, Richard's lover Kitty, and her friend Susan (all related in some way or another). At first the ladies and men are working separately on the mystery of James' disappearance, but gradually the trails of intrigue come together, pointing to a group of powerful aristocrats dabbling in the occult arts. This is where the fantasy comes in; some of the bad guys, at least, believe what they're doing is magic. The authors leave rationalists the option of believing otherwise, right up to the final deadly confrontation. The question of whether magic exists is actually part of the larger conflict between sensualist and rationalist outlooks, Hegel vs. Hume. These, and many other philosophical questions, are vital to the novel, which is extremely dense with political and economic theories of revolution (Engels turns up as a character). While dealing with British upper-class characters, Brust and Bull manage to paint a broad-spectrum picture of the times, the changing social needs, and the forces that shape such changes. It's a period I was not familiar with, and I found it helpful to brush up on a little history, but the picture painted is complete enough to stand alone, and the characters turn out to be quite engaging, particularly the forceful bluestocking Susan, whose journal accounts of her research into James' "death" provide the most straightforward and entertaining narrative. There's also plenty of intrigue and eventually action tucked in between the rational discourse. It's often difficult reading, but very rewarding, and most definitely not in the common way.

Kate Elliott, **King's Dragon** (DAW 0-88677-727-5, \$22.95, 532pp, hc) February 1997. Cover by Jody Lee.

The "Crown of Stars" series begins with this medieval-style fantasy novel. Royal siblings King Henry and Queen Sabella prepare to go to war over rule of the joined lands of Wendar and Varre. In this world, God is male and female, and Her son Daisan had male and female apostles (the gospels were written by Matthias, Mark, Johanna, and Lucia). Women traditionally rule, but Sabella failed to produce required proof of her fertility as the heir. King Henry produced a half-Aoi (elf) son, his favorite, Sanglant, leader of the elite forces of the King's Dragons. Sabella has since produced a daughter, and claims a throne. The actual plot follows two young people far from the war: Alain, a bastard of mysterious parentage, escapes becoming a monk when beastmen from the north destroy the monastery, sending him off to be a soldier instead; Liath is a sorcerer's

daughter who escapes a lustful priest and becomes a King's Eagle, part of an elite messenger corps. As the plot unwinds, the two are drawn directly into war – on opposite sides, at least at first. In the "Jaran" series, Elliott proved herself good at setting up conflict on a grand scale (if not so good at resolving it in a timely manner). Here she creates a complex fantasy world with intriguing parallels to European history, colorful characters, and plenty of action and magic. The chaotic climactic battle solves some major conflicts, while enough remain to leave me wanting more.

Nigel Bennett & P.N. Elrod, **Keeper of the King** (Baen 0-671-87759-3, \$21.00, 400pp, hc) January 1997. Cover by David Mattingly.

This contemporary Arthurian vampire novel is a definite guilty pleasure, a good read I can personally recommend for those with the flu or other temporary concentration disorders. Of course, it's intended for fans of the syndicated TV show *Forever Knight*, though its only overt connection is author Nigel Bennett, who played the dark-minded vampire La Croix. There are similarities: the vampire protagonist works for the police in contemporary Toronto, drinks blood from wine bottles, and used to be a Norman knight – but it was a goddess-worshipping Celtic vampire from Avalon who turned Richard d'Orleans into a vampire, and recruited him as one of Arthur's knights: Lancelot. Now, in present-day Toronto, there's an IRA super-assassin on the loose, even as Richard and his vampire mentor both seem to be losing control over their blood-thirst, and the only cure requires finding the Holy Grail. Native Canadians get mixed in, too, for a really improbable, but highly entertaining, multi-cultural mish-mosh.

Lynn Flewelling, **Stalking Darkness** (Bantam Spectra 0-553-57543-0, \$5.99, 501pp, pb) March 1997. Cover by Gary Ruddell

Events begun in **Luck in the Shadows** move forward in this second adventure of master thief Seregil, and his apprentice Alec. The two are keeping up their role as foppish lordlings when the necromancer Mardus tracks them down, intent on recovering the item Seregil stole back in the first book. There's a big magic battle, the nation goes to war, and in the end it's up to four companions to stop Mardus's schemes. Things get very violent, sometimes seriously gory, with blood sacrifices, torture, kidnappings, and murder – not to mention sea battles, cavalry charges, and guerilla warfare. There's also a strong emotional undercurrent, with Seregil on the edge of a breakdown because he's afraid to admit his love for Alec, a country-raised boy who hasn't a clue about Seregil's leanings – all complicated when Alec is kidnapped and scheduled to be the featured event at Mardus' next sacrifice, an amusing twist on the old "damsel in distress" scenario. So much of the plot begins in the previous novel that this is not a good standalone – but it does wrap up all the major plot lines for now, quite satisfactorily, with a tender bit of romance at the end.

Elizabeth Kerner, **Song in the Silence** (Tor 0-

312-85780-2, \$23.95, 380pp, hc) February 1996. Cover by Peter Bollinger.

Some misguided PR material compares this first novel to McCaffrey's *Pern* and Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Darkover*, but this is actually unabashed fantasy – though it does have dragons and an independent female protagonist: Lanen Kaelar, a young woman who has dreamed all her life of dragons. She takes advantage of her unloving father's death to go searching for the legendary beasts, and in the process she learns about her missing mother, and her true father – a man who promised his first-born child to a demon. Lanen's quest lands her in the middle between the dragons and her father, who has evil plans for the dragons. But Lanen has unexpected talents, and with her love for the king of the dragons, manages to save the day – and begins building a bridge between species. This first novel is full of romance and wonders, but feels a bit mushy, and not just because of the impossible inter-species romance. Part of the problem is the use of strictly first-person narration, from several characters' points of view, at times changing to a new viewpoint after only a few paragraphs. On the other hand, the characters are the novel's strength; despite being a stock type, Lanen has undeniable appeal, as do the pompous but charmingly curious dragons. Ultimately, curiosity and goodness win out over fear and greed, and a surprising last minute twist adds spice to Lanen's draconic love story.

Louise Marley, **Sing the Warmth** (Ace 0-441-99386-9, \$5.99, 298pp, pb) November 1996. Cover by Bob Eggleton.

With this sequel to **Sing the Light**, Marley again demonstrates the storytelling skills that carried her first novel, but with smoother technique, and more confidence. She keeps things moving so well that you don't notice at first that this, like most middle novels, is mostly marking time in terms of the larger plot. Cantrix Sira still plans to revolutionize her planet by changing the way the Gifted are taught, but the focus of this novel is on Sira's classmate Isbel, who gets a position as Cantrix at a House with a sour old Cantor whose talents are shaky, yet goes out of his way to undermine Isbel. Since the singers' combined musical/psi talents are all that keeps the cold away on this frozen planet, this puts intolerable pressure on Isbel, who makes the fatal mistake of falling in love. Sira, just freed from years of captivity, turns up in time to pick up the pieces. These tales of unappreciated, young, psionically talented musicians on a lost colony world are a trifle too derivative of McCaffrey's *Pern* and Bradley's *Darkover*, but Marley's lively storytelling and engaging characters give them a life of their own, enough to make them worth checking out.

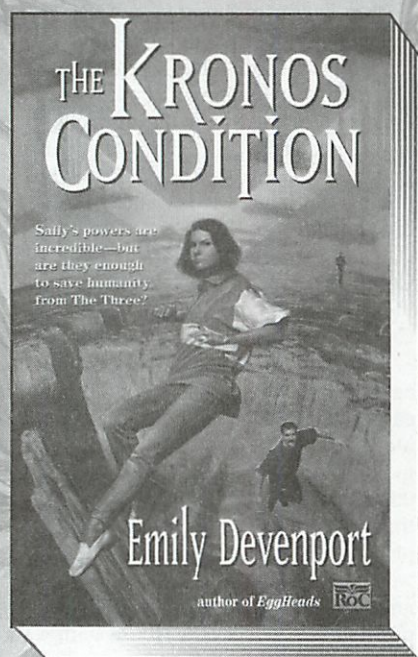
Marina Warner, ed. **Wonder Tales** (Chatto & Windus) 1984. (Farrar Straus Giroux 0-374-29281-7, \$22.00, 243pp, hc) November 1996. Cover by Roxanna Bikadoroff.

Five noted contemporary authors, including

*Continued on page 63*



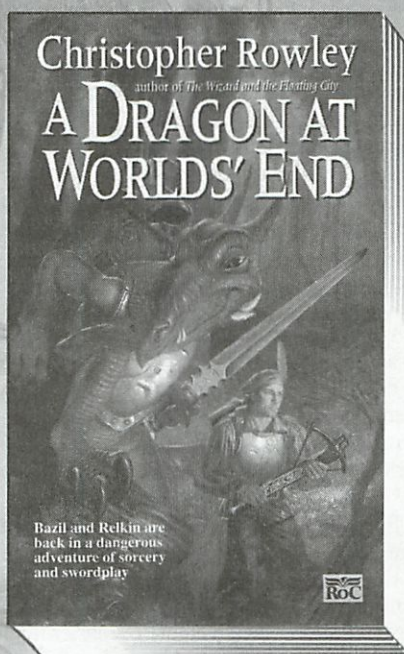
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I felt very nervous on the night of the [free trade] referendum....I kept running upstairs to read **The Lord of the Rings** because I found it so soothing. You know: the forces of evil, little hobbits, doom on every side, and nevertheless they make it through. Except in Quebec, you weren't always too sure what the forces of evil were. —Margaret Atwood, *Guardian Weekly*, 9/29/96

**The Lord of the Rings** is a book I read every year with a fascination that borders on contempt. It is a vast work, of great imagination and power, and the first-time reader cannot help identifying himself with the chief characters who are heroes. It is fifteen years since I first read it, and slowly I have begun to wonder about the chief characters who are villains. For this is a book with no shades of grey: the people in it are on the side either of good or of evil. ... **The Lord of the Rings** was a cult book on US university campuses during the '60s. It is still a cult book, in lesser ways. But it is a book of imperialism: a book wherein we of the east and new south are trodden down, vilified, and made villains. **The Lord of the Rings** ... is one of the best books I have ever read, and I shall ever glory in re-reading it. Yet I shall ever read it knowing it is written of and by an alien civilization. —Vijay Nambisan, *Indian Review of Books*, 9/16/96

I have never responded favorably to the recent razoring of literature by critics — the tribes of structuralists, postmodernists, deconstructionists. To many SF writers, "postmodern" is simply a signature of exhaustion. Its typical apparatus — self-reference, heavy dollops of obligatory irony, self-conscious use of older genre devices, pastiche, and parody — betrays

lack of invention, of the crucial coin of SF, imagination. —Gregory Benford,

"Afterword to **Foundation's Fear**", *New York Review of Science Fiction*, 12/96

Gilstrap felt the blood rushing to his head. Was all of this really happening? A \$400,000 book deal for an unpublished writer.... Incredible as it may seem, the next day he was back on the phone, and gaping frantically, as his ruthless agent turned down even bigger movie deals.... A delicious footnote to this "Believe It or Not" saga of the Instant Millionaire: When Gilstrap was an undergrad at William and Mary in the late 1970s, his creative writing instructor advised him to "find some other way to make a living." And when the hopeful writer asked the prof to elaborate, he was told: "You simply don't have enough talent." In spite of this discouraging assessment, however, Gilstrap says that he still has "a great deal of respect and affection" for his former teacher, Avram Davidson (now deceased).... —William & Mary [alumni magazine of the college], Fall 1996

## [Acts of Conscience, William Barton]

With insight and intelligence, Barton (**When Heaven Fell**) describes a series of moral dilemmas with no easy solutions.... There is an intense and intensely pleasurable display of erudition, writerly tact and hard psychological realism as [the hero] confronts difficult questions about exploitation and survival, evolutionary reality and moral righteousness. There are no obvious answers, but there is a fascinating work of science fiction that easily rises above the stock-in-trade. —Publishers Weekly, 11/4/96

## [The Fortunate Fall, Raphael Carter]

Ms. Carter mixes broad themes like homophobia, censorship and government surveillance with the shared intimacies and vulnerabilities of individuals who live outside the boundaries accepted by society. She also explores the relationship between man and machine in an increasingly wired world. The resulting novel — by turns terrifying and tender, frustrating and fulfilling — is a superb example of speculative fiction. —Tim Hilchey, *The New York Times Book Review*, 9/22/96

## [Present Tense, Dave Duncan]

Duncan writes succinctly, avoiding the verbiage that bloats so many other contemporary fantasies. And while his novel contains fewer pyrotechnics than most heroic fantasies, it features gritty, well-developed characters, several of whom change and grow believably in the course of the book. —Publishers Weekly, 9/30/96

## [The Sparrow, Mary Doria Russell]

Like the science fiction of C.S. Lewis, Russell's first novel is finally a parable about faith — the search for God, in others as well as Out There. What's found during the missionaries' visit to

[the planet] Rakhat is not at all reassuring or comforting. But only the most deceitful novels tell us what we'd like to hear. Important novels leave deep cracks in our beliefs, our prejudices, and our blinders. **The Sparrow** is one of them. —Tom De Haven, *Entertainment Weekly*

## [Otherland, Tad Williams]

Williams proves himself as adept at writing science fiction as he is at writing fantasy. His 21st-century South Africa, where blacks run the government and pursue careers but where whites control most economic power, rings true. His version of the Net, although obviously indebted to Neal Stephenson's **Snow Crash** and other novels, is detailed and fascinating. Best of all, however, are Williams's well-drawn, sympathetic characters ... all of whom hope to solve the mystery of the terrifying VR environment called Otherland. —Publishers Weekly, 10/28/96

[H]umans have managed to pull ahead of the rest of the animal world by effectively opting out of Darwinian evolution. Instead, we now undergo a sort of Lamarckian evolution — the inheritance of learned information — not through genes but through culture. Instead of slowly, biologically adapting to different environments as we spread out from Africa across the globe — we used culture to adapt those environments to ourselves. —Timothy Taylor

## The Prehistory of Sex

Virt-E-Go have developed a virtual reality sex suit that fulfills your dreams — no mess and no troublesome emotion. Trouble is, it's burned the balls of their principal backer, Nobushi Fukuada, and the future of the company looks to have gone up in smoke. But while the all-male management fails to rise to the challenge, the girls get stuck in. Frustrated secretaries for too long, they relish the opportunity to show just what they're made of. ... With Virt-E-Go's workforce showing an interest in the machine above and beyond the call of duty, it remains to be seen whether mechanical mating will win the day over good, old-fashioned rumpy-pumpy. —catalog description of

## Virtual Love, Susan Oudot

We're interested in seeing printed quotes to run on this page. Readers can send copies of anything pertinent to SF (or close enough) — articles, reviews, opinions, etc. — which has appeared in print. We hope to run reviews of books we didn't cover (or that illuminate or disagree with those by our various reviewers), philosophical musings about the field, wry observations, funny pieces, etc. Please put your name on the piece you send (we will run a credit section) and make sure the original source and author are clearly identified. Send to QuotePage, c/o Locus, 34 Ridgewood Lane, Oakland CA 94611.



# SPECTRA SCOPE

## AUTHOR PROFILE

## LYNN FLEWELLING

epPhoto: Bob DeLong-Bangor Daily News



**SPECTRA:** *STALKING DARKNESS* is the second book of your Nightrunner Series. Is this a trilogy or a pentology?

**FLEWELLING:** Neither.

*Luck in the Shadows* and *STALKING* were originally intended to be one book, and I consider the pair a duology, complete in itself. But the adventures of Alec and Seregil will continue, mostly in freestanding books, sort of

like Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories or Asimov's robot books. I'm working on the third book now, in which Seregil *finally* gets—well, you'll see.

**SPECTRA:** Did you always want to be a fantasy writer?

**FLEWELLING:** I never imagined being a fantasy writer—science fiction or historical maybe, or "lit'ry." I'm an omnivorous reader. But then this seductive guy named Seregil showed up, and I had to create a world for him. It started out as a pleasant pastime, an experiment, then grew into the grand obsession it is today.

**SPECTRA:** Your books have strong elements of horror, humor, political intrigue, and mystery. How do you classify them?

**FLEWELLING:** I don't. I just write whatever suits me and leave labels to the readers. To date, *Luck* has been called high, dark, and epic, none of which quite resonate for me. A reviewer christened it a "fantasy of manners." Sounds like Jane Austen on acid.

I prefer to think of my fantasy style as naturalistic, with characters who could exist in any setting doing things in a logical fashion as dictated by their circumstances.

**SPECTRA:** What powers your imagination?

**FLEWELLING:** Roughly 50% life experience and observation; 50% research.

**SPECTRA:** As a writer, what questions do you least like to be asked?

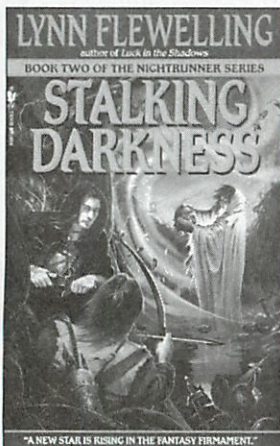
**FLEWELLING:** Least? "Is it a trilogy or a pentology?" No, just kidding. My two least favorites are, "Is this a Young Adult book?" and "You're a woman, so why are your main characters male?"

**SPECTRA:** How do you answer these questions?

**FLEWELLING:** With expletives, generally. And in the case of the second, pelt the questioner with copies of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Ursula LeGuin's *Left Hand of Darkness*—whatever's handy. You get The best distance with hardcovers, providing you take the dust jackets off first.

**SPECTRA:** What's the best thing about being a writer?

**FLEWELLING:** For me? Knowing that no matter what I do or read or see or think about, it's all potential for creation. The whole climactic ending of *Stalking* was triggered by a place I saw during a family hike at Schoodic Point. A minor but pleasing detail in a winter scene in Rhiminee—ice-coated rose hips glowing like red jewels after a storm—I saw at a McDonald's drive-through.



## STALKING DARKNESS

By Lynn Flewelling

Book two in the Nightrunner Series picks up from the riveting conclusion of *Luck in the Shadows*, and continues the tale of two of fantasy's most memorable characters. Young Alec of Kerry has learned most of the secrets of his mentor, Seregil of Rhiminee. When their country moves towards war, these skills are put to the test. Seregil undertakes a mission at the request of the wizard Nysander that could jeopardize both his and Alec's lives, acquiring a deadly piece of information that instigates an ancient and violent prophecy. Joined by a handful of loyal companions, Alec and Seregil must face a supreme evil that could crush any resistance they are able to offer.

512 pp; \$5.99/\$7.99C

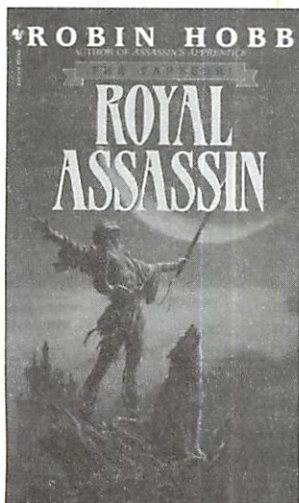


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# ROYAL ASSASSIN

by Robin Hobb



704 pp; \$6.50/\$8.99C

Robin Hobb offers the mass market edition of the thrilling second volume in the acclaimed Farseer Trilogy. Young Fitz Chivalry has been left embittered and crippled after his first mission as an assassin. Though he is determined to remain a recluse, as far away as possible from the Six Duchies, a series of events pull him back. First the Red-Ship Raiders resume their attacks on the coast, leaving pillaged towns behind them. Internal strife also arises, as someone close to the ailing King Shrewd threatens his life. Fitz must overcome his reluctance to join the fray, as he must sort through the treachery and intrigue to save his kingdom—even if it means sacrificing his life.

## Praise for ROYAL ASSASSIN:

"ROYAL ASSASSIN offers great rewards. Hobb continues to revitalize a genre that often seems all too generic, making it new in ways that range from the subtle to the shocking. And beneath all, that wise, deeply involved, humanity."

—*Locus*

"Another spellbinding installment, built of patient detail, believable characters, and mature plotting."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Dazzling.... Hobb's tale is so strongly rooted in character that readers will experience a tremendous sense of growth and completion. It will be hard indeed to wait for the next thrilling installment in this landmark fantasy series."

—*Romantic Times*

"I've been waiting for this one ever since last spring.... Reaches astonishing new heights.... The Farseer saga is destined for greatness—a must read for every devotee of epic fantasy."

—*Sense of Wonder*

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## Recommended Reading

There were fewer books in 1996 than in 1995, and far fewer short stories. Our short fiction recommendations are way down, not only because of this, but because fewer people read and recommended short fiction. Our number of book recommendations is up slightly, although the mix has changed, with more in some categories, and fewer in others.

Our Recommended Reading List – see pages 40, 41, and 42 – is a consensus by the staff, reviewers, other professionals, outside reviews, lists, etc. We'd love to be able to say that the collective "someone" here has read everything eligible, but that's nonsense. There were 600 new novels last year, not counting media-related work. Reviewers have to pick and choose just the way readers do – by covers, blurbs, knowledge about the author, and past performance. Despite these caveats, we're pretty happy with the final list, and are willing to bet that only a few got away. To make the final list usually takes two mentions. A few, backed by passion, bribes, etc., made it with only one.

The short fiction list is based on material provided by Mark R. Kelly, Gardner Dozois, and David Hartwell. The SF magazine editors were also asked for their favorites. The stories with two mentions made the final list, which is much shorter than usual. Several other readers, who normally give us a list, apparently didn't get to enough short fiction this year.

We previously used the Nebula list for both novel and short story recommendations, but alas, their eligibility rules are very different, and nearly all their leading titles are from 1995.

Eligibility for the *Locus* list isn't quite the same as that for any other award. We count books seen in 1996 regardless of copyright date or publisher's release date. There were a number of 1995 books we didn't see until 1996, including Greg Egan's *Distress* and several other British and Australian titles. John Clute's *Look at the Evidence* had a 1995 copyright, but apparently didn't appear until 1996. On the other hand, most books dated January 1996 appeared in November or December 1995, and were listed then. We're not entirely consistent, however, and several books dated January 1997 are being held for next year's recommendations, including *Black Wine* by Candace Jane Dorsey, *City on Fire* by Walter Jon Williams, and *Modern Classics of Fantasy* edited by Gardner Dozois. We got these near the end of December 1996, or early in 1997. There are other unread January 1997 books which may show up if enough reviewers read and campaign for them.

British, as well as Canadian and Australian works, are eligible (if we see them!) when published. We also will include any book first appearing in the English language. This year there is a Dutch art book, *Michael Parkes*, listed because it is in English. There are also British, Canadian, and Australian books listed. We only list international publication if it's the first world edition in English. If editions are simultaneous, we only list the US one.

We're holding some British books, including Peter Hamilton's *The Reality Dysfunction*, until the appearance of the US edition. There is also one novel, Paul J. McAuley's *Fairyland*, which we listed last year but are listing again because of its limited distribution late in 1995; advance copies appeared at the Worldcon, but it was actually published later, and most imports of the book didn't appear until 1996, when the US edition came out. In the future, we'll probably hold British novels if they appear late in the year and are scheduled al-

ready in the US for the following year. On the other hand, we think it's important to mention the unscheduled or unsold ones so they don't fall into the cracks. Several British books only sold in the US because of enthusiastic mentions in *Locus*.

For short fiction, we use cover date for magazines, but appearance date for books. This hybrid system can sometimes give us trouble. We listed "Radio Waves" by Michael Swanwick last year because it was in the Winter 1995 *Omni* – the last print issue. But Mark Kelly argues persuasively that the magazine didn't appear until 1996, and was misdated. He got us to change our mind, and the story, even though it has already won a World Fantasy Award, is being recommended again. He also successfully argued for Lucius Shepard's "Human History", which we missed in its limited-circulation program book incarnation. On the other hand, we're holding Fritz Leiber's "The Dealings of Daniel Kesserich" until next year, when its print version appears. The *Omni* Online appearance was much too limited.

We've listed more SF novels this year than last. They run the gamut from hard idea-oriented SF (*Distress* by Greg Egan) to passionate soft SF or quasi-fantasy (*Gibbon's Decline and Fall* by Sheri S. Tepper), from an alternate yesterday (*Voyage*, by Stephen Baxter) to a present-day thriller (*Oaths and Miracles* by Nancy Kress) to the far future (*Exodus From the Long Sun* by Gene Wolfe). There are those touted as the final (maybe – at least for now) book in a series (*Ringworld Engineers* by Larry Niven, *Blue Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson, *Beggars Ride* by Nancy Kress, *Inheritor* by C.J. Cherryh, *Children of the Mind* by Orson Scott Card, and *Exodus From the Long Sun* by Gene Wolfe), as well as the announced starts of other series (*Otherland* by Tad Williams, and *The Other End of Time* by Frederik Pohl). There is social satire (*Humpty Dumpty* by Damon Knight), otherworld adventure (*Dreamfall* by Joan D. Vinge), and far-future space opera (*Excession* by Iain M. Banks). No matter what you want, it's probably there.

My own favorites of the year include two near-future books: Bruce Sterling's *Holy Fire*, with its startling look at a near utopia with medical problems; and *Idoru* by William Gibson, a slickly written semi-hardboiled thriller. For far-out ideas, *Fairyland* by Paul J. McAuley and *Distress* by Greg Egan were mindblowers. *Blue Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson was excellent, but it unfairly buried another terrific Mars-novel-about-politics-and-environment – *River of Dust* by Alexander Jablokov, my nominee for best overlooked book of the year. I also liked *Endymion* by Dan Simmons, and *The Other End of Time* by Frederik Pohl. Finally, I'm in the middle of two others I picked up because of the reviews – *Otherland* by Tad Williams, and *Excession* by Iain M. Banks. I like them both.

The number of fantasy novels recommended is up quite a bit. As usual, the field is quite diverse. It includes magic realism (*The Prestige* by Christopher Priest and *Walking the Labyrinth* by Lisa Goldstein), humor (*Lunatics* by Bradley Denton) and *One for the Morning Glory* by John Barnes), satire (*Blameless in Abaddon* by James Morrow), primarily historical (*Attila's Treasure* by Stephan Grundy and *Byzantium* by Stephen Lawhead), Arthurian (*The Dragon and the Unicorn* by A.A. Attanasio), fairytale-based (*Firebird* by Mercedes Lackey), and contemporary (*Godmother Night* by Rachel Pollack and *Fair Peril* by Nancy Springer).

The hardest thing in this category is to be able

to say something new in Big Commercial Fantasy (probably a separate category, possibly a separate field). Being just good or slickly competent just doesn't cut it anymore. In the traditional series books, Robert Jordan manages to hold up thanks to the depth of his world; Terry Goodkind and Robin Hobb also do well. The most interesting of the newer BCFs is George R.R. Martin's *A Game of Thrones*, which has intriguing characters and a historical novel feel. *The Golden Key*, a collaboration by Melanie Rawn, Jennifer Robertson, and Kate Elliott, transcends its traditional storytelling despite, or maybe because of, its three voices.

My own favorites include a non-horror werewolf lesbian love story Western historical, *Nadya* by Pat Murphy, the beautifully written *Winter Rose* by Patricia A. McKillip, and the Young Adult alternate-world adventure, *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman.

There was more variety, and more standalone (or almost standalone) books than usual.

The number of horror books we listed, and the number we have recommended, is way down. We limit our listings and recommendations to those with fantasy content. In fact, we started out with them as one category until the horror field exploded a decade or so ago. Maybe it's time to go back to recombining them. Most of the interesting horror writers have moved into the non-fantasy field – what used to be called suspense. There were interesting creepy books this year by Peter Straub, Kathe Koja, Stephen King (*The Green Mile*), Joyce Carol Oates, David Prill, and others. But they weren't fantasy. See Ed Bryant's recommended write-up for titles, etc. I thought about covering non-supernatural horror, but that way lies madness. There are just too many books to look at, including most mysteries, all serial-killer books, and even several baseball(!) novels. SF and fantasy give us headaches because they've become more and more fuzzy around the edges. Horror is a fuzzy set to start with.

It was a terrific year for first novels. We listed 50 – up only slightly from 46 last year – but the quality was much higher. There was a drop in the number of mediocre or merely competent books. You had to be much better than that just to get published. We're recommending 20 books, the most ever in this category, almost equally split between SF (11) and fantasy (9). On the SF side, six are by women, four by men, and one uncertain. In fantasy, five are by women and four by men. My three favorites, all SF, were *The Fortunate Fall* by Raphael Carter, *Mainline* by Deborah Christian, and *Whiteout* by Sage Walker.

It was also an excellent year for collections, even though there were actually fewer than in 1995. There were more major gatherings, fewer just above chapbook size, and fewer collections of sweepings. The category was still dominated by small-press publications, so they may be more difficult to find. We've re-recommended *The Panic Hand* by Jonathan Carroll; the US edition adds a novelette. It's important to have short stories by Simak (mostly award winners) and Sturgeon (even Sturgeon sweepings) back in print, as well as first major collections by Lethem, Bujold, Rosenblum, Morrow, Lupoff, and McDevitt. The Le Guin so-called "mainstream" collection shows how well she blends fantasy into more general work. My own favorites were the Carroll, McAuley, Haldeman, and revised Bruce Sterling volume, which adds the Shaper-Mechanist short stories to the novel for an omnibus.

It wasn't a good year for anthologies. There were



## Recommended Reading

fewer published, and far fewer recommendable titles. The various bests of the year are self-recommending, as are survey books such as **Visions of Wonder** edited by David G. Hartwell and Milton T. Wolf, and **American Gothic Tales** edited by Joyce Carol Oates. There were two general surveys of current work in **Starlight 1** (without doubt, the best SF original anthology of the year) and **Darkside** (a good horror, but not necessarily fantasy, anthology). Unfortunately, most of the other books were either semi-professional gatherings or original theme anthologies. There are usually some good stories in there, but they're buried in merely competent (or worse) works. It's almost impossible to get a reviewer to plow through them. Besides, a couple of good stories does not make a recommendable book. Ellen Datlow was able to bring it off in **Off Limits** because the theme "Tales of New Sex" was treated very loosely. Kevin J. Anderson's **War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches** was delayed enough for many of the stories to appear in magazines first. It helped reviewers to be able to read the book piecemeal. Finally, we've recommended **Intersections**, a workshop anthology, because of its information on writing, as well as its fiction.

The non-fiction category has the usual diversity. David Pringle's **St. James Guide to Fantasy Writers** is not up to the level of the corresponding SF volume, but it's a good start and an extremely useful quick reference on general fantasy authors; **James Blish: Author Mirabilis** is an exhaustive bibliography of one of our most neglected outstanding authors.

The critical essay books include works with reviews, biography, literary criticism, and other material. **Look at the Evidence** by John Clute collects most of his reviews from 1989 to 1992, as well as a couple of critical introductions to specific authors. **Dreams and Wishes** by Susan Cooper collects various speeches, essays, interviews, etc.; nearly all are interesting musings on fantasy. **Ash of Stars**, edited by James Sallis, has original articles on Delany's work, as well as reprints from academic and other sources. **Outside the Human Aquarium** by Brian Stableford has 10 essays on SF writings, more than half new to this second edition. Stableford is, as usual, knowledgeable and interesting.

**Jules Verne** is a modern biography by Herbert R. Lottman, which adds quite a bit to our knowledge of this SF pioneer. It should be read in conjunction with Verne's newly discovered early novel **Paris in the Twentieth Century**. Together, they really change our ideas of the author. **The Jules Verne Encyclopedia** is filled with information, mostly bibliographic, but also biographic and explanatory.

**Time & Chance** by L. Sprague de Camp is a long personal autobiography. **H.P. Lovecraft: A Life** by S.T. Joshi is an exhaustive and exhausting study of both Lovecraft and his fiction. **Welcome to the Revolution: The Literary Legacy of Mack Reynolds** is an interesting study of Reynolds's social themes. Although not a major writer, Reynolds is extremely important for his social ideas and arguments.

Patrick Parrander's **Shadows of the Future: H.G. Wells, Science Fiction, and Prophecy** traces Wells as a prophet in his SF and as the first futurologist. It also covers his influence on SF and the scientific outlook.

Finally, we have one almost indescribable book: **The Tough Guide to Fantasyland** by Diana Wynne Jones is a must for "anyone stuck in the

realms of fantasy without a magic sword to call their own," to quote Terry Pratchett.

There were more than enough books to have an Art category this year. The one general volume was **Spectrum 3: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art**, a survey anthology of recent juried artwork from various sources. **Maxfield Parrish: A Retrospective** has over 130 color plates, 30 black & white illustrations, plus photographs, and text on Parrish's life and work. **The World of Edward Gorey** has a critical article about Gorey's art, over 200 illustrations from his stagework as well as his books, and an interview, plus some photographs. **H.R. Giger's Film Design** has sketches, final paintings, models, plus some final movie scenes, as well as descriptive text, photographs of the artist, and a list of exhibits and movies. **Michael Parkes** contains photographs of sculpture as well as his recent stone lithographs. There is a short text. **Neurotica** has Potter's disturbing airbrushed photography, including a whole section of Poppy Z. Brite. **The Faces of Fantasy** has 100 photos of fantasy writers.

Some of the best art is used in children's books. Three outstanding ones this year are Kinuko Craft's illustrations for **Cupid and Psyche**; Alan Lee's work for **The Wanderings of Odysseus**, a companion volume to the earlier **Black Ships Before Troy**, with text retelling the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey* by Rosemary Sutcliff; and Chris Van Allsburg's illustrations for **A City in Winter** by Mark Helprin, a sequel to their earlier **Swan Lake**. The Helprin fantasy novella is also excellent. Finally, there are Ralph Steadman's evocative illustrations for the 50th-anniversary reprint of **Animal Farm** by George Orwell. Again, don't skip the text, which is just as relevant today, despite the breakup of the USSR.

In the novella category, we have several anomalies. **Bellwether** by Connie Willis is a novel by length, and only eligible for a Hugo in that category, but we're looser in definition, and it reads like a novella even though it's long. **The Unicorn Sonata** by Peter S. Beagle also reads like a novella, although published as a novel. Its length is borderline. On the other end, we've included "Saddle Point Dreamtime" by Stephen Baxter here, even though it's actually three short stories. They're a sequence, and are published and meant to be read as such. Baxter's other three interconnected stories set here, "Saddle Point Sequence", is also long enough to fit. **Where They Are Hid** by Tim Powers is a novelette-length hardcover limited edition. There are far fewer stories from original anthologies than listed in the past.

The reviewers had a longer preliminary list, as well as their own columns, to check on while preparing their comments below, so they all mention items not on our final reading list, the one I was able to use for my introductory notes. Please feel free to use these comments or any other list for your voting.

—C.N. Brown

### 1996: YEAR IN REVIEW

by Gary K. Wolfe

Any year has to be counted a success that began with the concluding volume of Kim Stanley Robinson's monumental Mars trilogy, saw the conclusion of an important four-volume novel by Gene Wolfe, and included major new works by Dan Simmons, Bruce Sterling, William Gibson, Stephen Baxter, Paul J. McAuley, Jack Vance, and Damon Knight. While most of these novelists were busy refining and extending ideas and forms at which they were already acknowledged masters, some —

notably Baxter (whose **Voyage** actually didn't appear in the States until January of this year, but I'm counting it as a 1996 book because I need to in order to find a trend, and I'm supposed to find trends) set off in interesting new directions.

Baxter, who began his career with hard-SF novels and stories characterized by ingeniously worked-out but radically alienating environments, has lately been domesticating his imagination in the service of such mock-Victorian SF as **The Time Ships**, his astonishing sequel to Wells's **The Time Machine**, but **Voyage** takes this domestication several steps further. Essentially an alternate history of the last three decades of NASA, ending in a successful manned Mars landing in 1986, **Voyage** also represents one of the more interesting identifiable trends of the year. Together with Allen Steele's **The Tranquillity Alternative** and a number of stories and articles by a whole gaggle of hard-SF writers, Baxter's novel seems to reveal an emerging tragic nostalgia for a space program gone awry, and a desire to set history right through a kind of retro-corrective fiction.

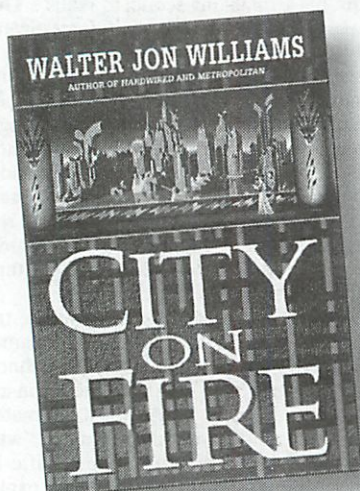
Whether it represents a continuing trend or whether it's just another example of steam-engine time, this re-examination of recent technological history departs from its source modes in a couple of significant ways: unlike most alternate histories (which tend toward more playful "what if?" scenarios), it shapes itself as a specific kind of policy critique; and unlike most space exploration fiction, it shifts focus from technological and natural wonders to issues of management. Questions of management and governance increasingly came to preoccupy the characters in Robinson's Mars trilogy as well, and novels such as Michael Flynn's **Firestar** and Charles Sheffield and Jerry Pournelle's **Higher Education** even returned to decades-old fantasies of the privatization of both space exploration and public education, in novels that made up in homiletics what they lacked in inventiveness. Does all this mean that hard SF, having long since laid out its basic scenarios of cosmological romance, has decided that what is needed to get there is a stern critique of public will and a series of novelized management seminars? (Not that SF hasn't visited this territory earlier and often; most readers who only remember those wonderful walkways in Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll" forget that the story was principally an argument about labor relations.)

Or is it simply that hard SF, like SF in general, is continuing to re-examine some of its own basic assumptions? One of the other trends of 1996 seemed to be a return to sources, to familiar themes and tropes revisited with new kinds of sophistication. Surely, nobody believed there was much life left in the old generation starship motif until Gene Wolfe came along and showed that it gave room for his full measure of Proustian density in the **Long Sun** series. William Gibson's **Idoru** did not add much imaginatively to his earlier cyberworlds of the **Neuromancer** trilogy, but its newfound maturity of voice enriched the setting and characters substantially. Orson Scott Card returned to the morally earnest world of Ender Wiggin in **Children of the Mind**, Larry Niven to Ringworld in **The Ringworld Throne**, and Dan Simmons to the world of his **Hyperion** novels with **Endymion** (a two-part narrative whose conclusion will appear this year). Earlier nanotech fiction may have offered wilder and woollier worlds than the future Europe described in Paul McAuley's **Fairyland** and several stories in **The Invisible Country**, but none offered a richer or more internally consistent





# U P D H a r p e r



**CITY ON FIRE** Walter Jon Williams

**A chilling sequel to the Nebula-nominated *Metropolitan*.**

*CITY ON FIRE* invites readers on a fascinating trip through a world-city whose inhabitants are tormented by their inability to overcome plasm, a mysterious life-dominating substance. It is up to Aiah to control the tyrannical man she helped create in a crusading effort to tame the plasm and save her world. Walter Jon Williams has envisioned a frightening post-modern cityscape, both remarkably familiar and painfully disconcerting, of a society plagued by internal conflict as people fight against their own hopes and fears.

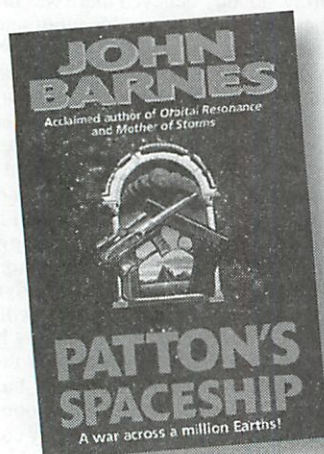
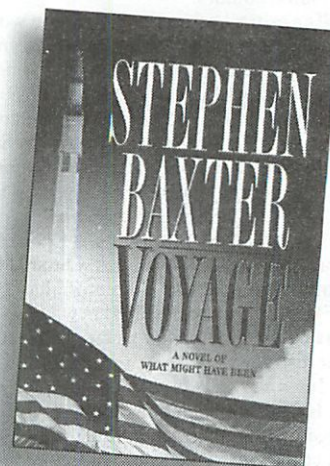
ISBN: 0-06-105213-2 • \$22.00 U.S./\$31.00 Can. • Hardcover/January 1997

**VOYAGE** Stephen Baxter

**A new saga of the Mars mission that should have been.**

In a unique synthesis of fact and fiction, Stephen Baxter tells the triumphant story of an American space program that has succeeded in landing three astronauts on Mars in 1986. Asking readers to flash back to 1963 and imagine a world where President John F. Kennedy survived to champion the space program, Baxter gives us a brilliant nationalistic saga blending a vivid historical imagination, the beauty of scientific discovery, and the soaring drama of human endeavor.

ISBN: 0-06-105258-2 • \$23.00 U.S./\$32.50 Can. • Hardcover/January 1997



**PATTON'S SPACESHIP: Timeline Wars #1** John Barnes

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A T E

# Prism



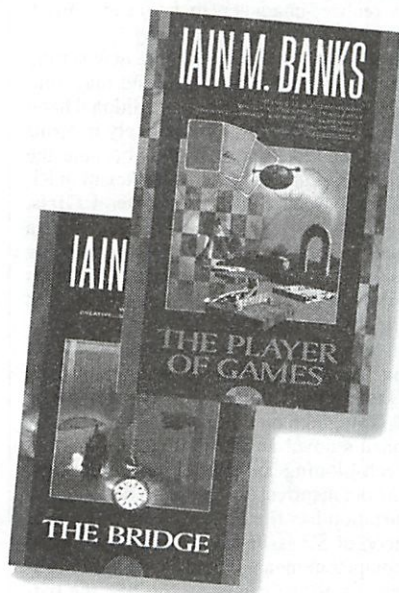
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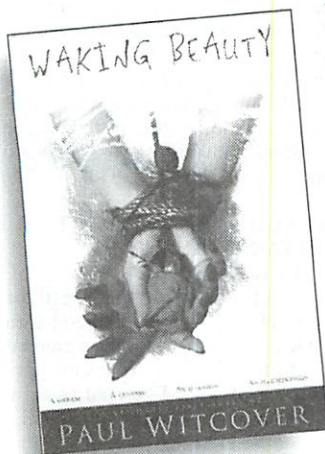
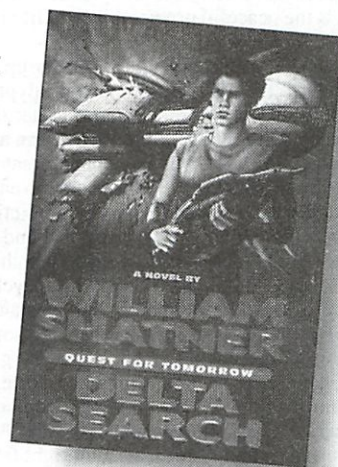


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## 1996 Recommended Reading

*mise en scène* or a keener sense of history.

McAuley also suggests another incipient trend in the introduction to one of the stories in **The Invisible Country**. Noting that in the last decade Europe has undergone social transformations of almost SFnal proportions, he complains that this volatile and provocative environment remains all but ignored even by English SF writers. His own **Fairyland** is partly a corrective to this, but 1996 also gave us fresh views of an evolving Europe in Bruce Sterling's **Holy Fire** (which also offers his most fully-realized characters to date) and in Brian W. Aldiss's collection **Common Clay**.

But Europe is not the only notable new setting in last year's fiction; the broader trend may simply be to get away from the genre's traditional habit of viewing the future earth almost solely in terms of New York or L.A. Bangkok thus became the focus of *fin de siècle* techno-viral-eroticism in Richard Calder's Dead Stuff series (**Dead Girls**, **Dead Boys**, and last year's **Dead Things**), while a claustrophobic Tokyo gave a rich and convincing texture to Gibson's **Idoru**. Greg Egan's **Distress** offers a brief grand tour of an anxiety-ridden 21st century, finally choosing for its setting an artificial island called Stateless. Even some novels set largely in the US, such as Damon Knight's **Humpty Dumpty** or Kathleen Ann Goonan's **The Bones of Time**, take on distinct regional flavors, with Goonan's novel an interesting combination of high-tech cloning and Hawaiian mythology. Perhaps the old manifest destiny myth of planetary Americanization has finally been knocked out of the pantheon of SF assumptions (along with that myth of competent management in the space program). Perhaps all we can hope for, like the battered space ranger of Terry Bisson's **Pirates of the Universe**, is the peaceful predictability of life in a Disney theme park.

One trend I keep half-expecting to show up, in pop media as well as SF, is millennial apocalypticism. The only such book from a major writer this year was Sheri S. Tepper's **Gibbon's Decline and Fall**, in which a real war of the sexes threatens catastrophe in the year 2000. Perhaps it's too early for such a trend to be apparent, but my prediction – based almost solely on the Tepper novel and on the Chris Carter TV series **Millennium** (which so far seems only to be about a somewhat psychic investigator solving creepy crimes, but constantly threatens to weave everything together into some kind of pattern) – is that such fiction, when it gets here, is more likely to be of the signs-and-ports variety than full-blown Book of Revelations circuses (I exclude tabloid newspapers, New Age bestsellers, and fiction of the Christian right from this prediction).

1996 also was an encouraging year for short story collections. In **None So Blind**, Joe Haldeman demonstrated that his real signature theme over the past few years has not been war, but art and artists. Ursula K. Le Guin's "mainstream" collection **Unlocking the Air** only served to demonstrate that the line between mainstream and fantasy in her work is often an arbitrary one – and she, too, revealed that the nature of story and storytelling has become her characteristic theme. Michael Bishop, on the other hand, seemed as eclectic as ever in **At the City Limits of Fate**, which ranged from a sharply envisioned tale of snake-handling to the usual Bishop oddities. The richness of Paul McAuley's settings, including those of the novels **Fairyland** and **Pasquale's Angel**, was further demonstrated in his collection **The Invisible Country**. Important first collections came from Jonathan Lethem, whose **The Wall of the Sky, the Wall of**

**the Eye** contains what is probably the best SF basketball story ever (although offhand I can't think of the competition); and Mary Rosenblum, whose **Synthesis and Other Virtual Realities** showed mastery of both environmental and VR fiction; and Jack McDevitt, whose **Standard Candles** showed a good deal more substance and originality than his much more successful novel, **Ancient Shores**.

But it was also encouraging to see new collections from old masters, and even reprint collections from masters in danger of oblivion. Ray Bradbury's **Quicker than the Eye** shows that the old poet's voice is still in fine fettle, even if his plots are not (have they ever been?), and Richard Lupoff's **Before 12:01 . . . and After** suggested that the SF field has all but ignored one of its more entertaining craftsmen of short fiction. White Wolf began a program of reprinting Harlan Ellison's stories and essays in a series of handsome volumes beginning with **Edgeworks**. The Sturgeon Project managed to keep alive with the publication of a second beautifully produced volume of early short fiction, **Microcosmic God**, and a small press named Tachyon brought back into print several of Clifford Simak's memorable tales in **Over the River and Through the Woods**. It is worth noting that not only did the Simak and Sturgeon collections come from small presses, but so did those of Lupoff, McDevitt, Rosenblum, and Bishop. This is becoming an important niche for the small presses to develop, and an important service they provide to readers.

The annual anthologies continued their reigns of excellence, although both the Dozois and the Datlow/Windling are beginning to look a little predictable from year to year, and it was good to see a new competitor enter the field in the form of David G. Hartwell's **Year's Best SF**. Hartwell, along with Milton Wolf, also produced the year's most ambitious anthology, **Visions of Wonder**, ostensibly a teaching text for members of the Science Fiction Research Association, but actually a provocative attempt to limn the whole field of SF in the 1990s. The most disheartening news is in the field of original anthologies and anthology series; with the end of Bantam's **Full Spectrum** series and Jane Yolen's **Xanadu** fantasy anthologies, the only ongoing series is the new **Starlight**, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden in a debut volume that is far more promising in terms of literary content than likely sales. Except for one "group" anthology, **Intersections** (edited by John Kessel, Mark van Name, and Richard Butner), the rest of the original anthology market was pretty much given over to theme or tribute anthologies: Ellen Datlow's **Off Limits: Tales of Alien Sex**, Robert M. Price's **The New Lovecraft Circle**, Peter Crowther and Edward E. Kramer's **Dante's Disciples**. The best way to sell short fiction direct to books, it seems, is to write purple prose about sex with bugs in hell.

I didn't see as much art and nonfiction this year as I have in the past, but a couple of titles in these areas deserve special attention. Cathy Burnett, Arnie Fenner, and Jim Loehr's **Spectrum** series continued to get better and better with its third volume, and is the only annual source for keeping up with the varieties of fantastic art – not to mention a genuine bargain among well-produced art books. (Such bargains are all the rarer following the collapse of London's Dragon's World.)

In the nonfiction category, the most important book of the year for gaining a fresh purchase on the whole of SF is one likely to be overlooked, partly because it theoretically appeared at the end of 1995 (but didn't get distributed until 1996), partly because it is a collection of reviews and review-essays. John Clute's **Look at the Evidence** is a thick and spicy stew of often obtuse opinions

and often stunning observations on genre as well as mainstream literature. Of a different kind of importance is L. Sprague de Camp's rather bemused autobiography **Time & Chance**, important mainly because de Camp is important. In a rather unusual move into the nonfiction market, Tor published a "newly revised" version of David G. Hartwell's cheerful 1984 study **Age of Wonders: Exploring the World of Science Fiction**, updated mostly by changing examples and adding more recent essays on hard SF, fantasy, and editing. There was a mainstream biography of Bram Stoker by Barbara Belford, and a small-press biography of Lovecraft by the chief of the revisionist scholars, S.T. Joshi. Samuel Delany, so academically upscale that his own fiction is being reprinted by a university press, was the subject of a university press study by James Sallis (**Ash of Stars: On the Writing of Samuel R. Delany**). The only other American university presses keeping alive an interest in SF are Georgia, which issued this year's volume of Eaton Conference papers (**Immortal Engines: Life Extension and Immortality in Science Fiction and Fantasy** edited by George Slusser, Gary Westfahl, and Eric S. Rabkin) and Syracuse, which published Patrick Parrinder's **Shadows of the Future: H.G. Wells, Science Fiction, and Prophecy**. In England, Liverpool University Press continues to be the semi-official academic press affiliate of the Science Fiction Foundation.

Two nonfiction publishers without university affiliations continue as the most consistent supporters of SF and fantasy scholarship. Borgo published a new edition of Brian Stableford's essays on major writers (**Outside the Aquarium: Master of Science Fiction**) and a study of Mack Reynolds (**Welcome to the Revolution: the Literary Legacy of Mack Reynolds**) by Curtis C. Smith. Greenwood Press continued its series of volumes from the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts (the most recent volume, **Visions of the Fantastic**, edited by Allienne R. Becker, covers the 1994 conference) and inaugurated a series of stolid but useful "critical companions" to popular authors; the first batch out included studies of Stephen King, John Saul, Robin Cook, and Dean Koontz.

There is, of course, a good deal that I didn't see during the year, and probably a fair amount that I saw and have forgotten. But there seems to be a solid enough base of important works by talented writers that the overall state of SF is healthy, and healthily diverse; past years may have seemed like the Year of Nanotech or the Year of Cyberspace, but no such bandwagons seemed to dominate in 1996, as writers turned toward consolidating what they have learned from these new themes. Such years of consolidation usually produce better fiction, because what initially seemed like a toy (golly, nanotech lets us do *anything*!) loses some of its novelty and becomes a narrative tool, adding to the panoply of SF resources and subject to the same rules as all the other tools. Whether or not a feared shakeout in the industry would leave such literate and imaginative SF untouched, or whether a year from now you'll be reading year-in-review summaries of Trek, droid, and X-files books, I wouldn't hazard a guess.

— Gary K. Wolfe

## WHAT I DID WHEN I WASN'T ON VACATION IN 1996

by Russell Letson

One good way of identifying the "best" of a year is to ask myself what books I remember first when I look back – though since I've entered a Laputan stage of life, it helps to whack me upside the head with a list of what I've read to get my attention, but the basic principle is still sound. Of



course, what sticks in the mind is variable and capricious – a setting, a scene, an image, an attitude, a root metaphor. And it's as likely to be something idiosyncratic, more in my nervous system than in the work-in-itself (which, we are assured by Theory, never existed anyway).

Some of the books that have stuck with me are also the no-brainer picks that you could put on a "best" without any help from me, but since annual essays are as much celebratory as advisory, let me tell you some things that you already know: That Greg Egan (*Distress*) and Paul McAuley (*Fairyland*) take both traditional and cutting-edge SF tropes and topics and work them into shapes that you can never anticipate and aren't likely to forget. That Nancy Kress (*Beggars Ride*) and Kim Stanley Robinson (*Blue Mars*) are tireless in their interrogation of the relationship between technological achievement and social justice. That William Gibson (*Idoru*) and Bruce Sterling (*Holy Fire*) may be real hip about cyberstuff but are far too humane (and probably too old) to be punkish.

As I look at this partial list, I realize that most of these are also books that would have a shot at being accepted by readers outside the SF ghetto – Gibson, in fact, seems to be marketed more vigorously to non-genre than genre readers. My intuition tells me that other books I enjoyed just as much, and took just as seriously, would be a harder sell to a "mainstream" audience. I can't come up with a single reason for this, but my intuition tells me that my poetry-reading-chemist brother-in-law would probably get through any of the novels already mentioned, but not the ones in the next paragraphs.

Inside our ghetto, though, the materials and motifs of classic SF can still produce the tickle of wonder, even if it takes more ingenuity and emotional complexity to keep the attention of this particular long-time addict. Christopher Evans's *Mortal Remains* and Alexander Jablov's *River of Dust* offer inhabited solar systems more exotic and alien than the ones I grew up on (except maybe Bester's in *The Stars My Destination*), though neither of them has the early-days innocence of the pulp space frontiers of, say, Leigh Brackett and C.L. Moore. (Come to think of it, neither does Bester.) C.J. Cherryh's *Inheritor* and its two companion volumes are some of the best alien-encounter/psychology stories I've ever read, and Melissa Scott's *Night Sky Mine* takes the blue-collar space-industry backdrop pioneered by Cherryh's Alliance-Union tales and adds her own take on uncertain interpersonal and interclass relations.

Even in this sophisticated, super-subtle, post-modern tail-end of the millennium, space opera isn't dead, thank heaven, and there are plenty of planets to explore and aliens to encounter. Scott B. Gier produced a respectable entry in his Genellen series with *In the Shadow of the Moon*, while Peter F. Hamilton appears to be going for some sort of genre-exploding super-trilogy with a 900-page first volume, *The Reality Dysfunction*, that employs a whole warehouse of kitchen sinks. The U.S. publication of this and the forthcoming second volume will tell us if the world is ready for triple helpings of *War and Peace Meets Doc Smith in Stephen King Land*. While "space opera" might be a constricting description for Larry Niven's *Ringworld Throne*, it's certainly one of the appropriate labels ("planetary romance" is another one), given the size of the standing sets and the scope of powers wielded by the actors. Jack Vance, of course, is a category all to himself, but *Night Lamp's* nifty space-yacht, planetary wandering, and encounters with aliens (who happen to be human) fit it comfortably into this paragraph.

Among the newer writers, Valerie Freireich is

really hitting her stride and establishing a thematic territory (though not mixing her metaphors as I do) with her third book, *The Beacon*. George Foy's first SF novel, *The Shift*, and Deborah Christian's first novel *Mainline*, share DNA with the mystery-thriller-crime supergenre, as do books by non-beginners Ian Watson (*Hard Questions*), Nancy Kress (*Oaths and Miracles*), and Kevin J. Anderson and Doug Beason (*Virtual Destruction*). The crime genres are as milieu-dependent as SF, and Foy succeeds especially well in this department, with a rich and various barely-next-week New York (particularly the Riker's Island section) and the virtual-reality 19th-century city that echoes the science-fictional one.

More than a third of my reading in 1996 was series-related, including six endings: the Cherryh, Kress, and Robinson sequences, plus three alternate-history series: Phillip Mann's *A Land Fit for Heroes, Vol 4: The Burning Forest*, Harry Harrison and John Holm's *King and Emperor*, and two volumes of Harry Turtledove's *Worldwar* tetralogy, *Upsetting the Balance* and *Striking the Balance*. With two starter volumes (Frederik Pohl's *The Other End of Time* and the Hamilton giant), one middle book, and four from open series in operation, I shouldn't lack for this particular guilty pleasure in coming years.

Even if I do, maybe I will be able to get along on reprints of classic SF. The appearance of *Retro Reviews* in 1996 was not just a pseudo-feature suggested by some high-priced magazine makeover consultant, but a response to the republication of several rereadable books, including Heinlein's *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* and George Turner's *Beloved Son* trilogy. Is it too much to hope that some form of the backlist is returning? (Well, a fellow can dream, can't he?)

I reviewed fewer books this year, not because there was less worth reading but because of collisions in other departments of my working life. In fact, I am struck yet again by how much there is that I really want to read, ranging from the competent and worth-your-effort to the first-rate, don't-miss-this. That's why it takes a half-dozen *Locus*ites to cover even a fraction of what's published, and why a good book gets past us once in a while. (This time it was 1995's UK hardcover of *Mortal Remains*, caught on the paperback rebound.) With any luck, the field will keep kicking up surprises and delights until I'm so far gone that even a thwack with a hardcover *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (the CD-ROM doesn't mass enough) won't get my attention.

— Russell Letson

#### 1996 IN REVIEW

by Faren Miller

In the past year, I read very little hard SF, so will leave discussion to others, but of the quirkier variety, and the books driven more by social sciences, there was some fine work by both old hands and new. Lois McMaster Bujold continues to write series books which offer at the least witty adventure (*Cetaganda*) and at best true psychological depth and continuing surprises in a future which never remains static (*Memory*). Nancy Kress turns ably to the thriller for *Oaths and Miracles*, losing none of her powerful sense of humanity, then takes her "Beggars" books to an unsettling but equally forceful conclusion in the dystopian *Beggars Ride*. Complexity of culture, plot, and characters continue to delight in both Iain M. Banks's latest tale of the far-future Culture, *Excession*, and Gene Wolfe's final "Long Sun" book, *Exodus From the Long Sun*, while the awesome meets the gloriously absurd in Terry Bisson's *Pirates of the Universe*. And the unique blend of the exotic and the darkly

human that marks the work of Jack Vance makes a welcome return in his memorable *Night Lamp*.

As for relative newcomers, David Zindell's *The Wild*, follow-up to spectacular debut *Neverness*, is nearly as impressive, ranging from cyberspace to far planets as it follows its hero on a voyage toward the forces that drive all life. Jeff Noon defies the trend toward direct sequels with *Automated Alice*, a very indirect, downright skewed, transformation of Lewis Carroll's England, infused with Noon's own brand of wit. And then there's Sage Walker's magnificent bringing of full human complexity to cyberspace in *Whiteout*, which makes my lists for both best SF and best first novel.

Turning to fantasy, though I see no absolute trends, there has been a wealth of fine work, impossible to confine to a Top Ten. Robin Hobb continues to revitalize "traditional" epic fantasy in series book *Royal Assassin*, while George R.R. Martin brings it a gritty sense of realism (with some memorable characters) in *A Game of Thrones*. Faerie meets stark humanity in the timelessly eloquent encounter of Patricia A. McKillip's *Winter Rose*, and the thoroughly contemporary wit and wisdom of Nancy Springer's *Fair Peril*. Lisa Goldstein creates a quieter but no less powerful blend of 19th-century England, 20th-century California, and the forces of fantasy in *Walking the Labyrinth*.

Other books turn tradition inside-out or abandon it altogether. Sean Stewart creates his own splendidly unique realms in stand-alone novel *Clouds End*, while Bradley Denton – another writer who refuses to repeat himself – brings the supernatural into our own world for the joyous romantic/screwball comedy of *Lunatics*. Though *The War Amongst the Angels* belongs to the quirky, decades-long saga featuring most of Michael Moorcock's continuing cast of characters, its eloquent, unlikely montages of SF, fantasy, and the undefinable make it as grandly experimental as anything he's written. Unconventional genre mixtures also continue in Round Two of Dave Duncan's "Great Game", *Present Tense*, where the harsh realities of World War I alternate with otherworldly adventures exhibiting both wry invention and their own brand of darkness. Then there's the uniquely Baby Boomer Americana of the clash between science and fantasy as Richard Grant chronicles it with *Tex and Molly in the Afterlife*.

Other '96 fantasies worthy of note: Attila's *Treasure* (history with touches of magic) by Stephan Grundy; *Ancient Echoes*, a return to the reliably uncanny British realms of Robert Holdstock; *Feet of Clay* by old master of "Discworld" satire Terry Pratchett; Pat Murphy's all-American werewolf saga *Nadya*; and Michael Williams's fine jaunt through realms of poesy, *Arcady*.

Now, on to horror and the darker forms of fantasy. Though Edward Bryant is the specialist here, I also managed to read some outstanding contributions to the field. Former boy wonder Clive Barker brings a new grace and wisdom to his special mythology in his best novel yet, *Sacrament*. Michael Cadnum brings a tough, yet eloquent new feeling to the contemporary vampire novel in *The Judas Glass*, and Todd Grimson introduces vampirism to Southern California's Blank Generation in *Stainless*, while Brian Stableford's *The Hunger and Ecstasy of Vampires* goes further back for a witty mingling of horror with philosophical speculation, late 19th-century scientific fiction, and detective story (featuring a stellar cast).

In first novels, I already mentioned the standout, Sage Walker's *Whiteout*. Another impressive newcomer to SF is Raphael Carter, who introduces



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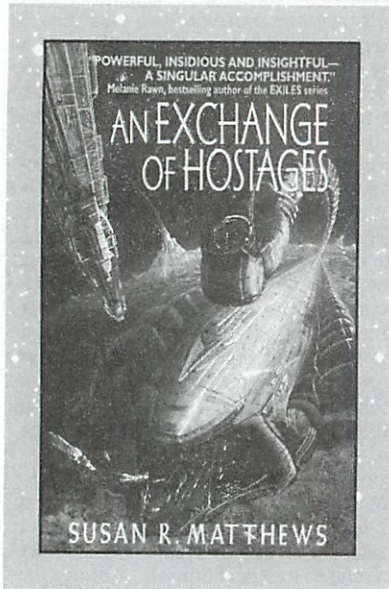
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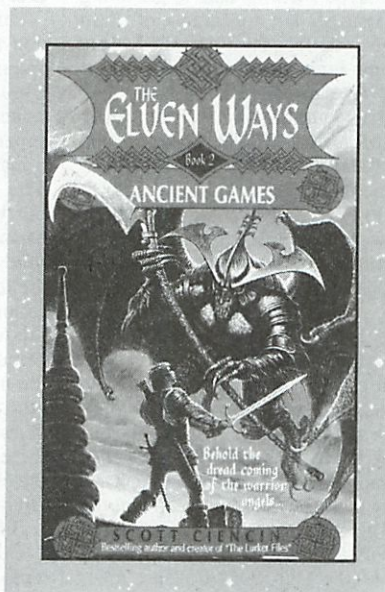
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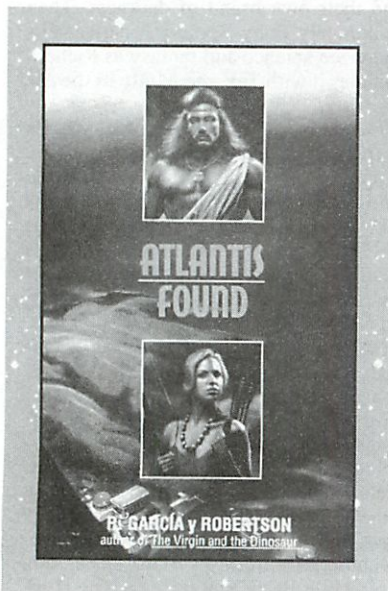
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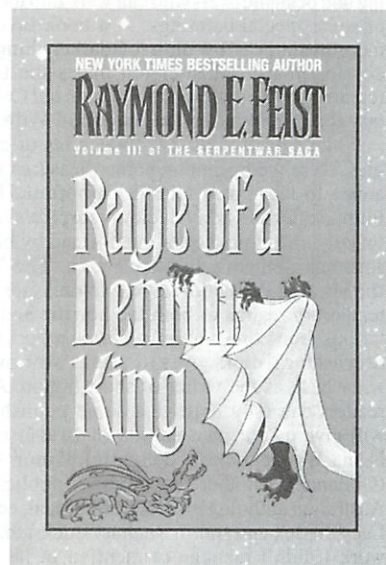
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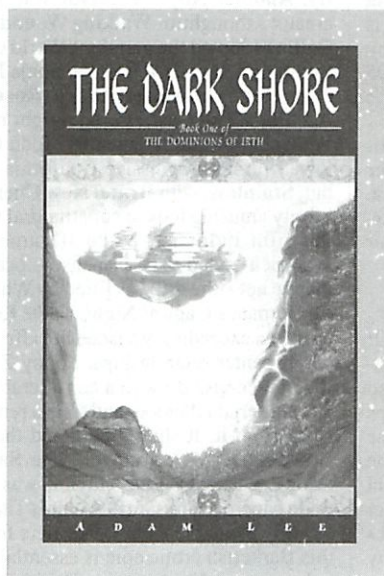
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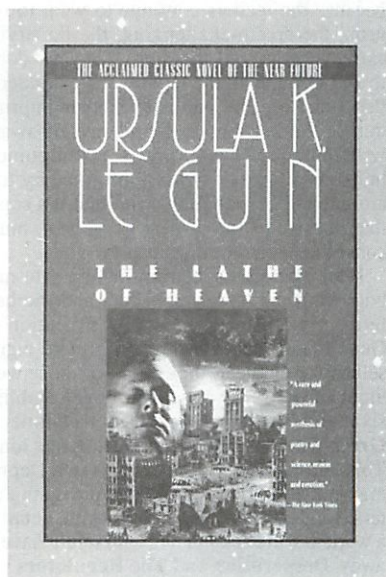
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## 1996 Recommended Reading

grand questions about humanity and godhead into the dystopian future America of **The Fortunate Fall**. As for fantasy debuts: **Top Dog** by Jerry Jay Carroll presents the unlikely but cleverly comic meeting of a shape-changed New York executive (now a very large canine) and a Tolkienesque fantasy realm. Michael King's **Lorien Lost** is a charming tale of an introvert who can walk into the worlds of some special paintings — a book saved from mere quaintness by hints of darker things. And cosmopolitan sophistication meets the timeless realms of both southwestern US and old Celtic fantasy for Terri Windling's **The Wood Wife**.

While I dealt with few collections or anthologies, there were some genuine pleasures in these areas. In the linked tales of **Ribofunk**, Paul Di Filippo offers an array of clever surprises in a continually changing world transformed by bio-tech. Jonathan Lethem's first collection, **The Wall of the Sky, the Wall of the Eye**, explores mostly contemporary realms of both the horrific and the hilarious (sometimes together in one work). **Bible Stories for Adults** gives us James Morrow at his witty best, as the writer of short fiction. And US readers can only hope that some publisher here will give us our own edition of British fantasist Diana Wynne Jones's delightful **Minor Arcana** (Gollancz). Another top overseas publication is Australian anthology **She's Fantastical**, edited by Lucy Sussex and Judith Raphael Buckrich, a 1995 work I didn't manage to mention in last year's round-up.

Last but far from least, two charming, intelligent novellas: the SF of Connie Willis's **Bellwether** and the fantasy of Peter Beagle's **Unicorn Sonata**. For shorter fiction, I'll leave comments to the experts.

—Faren Miller

## 1996: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

by Edward Bryant

Okay, okay, so horror is still dead. Or dying. Or so far extinct the literary bones are being excavated only by paleo grad students. So why's so much good material still being published? Perhaps because the readers continue to want to read the grim, the dream-challenging, the horrifying, the extreme, the crazed, the weird. They just don't want to sort through all the tepid word-extender fodder that filled out the publisher horror imprint lines during the late boom. I find myself swayed by writer/editor Steve Rasnic Tem's argument that horror is a form of writing informed by tone and attitude rather than plot — and that it's something that doesn't fit into a neat genre slot, much less constitute a marketing category.

1996 offered a spectrum of first-rate material, both from the trade publishers and the healthily fermenting specialty press. Let's mention the Big Guns first. Stephen King had a mere eight best-sellers for the year, though six of those were volumes of the same serialized novel. Published in six monthly original paperback installments, **The Green Mile** was my favorite King in a long time. This tale of extraordinary events in a Depression-era Southern prison hinged on intriguing characters, solid storytelling, and first-rate detail. It was a work to win back readers who might have drifted away. **Desperation** and **The Regulators** were interlocked novels taking parallax views of the same story. The latter was published as the joke-conceit of being a decade-lost manuscript by King's deceased pseudonym, Richard Bachman. Each novel, I've discovered, has its enthusiastic fans. Each tale deals with an evil force dwelling deep in an isolated Nevada mine, and doing its level best to defeat humanity and Take Over Everything. The King

book was set in Nevada; the Bachman book imported the evil to the Midwest. I far preferred the **Desperation** version, though **The Regulators** had its edgy moments.

Peter Straub's **The Hellfire Club** was a powerful literary novel about serial killing and general craziness among the eastern seaboard upscale suburban set. Strong story; strong writing. **Sacrament** extended Clive Barker's range into a solid mainstream novel with sufficient shocking elements of the weird to satisfy his established fans even as he appeals to a wider audience. Dean Koontz's **Ticktock** was published only in Great Britain; the American edition will appear here in 1997 as a paperback original. This is an atypically wacky supernatural fantasy — Koontz being funny, and doing it well. **Intensity**, a suspense thriller about a crazed killer, was more what his readers have grown to expect. Joyce Carol Oates, never a stranger to the world of the modern gothic, gave us **First Love**, a slim but exquisitely crafted account of grotesque goings-on in upstate New York.

Less famous but equally successful writers offering up novels this year included Marc Laidlaw with **The 37th Mandala**, a taut, somewhat Lovecraftian tale of cosmic terror. Brian Hodge's **Prototype** was one of the final Dell Abyss acquisitions. Essentially SF, it could pass for horror easily. Another Abyss survivor was Robert Devereaux's thoughtful **Walking Wounded**. Nancy A. Collins adopted the gaming "World of Darkness" to supply a venue for her own Sonja Blue vampire character in **A Dozen Black Roses**. Jonathan Aycliffe's **The Lost** offered a tight new angle on Wallachian vampire legendry. Todd Grimson followed up his impressive California vampire debut, **Stainless**, with **Brand New Cherry Flavor**, a grimly amusing look at supernatural vengeance in the film industry. When it came to Cornell Woolrich-styled dark suspense — perhaps SF, but maybe not — the bill was filled by White Wolf with Ed Gorman's **Cage of Night**. Kathe Koja published **Kink**, an exceedingly shaded but affecting glimpse of off-center relationships. Poppy Z. Brite's **Exquisite Corpse** drew in a considerable amount of current serial killer lore and spun a remarkable love story from it. It should be noted that this year's Bram Stoker Award novel, **The Safety of Unknown Cities** by Lucy Taylor, was reprinted in trade paperback by Great Britain's Titan/Eros Plus. Readily available from US dealers for about \$14, this Barkerish erotic epic is essential reading.

In a much lighter vein, David Prill's second novel, **Serial Killer Days**, dissected a small Midwestern town whose whole tourist industry is based upon the depredations of a resident murderer. Neil Gaiman's **Neverwhere**, based on his script for a BBC miniseries, has yet to be published in the US. It will be, so don't miss this seriocomic dark fantasy epic of the magical world hidden beneath London. Bradley Denton took a sharp left turn from his last novel, **Blackburn**, and wrote a wonderful Thorne Smithian fantasy about love and relationships in Texas in **Lunatics**. Dell Stone, Jr.'s **Dead Heat** is a debut novel of zombies, vaguely Lovecraftian myth, and nonstop action.

Original anthologies continued to be a primary source of good, dark fiction. John Pelan edited **Darkside: Horror for the Next Millennium** for Darkside Press, stories with a consistently high standard of writing. Edward Kramer and Peter Crowther's **Dante's Disciples** took the appropriate mythos and found plenty of good material. Kramer and Neil Gaiman's **Sandman: the Book of Dreams** set a variety of writers in Gaiman's graphic novel universe; in "Stoppt-Clock Yard," contributor Susanna Clarke accomplished her assignment particularly well. In Jeff Gelb and

Michael Garrett's sexual horror anthology **Fear the Fever: Hot Blood 8**, Patricia D. Cacek's gynecological nightmare, "Metalica," was an absolute stand-out. Among Ellen Datlow's editing of a variety of anthologies, I particularly enjoyed **Twist of the Tale**, a compilation that far exceeded simply being a theme book of cat horror stories. In **High Fantastic**, editor Steve Rasnic Tem collected both new and reprinted material by a wide range of writers who have lived or worked in Colorado. Dan Simmons, Joanne Greenberg, and Reginald McKnight represent only a small portion of the first-rate ingredients in this huge compilation. There is a good amount of fine dark writing in **David Copperfield's Beyond Imagination**, edited by Copperfield and Janet Berliner. Edited by Norman Partridge, **It Came From the Drive-in** is a theme anthology dealing with the multiple marvelous avatars of B-movies; "Underground Atlanta" by Gregory Nicoll really ought to be a Roger Corman low-budget epic. **The New Lovecraft Circle** edited by Robert M. Price is good, solid Cthulhu-oid fiction, and more evidence that the publisher, Fedogan & Bremer, is ever more a superior version of Arkham House in its classic period. **Gahan Wilson's The Ultimate Haunted House** provides a variety of both traditional and innovative contemporary approaches to the convention of the haunted house. **Darkside**, edited by John Pelan, along with **Dark Terrors 2**, edited by Stephen Jones and David Sutton, represents the apex of original anthologies for the year. It's only available in a British hardback edition, but is amply worth the time, trouble, and cash it takes to track it down.

The old standbys of series reprint anthologies are available like clockwork, and they're worth every penny of the price: **The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror: Ninth Annual Collection**, edited by Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling, and **The Mammoth Book of Best New Horror Volume Seven**, edited by Stephen Jones. These two large volumes may not collect all that's interesting, but they're a first-rate, comprehensive beginning.

Thomas Ligotti's **The Nightmare Factory** functions as a healthily bulky "selected stories," drawing from previous collections and adding new and uncollected works. Specialty press Silver Salamander brought out three first-rate single-author collections: **With Wounds Still Wet** by Wayne Allen Sallee, **Shadow Dreams** by Elizabeth Massie, and **The Convulsion Factory** by Brian Hodge. Subterranean Press printed a lavishly designed Norman Partridge collection titled **Bad Intentions**. Mojo Press issued a huge trade paperback compilation of Joe R. Lansdale's fiction in graphic form, called **Atomic Chili**. Gauntlet published the nicely eclectic **Midnight Promises** by Richard Chizmar. CD Books compiled a nasty-edged collection of Ray Garton's short work titled **Pieces of Hate**. A long-anticipated event was the publication of S.P. Somtow's supernatural story collection, **The Pavilion of Frozen Women**, in a British hardback edition. Finally available in the US, praise be to St. Martin's, is Jonathan Carroll's collected stories, **The Panic Hand**.

Outside of fiction, David J. Skal continued his run as one of pop culture/horror's most accomplished commentators with **V Is For Vampire**, an entertaining once-over of the sub-genre, but particularly scrutinizing cross-connections with gay content. In the large-format collection, **Neurotica: The Darkest Art of J.K. Potter**, the artist displays his best collection of twisted photographic weirdness. It effectively both disturbs and challenges the observer. S.T. Joshi's **H.P. Lovecraft: A Life from Necronomicon Press** is certainly the most comprehensive and serious-minded literary view



of the Old Gentleman yet. The Donald Grant edition of **Time & Chance** is an equally impressive autobiography by L. Sprague DeCamp. For real life horror in the arts, one should read the White Wolf edition of Harlan Ellison's **The City on the Edge of Forever**, a compilation of the original *Star Trek* script, along with the author's extended account of the horrendous machinations the script passed through on its way to production.

It should also be noted that a growing body of interesting material is appearing in the erotica field, thanks in part to Richard Kasak and Masquerade Books. Editors Thomas A. Roche, David Aaron Clarke, and Nancy Kilpatrick continue to compile such diverse anthologies as **Noirotica** and **Seductive Spectres**. Kilpatrick also writes erotic dark fantasy novels under a variety of pseudonyms.

There's a lot more interesting material I could note – if I had either the space to list it or the brain to recall it. I'll offer a word of encouragement to readers looking for the same sort of work I like and note here: don't get lazy and simply check for horror icons on book spines or dancing skeletons on the jacket. Invest a bit more time and energy to browse mysteries and mainstream, westerns and erotica, romance and god-knows-what-else. Horror is indeed there – but much of it is hiding. Lurking.

– Edward Bryant

## RECOMMENDED READING

by Shira Daemon

I would love to have some godmother (fairy, straight, beatified, programmed, or otherwise) wave a wand over a pile of the year's books and have all the best ones pop up and dance, but it never seems to work that way. Here are the dancing ones I managed to get my hands on.

As it did on most everybody's lists in 1995, **Fairyland** by Paul J. McAuley comes to the fore as the book most difficult to synopsise because it is just so darn good. With its extensive use of nanotech, melding of fantastic motifs, and good hard SF, as well as McAuley's exquisite command of imagery, it's one of those yardsticks against which others can be measured.

This year also gave us several novels where the characters were involved in non-mainstream sexual practices. In the forefront of "gay themed" books was Rachel Pollack's superb **Godmother Night**, a striking contemporary adult fairy tale which has as its linchpin the undying love two lesbians feel for each other, and how their relationship is personally influenced by the angel of death. Candace Jane Dorsey's **Black Wine** is technically a 1997 book, but it should be in stores by the time this list is in your hand. Dorsey's uncompromising novel is rife with difficult topics tackled head-on. She skillfully deals with clitoridectomies, rapes, amputations, lesbian passions, orgies of heterosexual lovemaking, violent death, parental dismay, and the pros and cons of political revolution in a novel that is not only beautifully written, but which I found nearly impossible to put down. Melissa Scott, who uses the genre to remind us that in contemporary America homosexuals are still considered the alien other, has the universe as her backdrop in **Night Sky Mine** – a book with a cool "wildnet" where interesting programs breed and munch on each other. Set during the Westward Expansion in America, **Nadya** by Pat Murphy has one of the year's best alternative sexuality affairs between a free-loving werewolf and her uptight lesbian lover. Lynn Flewelling's first novel, **Luck in the Shadows**, has that Fantasy-of-Manners feel to it – with the two male main characters dancing around their sexual tensions while enjoying an exciting, sybaritic life as royal magicians, rogues, and thieves.

Grand masters in the field added exemplary books to already outstanding repertoires. Damon Knight produced **Humpty Dumpty: An Oval** a surrealist and bizarre story that illuminates both the mundanity and the magnificence of the human condition while avoiding the limitations of a linear plot. Peter S. Beagle gave us **The Unicorn Sonata**, a lyrical work, richly illustrated, which mixes contemporary settings with a mystical and glorious mythic world. Patricia A. McKillip's **Winter Rose** is a beautiful book about freedom and love, light and shadow. McKillip's prose is, as always, astonishing and wonderful, and her heroines are uncompromising and glorious.

Religion took its usual slings and arrows. While in the interests of fairness I have always avoided reviewing my friend James Morrow's works, I see no problem in hopping onto other's bandwagons, pointing out that the second novel in his God trilogy, **Blameless in Abaddon**, and his collection **Bible Stories for Adults**, help prove yet again that the field can encompass grownup, intelligent, and satirical writing. Graham Joyce's **Requiem** takes the enigma that is modern Jerusalem, adds a pinch of the Dead Sea Scrolls, feminism, and messianic complexes, and comes up with an inspiring and exotic contemporary work. Newcomer Katya Reimann's **Wind From a Foreign Sky**, about two sisters who rise from hedge witches to become the incarnations of a pair of twin Goddesses, makes excellent use of a fantastic religion, sororal bondings, and magical imagination. Sheri S. Tepper's **Gibbon's Decline and Fall** climbs most of Tepper's soapboxes about the Catholic church and misogyny without sacrificing the exigencies of character, plot, and pacing.

Lots of heroes and heroines found themselves this year. At the top of this list is Bradley Denton's **Lunatics** – a fast, funny, and ferociously truthful book about a man in love with the goddess of the moon, and his loyal and loopy pals. Terri Windling, best known as an editor and artist, has written her first adult novel, **The Wood Wife**, an upbeat work about a fortyish divorced writer who meets a crew of mythological desert creatures, finds new love, and rediscovers a sense of herself as a poet – and as an individual.

For my entry into the Truly Great Aliens of the Year category I put forth the ones in Sarah Zettel's exciting first novel, **Reclamation**. Zettel's Shessels are sentient beings with eight pairs of legs, primary and secondary hands, four eyes, golden scales, a lipless mouth and a snout. The parent Shessel remains female until the breeding of children is done with, and then becomes male, still keeping all of the children with her/him and living in a nearly psychically symbiotic relationship with them. Also intriguing are the many alien and otherwise characters in Phyllis Gotlieb's collection **Blue Apes**, who must look for their souls within the bellies of alien beasts, as well as in the mirror.

With the centenary of Bram Stoker's **Dracula** there was a plethora of vampire novels. My vote is to reread the original. What I will highly recommend in horror is Robert Holdstock's **Unknown Regions**, originally published in England under the title **The Fetch**. This novel is an intense blend of magic, myth, and the worst nightmares of childhood. Holdstock has a flair for making the dark depths of the subconscious a vivid place – full of moldering treasures and vaporous nymphly delights and, as always, he has done an impressive job blending reality, history, and the supernatural into a potent work of powerful fiction. Also notable is Lisa Tuttle's **The Pillow Friend**. This odd and disturbing novel, with its fumbling and passionate intensities, conveys and exemplifies a longing for pure spiritual congress, while showing the

pleasures and pitfalls that occur when the need for communication is sublimated, and finally overwhelmed, by the darker spirits of erotic fantasies.

In historical fiction there were three books that caught my eye: Judith Tarr's **King and Goddess**, about Queen Hatshepsut who went and had herself crowned King of the Two Lands four thousand years ago in Egypt; **Goa – Blood of the Goddess** I Kara Dalkey's tale of alchemy, betrayal, magic, and religion in India in the 1500s; and Susan Shwartz's **Shards of Empire**, about a Christian boy and a Jewish girl finding love, war, and some serious pagan gods in Tenth-Century Byzantium.

Lastly, I want to recommend two books by genre authors out in the mainstream. In **Let's Put the Future Behind Us**, Jack Womack's Russia rivals most fantasists' idea of Hell, filled with bizarrely believable characters, and a schizoid country that is at once majestic, historic, pornographic, and paupered. Karen Joy Fowler's **The Sweetheart Season** is a rambling first-person account ostensibly about many disparate things: baseball, breakfast cereal, the science of cooking, female friendships, and the politics of patriotism and Gandhi, but what Fowler mainly demonstrates is how finely expressive writing can expose surprising truths about character, false innocence, and society.

– Shira Daemon

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

by Carolyn Cushman

Several SF novels stand out for me this year. Lois McMaster Bujold had fun with the young Miles Vorkosigan in **Cetaganda**, and then gave the older Miles a much more serious – and satisfying – challenge, not to mention a major career change, in **Memory**. Elizabeth Moon made her first-contact novel **Remnant Population** particularly interesting by giving it a feisty, elderly, lower-class woman as protagonist. David Feintuch wrapped up the war against the alien goldfish in **Fisherman's Hope**, then concluded the "Seafort" series by revisiting the character many years later, sans goldfish, in **Voices of Hope**, a taut action-adventure that almost stands alone as it tells the gripping story of a new generation loose in the ruins below New York City. C.J. Cherryh's **Cloud's Rider**, sequel to **Rider at the Gate**, is a thrilling tale of frontier survival on a planet where the predators are telepathic, and uncomfortably intelligent. Jane Emerson's **City of Diamond** is a richly complex piece of sociological SF, a sweeping tale of the inhabitants of two warring, theocratic city-ships in the far future. Also on the epic scale, and most impressive of all, is Tad Williams's **Otherland: City of Golden Shadow**, a big, colorful novel full of real-world conspiracy and virtual reality wonders, and characters worth caring about. Unfortunately, it's also only the first in a series. (You can't escape them these days.)

Some SF novels are worth recommending as just plain fun. James White returned with a welcome new "Sector General" novel, **The Galactic Gourmet**, a hilarious account of what happens when an mammoth master chef decides to make hospital food palatable, regardless of the patient's species. This year I became hooked on a new guilty pleasure, J.D. Robb's futuristic "romantic suspense" series featuring detective Eve Dallas and her fantastically wealthy boyfriend Rourke; this year, the two get married (despite a few corpses in the way) in **Immortal in Death**, and solve a space-station murder while honeymooning in **Rapture in Death**. Poor SF, but great entertainment.

There were fewer clear standouts in fantasy this year, but there were several unusual standalones

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# 1996 Recommended Reading List

## Novels - Science Fiction

**Excession**, Iain M. Banks (Orbit; Bantam Spectra)  
**Voyage**, Stephen Baxter (HarperCollins Voyager; HarperPrism)  
**Pirates of the Universe**, Terry Bisson (Tor)  
**Cetaganda**, Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)  
**Memory**, Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)  
**Children of the Mind**, Orson Scott Card (Tor)  
**Inheritor**, C.J. Cherryh (DAW)  
**Distress**, Greg Egan (Millennium)  
**Idoru**, William Gibson (Putnam)  
**River of Dust**, Alexander Jablovkov (Morrow AvoNova)  
**Humpty Dumpty: An Oval**, Damon Knight (Tor)  
**Beggars Ride**, Nancy Kress (Tor)  
**Oaths and Miracles**, Nancy Kress (Forge)  
**Fairyland**, Paul J. McAuley (Gollancz 1995; Avon)  
**Remnant Population**, Elizabeth Moon (Baen)

**The Ringworld Throne**, Larry Niven (Del Rey)  
**The Other End of Time**, Frederik Pohl (Tor)  
**Blue Mars**, Kim Stanley Robinson (HarperCollins Voyager; Bantam Spectra)  
**Night Sky Mine**, Melissa Scott (Tor)  
**Endymion**, Dan Simmons (Bantam Spectra)  
**The Tranquillity Alternative**, Allen Steele (Ace)  
**Holy Fire**, Bruce Sterling (Orion; Bantam Spectra)  
**Gibbon's Decline and Fall**, Sheri S. Tepper (Bantam Spectra)  
**Night Lamp**, Jack Vance (Underwood Books; Tor)  
**Dreamfall**, Joan D. Vinge (Warner Aspect)  
**Otherland: City of Golden Shadow**, Tad Williams (DAW)  
**Exodus from the Long Sun**, Gene Wolfe (Hodder & Stoughton; Tor)

## Novels - Fantasy

**The Dragon and the Unicorn**, A.A. Attanasio (Hodder & Stoughton 1994; HarperPrism)  
**One for the Morning Glory**, John Barnes (Tor)  
**Lunatics**, Bradley Denton (St. Martin's)  
**Blood of the Fold**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)  
**Attila's Treasure**, Stephan Grundy (Michael Joseph; Bantam Spectra)  
**Walking the Labyrinth**, Lisa Goldstein (Tor)  
**Mother of Winter**, Barbara Hambly (Del Rey)  
**Royal Assassin**, Robin Hobb (HarperCollins Voyager; Bantam Spectra)  
**Ancient Echoes**, Robert Holdstock (HarperCollins Voyager; Roc)  
**A Crown of Swords**, Robert Jordan (Tor)  
**Firebird**, Mercedes Lackey (Baen)  
**Byzantium**, Stephen Lawhead (HarperCollins Voyager; HarperPrism/Zondervan)  
**A Game of Thrones**, George R.R. Martin (HarperCollins Voyager;

Bantam Spectra)  
**Winter Rose**, Patricia A. McKillip (Ace)  
**Blameless in Abaddon**, James Morrow (Harcourt Brace)  
**Nadya**, Pat Murphy (Tor)  
**Sabriel**, Garth Nix (HarperCollins Australia 1995; HarperCollins)  
**Godmother Night**, Rachel Pollack (St. Martin's)  
**Feet of Clay**, Terry Pratchett (Gollancz)  
**The Prestige**, Christopher Priest (Touchstone UK 1995; St. Martin's)  
**The Golden Compass**, Philip Pullman (Knopf); as **His Dark Materials 1: Northern Lights** (Scholastic UK 1995)  
**The Golden Key**, Melanie Rawn, Jennifer Roberson, & Kate Elliott (DAW)  
**Sea Without a Shore**, Sean Russell (DAW)  
**Fair Peril**, Nancy Springer (Avon)  
**Clouds End**, Sean Stewart (Ace)  
**Arcady**, Michael Williams (Roc)  
**The Wood Wife**, Terri Windling (Tor)

## Novels - Horror/Dark Fantasy

**The Lost**, Jonathan Aycliffe (HarperPrism)  
**Sacrament**, Clive Barker (HarperCollins)  
**The Judas Glass**, Michael Cadnum (Carroll & Graf)  
**Stainless**, Todd Grimson (HarperPrism)  
**Unknown Regions**, Robert Holdstock (Roc); as **The Fetch** (Orbit UK 1991)

**Requiem**, Graham Joyce (Michael Joseph; Creed 1995; Tor)  
**Desperation**, Stephen King (Hodder & Stoughton; Viking)  
**The 37th Mandala**, Marc Laidlaw (St. Martin's)  
**Servant of the Bones**, Anne Rice (Knopf)  
**The Hunger and Ecstasy of Vampires**, Brian Stableford (Ziesing)  
**The Pillow Friend**, Lisa Tuttle (White Wolf)

## First Novels

**The Jigsaw Woman**, Kim Antieau (Roc)  
**Top Dog**, Jerry Jay Carroll (Ace)  
**The Fortunate Fall**, Raphael Carter (Tor)  
**Mainline**, Deborah Christian (Tor)  
**Luck in the Shadows**, Lynn Flewelling (Bantam Spectra)  
**Circle of One**, Eric James Fullilove (Bantam Spectra)  
**Celestial Matters**, Richard Garfinkle (Tor)  
**The Nature of Smoke**, Anne Harris (Tor)  
**Commencement**, Roby James (Del Rey)  
**Waterborn**, J. Gregory Keyes (Del Rey)

**Lorien Lost**, Michael King (St. Martin's)  
**Mordred's Curse**, Ian McDowell (AvoNova)  
**First Dawn**, Mike Moscoe (Ace)  
**Memory Seed**, Stephen Palmer (Orbit)  
**Wind from a Foreign Sky**, Katya Reimann (Tor)  
**Mage Heart**, Jane Routley (Morrow AvoNova)  
**Whiteout**, Sage Walker (Tor)  
**Looking for the Mahdi**, N. Lee Wood (Ace)  
**Shade and Shadow**, Francine G. Woodbury (Del Rey)  
**Reclamation**, Sarah Zettel (Warner Aspect)

## Collections

**All One Universe**, Poul Anderson (Tor)  
**At the City Limits of Fate**, Michael Bishop (Edgewood)  
**Quicker than the Eye**, Ray Bradbury (Avon)  
**Dreamweaver's Dilemma**, Lois McMaster Bujold (NESFA)  
**The Panic Hand**, Jonathan Carroll (HarperCollins UK 1995; St. Martin's)  
**Ribofunk**, Paul Di Filippo (Four Walls, Eight Windows)  
**Blue Apes**, Phyllis Gotlieb (Tesseract)

**None So Blind**, Joe Haldeman (Morrow/AvoNova)  
**Minor Arcana**, Diana Wynne Jones (Gollancz)  
**Unlocking the Air and Other Stories**, Ursula K. Le Guin (HarperCollins)  
**The Wall of the Sky, the Wall of the Eye**, Jonathan Lethem (Harcourt Brace)  
**The Nightmare Factory**, Thomas Ligotti (Robinson; Carroll & Graf)  
**Before...12:01...and After**, Richard Lupoff (Fedogan & Bremer)



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**The Invisible Country**, Paul J. McAuley (Gollancz)  
**Standard Candles**, Jack McDevitt (Tachyon)  
**Bible Stories for Adults**, James Morrow (Harcourt Brace)  
**Synthesis and Other Virtual Realities**, Mary Rosenblum (Arkham House)

**Over the River & Through the Woods**, Clifford D. Simak (Tachyon)  
**The Pavilion of Frozen Women**, S.P. Somtow (Gollancz)  
**Schismatrix Plus**, Bruce Sterling (Ace)  
**Killdozer!**, Theodore Sturgeon (North Atlantic Books)  
**Microcosmic God**, Theodore Sturgeon (North Atlantic Books)

## Anthologies

**War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches**, Kevin J. Anderson, ed. (Bantam Spectra)  
**Off Limits: Tales of Alien Sex**, Ellen Datlow, ed. (St. Martin's)  
**The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror: Ninth Annual Collection**, Ellen Datlow & Terri Windling, eds. (St. Martin's)  
**The Year's Best Science Fiction: Thirteenth Annual Collection**, Gardner Dozois, ed. (St. Martin's)  
**Year's Best SF**, David G. Hartwell, ed. (HarperPrism)  
**Visions of Wonder**, David G. Hartwell & Milton T. Wolf, eds. (Tor)

**Starlight 1**, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, ed. (Tor)  
**The Mammoth Book of Best New Horror Volume Seven**, Stephen Jones, ed. (Robinson/Raven; Carroll & Graf)  
**Intersections: the Sycamore Hill Anthology**, John Kessel, Mark L. Van Name, & Richard Butner, eds. (Tor)  
**American Gothic Tales**, Joyce Carol Oates, ed. (Penguin/Plume)  
**Darkside: Horror for the Next Millennium**, John Pelan, ed. (Darkside Press)  
**Nebula Awards 30**, Pamela Sargent, ed. (Harcourt Brace)

## Non-Fiction

**Look at the Evidence**, John Clute (Serconia Press)  
**Dreams and Wishes**, Susan Cooper (Simon & Schuster/McElderry)  
**Time & Chance**, L. Sprague de Camp (Grant)  
**The Tough Guide to Fantasyland**, Diana Wynne Jones (Gollancz/Vista)  
**H.P. Lovecraft: A Life**, S.T. Joshi (Necronomicon Press)  
**St. James Guide to Fantasy Writers**, David Pringle, ed. (St. James Press)  
**Jules Verne: An Exploratory Biography**, Herbert R. Lottman (St. Martin's)  
**Shadows of the Future: H.G. Wells, Science Fiction, and Prophecy**, Patrick Parrinder

(Liverpool University; Syracuse University)  
**Ash of Stars: On the Writing of Samuel R. Delany**, James Sallis, ed. (University Press of Mississippi)  
**Welcome to the Revolution: the Literary Legacy of Mack Reynolds**, Curtis C. Smith (Borgo Press)  
**Outside the Human Aquarium: Masters of Science Fiction, 2nd Edition**, Brian Stableford (Borgo Press)  
**James Blish: Author Mirabilis**, Phil Stephensen-Payne (Galactic Central)  
**The Jules Verne Encyclopedia**, Brian Taves & Stephen Michaluk, Jr., et al. (Scarecrow Press)

## Art

**Spectrum III: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art**, Cathy Burnett, Arnie Fenner, & Jim Loehr, eds. (Underwood Books)  
**Kinuko Y. Craft, Cupid and Psyche**, M. Charlotte Craft (Morrow)  
**H.R. Giger, H.R. Giger's Film Design** (Morpheus International)  
**Edward Gorey, The World of Edward Gorey**, Clifford Ross & Karen Wilkin (Abrams)  
**Alan Lee, The Wanderings of Odysseus**, Rosemary Sutcliff (Delacorte)  
**Michael Parkes, Michael Parkes**, John Russell Taylor (Steltman)

**Maxfield Parrish, Maxfield Parrish: A Retrospective**, Laurence S. Cutler & Judy Goffman Cutler, eds. (Pomegranate)  
**Patti Perret, The Faces of Fantasy** (Tor)  
**J.K. Potter, Neurotica: The Darkest Art of J.K. Potter** (Overlook Press)  
**Ralph Steadman, Animal Farm: 50th Anniversary Edition**, George Orwell (Harcourt Brace)  
**Chris Van Allsburg, A City in Winter**, Mark Helprin (Viking Ariel)

## Novellas

"Saddle Point Dreamtime", Stephen Baxter (*SF Age* 11/96)  
 "The Saddle Point Sequence", Stephen Baxter (*SF Age* 7/96)  
**The Unicorn Sonata**, Peter S. Beagle (Turner)  
 "Immersion", Gregory Benford (*SF Age* 3/96)  
 "Kilroy Was Here", Jack Cady (*F&SF* 7/96)  
 "The Road to Reality", Phillip C. Jennings (*Asimov's* 3/96)  
 "Farthest Horizons", Geoffrey A. Landis (*SF Age* 5/96)  
 "Blood of the Dragon", George R.R. Martin (*Asimov's* 7/96)  
 "The Cost to Be Wise", Maureen F. McHugh (*Starlight* 1)  
 "Verglas", Ian R. MacLeod (*F&SF* 10-11/96)

"Fugue on a Sunken Continent", G. David Nordley (*Analog* 11/96)  
 "Abandon in Place", Jerry Oltion (*F&SF* 12/96)  
 "Chrysalis", Robert Reed (*Asimov's* 9/96)  
 "Gas Fish", Mary Rosenblum (*Asimov's* 2/96)  
 "The Tree that Grew from the Sky", Robert Silverberg (*SF Age* 9/96)  
 "Human History", Lucius Shepard (*Asimov's* 4/96)  
 "Primrose and Thorn", Bud Sparhawk (*Analog* 5/96)  
 "The Littlest Jackal", Bruce Sterling (*F&SF* 3/96)  
**Bellwether**, Connie Willis (Bantam Spectra)

## Novelettes

"The Dog's Story", Eleanor Arnason (*Asimov's* 5/96)  
 "Age of Aquarius", William Barton (*Asimov's* 5/96)  
 "The Edge of the Universe", Terry Bisson (*Asimov's* 8/96)  
 "In the Upper Room", Terry Bisson (*Playboy* 4/96)  
 "Amends", John Brunner (*Asimov's* 3/96)  
 "The Longer Voyage", Michael Cassutt (*F&SF* 7/96)  
 "Beauty and the Opéra or the Phantom Beast", Suzy McKee Charnas (*Asimov's* 3/96)  
 "The Spade of Reason", Jim Cowan (*Century* #4, 1-2/96)

"A Dry, Quiet War", Tony Daniel (*Asimov's* 6/96)  
 "Never Seen by Waking Eyes", Stephen Dedman (*F&SF* 8/96)  
 "Bettina's Bet", L. Timmel Duchamp (*Asimov's* 1/96)  
 "Lisa and the Crazy Water Man", Andy Duncan (*Starlight* 1)  
 "The Weighing of Ayre", Gregory Feeley (*Starlight* 1)  
 "Out of the Mouths", Sheila Finch (*F&SF* 12/96)  
 "Advance Notice", Kathleen Ann Goonan (*Asimov's* 4/96)  
 "Blowup", Astrid Julian (*F&SF* 5/96)  
 "The First Law of Thermodynamics", James Patrick Kelly



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### (Intersections)

- "The Flowers of Aulit Prison", Nancy Kress (*Asimov's* 10-11/96)  
 "Mountain Ways", Ursula K. Le Guin (*Asimov's* 8/96)  
 "Martian Valkyrie", G. David Nordley (*Analog* 1/96)  
**Where They Are Hid**, Tim Powers (Charnel House)  
 "The Land of Nod", Mike Resnick (*Asimov's* 6/96)  
 "Spirey and the Queen", Alastair Reynolds (*Interzone* 6/96)  
 "Cloud Cuckoo", Charles Sheffield (*Asimov's* 7/96)  
 "The Peacock Throne", Charles Sheffield (*Asimov's* 2/96)  
 "Diana of the Hundred Breasts", Robert Silverberg  
 (*Realms of Fantasy* 2/96)  
 "Kronos", Allen Steele (*SF Age* 1/96)

## Novelettes continued

- "Bicycle Repairman", Bruce Sterling  
 (*Intersections; Asimov's* 10-11/96)  
 "Radio Waves", Michael Swanwick (*Omni* Winter '95)  
 "The Three Labors of Bubba", Bud Webster (*Analog* 6/96)  
 "Dr. Tilmann's Consultant: A Scientific Romance", Cherry Wilder  
 (*Omni Online* 11/96)  
 "Nonstop to Portales", Connie Willis (*The Williamson Effect*)  
 "The Man in the Pepper Mill", Gene Wolfe (*F&SF* 10-11/96)  
 "Try and Kill It", Gene Wolfe (*Asimov's* 10-11/96)  
 "After a Lean Winter" Dave Wolverton (*F&SF* 3/96;  
**War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches**)

## Short Stories

- "The Dying Fall", J. G. Ballard (*Interzone* 4/96)  
 "Columbiad", Stephen Baxter (*SF Age* 5/96)  
 "Prospero One", Stephen Baxter & Simon Bradshaw  
 (*Interzone* 10/96)  
 "The Spacetime Pit", Stephen Baxter & Eric Brown  
 (*Interzone* 5/96)  
 "A Crab Must Try", Barrington J. Bayley (*Interzone* 1/96)  
 "Thirteen Phantasms", James P. Blaylock (*Omni Online* 10/96)  
 "Appointment in Sinai", Ben Bova (*Analog* 6/96)  
 "Gone", John Crowley (*F&SF* 9/96)  
 "The Ichneumon and the Dormeuse", Terry Dowling  
 (*Interzone* 4/96)  
 "Community", Gardner Dozois (*Asimov's* 9/96)  
 "The Bride of Elvis", Kathleen Ann Goonan (*SF Age* 5/96)  
 "Red Sonja and Lessingham in Dreamland", Gwyneth Jones  
 (*Off Limits*)  
 "Breakaway, Backdown", James Patrick Kelly (*Asimov's* 6/96)  
 "Life Edit", Damon Knight (*SF Age* 9/96)  
 "The Spear of the Sun", David Langford (*Interzone* 10/96)  
 "Recording Angel", Ian McDonald (*Interzone* 2/96)
- "Strings", Maureen F. McHugh (*SF Age* 11/96)  
 "On Sequoia Time", Daniel Keys Moran (*Asimov's* 9/96)  
 "The Last Homosexual", Paul Park (*Asimov's* 6/96)  
 "Decency", Robert Reed (*Asimov's* 6/96)  
 "First Tuesday", Robert Reed (*F&SF* 2/96)  
 "Killing the Morrow", Robert Reed (*Starlight* 1)  
 "Invasion", Joanna Russ (*Asimov's* 1/96)  
 "Death Do Us Part", Robert Silverberg (*Omni Online* 12/96)  
 "The House of Mourning", Brian Stableford (*Off Limits*)  
 "The Dead", Michael Swanwick (*Starlight* 1)  
 "A Silurian Tale", Steven Utley (*Asimov's* 5/96)  
 "A Replant Day Carol", John Vester (*Analog* 12/96)  
 "Tulips from Amsterdam", Ian Watson (*Interzone* 8/96)  
 "Loniemanian", Don Webb (*Interzone* 3/96)  
 "Un-Birthday Boy", James White (*Analog* 2/96)  
 "Forget Luck", Kate Wilhelm (*F&SF* 4/96)  
 "The Soul Selects Her Own Society...", Connie Willis  
 (*Asimov's* 4/96; **War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches**)  
 "Counting Cats in Zanzibar", Gene Wolfe (*Asimov's* 8/96)  
 "Under Pressure", Sarah Zettel (*Analog* 4/96)

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# 1996 Book Summary

Publishers, like clothing manufacturers, always complain how bad business is. This past year, they had more reasons than usual – and more right to do so. Returns were way up, sales were down by quite a bit, and it became almost impossible to sell mass-market originals other than tie-ins. There was also the virtual destruction of the independent distribution system.

The number of books of interest published this year went down by 6% – not surprising, since several publishers cut their SF lines. The only surprise is it didn't go down further. It takes quite a while for publishers to publish what is already in the pipeline, so expect next year's figures to be even lower. There were 1,121 original books, 493 of them novels – not counting YA novels (106) or game- and media-related books.

For the second time in a row, there are fewer original mass market paperbacks than new hardcovers, even if you count tie-ins, novelizations, and young-adult horror. Last year was the first time this happened since we started keeping track. There were only two more original hardcovers than mass-market paperbacks last year; this year the gap has widened to 33. Symptomatically, Tor, at one time a paperback-only company, had only six mass-market paperback originals this year.

The number of new trade paperbacks published is down 14% from 1995, but is still higher than in any previous year. The leading companies are publishing more, not fewer, trade paperbacks. The decline is in the smaller houses and the small press, which is *really* in trouble. We listed 177 publishers of SF books this year, compared to 206 last year. The missing publishers were mostly small presses and individuals doing trade paperbacks. Most discovered there was no way to get them into the distribution system, and how difficult it was to get paid even if you did!

Mass-market paperback reprints were the only category to increase this year. The increase was a minuscule 1%, but it allowed mass-market paperbacks overall to hold on to their proportion of the market (45%). Some customers are still holding out for those paperback reprints, even if costs continue to force paperback prices proportionately higher. Readers who want the latest books, though, are more and more having to shell out for hardcovers, or at least trade paperbacks, as the genre publishers shift their focus away from the traditional mass-market original.

Tor/St. Martin's, the publisher with the most books in the genre for the fourth year in a row, is still the leader in this trend; for 1996, they published only six paperback originals. Hardcover were a whopping 88% of their original books, and mass market paperbacks only 5%; a decade ago, the percentages were reversed. Not all the top publishers are following this trend as sharply, with most still doing from 30 to 48% hardcover originals. Three of the major SF publishers still rely heavily on paperback originals: DAW's originals were only 20% hardcover, while Baen and Putnam/Berkley/Ace's were only 15% hardcover (their trade paperback originals are also at 15%, up from 10% in 1995). The overall percentages for new books from all publishers this year: hardcover 41% (up from 39%), mass market paperbacks 38% (down from 39%), trade paperbacks 22% (down from 23%).

After last year's high, hardcover numbers are down 6%. Mass market paperbacks are also down 6% overall, with paperback originals down 12%. Original mass-market paperbacks (423) are down 35% from the 649 of near-peak year 1991. Trade

## Cumulative Book Survey

	HARDBOUND			TRADE PB		MASS MKT. PB		ALL BOOKS		%NEW
1984	New	270	(+ 7%)	69	( - )	274	(+5%)	613	(+6%)	52%
	Reprint	92	(+15%)	76	(+25%)	395	(+9%)	563	(+12%)	
	Total	362	(+ 9%)	145	(+12%)	669	(+7%)	1176	(+ 8%)	
1985	New	305	(+13%)	78	(+13%)	332	(+21%)	715	(+17%)	54%
	Reprint	84	(-9%)	106	(+39%)	427	(+ 8%)	617	(+10%)	
	Total	389	(+7%)	184	(+27%)	759	(+13%)	1332	(+13%)	
1986	New	338	(+11%)	97	(+24%)	411	(+24%)	846	(+18%)	56%
	Reprint	100	(+19%)	100	(-6%)	456	(+7%)	656	(+6%)	
	Total	438	(+13%)	197	(+ 7%)	867	(+14%)	1502	(+13%)	
1987	New	380	(+12%)	112	(+16%)	534	(+30%)	1026	(+21%)	61%
	Reprint	92	(-8%)	60	(-40%)	497	(+9%)	649	(-1%)	
	Total	472	(+8%)	172	(-12%)	1031	(+19%)	1675	(+12%)	
1988	New	427	(+12%)	106	(-1%)	653	(+22%)	1186	(+16%)	61%
	Reprint	120	(+30%)	69	(+15%)	561	(+13%)	750	(+16%)	
	Total	547	(+16%)	175	(+ 2%)	1214	(+18%)	1936	(+16%)	
1989	New	408	(-4%)	158	(+49%)	572	(-12%)	1138	(-4%)	64%
	Reprint	124	(+3%)	104	(+51%)	418	(-25%)	646	(-14%)	
	Total	532	(-3%)	262	(+50%)	990	(-18%)	1784	(-8%)	
1990	New	361	(-11%)	211	(+33%)	616	(+8%)	1188	(+4%)	63%
	Reprint	144	(+16%)	139	(+34%)	419	(+0%)	702	(+9%)	
	Total	505	(-5%)	350	(+34%)	1035	(+5%)	1890	(+6%)	
1991	New	408	(+12%)	188	(-12%)	649	(+5%)	1246	(+5%)	63%
	Reprint	167	(+14%)	132	(-5%)	445	(+6%)	744	(+6%)	
	Total	575	(+12%)	320	(-9%)	1094	(+5%)	1990	(+5%)	
1992	New	403	(-1%)	198	(+5%)	528	(-19%)	1129	(-9%)	62%
	Reprint	161	(-4%)	145	(+10%)	395	(-11%)	701	(-6%)	
	Total	564	(-2%)	343	(+7%)	923	(-16%)	1830	(-8%)	
1993	New	457	(+13%)	216	(+9%)	500	(-5%)	1173	(+9%)	64%
	Reprint	178	(+11%)	134	(- 8%)	335	(-15%)	647	(-8%)	
	Total	635	(+13%)	350	(+2%)	835	(-10%)	1820	(-1%)	
1994	New	432	(-5%)	223	(+3%)	453	(-9%)	1109	(-5%)	64%
	Reprint	148	(-17%)	116	(-13%)	363	(+8%)	627	(-3%)	
	Total	580	(-9%)	339	(-3%)	816	(-2%)	1736	(-5%)	
1995	New	485	(+12%)	282	(+26%)	483	(+6%)	1250	(+13%)	64%
	Reprint	160	(+8%)	159	(+37%)	388	(+7%)	707	(+13%)	
	Total	645	(+11%)	441	(+30%)	871	(+7%)	1957	(+13%)	
1996	New	456	(-6%)	242	(-14%)	423	(-12%)	1121	(-10%)	61%
	Reprint	147	(-8%)	168	(+6%)	393	(+1%)	708	(-)	
	Total	603	(-6%)	410	(-7%)	816	(-6%)	1829	(-6%)	

paperbacks are down 7% this year, with originals down 14%.

The percentage of new titles is down 3% to 61%. This is good. Paperback originals usually earn out their advances only if reissued, so a 50/50 split would be ideal. Graph #1 shows the publishing history for new and reprint books, showing the trends over a decade. The gap between new books and reprints really took off in the mid-'80s. It's interesting to note that the reprint curve is mostly flat and relatively stable, with numbers almost independent of the yearly trends.

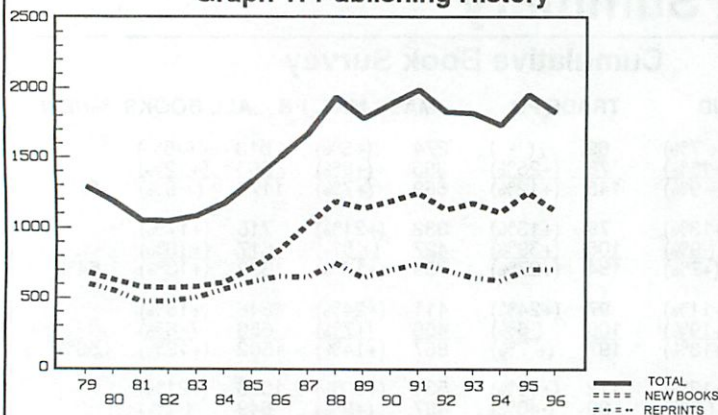
The data used to create these figures is based on our monthly "Books Received" column. Everything counted has been listed there, but we don't count everything listed. British books with American prices (such as the "Doctor Who" books and Severn House titles) are counted with the British books, not here. Associational non-genre books by genre authors aren't counted, nor are the science books, non-fiction titles whose content is principally not genre-related, fiction pamphlets, chapbooks, etc. Therefore, the number at the end of the "Books Received" column does not agree with the total used here. 1995 books not seen until 1996 are included, as are 1997 books seen in 1996. Where there are simultaneous hardcover and trade

paperback editions, we count only the most common or earliest one, usually the trade paperback. If there are two different publishers, we count both. If we only see one state or edition, we note the possible existence of the other(s) in the description. Editions with multiple bindings and states are counted only once, unless there are differences in the text. Completely rewritten books are counted as new, but those with minor revisions or corrections are considered reprints. First American editions are considered new books, even if the British editions have been previously mentioned or listed in the "British Books" column. Omnibus volumes are counted as new, even if all the contents have previously appeared; however, if a book is broken down into multiple volumes, it's considered a reprint unless there is significant additional material.

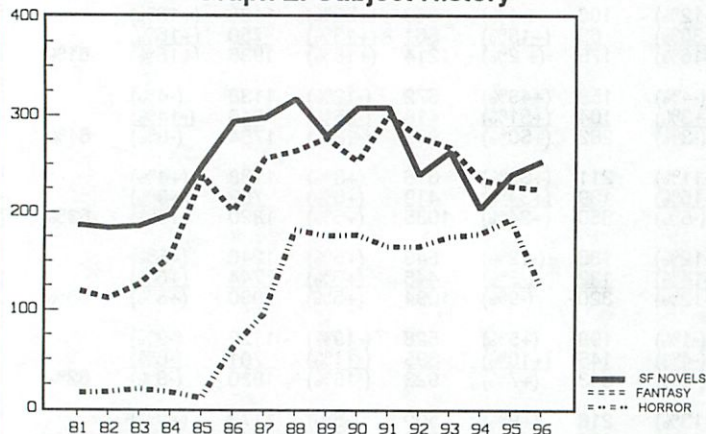
The distinction between paperbacks and trade paperbacks is the most confusing. While publishers and booksellers frequently make the distinction based on the returnability of the product, we make it purely on the question of physical size. Anything larger than a standard mass-market rack size is considered a trade paperback. Some almost-mass-market-size books, particularly those from TSR, are slightly larger as well as being marketed



Graph 1: Publishing History



Graph 2: Subject History



## Total Books Published 1996

PUBLISHER	HC		TP		PB		TOTAL
	New	Repr.	New	Repr.	New	Repr.	
Tor/St. Martin's	103	6	8	29	6	94	246
Putnam/Berk/Ace	13	-	13	7	61	57	151
Random/Ball/Del Rey/Knopf	27	5	8	22	21	35	118
Bantam/D'day/Dell	23	-	10	8	37	35	113
SFBC	12	99	-	1	-	-	112
Penguin USA	21	4	5	18	43	20	111
Simon & Schuster/Pocket	27	-	2	4	50	18	101
HarperCollins US	28	-	11	12	25	21	97
Avon/Morrow	21	3	2	3	28	24	81
Baen	7	-	4	-	36	12	59
DAW	7	-	-	-	28	20	55
White Wolf	9	-	5	6	16	9	45
TSR	10	-	31	3	-	-	44
Warner/Little, Brown	10	-	4	1	16	11	42
Harcourt	15	1	-	11	1	9	37
Zebra/Kensington	1	-	-	-	14	9	24
Barnes & Noble	6	6	-	3	-	-	15
Prima/Proteus	1	-	1	-	13	-	15
Carroll & Graf	2	-	3	1	-	6	12
Easton Press	-	12	-	-	-	-	12
Greenwood	12	-	-	-	-	-	12
Royal Fireworks Press	-	-	11	-	-	-	11
Farrar Straus Giroux	4	-	-	5	-	1	10
Circlet Press	-	-	7	1	-	-	8
Hyperion/Disney Press	3	-	-	2	-	3	8
Holt/Owl	5	-	-	2	-	-	7
Masquerade/Rhinoceros/Kasak	-	-	4	1	1	1	7
Borgo Press	-	-	5	1	-	-	6
Gryphon Books	-	-	6	-	-	-	6
Harlequin/Worldwide	-	-	-	-	6	-	6
Books of Wonder	-	1	-	4	-	-	5
Mojo Press	2	-	3	-	-	-	5
Oxford University Press	2	-	-	3	-	-	5
Tesseract	-	-	-	-	4	1	5
143 misc. publishers	85	10	99	20	17	7	238
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>1829</b>
177 Publishers							

## 1996 Book Summary

as trade books, so we count them as trade paperbacks. Mass-market-sized paperbacks sold as trade books by Penguin are counted as mass-market titles.

The following percentages are based on the 1,121 new titles listed. As usual, our subject breakdown does not quite match our count by publisher. Because we compile the two sections independently, discrepancies usually creep in.

The new titles for 1996 are broken down by subject in Chart #1. SF novels were up significantly to 253 titles, 23% of the total, from 239 (19%) in 1995. Fantasy novels were down somewhat, 20% of the total at 224, a ten-year low, and an apparent trend. Fantasy still has considerable presence on the shelves, thanks mainly to the many fantasy anthologies and role-playing game novelizations on the market. At 122 titles (36 young-adult), horror was down considerably from 1995's 193 titles (84 young-adult). Horror novels were 11% of the 1996 total, down from 15%. The decrease in YA horror is partly due to our change in the age levels we

require for books we list — "novels" that say they're for ages 8-12 keep getting slimmer and slimmer; many are now 10,000 to 20,000 words. We've upped our lower age limit to 10, unless a book is otherwise of particular interest. Still, there appears to be a radical decrease overall in horror; Zebra dropped their horror line in 1996. It was the last of the special horror lines here in the US.

The 253 SF novels include 27 young-adult novels, or 11%, down from 13% last year. There were 22 first novels, 9% of the total, up from 7%. "Sharecropped" books are pretty much a dead trend, kept barely alive through rare exceptions, such as Jody Lynn Nye's new solo novel in Anne McCaffrey's "Ship" universe, or Margaret Ball's *Mathemagics*, based on a story from the *Chicks in Chainmail* anthology. (But then, there's the question of who really writes the YA novels by R.L. Stine. At least one so far credits another writer. And what about V.C. Andrews?) Much that we used to count as sharecropped is now counted as Media-Related — the worlds shared these days are mostly shared with games or movies, not other authors.

The 224 new fantasy novels include 43 young-adult novels, or 19% of the total, up slightly from last year. Fantasy was 41% of the young-adult total, up dramatically from 26% in 1995 — due mostly to the marked decrease in YA horror. There were 23 fantasy first novels. As in the last two years, we did not count the bulk of fantasy romances unless they had major fantasy elements.

Horror was down considerably, with 122 new novels, compared to 193 for 1995. Young-adult horror was 34% of the total, down from 44% last year. There were five (4%) first novels, and 28 (23%) vampire novels, up one point from last year. Young-adult horror, the driving force behind the last three years' increase in new horror, dropped from 84 (44%) titles in 1995, to 36 titles, or 30% of all horror in 1996. That figure doesn't include the numerous YA horror novels we didn't list, the ones without supernatural elements, and the ones aimed at a pre-teen audience ("Goosebumps", *et al.*). Simple space requirements have forced us to be more selective as more and more kiddie horror series appear. Of the YA horror novels we did list, at least 22 (61%) were parts of series. The number

CHART 1: ORIGINAL BOOKS

	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1987
SF Novels	253	239	204	263	239	308	308	279	317
Fantasy Novels	224	227	234	267	278	301	253	277	264
Horror Novels	122	193	178	175	165	165	177	176	96
Anthologies	103	124	103	98	86	128	114	101	98
Reference	28	23	13	14	19	19	21	*76	*95
Collections	76	78	59	77	78	82	90	74	77
Media-Related*	183	204	137	113	81	81	73	76	64
Art/Humor	29	19	35	24	20	18	37	24	39
History/Criticism	43	52	49	57	60	43	60	-	-
Omnibus	35	31	30	23	28	29	20	22	19
Misc.	29	60	72	65	73	72	64	39	31

\* includes History/Criticism

+includes Non-Fiction

CHART 2: TOP PUBLISHERS - TOTAL BOOKS

	1996	95	94	93	92	91	90	89	88
Tor/St. Martin's	246	260	230	217	180	186	172	204	256
Putnam/Berkley/Ace	151	149	146	153	177	234	195	178	170
Random House/Ballantine	118	133	126	128	124	168	164	186	195
Bantam/Doubleday/Dell	113	129	161	160	200	234	209	167	170
Science Fiction Book Club	112	116	92	111	92	67	72	61	59
Penguin USA	111	123	105	109	116	115	120	99	109
Simon & Schuster/Pocket	101	121	88	80	71	70	50	59	49
HarperCollins	97	92	69	45	48	53	26	22	24
Morrow/Avon	81	92	68	82	70	101	89	74	95
Baen	59	56	52	53	54	49	51	58	71
DAW	55	51	42	47	43	43	57	50	65



is down, from 49 titles in 1995, but the percentage is actually up slightly from 58% last year.

For the last two years, horror dominated the young-adult novels, but this year, fantasy took the lead. Of the 106 original young-adult novels we listed, 27 (25%) were SF, 43 (41%) were fantasy, and 36 (34%) were horror. These percentages seem to be more fluid than in the adult field: in 1995, they were 19% SF, 26% fantasy, and 55% horror; in 1994, 14% SF, 25% fantasy, and 61% horror.

In first novels, we listed 50, up from 46 last year. Fantasy led the way with 23; SF came in a close second at 22. The horror field is difficult to gauge because the writers are mostly unknown and use a bewildering number of pen names. We identified only five horror first novels.

With 183 titles, media-related books accounted for 16% of all new books, the same as last year. In past years, the media category included both fiction and non-fiction, but this year we decided to drop the non-fiction books (guides, companions, biographies, etc.) Some books of significant interest in other areas (art, literary criticism) were counted as non-fiction.

Among the media-related titles, Star Trek (30) and TSR games (38) still dominate. White Wolf's "World of Darkness" produced 15 game-related titles. With only 14 novelizations, Star Wars (counting both Bantam Spectra adult and Putnam/Boulevard YA) nonetheless showed itself to be a major contender on the newsstands and bestseller lists. *The X-Files* had only one new adult novelization out this year, but is still a contender in sales, with several non-fiction and junior novelizations we didn't count, but which have shown up on the bestseller lists.

We listed 29 art and humor books in 1996, up from 19 in 1995. There was only one graphic novel related to literary fiction counted in this category; several graphic novels were counted by related subject, including three horror collections from Mojo Press. Twelve books specifically showcased the work of single artists. The third *Spectrum* provided a powerful survey of the current field of fantastic art, while *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy and Science Fiction Art Techniques* (not just a how-to book) showcased numerous British artists, and the detailed show catalog *Myth, Magic, and Mystery: One Hundred Years of American Children's Book Illustration* covered a number of artists of interest to the field. The rest are mostly illustrated stories, ranging from interestingly illustrated children's picture books to the more substantial fantasy story *Voyage of the Basset*, illustrated by James Christensen. The only pure humor book we counted here was the Gahan Wilson cartoon collection *Even Weirder*.

There were 103 new anthologies in 1996, down from 125. 63 contained primarily original stories, and only 42 reprinted stories. There were nine media tie-in anthologies, counted with the rest of the media-related titles. In the past we've counted shared world anthologies, but aside from *Gahan*

*Wilson's Ultimate Haunted House*, none of the non-media-related anthologies is set in a world created specifically to be shared. There were a number of "theme" anthologies set in a specific author's work, including six Lovecraftian anthologies, one set in Mercedes Lackey's "Valdemar," another based on a Lackey ballad, one covering Wells's *War of the Worlds* and another set in Dante's *Inferno*. There were at least 85 theme-specific anthologies. It's hard to define a "theme" anthology, since it's rare to find any anthology without a theme of some sort. Two years ago it was arbitrarily decided that mere "erotic horror" was too common to count, but "erotic vampire horror" qualified, but then publishers confused the issue even more by avoiding simple "erotic horror" and going for tales of "Dark Love," "Forbidden Acts," and "Unearthly Love." For 1996, at least 13 anthologies were described as "erotic" or about sex; there were eight vampire anthologies (some with sex in them).

There were 76 new collections, down slightly from 78 in 1995. Though we don't categorize these strictly as SF, fantasy, or horror, there were nine young-adult collections, down from 14 last year, but the same as the year before; of those nine, at least four were primarily horror or dark fantasy. Small presses were responsible for 37, or 49% of the collections, up two points from last year.

There were 28 reference books, up from 23 the previous year. History/Criticism books were down, from 52 to 43. Including the 29 Art/Humor, the non-fiction total was 100, up from 94. Omnibus titles were up, from 31 to 35.

Chart #1 shows the subject breakdown from 1988 to 1996. The number of novels, 599, is down 9% from the previous year. Novels are 53% of the new books, the same as last year. (If you include the 174 media tie-in novelizations, the figure would be 69%.)

Charts #2 and #3 show the top publishers for total and original books; the Cumulative Book Survey gives the larger picture, listing all publishers with five or more books, and combining the rest as Miscellaneous. We try to make the current figures more comparable by adjusting past figures for mergers and new combinations. There were no significant changes of this kind in the publishing industry last year.

Among the small presses, Circler Press broke out of the Miscellaneous pack with seven new trade paperbacks; newcomer Gryphon Press also made it onto the list with six first US editions of novels from the British pulp era. There were 143 Miscellaneous publishers, down from 166 last year. Not all the Miscellaneous publishers are small press, but most of the small press is Miscellaneous.

Chart #2 shows the top publishers by total number of books. The names are the same, with only one shift in order: SFBC moved up two places, coming in just behind Bantam/Doubleday/Dell. Most of the top publishers decreased their output, the exceptions being Putnam/Berkley/Ace,

HarperCollins, Baen, and DAW.

Chart #3 shows the Top Publishers of Original Books. Again, there was very little change in the publishers' relative positions: Penguin USA moved up a couple of places, to fifth, just behind Bantam/Doubleday/Dell. Penguin USA was also the only top publisher to increase the number of original novels published in 1996; HarperCollins tied their 1995 production. Tor's output of original books was down 18% from 1995, Putnam's down 17%, and Simon & Schuster/Pocket down 25%. Bantam/Doubleday/Dell was down 5%, and Random House down 10%. Zebra/Pinnacle, which cut its horror line last year, dropped it completely, and fell off this list; White Wolf took its place with 30 original books.

The percentage of reprints for each publisher can give an indication of publishers' profits. Hard/soft deals and other contractual variables skew the figures somewhat, but even then it's cheaper to do a reprint than to buy a new book (with the exception of reprints for which huge advances are paid). As you can see on Graph 1: Publishing History, the overall proportion of reprints to new books generally holds quite steady, though this year the proportion of reprints (the opposite of the percentage of new books shown on the Cumulative Book Survey chart) went up to 39%, from 36% last year. Not counting the Science Fiction Book Club (which had 89% reprints this year), among the top publishers Random House led once again with 53% reprints, the same as last year. Tor/St. Martin's followed closely with 52% (up 7%), then Putnam/Berkley/Ace at 42% (up 12%), Bantam with 38% (down 5%), tied with Penguin USA with 38% (down 14%, after being up 15% last year). Morrow/Avon had 37% (down 5%), DAW 36% (up 12%), HarperCollins US 34% (up 4%), Simon & Schuster/Pocket 20% (up 7%), Baen 20% (up 6%), and TSR 7% (down 7%). (With TSR and the Pocket Star Trek books, it's particularly hard to keep up with reprints – even the publishers don't always know whether they've actually been reprinted or reissued from stock – so these figures may well be low.)

Genre material in 1996 was produced by 177 publishers, a significant decrease from 206 in 1995. (The record was 230 publishers in 1993.)

#### QUALITY

The only fair basis we have for making a judgment on a publisher's quality is through the number of their books on the Locus Recommended Reading list (pp. 40-41), shown on Chart #4. Forty-nine different publishers (from the US, Canada, UK, and Australia) had recommended books on this list. If a book had a UK edition and a later US one, we gave credit to both publishers. Tor/St. Martin's kept the top spot with 37 recommended books, eight more than the year before; of those, ten were from St. Martin's. Bantam held onto second with 12, down one from the previous year. HarperCollins US tied at third with nine books.

*Continued on page 75*

CHART 3: TOP PUBLISHERS - ORIGINAL BOOKS 1996

	1996	95	94	93	92	91	90	89	88
Tor/St. Martin's	117	143	118	112	101	99	103	122	143
Putnam/Berkley/Ace	87	105	107	105	121	146	137	121	103
Simon & Schuster/Pocket	79	105	78	63	54	57	37	50	30
Bantam/Doubleday/Dell	70	74	83	97	115	122	103	107	104
Penguin USA	69	59	66	68	68	72	72	60	71
HarperCollins	64	64	38	24	29	39	14	15	11
Random House/Ballantine	56	62	63	66	67	91	95	86	89
Morrow/Avon	51	53	41	59	40	77	54	52	55
Baen	47	48	39	41	41	36	41	41	55
TSR	41	42	28	30	27	25	23	24	13
DAW	35	39	28	37	30	32	35	35	33
Warner/Little, Brown	30	33	23	18	33	37	49	51	48
White Wolf	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

CHART 4: RECOMMENDED BOOKS

	1996	95	94	93	92	91	90	89	88
Tor/St. Martin's	37	30	30	25	24	18	16	20	27
Bantam/Doubleday/Dell	12	14	24	17	21	17	18	18	21
HarperCollins US	9	9	4	-	2	-	-	-	-
Putnam/Berkley/Ace	8	4	5	7	3	6	7	13	12
Morrow/Avon	8	5	7	8	6	9	7	6	12
Random House/Ballantine	7	6	6	11	10	7	4	5	8
HarperCollins UK	7	7	7	8	5	3	3	5	5
Penguin USA	7	5	7	5	-	6	6	6	5
Harcourt Brace	5	4	5	3	1	3	2	3	2
Gollancz	5	9	7	1	8	5	7	6	3
DAW	4	4	5	4	7	4	5	7	9



# 1996 Magazine Summary

Last year, we said 1995 was one of the worst years ever for the professional SF magazine market, with vanishing magazines, high paper costs, the cutback in Publishers Clearing House "stamp" subscription mailings, the virtual destruction of the Independent magazine distributors network, plus a rise in post office mailing rates.

Well, 1996 is even worse, with still lower circulations, fewer issues of the top magazines, the disappearance of *Omni* plus its novella program on AOL, the end of the print runs of *Tomorrow*, and more. The only bright spots were a large drop in pulp paper prices, and the fact that the postal increase/periodical switchover was easier than anticipated.

The big news for the year was the March sale of the Dell magazine chain to Penny Press, a family-owned puzzle magazine company. They actually wanted the Dell puzzle magazines, and took the fiction magazines – both SF and mystery – as part of the deal. The fiction magazines were quite profitable without the horrendous BDD corporate overhead, and probably still are. Penny Press moved the magazines to another New York location, but has pretty much neglected them since (the page and frequency cuts were done before the sale). I would guess that the condition of the magazine field, with mounting distribution problems, forced them to concentrate on the Dell puzzle magazines (they're trying to swallow a company bigger than they were) and neglect the fiction magazines. They've forcefully denied any rumors they want to sell them. The publisher says they will soon have a campaign to increase newsstand sales and subscriptions as well as sales through the chains and other bookstores. It can't happen soon enough.

## ANALOG

*Analog's* circulation dropped to its lowest yet, down 14.8% from last year to under 60,000 (down 39% from just under 100,000 ten years ago). Both subscriptions and newsstand sales are down, with sell-through also down slightly, but improved at the end of the year.

*Analog* lost about 9,500 subscribers this year, but is still the biggest selling SF magazine, although the puzzle itself is getting smaller and smaller. The magazine has a core audience that will stick with it, but it still needs a shot in the arm. *Analog* produced 12 issues in 1996 (down one from last year), including two "double" issues which counted as two for subscribers. The magazine cut 16 pages per issue starting in March, bringing doubles to 288 pages, and regular issues to 160. In the March issue, the publishing information stated that the magazine would now have 11 issues, with July/August double. The annual subscription price was dropped from \$39.97 to \$33.97, starting in March.

Scott L. Towner, senior associate editor of *Analog* and *Asimov's*, resigned, and was replaced by a second editorial assistant, Torsten Scheihagen. In an apparent economy move, the long-time art director of the magazines, Terry Czezko, was fired and not replaced. There are rumors the magazines will use more stock art and fewer originals.

The fiction was up to *Analog's* standards, but there was less of it because of the cutback in issues and size. Two four-part serials also cut the number of stories down considerably. Next year, with one less issue, it may have still fewer stories. I hope they drop the serials and give us more novellies or novellas. See further comments under *Asimov's*.

## ASIMOV'S

*Asimov's* circulation, like *Analog's*, dropped to its lowest point ever, with a total paid circulation

of 45,909. The subscription and newsstand sales both dropped to their lowest ever. *Asimov's* has always been a subscription-oriented magazine, and the nearly 11,000 drop is very bad.

*Asimov's* produced 11 issues in 1996, including one "double" issue, a decrease from the previous 13 issues, two of them "specials," per year. The size of issues was cut 16 pages, starting with the March issue, while the cover price remained the same. The subscription price dropped the same amount as *Analog's*.

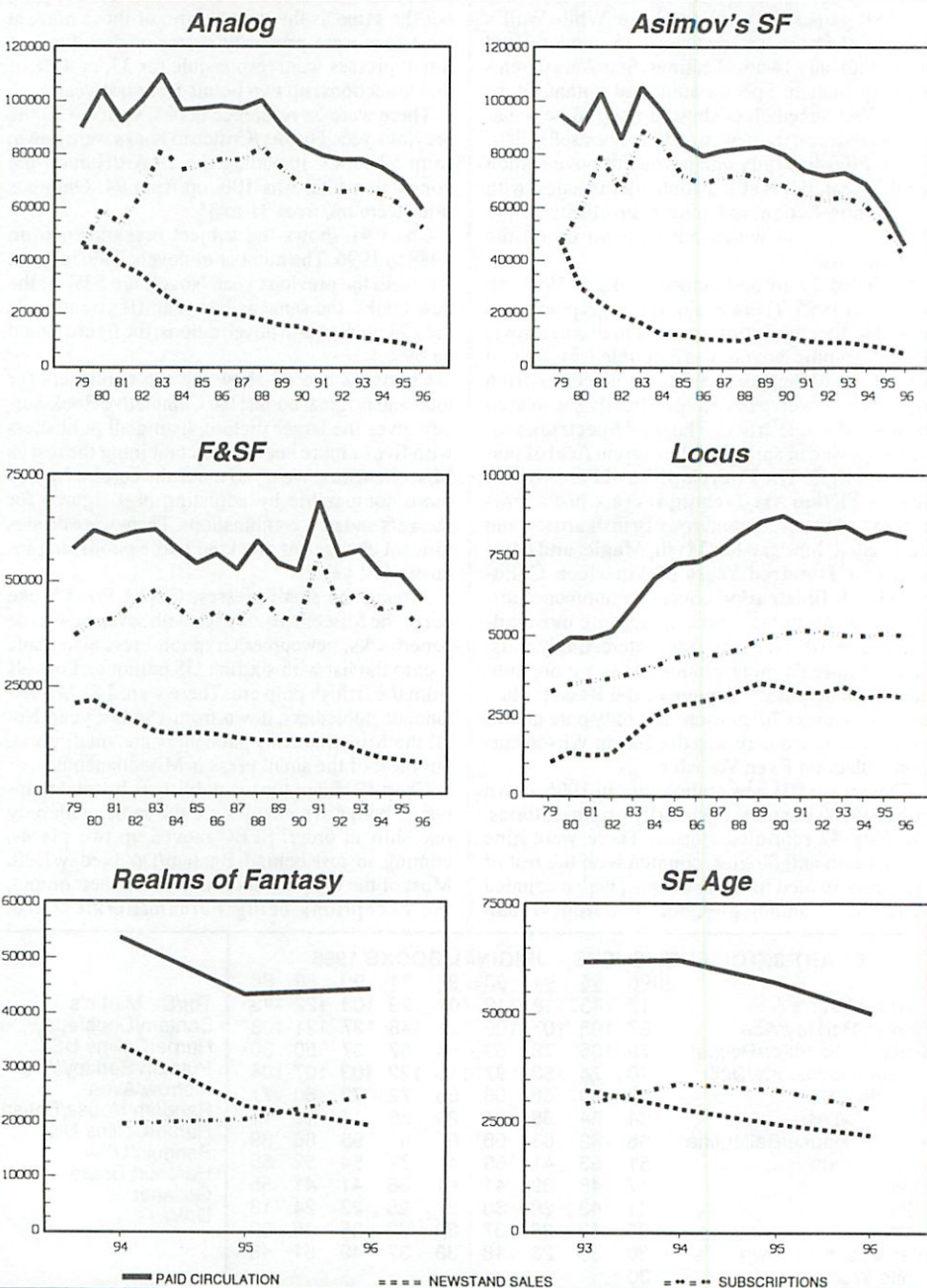
The number of available pages per year for each of the Dell fiction magazines dropped from 2576 to 1888, a 27% reduction. Since the ad space and nonfiction remained approximately the same, the space available to fiction was reduced by 30 to 35% – a disaster for both readers and writers. *Asimov's* has been particularly strong in the novella category, but will have to do very few now. Our list of recommended novellas this year, as well as recommendations in other short fiction categories, was way down. Our recommendations from

*Asimov's* dropped nearly 25% – and it wasn't because of the quality of the magazine. The fiction was quite good, but there was so much less of it! *Asimov's*, at least, doesn't run serials.

*Asimov's* has a much smaller core readership than *Analog*, and needs to be pushed more. Oddly enough, it probably has a larger potential readership than *Analog*, but it needs to reach them. I'm not sure how. Direct mailings to the usual lists – Science Fiction Book Club, related magazines, etc. – will help, but only as stopgap measures. Reaching the larger audience needs TV advertising piggybacked to SF programs – *Star Trek*, *X-Files*, etc. – but it has usually been too expensive for the possible return. The cable-TV syndicated shows are much cheaper, and may be possible.

## F&SF

*F&SF* has the same schedule *Asimov's* and *Analog* are moving to – 10 regular issues plus one double per year. *F&SF's* circulation dropped 11.6%, about half the drop at *Asimov's* – which is very small consolation. The biggest drop was in





# 1996 Magazine Summary

subscriptions, but their sell-through rate also fell, to 41%, down 3%. However, ending on a hopeful note, the issue nearest to filing was up, with 41,500 subscriptions and a sell-through of 46%.

The subscription price is set to go up in May. Maybe you should subscribe now, if you read the magazine, but not constantly. It's a bargain.

The biggest change in the magazine was the resignation of editor Kristine Kathryn Rusch after six years in the job. She is going back to full-time writing. Her replacement is Gordon Van Gelder, who will probably institute his own changes sometime this next year.

## OMNI

The print version is gone; the last issue, dated Winter 1995, actually appeared in 1996 and should be counted here, but we went by the date and counted it last time. There is still one recommendation from the magazine on our short fiction list. The Omni Online novella series ended with a lost Fritz Leiber story which we're holding for this year's book publication. The newly relaunched Omni Online magazine had six stories; we've recommended three. Does anybody read them online? The Omni Online magazine is very popular, with thousands of "hits" every day, but nobody knows how that transfers into people reading the magazine, let alone the fiction. It's still an important, and obviously professional, source of fiction.

## REALMS OF FANTASY

*Realms of Fantasy's* circulation went up – the second year in a row of increase. This was only their second full year of publication, but the third year of increase in subscriber numbers. Newsstand sales have had a steady decrease in the same period (probably conversions to subscriptions), though the sell-through remained steady. In a year when everyone else is down, a 2.4% overall increase is quite impressive.

*RoF* produced six issues in 1996. The price remained steady, while the page count varied from 74 to 90 pages. The paper is slick inside and out, with extensive use of color. The covers use reprint

art quite effectively. The magazine published 32 stories this year, as well as interesting features, including one on fantasy legends by Terri Windling.

## SCIENCE FICTION AGE

*SFA's* circulation dropped 12.5%. Subscriptions and newsstand sales have both dropped below the magazine's initial figures from 1993. The sell-

through dropped slightly to 25% – both *RoF* and *SFA* require four copies on the newsstand to sell one. The publisher suspects that most of the decrease in subscriptions was because of their extensive use of the *SF Age* list to promote *Realms of Fantasy*. Many readers decided they preferred fantasy, and let their *SFA* subscriptions lapse. They

## 1996 Magazine Circulation Summary

Year	Subscriptions	Newsstand Sales	Returns	%Newsstand Copies Sold	Paid Circulation	Paid Circ. Change
<i>Analog</i>						
1985	75,967	21,217	60,653	26%	97,184	+0.5%
1986	78,123	20,000	51,809	28%	98,123	+1.0%
1987	77,844	19,365	46,587	29%	97,209	-0.9%
1988	82,596	17,668	47,357	27%	100,264	+3.1%
1989	74,788	15,616	49,665	24%	90,404	-9.8%
1990	68,297	14,938	39,989	27%	83,253	-7.9%
1991	67,475	12,250	30,133	29%	79,725	-4.2%
1992	66,000	12,000	27,800	30%	78,000	-2.2%
1993	67,000	11,000	41,000	21%	78,000	0.0%
1994	65,000	10,000	38,000	21%	75,000	-3.8%
1995	61,000	9,000	19,400	32%	70,000	-6.7%
1996	52,562	7,086	17,140	29%	59,648	-14.8%
<i>Asimov's Science Fiction</i>						
1985	71,915	11,933	37,365	24%	83,848	-12.7%
1986	69,011	10,378	30,389	25%	79,389	-5.3%
1987	71,356	9,970	29,244	25%	81,326	+2.4%
1988	72,579	9,684	30,899	24%	82,263	+1.2%
1989	70,669	12,176	36,147	25%	82,845	+0.7%
1990	68,223	11,592	32,494	26%	79,815	-3.6%
1991	64,377	9,638	27,224	26%	74,015	-7.3%
1992	63,000	9,000	26,900	25%	72,000	-2.7%
1993	64,000	9,000	40,000	18%	73,000	+1.4%
1994	61,000	8,000	32,000	20%	69,000	-5.4%
1995	52,000	7,000	17,000	29%	59,000	-14.5%
1996	41,230	4,679	13,134	26%	45,909	-22.2%
<i>The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction</i>						
1985	40,072	14,177	21,972	39%	54,249	-6.4%
1986	42,672	13,798	17,790	44%	56,470	+4.1%
1987	39,878	13,012	16,011	45%	52,890	-6.3%
1988	47,153	12,479	15,570	44%	59,632	+12.8%
1989	41,904	12,367	15,991	44%	54,271	-9.0%
1990	40,077	12,507	14,426	46%	52,584	-3.1%
1991	56,550	12,329	12,960	49%	68,879	+30.9%
1992	43,999	12,079	10,770	53%	56,078	-18.6%
1993	47,598	9,857	11,123	47%	57,455	+2.5%
1994	43,412	8,354	10,758	44%	51,766	-9.9%
1995	43,803	7,754	9,735	44%	51,557	-0.4%
1996	38,442	7,144	10,186	41%	45,586	-11.6%
<i>Locus</i>						
1987	4,590	3,066	176	95%	7,656	+4.6%
1988	4,901	3,267	97	97%	8,168	+6.7%
1989	5,053	3,530	121	97%	8,583	+5.1%
1990	5,328	3,428	130	96%	8,756	+2.0%
1991	5,169	3,224	134	96%	8,393	-4.1%
1992	5,111	3,238	131	96%	8,349	-0.5%
1993	5,006	3,416	251	93%	8,422	+0.9%
1994	4,993	3,061	372	89%	8,054	-4.4%
1995	5,073	3,172	348	90%	8,245	+2.4%
1996	4,998	3,081	449	87%	8,079	-2.0%
<i>Realms of Fantasy</i>						
1994	19,549	34,125	58,125	37%	53,674	--
1995	20,449	22,880	66,567	26%	43,329	-19.3%
1996	24,940	19,408	54,828	26%	44,348	+2.4%
<i>Science Fiction Age</i>						
1993	29,235	32,635	77,717	30%	61,870	--
1994	34,068	28,166	62,410	31%	62,234	0.6%
1995	32,592	24,630	68,663	26%	57,222	-8.1%
1996	28,115	21,980	66,601	25%	50,095	-12.5%

## PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINES ISSUES PUBLISHED (ALL FICTION ONLY)

TITLE	1996
<i>Analog</i> .....	12
<i>Asimov's SF</i> .....	11
<i>F&amp;SF</i> .....	11
<i>Interzone</i> .....	12
<i>Realms of Fantasy</i> .....	6
<i>SF Age</i> .....	6
Total .....	58

## TOTAL ISSUES

1996	6 fiction titles	58 issues
1995	6 fiction titles	61 issues
1994	8 fiction titles	61 issues
1993	7 fiction titles	71 issues
1992	7 fiction titles	65 issues
1991	6 fiction titles	64 issues
1990	6 fiction titles	60 issues
1989	7 fiction titles	59 issues
1988	6 fiction titles	55 issues
1987	6 fiction titles	53 issues
1986	7 fiction titles	57 issues
1985	7 fiction titles	58 issues
1984	5 fiction titles	50 issues
1983	5 fiction titles	50 issues
1982	7 fiction titles	61 issues
1981	8 fiction titles	59 issues
1980	8 fiction titles	49 issues
1979	9 fiction titles	57 issues
1978	10 fiction titles	55 issues
1977	13 fiction titles	73 issues
1976	10 fiction titles	71 issues
1975	10 fiction titles	89 issues
1974	13 fiction titles	109 issues



## 1996 Magazine Summary

plan advertising on the Sci-Fi Channel this coming year. It should make a difference.

SFA published six issues in 1996. The page count varied from 98 to 106 pages. There is extensive use of color, on the covers (which feature mostly reprint art), story illustrations, and the dramatic "Gallery" spreads. The magazine remains an interesting mix of fiction, features, and media coverage. Total for the year was 36 stories, down from 40 last year. The quality of the fiction was quite good. We recommended a record 10 stories from the magazine – more than a quarter of what they published!

### INTERZONE

If *Interzone* were a US magazine, it would be in the semiprofessional category, but it's professional in all but circulation, and is the best magazine outside the US. *IZ* published 12 issues in 1996. Their covers, while not slick, are full-color, about half and half original and reprint art. There was one issue specially edited and produced by Nicholas Royle, who also provided the photos manipulated to produce the cover. The circulation dropped again, and ran between 3,000 and 4,000. They deserve much better. The fiction was, as usual, very good to excellent. We recommended 10 stories from it this year.

### LOCUS

We're not a fiction or professional magazine, but put *Locus* here to show the circulation figures. We seem to be the only semiprofessional magazine with a periodical mail (what used to be second-class) permit. It used to be much easier (and saved more money!) to get one.

Our circulation went down slightly. We do no newsstand distribution; all non-sub sales are in bookstores. We have an average 62% sell-through for the copies we send to the chains, and a 95% sell-through in the specialty stores. As we move toward all-computer production, we're also experimenting with our covers, updating our logo thanks to Arnie Fenner, and re-designing our table of contents. So far, comment has been positive. We don't foresee any major changes this coming year, but it's the things you can't foresee which get you.

### SEMI-PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINES

We define semi-professional magazines as fiction magazines with no national newsstand distribution but which do have bookstore sales. They have circulations under 10,000 but are otherwise professional. They have color covers, publish mainly fiction, pay at least 2¢ a word on acceptance, and appear at least quarterly. Others are irregular serial, small-press magazines, or fanzines.

After a temporary suspension in 1995, *Aboriginal Science Fiction* came back in 1996 with three issues. The Fall issue was not seen until December, and Winter has not yet appeared, but it seemed safe enough to upgrade this from "irregular" to "quarterly." According to the issue numbers, these are all "doubles" at 98 pages; the price is \$5.95 per issue. It seems silly to call every issue a double issue, instead of just adjusting subscription numbers. According to the editor, they have 5,500 subscribers and 2,300 sales through bookstores.

*Cemetery Dance*, edited and published by Richard T. Chizmar, came back from hiatus in 1995 (due to the editor's illness) to produce three issues in 1996 – four if you count the Winter 1995 issue we didn't count last year, or the Winter 1996 which just appeared in 1997. It's an impressive comeback. *Cemetery Dance* is easily the best of the horror small-press magazines, with good, readable layout, mostly professional-level fiction, and interesting columns. At 144 pages, it's a bargain at \$4.00.

*Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine*, edited by Marion Zimmer Bradley and Rachel E. Holmen, is in its ninth year of publication and has maintained its quarterly schedule like clockwork. Price is still \$4.50. The magazine has good fantasy covers, mostly professional-level fiction, and neat layout. They have about 2,000 subscribers and sell 3,500 through distributors. They did an SFBC mailing last year, and got the subs up to 3,000, but couldn't keep them in the long run. They're doing another SFBC mailing this month. They should raise the price to \$4.95 soon.

*Pirate Writings*, edited by Edward J. McFadden, put out four quarterly issues in 1996. The slick, full-color covers remain strong, with distinctive art, and the interior art and layout are improving. They continue to have stories from known professional writers. One issue had a special concentration on mystery fiction. They're printing 5,000 copies with 1,000 subscribers and 3,600 going to distributors. They have a 45% sell-through for a total paid circulation of 2,600.

*Tomorrow Speculative Fiction*, published and edited by Algis Budrys, produced only five bi-monthly issues, due to a change in dating intended to avoid publishing in the dead month of December. Also, due to rising paper costs the newsstand price increased to \$5.00. However, they have since announced that the February 1997 issue will be the last physical copy of the magazine; they are moving to the Internet, where the next three will be free. You can check it out at [www.tomorrowsf.com](http://www.tomorrowsf.com)

### ALMOSTS

The following would have made semi-pro if they

got out their scheduled four issues:

*Absolute Magnitude*, edited by Warren Lapine, published two of their four quarterly issues in 1996. Committed to publishing pure SF (none of this blurred-borderline mainstream stuff), with slick color covers, and with stories from known authors, this magazine has a shot at success – in a better market, with better frequency.

*Century* only managed one issue this year. This looked highly promising last year, with its great production values and high-quality literature; but you can't sell what you don't produce. The one issue was excellent, and garnered a story recommendation. The publisher says they will be back to normal this year, but the longer it takes, the harder it is to regain lost momentum.

*Crank!*, edited by Bryan Cholfin, had two issues this year. This small-press "quarterly" magazine continues to be of high quality, if irregular publication. The editor/publisher just moved to New York and went to work for Tor; this may either help or hinder the magazine.

We saw only three issues of *On Spec*, the Canadian fiction magazine edited by a collective. It's a good-looking digest magazine with good production values and OK fiction. They probably still have a circulation of around 2,000.

*Worlds of Fantasy & Horror* (formerly *Weird Tales*), published by George H. Scithers and edited by Darrell Schweitzer, had two issues in 1996. The latest (Winter 1996/97) issue ups the stated frequency from three to four times a year, an optimistic sign. The magazine has all professional-level fiction.

### OTHER

*Deathrealm*, edited by Stephen Mark Rainey, had four quarterly issues this year. The layout's cluttered, the art sometimes amateurish, but the two-color covers are striking, and between its coverage of the horror field and its regular publication it has a solid source of appeal for horror fans.

*Keen Science Fiction!*, edited by Teresa Keene, is a new fiction magazine announced as a monthly; we saw eight issues in 1996. The size went up, and the price with it to \$6.50 per issue, for the November issue, though there is no indication if the change will continue. This looks more like a fanzine than a commercial venture, but the enthusiastic editor manages a better publishing schedule than many.

We saw one issue of *Leviathan*, an eclectic new small-press/literary magazine/anthology, that looked quite professional, edited by Jeff VanderMeer and Luke O'Grady. Published by Mule Press and The Ministry of Whimsy, the *Leviathan* anthologies are scheduled to appear every 18 months.

*Continued on page 52*

# INTERZONE

So where were you when we published Steve Baxter's and Greg Egan's first stories? What were you reading when we ran Geoff Ryman's award-winning *Unconquered Country*? For more than ten years, *Interzone* has led the way in science fiction, bringing stories by exciting new authors to its readers alongside the work of more established names. Isn't it about time you subscribed to find out where the future really is?

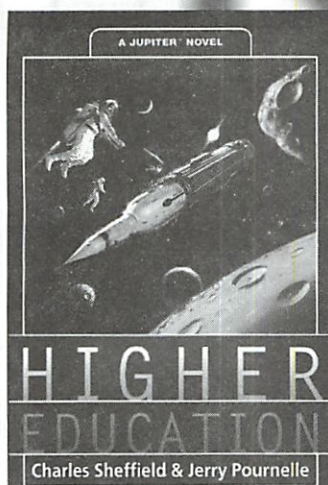
**Subscription Rates:** 12 issues £32 UK; £38 for the rest of the world (US \$60). In the UK, cheques or postal orders should be crossed and made out to *Interzone*. Overseas subscriptions are payable by International Money Order. American subscribers may pay by dollar check, drawn on a US bank. Payments may also be made by Visa, MasterCard, or Eurocard.

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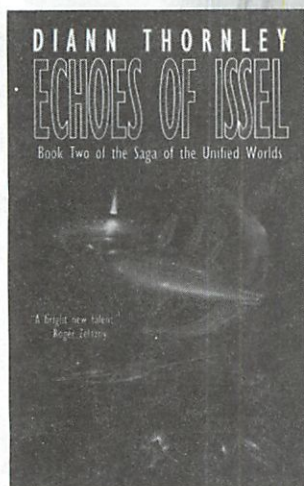
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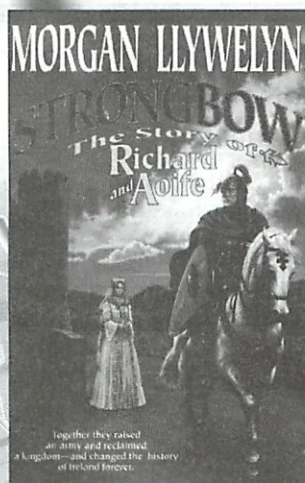
## ECHOES OF ISSEL

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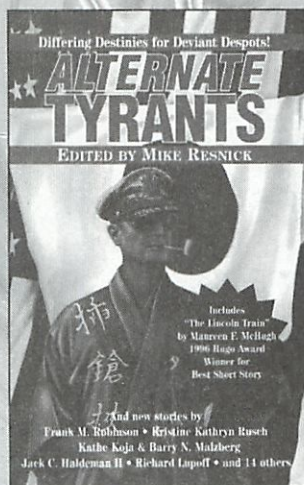
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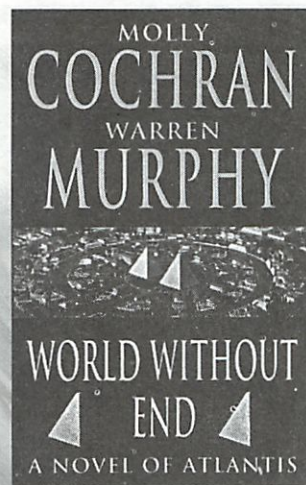


## ALTERNATE TYRANTS

Mike Resnick, editor

Features Maureen McHugh's "The Lincoln Train," which won the Hugo Award for Best Short Story.

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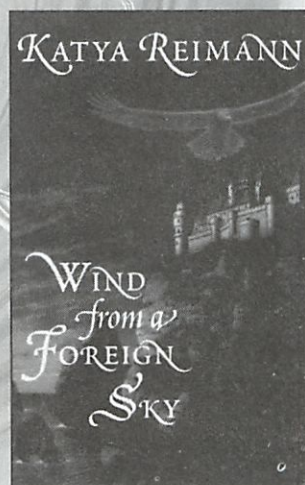
## WORLD WITHOUT END

Molly Cochran and  
Warren Murphy

"If you like Atlantis novels, here is a dandy."—Rocky Mountain News  
"Captivating."

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"An exciting and evocative story set in a well-realized fantasy world."

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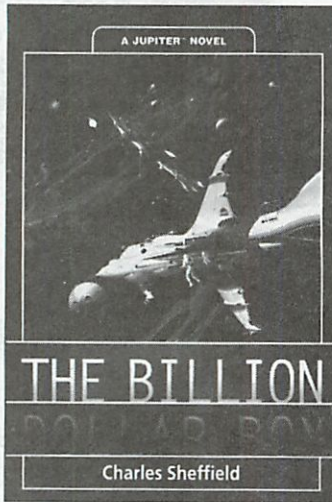
0-812-54933-3 • \$6.99/\$8.99







# New Arrivals



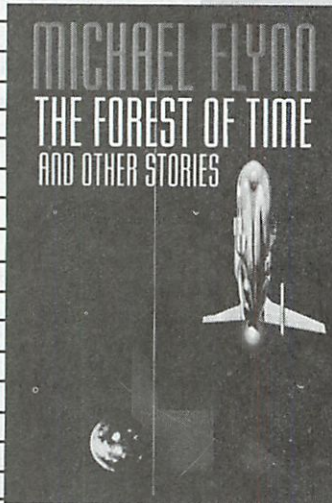
## THE BILLION DOLLAR BOY

A Jupiter™ Novel  
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"Another well-written coming-of-age adventure story in the new Jupiter series."—*Library Journal*

"A gripping, genuine story... Far and away, the most believable and interesting near-space milieu I've seen in years."—Orson Scott Card on *Higher Education*

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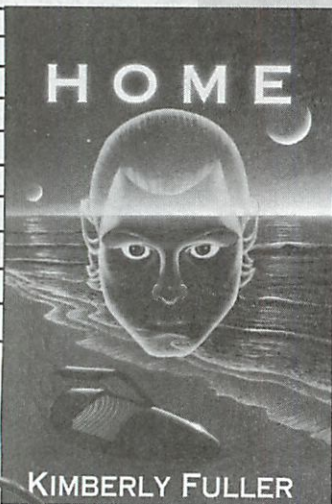


## THE FOREST OF TIME AND OTHER STORIES

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"As Heinlein did and all too few have done since, Flynn writes about the near future as if he'd been there and was bringing back reports of what he'd seen."—Harry Turtledove

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In the tradition of John Christopher's Tripod Trilogy, *Home* is a fabulous young-adult SF adventure from a talented and inspiring seventeen-year-old writer.

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## THE BROKEN SWORD

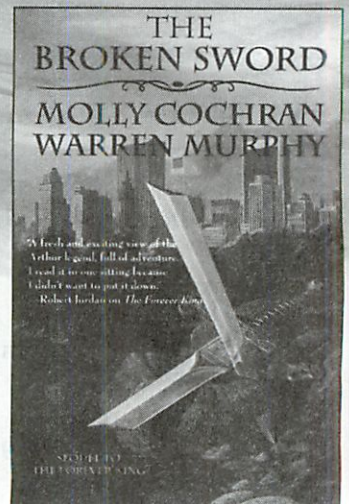
Molly Cochran and  
Warren Murphy

The sequel to the highly praised  
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"A fresh and exciting view of the Arthur legend, full of adventure. I read it in one sitting because I didn't want to put it down."

—Robert Jordan on *The Forever King*

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# ivals from TOR

## RECKONING INFINITY

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A riveting exploration of what it means to be an alien . . . and what it means to be human.

"A fascinating, intelligent account of people struggling to define and confront events that are beyond anything they have dared to imagine."

—*Chicago Tribune* on *Manhattan Transfer*

0-312-86298-9 • \$23.95

## John Stith RECKONING INFINITY



## BIJAPUR

Kara Dalkey

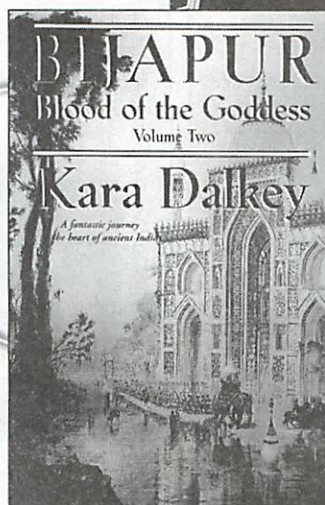
Volume Two of the

BLOOD OF THE GODDESS trilogy

"Splendid characters, intriguing historical details, fascinating cultures, and agreeably restrained sorceries: a highly auspicious launch."

—*Kirkus Reviews* on *Goa*, Volume One of the Blood of the Goddess trilogy

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## The Stars Dispose

MICHAELA ROESSNER

## THE STARS DISPOSE

Michaela Roessner

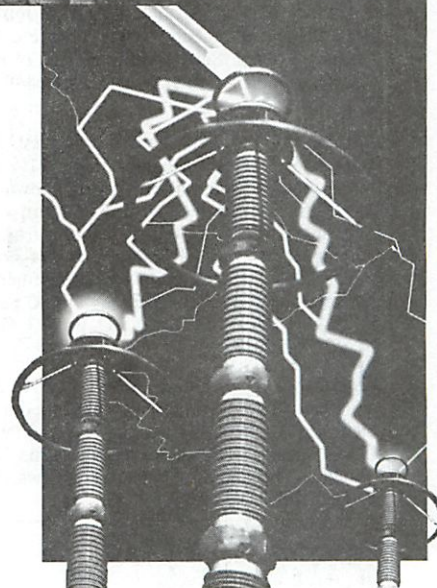
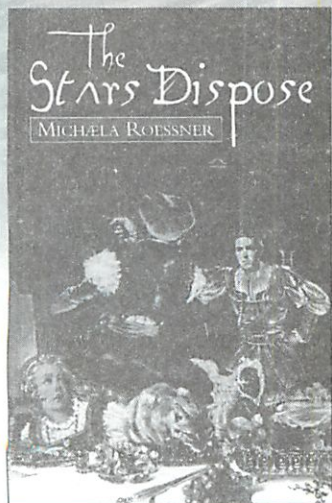
A novel of culinary magic—set in Catherine de Medici's Florence.

"Thoughtfully conceived, convincingly and elegantly developed, with solid female leads and a splendid conclusion. Deeply satisfying."

—*Kirkus Reviews* (pointer)

on *Vanishing Point*

0-312-85754-3 • \$23.95





## 1996 Magazine Summary

Continued from page 48

*New Worlds* magazine, edited by Michael Moorcock, had a special 50th anniversary issue celebrating the influential British SF magazine, which otherwise exists currently only as an anthology series.

*Terra Incognita*, edited and published by Jan Berrien Berends, is a new magazine, announced as a quarterly, though so far only one issue has appeared. The layout looks good; the art is adequate. The focus on "Earth-based SF" seems somewhat limiting, but with fiction and articles by known professional authors the magazine may just find its niche.

We saw a number of other older fiction fanzines/small-press magazines last year – too many to mention, since we don't have the box of them handy at the moment. There were, however, a lot fewer than in past years. It may be getting easier to publish a magazine, but it's harder to sell, and too expensive to mail a large number.

### CRITICAL MAGAZINES

*The New York Review of Science Fiction* produced 12 issues in 1996, and reached issue number 100 with the December issue. Congratulations!

*Necrofile* produced its scheduled four issues, and continued to publish thoughtful in-depth pieces on the horror field.

*SF Eye*, edited and published by Stephen P.

Brown, produced one issue in 1996.

Of the academic journals, *Extrapolation* and *Foundation* produced four issues, and *Science-Fiction Studies* three. We also saw one special issue of the *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, two issues of *Utopian Studies*, and six issues of the *SFRA Review* in 1996.

We saw only one issue of *Vector*, the critical journal of the British SF Association, and two issues of the short-fiction review magazine *Tangent*.

### QUALITY

Our only yardstick for judging quality is our Recommended Reading List. This is broken down in chart 3 (see p.48). We recommended 89 short fiction appearances (not counting the individual books listed elsewhere) this year – down 25% from the 117 last year. *Asimov's* was still the leading source with 29 recommendations, down from 38 last year (they published a lot less fiction). The stories from original anthologies and collections were way down – from 29 to 12, with five from *Starlight*. There were far fewer original anthologies of note. *SF Age* was the real winner, with 10 stories out of only 38 published. *Omni Online* also did very well in this respect. *Realms of Fantasy* had its first recommendation. On the whole, the traditional magazines still dominated.

### CONCLUSION

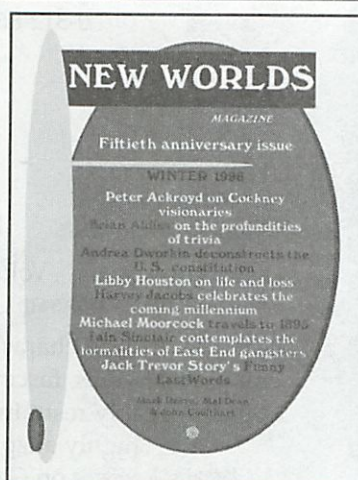
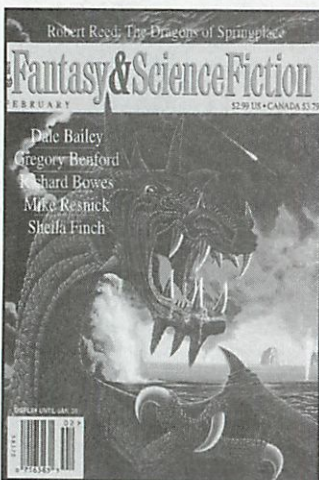
1996 was a hard year for magazines, and so far there don't appear to be easy answers. If costs of paper, printing, and especially distribution continue

to rise, online publication may suddenly become more viable. Heck, if this trend continues, online publication may be the only hope for the short fiction that has always been a major factor in the development of science fiction. Despite the occasional influential anthology, books can't reach as wide an audience, or maintain a dialog, the way magazines can. But it's too early to write off the magazines yet; if some fold, others pop up to take their place, in a process that's been going on since Gernsback. And for some of us, electronic media can never replace the feel of print on paper, and the periodic thrill of opening the latest issue of an old (or new) friend. I just hope it doesn't become a rare and expensive luxury anytime soon.

—Carolyn Cushman/Charles N. Brown

CHART #3 LOCUS RECOMMENDED SHORT FICTION						
	1996	95	94	93	92	91
<i>Asimov's</i>	29	38	42	37	34	40
<i>F&amp;SF</i>	13	10	20	16	10	8
<i>anth./coll.</i>	12	29	16	30	16	26
<i>Interzone</i>	10	9	6	7	12	6
<i>SF Age</i>	10	1	3	2	1	-
<i>Analog</i>	8	10	9	9	2	2
<i>Omni Online</i>	3	8	-	-	-	-
<i>Omni</i>	1	5	6	7	7	9
<i>Century</i>	1	5	-	-	-	-
<i>Playboy</i>	1	-	1	3	4	1
<i>Realms of F.</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-

## Magazines Received - December



*Aboriginal Science Fiction*—Charles C. Ryan, ed. Issue #51/52, Fall 1996, \$5.95, quarterly, 100pp, 21 x 27½ cm. Fiction by Spencer Luster, A. Jon Wallace, Robert Hood, and others, plus reviews, etc. Cover by Courtney Skinner. Subscription: \$21.50 (4 issues) to *Aboriginal Science Fiction*, P.O. Box 2449, Woburn MA 01888.

*Absolute Magnitude*—Warren Lapine, ed. Issue #6, Winter 1996, \$4.95, irregular, 98pp, 21½ x 28 cm. SF adventure semiprozine (formerly known as *Harsh Mistress*). Fiction by Harlan Ellison (reprint), Shariann Lewitt (Part 1 of an excerpt from a forthcoming novel), Barry B. Longyear (Part 3 of 3), and others, plus an interview with Hal Clement. Cover by Kevin Murphy. Subscription: \$14.00 per year (4 issues) to DNA Publications, P.O. Box 13, Greenfield MA 01302-0013.

*Analog*—Stanley Schmidt, ed. Vol.117 No.2, February 1997, \$2.95, 11 times a year, 162pp, digest. Novellas by Michael A. Burstein, Hayford Peirce, and David Phalen, short stories by Katherine MacLean, Timothy Zahn, and J.R. Dunn, plus reviews, etc. Cover by Daniel S. Jiménez.

*Asimov's Science Fiction*—Gardner Dozois, ed. Vol.21 No.2 (whole #254), February 1997, \$2.95, 11 times a year, 162pp, digest. Novellas by Robert Silverberg, Mary Rosenblum & James Sarafin, James Alan Gardner, Uncle River, and Phillip C. Jennings, poetry by Jenna A. Felice, Peg Healy, and William John Watkins. Reviews this issue by Peter Heck. Cover by Joel.

*Crypt of Cthulhu*—Robert M. Price, ed. Vol. 16 No. 1, whole #94, Halloween 1996, \$4.50, three times a year, 38pp, 14 x 22 cm. Lovecraftian journal, with articles (all by August Derleth, including a 1930 thesis on weird fiction) and reviews. Information: Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick RI 02893. (No subscriptions.)

*Cthulhu Codex*—Robert M. Price, ed. Issue #9, November 1996, \$4.50, 36pp, 14 x 22 cm. Lovecraftian journal, with fiction and poetry. Information: Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick RI 02893. (No subscriptions.)

*Deathrealm*—Stephen Mark Rainey, ed. #30, Winter 1996/97, \$4.95, quarterly, 58pp, 21 x 28 cm. Small-press horror fiction magazine, with stories by Tom

Piccirilli and others, interviews with Piccirilli and Stephen Jones, plus poetry, reviews, etc. Cover by Michael Apice. Subscription: \$16.95 for four issues, to *Deathrealm*, 2210 Wilcox Drive, Greensboro NC 27405.

*Eidolon*—Jeremy G. Byrne et al., eds. Vol. 6 No.2-3 (whole #22/23), Spring 1996 [Oct. 1996], no indv. price, quarterly, 216pp, 14½ x 20½. Australian small-press magazine, double issue, with fiction by Andrew Whitmore, Garth Nix, Sean Williams, Jack Dann, R.G. Riel, Simon Brown, Damien Broderick, Tess Williams, Shane Dix, Chris Lawson, and Terry Dowling, plus interviews with Garth Nix, Simon Brown, and Howard Waldrop, news, reviews, etc. Cover by Shaun Tan. Subscription: A\$27.80 for four issues, A\$35 overseas surface mail, A\$45 overseas air mail (for payments in foreign currency, add \$3.00 for exchange costs), checks to Eidolon Publications, P.O. Box 225, North Perth WA 6006, Australia.

*Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction*—Edward James, ed. #68, Autumn 1996, £4.95, three times a year, 130pp, 14½ x 21 cm. Scholarly magazine, with articles, letters and reviews. This is a special Mars



issue. Subscription: £14.00 for 3 issues, U.K. and Ireland, \$27.50 U.S. surface mail, \$33.50 U.S. air mail, more for institutions, to the SF Foundation, c/o New Worlds, 71-72 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0AA, UK.

*Interzone*—David Pringle, ed. Issue #115, January 1997, £2.75, monthly, 68pp, 21 x 29½ cm. Fiction by Brian Stableford (Part One of two), Michael Marshall Smith, Geoffrey A. Landis, Ian Watson, and Peter T. Garratt, interviews with Michael Marshall Smith and Jeff Noon, plus reviews, etc. Subscription: £30 UK, £36 overseas seamount, \$56 overseas airmail, to *Interzone*, 217 Preston Drive, Brighton BN1 6FL, UK.

*The Leading Edge*—Steve Setzer, ed. #33, October 1996, \$3.95, triannual, 108pp, 13½ x 21 cm. SF magazine of Brigham Young University, with six stories, an interview with L.E. Modesitt, plus articles, poems, and reviews. Cover by Brian Durfee. Published by Brigham Young University. Subscription: \$11.85 (3 issues) to *The Leading Edge*, 3163 JKHB, Provo UT 84602.

*Lore*—Rod Heather, ed. Vol.1 No.6, Autumn 1996, \$4.00, quarterly, 62pp, 14 x 21½ cm. Small-press magazine, subtitled "The Quarterly Digest of Mad-dening Fiction," with five stories, part 4 of a series, and poetry. Cover by Jamie Oberschlake. Subscription: \$15 for 4 issues to Rod Heather, P.O. Box 381, Matawan NJ 07747-9998.

*Lovecraft Studies*—S.T. Joshi, ed. #35, Fall 1996, \$5.00, twice a year, 38pp, 17½ x 21½ cm. Scholarly Lovecraftian journal, with articles on Lovecraft and his works. Cover by Jason Eckhardt. Info: Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick, RI 02893. (No subscriptions.)

*The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*—Kristine Kathryn Rusch, ed. Vol.92 No.2 (whole #548), February 1997, \$2.99, 11 times per year, 164pp, digest. Novella by Robert Reed, novelettes by Dale Bailey and Richard Bowes, short stories by Mary A. Turzillo, Kent Patterson, and Sheila Finch, an article by Mike Resnick on forgotten authors, and reviews by Charles de Lint. Cover by Kent Bash.

*Midnight Shambler*—Robert M. Price, ed. Issue No. 4, November 1996, \$4.50, three times a year, 38pp, 14 x 22 cm. Lovecraftian journal, with fiction and poetry. Information: Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box

1304, West Warwick RI 02893. (No subscriptions.)

*Necrofile: The Review of Horror Fiction*—Stefan Dziemianowicz, S.T. Joshi, & Michael A. Morrison, eds. #22, Fall 1996, \$3.00, quarterly, 32pp, 17½ x 21½ cm. Review magazine with essay-style and capsule reviews of American and British horror fiction and non-fiction, columns by Ramsey Campbell, book listings, etc. Subscription: \$12.00 per year (4 issues) US, \$15.00 Canada, \$17.50 overseas airmail, to Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick RI 02893.

*The New Lovecraft Collector*—Anon., ed. #16, Fall 1996, \$1.50, quarterly, 4pp, 18 x 21½ cm. Magazine for collectors of H.P. Lovecraft material, a spinoff of the scholarly journal *Lovecraft Studies*. Subscription: \$5.00 per year to Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick RI 02893.

*New Worlds Magazine*—Michael Moorcock, ed. No. 221, Winter 1996, no price given, 66pp, 21½ x 28 cm. Special 50th anniversary of a highly influential British SF magazine which otherwise survives only as an anthology series, with fiction by Brian Aldiss, Harvey Jacobs, and Jack Trevor Story, articles by Peter Ackroyd, Michael Moorcock, and Andrea Dworkin, plus numerous illustrations. Information: New Worlds, 45 St. Mary's Mansions, St. Mary's Terrace, London W2 1SH, UK.

*The New York Review of Science Fiction*—David Hartwell et al., eds. Issue #100, December 1996, \$3.50, monthly, 24pp, 21½ x 28 cm. Review and criticism magazine, with essay-length and short reviews, etc. This issue features Part III of a three-part essay (on "paraliterary criticism") by Samuel R. Delany, an excerpt from Brian Aldiss's forthcoming autobiography, Gregory Benford's Afterword to his forthcoming *Foundation's Fear*, plus articles by Jessica Amanda Salmonson and others. Subscription: \$31.00 per year to Dragon Press, Box 78, Pleasantville NY 10570.

*Plot: A Magazine of Speculative Fiction*—Teresa Williams, ed. #7, Fall 1996, \$3.95, quarterly, 62pp, 21 x 28 cm. Small-press magazine "designed to encourage new and emerging writers in the genres of fantasy, science fiction, horror, and suspense," with 13 stories. This issue features horror. Subscription: \$14.00 for 4 issues to Calypso Publishing, P.O. Box 1351, Sugar Land TX 77487-1351.

*Robert E. Howard's Fight Magazine*—Robert M. Price,

ed. #4 [October 1996], \$5.00, 40pp, 17½ x 21½ cm. Fiction and poetry by Howard, most previously unpublished non-fantasy. Cover by Jason Eckhardt. Info: Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick, RI 02893. (No subscriptions.)

*Tales of Lovecraftian Horror*—Robert M. Price, ed. Issue No. 4, Halloween 1996, \$4.50, 38pp, 14 x 22 cm. Revived Lovecraftian journal, with fiction and poetry. Information: Necronomicon Press, P.O. Box 1304, West Warwick RI 02893. (No subscriptions.)

*Tomorrow Speculative Fiction*—Algis Budrys, ed. #24, February 1997, \$5.00, bimonthly, 130pp, 21 x 27½ cm. Semi-professional fiction magazine, with novels by Virginia Baker and James Killus, novelettes by Jeffrey Green and Richard Parks, and short stories by R.G. Riel, Matthew Blaise Anticole, Kandis Elliot, Liz Farrell, Elisa Romero-McCullough, Brandy Heineman, E.A.M. Jakab, Marc Schultz, Ellen Levy Finch, Chris Roberts, Jake Burnett, Timalyne Lindquist-Frazier, and Robert J. Levy. Cover by Kandis Elliot. This is the last physical copy of the magazine, which is moving to the Internet, where "the next three will be free." This last issue can be ordered from The Unifont Co. Inc., Box 6038, Evanston IL 60204.

*Utopian Studies*—Lyman Tower Sargent, ed. Vol.7 No.2, 1996, \$20.00, irregular, iv + 434pp, 15 x 23 cm. Scholarly journal, with articles on utopias, and reviews. This special issue includes the annual directory of utopian scholars. Available free to members of the Society for Utopian Studies. Membership: \$45.00 a year, to Lyman Tower Sargent, Society for Utopian Studies, Dept. of Political Science, Univ. of Missouri- St. Louis, 8001 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis MO 63121-4499.

#### The Outer Limits

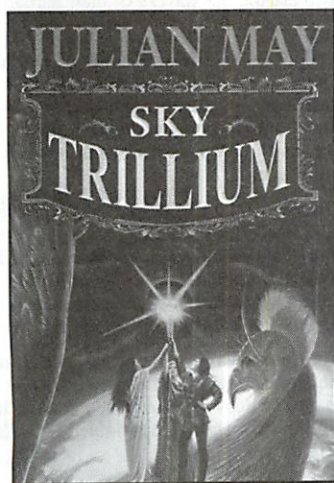
*Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*, February 1997, has (non-fantastic) horror story "Copy Dog" by Ralph McInerney.

*The Library of Congress Information Bulletin*, Sept. 30, 1996, has an article on library SF collections.

*The New York Times Book Review*, 12/8/96, has "Flaming Swords and Wizards' Orbs", an article on Tolkien-inspired fantasy fiction, especially the Robert Jordan books, by Edward Rothstein.

*Starlog* #235, February 1997, has an interview with Neil Gaiman.

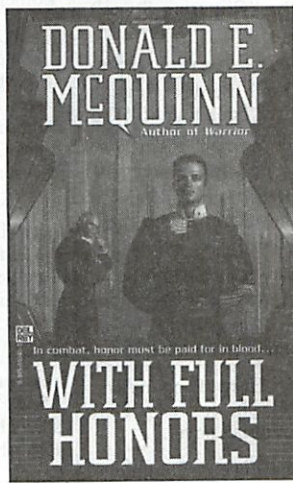
## Books Received - December



Compiled by Charles N. Brown and Carolyn Cushman. Please send all corrections to Carolyn Cushman c/o Locus. We will run all verified corrections.

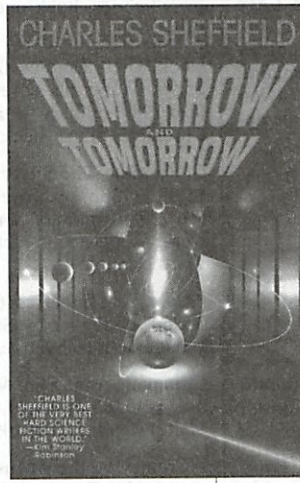
KEY: \* = first edition + = first American edition

\* Anderson, Kevin J. & Rebecca Moesta *Star Wars*:



*Young Jedi Knights: Shards of Alderaan* (Boulevard 1-57297-207-6, \$5.99, 216pp, pb, cover by Dave Dorman) Young-adult *Star Wars* novelization, seventh in the series. Copyrighted by Lucasfilm.

Anthony, Piers *Balook* (Ace 0-441-00398-2, \$5.99, 232pp, pb, cover by Patrick Woodroffe) Reprint



(Underwood-Miller 1990) young-adult SF novel about a kid and his genetically engineered prehistoric pet. Illustrated by Patrick Woodroffe.

Atwood, Margaret *Bluebeard's Egg* (Bantam 0-553-37860-0, \$10.95, 244pp, tp, cover by Heather Cooper) Reprint (McClelland & Stewart 1983) literary



Edited by Mercedes Lackey



## Books Received

collection with some fantasy.

\* Axler, James **Deathlands: Bitter Fruit** (Worldwide Library Gold Eagle 0-373-62535-9, \$5.50, 348pp, pb) Post-holocaust SF adventure novel. Copyrighted by Worldwide Library.

Baker, Scott **Ancestral Hungers** (Tor 0-312-86305-5, \$14.95, 320pp, tp, cover by Thomas Snowdon-Romer) Reprint (Tor 1995) vampire novel, an expanded version of **Dhampire** (Pocket 1982).

\* Barnes, John **Patton's Spaceship** (HarperPrism 0-06-105659-6, \$5.99, 325pp, pb, cover by Vincent DiFate) Military SF novel of war across alternate Earths. First book in the "Timeline Wars" series.

\* Barton, William **Acts of Conscience** (Warner Aspect 0-446-67251-3, \$12.99, 400pp, tp, cover by Wayne Barlowe) SF novel. A mechanic gets his own spaceship by a fluke, and finds aliens out to exterminate mankind for its greed and destructiveness.

+ Baxter, Stephen **Voyage** (HarperPrism 0-06-105258-2, \$23.00, 511pp, hc) SF novel of an alternate space program leading to the first manned landing on Mars. First US edition (HarperCollins UK 1996).

\* Bennett, Nigel & P.N. Elrod **Keeper of the King** (Baen/Starline 0-671-87759-3, \$21.00, 400pp, pb, cover by David Mattingly) Present-day Arthurian vampire novel. Packaged and copyrighted by Bill Fawcett and Associates.

Benson, E.F. **The Collected Ghost Stories of E.F. Benson** (Carroll & Graf 0-7867-0365-2, \$12.95, 624pp, tp) Reissue (Carroll & Graf; Robinson 1992) collection of 54 literary ghost stories. Edited by Richard Dalby, with a foreword by Joan Aiken. Second printing.

Bova, Ben **Brothers** (Bantam Spectra 0-553-57356-X, \$6.50, 449pp, pb, cover by Tom Hallman) Reprint (Hodder & Stoughton 1995) futuristic medical thriller.

\* Brady, Clark A. **The Burroughs Cyclopaedia** (McFarland 0-89950-896-0, \$55.00, 402pp, hc) Non-fiction, reference. An alphabetical guide to characters, places, and things found in the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs. Appendices give a chronology of events in Burroughs's fiction, selected words from featured languages, and a story map; there is an index. Available from McFarland & Company, Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640; credit card orders 800-253-2187; add \$3.00 postage.

\* Brite, Poppy Z. & Martin H. Greenberg, eds. **Love in Vein II** (HarperPrism 0-06-105333-3, \$12.00, 375pp, tp, cover by Mel Odom) Original anthology of 18 tales (one previously published) of vampiric erotica. Authors include Neil Gaiman, Lucy Taylor, and Brian Hodge. Martin H. Greenberg's name appears only on the copyright page.

Burgess, Anthony **The Wanting Seed** (Norton 0-393-31508-8, \$13.00, 285pp, tp) Reissue (Heinemann 1962) SF novel. *Soylent Green* meets "The Wasteland". Repackaged and indicated as first printing.

\* Burroughs, Edgar Rice **Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar/Jungle Tales of Tarzan** (Ballantine Del Rey 0-345-40831-4, \$5.99, 340pp, pb, cover by J. Allen St. John) Omnibus of Tarzan #5 and #6.

\* Burton, LeVar **Aftermath** (Warner Aspect 0-446-51993-6, \$22.00, 274pp, hc) Post-holocaust SF novel. A first novel.

\* Bush, Anne Kelleher **The Misbegotten King** (Warner Aspect 0-446-60331-7, \$5.99, 357pp, pb, cover by Thomas Canty) Futuristic fantasy novel, third in "The Power and the Pattern".

Calvino, Italo **The Castle of Crossed Destinies** (Harcourt Brace/Harvest 0-15-615455-2, \$12.00, 129pp, tp, cover by Shelton Walsmith) Reissue

(Secker & Warburg 1977) literary fantasy collection. 10th printing.

Calvino, Italo **If on a Winter's Night a Traveler** (Harcourt Brace/Harvest 0-15-643961-1, \$12.00, 260pp, tp, cover by Shelton Walsmith) Reissue (Harcourt Brace 1981) literary fantasy collection. 14th printing.

Calvino, Italo **Invisible Cities** (Harcourt Brace/Harvest 0-15-645380-0, \$9.00, 165pp, tp, cover by Shelton Walsmith) Reissue (Harcourt Brace 1974) literary fantasy collection. 14th printing.

Calvino, Italo **Mr. Palomar** (Harcourt Brace/Harvest 0-15-662780-9, \$9.00, 130pp, tp, cover by Shelton Walsmith) Reissue (Secker & Warburg 1985) literary quasi-fantasy collection. Seventh printing.

Calvino, Italo **Under the Jaguar Sun** (Harcourt Brace/Harvest 0-15-692794-2, \$9.00, 86pp, tp, cover by Shelton Walsmith) Reissue (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1988) literary fantasy collection. Third printing.

\* Chester, Deborah **Shadow War** (Ace 0-441-00400-8, \$6.99, 390pp, pb, cover by Mary Jo Phalen) Fantasy novel, second in the "Ruby Throne" trilogy.

\* Claremont, Chris & George Lucas **Shadow Dawn** (Bantam Spectra 0-553-09597-8, \$22.95, 415pp, hc, cover by Ciruelo Cabral) Fantasy novel, second in the "Shadow War" chronicles, a sequel to *Willow*. The book is credited as by Claremont, with "story by George Lucas." Copyrighted by Lucasfilm.

\* Clark, Trinkett & H. Nichols Clark **Myth, Magic, and Mystery: One Hundred Years of American Children's Book Illustration** (Roberts Rinehart 1-57098-079-9, \$29.95, 242pp, tp, cover by N.C. Wyeth) Non-fiction art book covering illustrations from early picture books to YA adventure and fantasy. Includes works by Maurice Sendak, Dr. Seuss, and Edward Gorey. A hardcover edition (-080-2, \$50.00) was announced but not seen. This is the catalog for a travelling museum exhibit; copyrighted by The Chrysler Museum of Art.

\* Collignon, Rick **The Journal of Antonio Montoya** (MacMurray & Beck 1-878448-69-2, \$17.00, 217pp, hc) Literary fantasy/magical realism novel. A woman artist shares her house with numerous dead relatives who speak, make coffee, and occasionally borrow her truck. MacMurray & Beck, 400 W. Hopkins, Suite 5, Aspen CO 81611-1609.

Cook, Glen **Bleak Seasons** (Tor 0-812-55532-5, \$5.99, 316pp, pb, cover by Nicholas Jainschigg) Reprint (Tor 1996) fantasy novel in the "Black Company" series, book one of the "Glittering Stone" subseries.

Cook, Glen **Shadow Games** (Tor 0-812-53382-8, \$5.99, 311pp, pb, cover by Keith Berdak) Reissue (Tor 1989) military fantasy novel, book four of "The Chronicles of the Black Company". Fourth printing.

Cook, Glen **The Silver Spike** (Tor 0-812-50220-5, \$5.99, 313pp, pb, cover by Keith Berdak) Reissue (Tor 1989) military fantasy novel, set in the same world as "The Chronicles of the Black Company". Third printing.

\* Cool, Tom **Infectress** (Baen 0-671-87763-1, \$5.99, 370pp, pb, cover by Stephen Hickman) SF novel about a high-tech bio-terrorist and an AI interface.

Crompton, Anne Eliot **Merlin's Harp** (Penguin/Roc 0-451-45583-5, \$5.99, 298pp, pb, cover by Don Maitz) Reprint (Fine 1996) Arthurian novel.

+ Crumey, Andrew **Music, in a Foreign Language** (St. Martin's/Picador 0-312-14688-4, \$22.00, 243pp, hc) Literary SF set in an imaginary police state in Britain. First US edition (Dedalus 1994); winner of Scotland's Saltire Prize for Best First Novel.

\* Dalmas, John **The Bavarian Gate** (Baen 0-671-87764-X, \$5.99, 342pp, pb, cover by Paul Alexander)

Fantasy novel, sequel to *The Lion of Farside*.

Dann, Jack **The Memory Cathedral** (Bantam 0-553-37857-0, \$10.95, 486pp, tp, cover by Tim Jacobus) Reprint (Bantam 1995) associational novel of slightly altered history, subtitled *A Secret History of Leonardo da Vinci*.

\* Davis, Brett **Hair of the Dog** (Baen 0-671-87762-3, \$5.99, 279pp, pb, cover by Bob Eggleton) Humorous werewolf novel.

de Mers, Joe **The Return** (Penguin Onyx 0-451-40729-6, \$6.99, 448pp, pb) Reprint (Dutton 1996) occult/fantasy thriller. Christ has risen.

\* Dean, J. David **Ravenetus** (Panda Publications 0-9646604-4-X, \$21.95, 379pp, hc) Fantasy novel. The key to world domination is hidden in a boy unaware of either his powers or the secret he holds.

Devlin, Dean & Roland Emmerich **Stargate** (Penguin/Signet 0-451-18410-6, \$4.99, 269pp, pb) Reissue (Signet 1994) novelization of the SF movie. Fourth printing.

DiChiara, Robert **Deal With the Devil** (Tor/Forge 0-812-51698-2, \$6.99, 394pp, pb) Reprint (Tor 1989 as *The Dick and the Devil*) dark fantasy hard-boiled detective novel. A police officer will do anything to solve his father's 40-year-old murder, including selling his soul.

\* Dickerson, Vanessa D. **Victorian Ghosts in the Noontide: Women Writers and the Supernatural** (University of Missouri Press 0-8262-1081-3, \$34.95, 166pp, hc) Non-fiction; an examination of women's changing roles in the face of technological advance in the Victorian period, an analysis of "women's spirituality in a materialistic age" as reflected in supernatural fiction. Available from the University of Missouri Press, 2910 LeMone Blvd, Columbia MO 65201; 800-828-1894.

Dickson, Gordon R. **The Final Encyclopedia, Volume 1** (Tor/Orb 0-312-86186-9, \$16.95, 349pp, tp, cover by Michael Whelan) Reprint (Tor 1984) of the first half of an SF novel in the "Childe" saga. This new edition has been corrected and revised. Also available as a Tor hardcover (-86288-1, \$25.00).

\* Dorman, Dave **Star Wars: The Art of Dave Dorman** (FPG 1-887569-37-5, \$24.95, 128pp, tp, cover by Dave Dorman) Art book. Order from FPG, 2539 Washington Rd, Bldg 1000, Pittsburgh PA 15241; 412-854-0200.

\* Dorsey, Candas Jane **Black Wine** (Tor 0-312-86181-8, \$22.95, 285pp, hc) Feminist fantasy novel. Two women seek to escape the slavery of their barbarian land.

\* Dozois, Gardner, ed. **Modern Classics of Fantasy** (St. Martin's 0-312-15173-X, \$35.00, 647pp, hc, cover by James Gurney) Anthology of 32 stories. Authors include Peter S. Beagle, Ursula K. Le Guin, John Crowley, and Terry Bisson. There is a list of recommended reading.

\* Edghill, Rosemary **The Cloak of Night and Daggers** (DAW 0-88677-724-0, \$5.99, 347pp, pb, cover by John Howe) Fantasy novel, book three of "The Twelve Treasures". A nurse rescues an elf from imprisonment in a psychiatric hospital, and helps him search for his missing Treasure.

\* Emerson, Ru Xena: **Warrior Princess: The Huntress and the Sphinx** (Boulevard 1-57297-215-7, \$5.99, 226pp, pb) Fantasy novelization, second in the series based on the TV show. Copyrighted by MCA Publishing Rights.

Etchison, Dennis **Darkside** (American Fantasy/Airgedlámh Publications 0-9610352-1-8, \$35.00, 206pp, hc) Reprint (Charter 1986) horror novel of a dark Los Angeles. This is restored and corrected somewhat from the Charter version, and has a new introduction by Ramsey Campbell, author's note from Etchison, and illustrations by Robert T. Garcia. Avail-



able from Robert T. Garcia, PO Box 41714, Chicago IL 60641.

\* Etchison, Dennis **Double Edge** (Dell 0-440-21868-3, \$5.50, 230pp, pb) Horror novel of psychological suspense with psychic elements. Murders surround a woman researching the life of Lizzie Borden.

\* Forrest, Jodie **The Elves' Prophecy** (Seven Paws Press 0-9649113-1-0, \$16.95, 400pp, tp, cover by Jodie Forrest) Historical fantasy novel, sequel to **The Rhymer and the Ravens**, a Nordic-Celtic version of the story of Tomas the Rhymer. Available from Seven Paws Press, PO Box 2345, Chapel Hill NC 27515; 919-929-4287.

\* Forstchen, William R. **Battle Hymn** (Penguin/Roc 0-451-45286-0, \$5.99, 362pp, pb) Military SF novel, fifth in "The Lost Regiment" series.

\* Foster, Alan Dean **Jed the Dead** (Ace 0-441-00399-0, \$5.99, 298pp, pb, cover by Gary Ruddell) Humorous SF novel about a travelling Texan and his dead alien buddy.

+ Gabaldon, Diana **The Drums of Autumn** (Delacorte 0-385-31140-0, \$24.95, 880pp, hc, cover by Kinuko Craft) Fourth time-travel historical novel in the "Outlander" series. Claire and Jamie settle in the New World, while daughter Brianna travels from the future to warn them. First US edition (Century 1996).

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins **The Yellow Wallpaper** (The Feminist Press at CUNY 0-912670-09-6, \$5.95, 63pp, tp) Reissue (Feminist Press 1973) ghost story, with critical afterword by Elaine R. Hedges.

Gould, Steven **Wildside** (Tor 0-812-52398-9, \$5.99, 316pp, pb, cover by Nicholas Jainschigg) Reprint (Tor 1996) SF novel. An 18-year-old controls a gateway to a rich, unpolluted world.

Grahame, Kenneth **The Wind in the Willows** (St. Martin's/GriFFin 0-312-14826-7, \$10.95, 272pp, tp, cover by Patrick Benson) Reprint (Methuen 1908) of the classic YA animal fantasy novel; this is the new (HarperCollins UK 1993) edition with illustrations by Patrick Benson to match the Horwood sequels.

\* Green, Roland J. **Conan and the Death Lord of Thanza** (Tor 0-812-55268-7, \$5.99, 267pp, pb, cover by Keegan) Novel based on the character created by Robert E. Howard.

\* Green, Terence M. **Blue Limbo** (Tor 0-312-86282-2, \$22.95, 253pp, hc) Near-future SF thriller. An ex-cop decides to clean up Toronto single-handed. Sequel to **Barking Dogs**.

Gunn, James, ed. **The Road to Science Fiction #4** (White Wolf 1-56504-822-9, \$14.99, 601pp, tp) Reprint (1982) SF anthology.

Harrison, Harry **The Stainless Steel Rat Goes to Hell** (SFBC #14465, \$10.98, 253pp, hc, cover by Walter Velez) Reprint (Tor 1996) humorous SF novel. This is similar to the Tor edition, except it lacks a price and has the SFBC number on the back jacket.

\* Hautman, Pete **Mr. Was** (Simon & Schuster 0-689-81068-7, \$16.00, 216pp, hc, cover by Vlad Guzner) Young-adult time travel novel. A boy witnesses his mother's murder, travels through a mysterious door into the past, and decides to stay there so he can prevent the murder - 55 years later.

+ Hoban, Russell **The Trokeville Way** (Knopf 0-679-88148-4, \$17.00, 118pp, hc, cover by David Bowers) Young-adult fantasy. A magician sells Nick a puzzle that transports him into a surreal world. First US edition (Cape 1996).

+ Hollick, Helen **Pendragon's Banner** (St. Martin's 0-312-14699-X, \$25.95, 547pp, hc, cover by Stephen Bradbury) Associational historical romantic Arthurian novel, book two of "Pendragon's Banner". First US edition (Heinemann UK 1995).

\* Hooper, Walter C.S. **Lewis: A Companion and Guide** (HarperSanFrancisco 0-06-063879-6, \$40.00,

940pp, hc) Nonfiction guide to Lewis's life and works, including "The Chronicles of Narnia" and the "Cosmic" trilogy. There are encyclopedic listings of the people and places in Lewis's life, a bibliography of his writings, and an index.

\* Horwood, William **Toad Triumphant** (St. Martin's 0-312-14821-6, \$19.95, 282pp, hc, cover by Patrick Benson) Animal fantasy novel; second sequel by Horwood to **The Wind in the Willows** by Kenneth Grahame, illustrated by Patrick Benson. First US edition (HarperCollins UK 1995)

\* Howe, John **The Knight with the Lion: The Story of Yvain** (Little Brown 0-316-37583-7, \$15.95, 32pp, hc, cover by John Howe) Children's picture book based on an Arthurian tale, illustrated and retold by John Howe.

Høeg, Peter **The History of Danish Dreams** (Delta

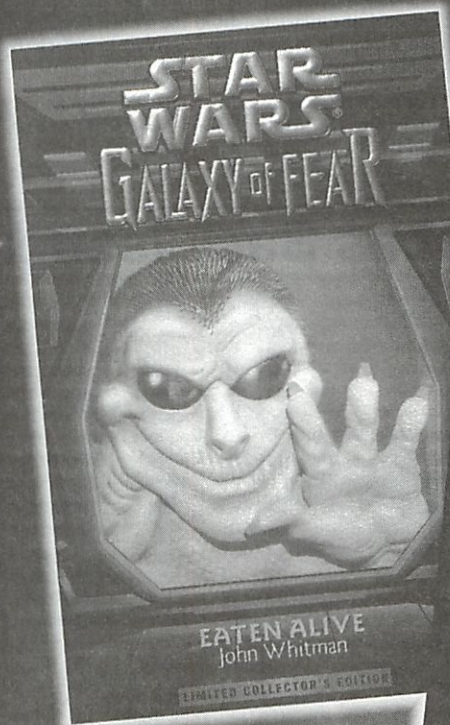
0-385-31591-0, \$12.95, 408pp, tp) Reprint (Farrar Straus Giroux 1995) literary fantasy, an ornate fairy tale and strange family history. We apparently missed the previous edition. Translated by Barbara Haveland from the Danish **Forestillin Om Det Tyvende Århundrede** (Copenhagen 1988).

Ing, Dean **Spooker** (Tor 0-812-54842-6, \$6.99, 344pp, pb) Reprint (Forge 1995) associational spy novel.

\* Jackson, Shirley **Just an Ordinary Day** (Bantam 0-553-10303-2, \$23.95, 388pp, hc, cover by Tom Hallman) Collection of 54 unpublished or previously uncollected stories, some fantasy, edited and with an introduction by Laurence Jackson Hyman and Sarah Hyman Stewart.

Kennealy-Morrison, Patricia **The Hedge of Mist** (HarperPrism 0-06-105604-9, \$5.99, 553pp, pb, cover

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by Thomas Canty) Reprint (HarperPrism 1996) fantasy novel in the "Keltiad" series, third in "The Tales of Arthur".

Kilworth, Garry Angel (Tor 0-812-54284-3, \$5.99, 320pp, pb, cover by Dave Kramer) Reprint (Gollancz 1993) horror novel about an angel pursuing demons on Earth.

Knight, Damon **In Search of Wonder** (Advent: Publishers 0-911682-31-7, \$20.00, 402pp, hc) Reprint (Advent 1956) non-fiction collection of 33 review essays on science fiction. Revised and expanded from the 1967 second edition. Third edition. This edition adds six chapters, mostly general articles on SF, not reviews. Order from Advent: Publishers, PO Box A3228, Chicago IL 60690.

Koontz, Dean **The Vision** (Berkley 0-425-09860-5, \$7.50, 353pp, pb) Reissue (Putnam 1977) horror novel. 28th printing.

\* Kube-McDowell, Michael P. **Star Wars: Tyrant's Test** (Bantam Spectra 0-553-57275-X, \$5.99, 366pp, pb, cover by Drew Struzan) Star Wars novelization, book three in **The Black Fleet Crisis**. Copyrighted by Lucasfilm.

Lackey, Mercedes **Magic's Pawn** (DAW 0-88677-352-0, \$4.99, 349pp, pb, cover by Jody Lee) Reissue (DAW 1989) fantasy novel, book one of "The Last Herald-Mage". 11th printing.

Lackey, Mercedes **Storm Breaking** (SFBC #14437, \$10.98, 386pp, hc, cover by Jody A. Lee) Reprint (DAW 1996) fantasy novel, book three of "The Mage Storms" trilogy. This is similar to the DAW edition, except it lacks a price and has the SFBC number on the back jacket.

\* Lackey, Mercedes, ed. **Sword of Ice and Other Tales of Valdemar** (DAW 0-88677-720-8, \$5.99, 350pp, pb, cover by Jody A. Lee) Original anthology of 18 fantasy stories set in Lackey's world of "Valdemar". Authors include Tanya Huff, Josepha Sherman, and Michelle Sagara.

\* Lansdale, Joe R. **Atomic Chili: The Illustrated Joe R. Lansdale** (Mojo Press 1-885418-06-X, \$24.95, 303pp, tp, cover by Dave Dorman) Collection of 10 Lansdale stories adapted in graphic format, with various artists. There is an introduction by Timothy Truman. Order from Mojo Press, PO Box 140005, Austin TX 78714; fax 512-858-7282; www.eden.com/comic/mojo.html

Lansdale, Joe R. **Writer of the Purple Rage** (Carroll & Graf 0-7867-0389-X, \$5.95, 304pp, pb) Reprint (CD Publications 1994) collection.

Lawrence, Martha C. **Murder in Scorpio** (St. Martin's 0-312-95984-2, \$5.50, 227pp, pb) Reprint (St. Martin's 1995) psychic-detective mystery.

Le Guin, Ursula K. **Unlocking the Air** (HarperCollins 0-06-092803-4, \$12.00, 207pp, tp, cover by Paul Klee) Reprint (HarperCollins 1996) collection of 18 "mainstream" stories, about half with fantasy elements.

Lem, Stanislaw **Highcastle** (Harcourt Brace/Harvest 0-15-600472-0, \$11.00, 146pp, tp) Reprint (Harcourt Brace 1995) non-fiction autobiography. A memoir of Lem's youth, translated from the Polish (Wydawnictwo Literackie, Krakow 1975 as *Wysoki zamek*) by Michael Kandel.

\* Lottman, Herbert R. **Jules Verne: An Exploratory Biography** (St. Martin's 0-312-14636-1, \$26.95, 360pp, hc) Non-fiction. A biography of Jules Verne that draws on previously unpublished letters and pa-

pers.

\* Lumley, Brian **Titus Crow** (Tor 0-312-86299-7, \$24.95, 347pp, hc, cover by Bob Eggleton) Omnibus of the first two novels in the Lovecraftian "Titus Crow" series, **The Burrowers Beneath** (1974) and **The Transition of Titus Crow** (1975, revised 1991).

Maloney, Mack **Wingman: The Circle War** (Zebra/Pinnacle 0-7860-0346-4, \$4.99, 413pp, pb) Reissue (Zebra 1987) post-holocaust SF adventure novel, second in the series. Sixth printing.

\* Manz, Elizabeth **Scare Tactics** (St. Martin's 0-312-95792-0, \$5.99, 329pp, pb) Horror novel. A writer's son is drawn into a supernatural horror novel. A first novel.

\* Marlow, Gordon Robert **Vincent's Revenge** (Baillie Caymar Publishing 1-887500-00-6, \$8.00, 216pp, tp, cover by Ronald Garcia) Collection of two novellas, one dealing with Van Gogh's ghost, the other an SF story of a sensitive killer in a too-nice future. Available from Baillie Caymar Publishing, 1951 Port Edward Place, Newport Beach CA 92660.

\* May, Julian **Sky Trillium** (Ballantine Del Rey 0-345-38000-2, \$12.95, 389pp, tp, cover by Mark Harrison) Fantasy novel, sequel to **Blood Trillium**, May's solo sequel to **Black Trillium**, the collaboration by Andre Norton, Julian May, and Marion Zimmer Bradley.

\* McConnell, Ashley **The Courts of Sorcery** (Ace 0-441-00393-1, \$5.99, 215pp, pb, cover by Duane O. Myers) Fantasy novel. Book three of the "Demon Wars" trilogy.

McDonald, Ian **Evolution's Shore** (Bantam Spectra 0-553-57309-8, \$5.99, 401pp, pb, cover by John Jude Palencar) Reprint (Gollancz 1995 as *Chaga*) SF novel

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of alien contact and genetic change at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro.

\* McQuinn, Donald E. **With Full Honors** (Ballantine Del Rey 0-345-40045-3, \$5.99, 374pp, pb, cover by Donato Giancola) Military SF novel. A captain assigned to a backwater planet discovers plots that could undermine the empire.

Miller, Sasha **Ladybird** (Tor 0-812-54949-X, \$6.99, 392pp, pb, cover by Tristan Elwell) Reprint (Tor 1996) fantasy novel. A woman quests for a position of power in an Asia-like world ruled by men.

\* Murphy, Shirley Rousseau **Cat under Fire** (HarperPrism 0-06-105601-4, \$5.50, 244pp, pb, cover by Joe Burleson) Fantasy mystery, second in the series featuring talking-cat detectives Joe Grey and Dulcie.

\* Myers, Bill **Blood of Heaven** (HarperCollins/Zondervan 0-310-20119-5, \$12.99, 326pp, tp, cover by Edwin Herder) Christian-oriented thriller in which non-human DNA is found in a relic of Christ, and injected into a human guinea pig.

Nesbit, E. **Five Children and It** (Penguin/Puffin Classics 0-14-036735-7, \$3.99, 237pp, tp, cover by Stewart Bodek) Reprint (Unwin 1902) classic juvenile fantasy novel. This edition follows the Puffin 1959 edition, with a new jacket.

Newman, Kim **The Bloody Red Baron** (AvoNova 0-380-72714-5, \$5.99, 370pp, pb) Reprint (Carroll & Graf 1995) alternate-history vampire novel, sequel to *Anno Dracula*.

Norton, Andre **The Warding of Witch World** (SFBC #14378, \$10.98, 560pp, hc, cover by Kevin Johnson) Reprint (Warner Aspect 1996) fantasy novel, "Secrets of the Witch World" #3. The final "Witch World" novel. This is similar to the Warner Aspect edition, except it lacks a price and has the SFBC number on the back jacket.

\* Nylund, Eric **A Game of Universe** (AvoNova 0-380-78541-2, \$5.50, 355pp, pb, cover by Eric Peterson) Fantasy novel. A corporate assassin wagers his soul in a deadly quest.

O'Leary, Patrick **Door Number Three** (Tor 0-312-86287-3, \$14.95, 384pp, tp, cover by Nicholas Jainschigg) Reprint (Tor 1995) philosophical SF novel in the Philip K. Dick quasi-reality style.

\* Oates, Joyce Carol, ed. **American Gothic Tales** (Penguin/Plume 0-452-27489-3, \$14.95, 547pp, tp, cover by Albert Pinkham Ryder) Anthology of 46 literary stories of horror and suspense, arranged chronologically. Authors include Washington Irving, Joyce Carol Oates, Anne Rice, Harlan Ellison, and Stephen King.

\* Olton, Jerry **Star Trek: Mudd in Your Eye** (Pocket 0-671-00260-0, \$5.99, 280pp, pb) Star Trek novelization, #81 in the series. Copyrighted by Paramount Pictures.

Orwell, George **1984** (Penguin/Signet Classic 0-451-52493-4, \$5.95, 268pp, pb) Reissue (Secker & Warburg 1949) classic dystopian SF novel. This follows the 1981 edition with the updated bibliography. 94th printing.

\* Osburn, Jesse **Only Child** (Avon Flare 0-380-78043-7, \$3.99, 245pp, pb) Young-adult horror novel. Only children disappear mysteriously at a seaside resort.

\* Parkes, Michael **Michael Parkes: Stone Lithographs and Bronze Sculptures 1982-1996** (Steltman 90-71867-11-0, \$19.95, 93pp, tp, cover by Michael Parkes) Art book. A collection of reproductions of Parkes' fantastic art. There is an introduction by John Russell Taylor.

\* Pascal, Francine **Kiss of a Killer** (Bantam Sweet Valley 0-553-57049-8, \$3.99, 199pp, pb, cover by Bruce Emmett) Young-adult vampire horror novel, third in the "Vampire" trilogy, and #128 in the "Sweet

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Paxson, Diana L. **The Lord of Horses** (AvoNova 0-380-76528-4, \$5.99, 373pp, pb, cover by Donato Giancola) Reprint (Morrow 1996) fantasy novel, the third book in the "Wodan's Children" trilogy.

\* Peel, John **Star Trek, the Next Generation: Death of Princes** (Pocket 0-671-56808-6, \$5.99, 276pp, pb) Star Trek novelization. Copyrighted by Paramount Pictures.

Pini, Wendy & Richard Pini **Elfquest: Journey to Sorrow's End** (Ace 0-441-18371-9, \$5.99, 320pp, pb, cover by Wendy Pini) Reissue (Underwood-Miller 1982) novelization based on the fantasy comic books. Second Ace printing.

Powers, Tim **The Anubis Gates** (Ace 0-441-00401-6, \$12.00, 387pp, tp, cover by Jean Francois Podevin) Reprint (Ace 1983) fantasy novel. Winner of the Philip K. Dick Award.

Roberson, Jennifer **Shapechangers** (DAW 0-88677-140-4, \$4.99, 221pp, pb, cover by Julek Heller) Reissue (DAW 1984) fantasy novel, first book of the "Chronicles of the Cheysuli". 11th printing.

\* Ruff, Matt **Sewer, Gas, and Electric** (Atlantic Monthly 0-87113-641-4, \$23.00, 450pp, hc, cover by Elaine Cardella) Near-future post-literary SF novel. "A madcap ride through NYC in the year 2023." People live in the walls of the New York Public Library.

\* Runté, Robert & Yves Meynard, eds. **Tesseract 5** (Tesseract 1-895836-25-5, C\$8.95, 352pp, pb, cover by David Vereschagin) Original anthology of 33 stories, eight previously published, by Canadian writers. Authors include Elisabeth Vonarburg (in translation), Candace Jane Dorsey, and James Alan Gardner. A limited hardcover edition (-26-3, C\$21.95) was announced but not seen. Order from The Books Collective, 214-21 10405 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton Alberta Canada T5J 0X2; 403-448-0590; add \$3.00 postage; US orders pay in US dollars.

Rusch, Kristine Kathryn **Star Wars: The New Rebellion** (SFBC #14441, \$8.98, 386pp, hc, cover by Drew Struzan) Reprint (Bantam Spectra 1996) novelization based on characters from the movies. This is similar to the Bantam Spectra edition, except it lacks a price and has the SFBC number on the back jacket.

Saberhagen, Fred **Brother Assassin** (Tor 0-812-53642-8, \$5.99, 219pp, pb, cover by Martin Andrews) Reprint (Ballantine 1969) SF novel in the "Berserker" series.

\* Sandner, David **The Fantastic Sublime: Romanticism and Transcendence in Nineteenth-Century Children's Fantasy Literature** (Greenwood Press 0-313-30084-4, \$49.95, 160pp, hc) Non-fiction, critical. A discussion of romanticism in fairy tales and other children's literature, with specific discussions

of Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*, George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind*, and Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market". Includes bibliography and index. Order from Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport CT 06881; credit card orders: 800-225-5800.

\* Sheffield, Charles **Tomorrow and Tomorrow** (Bantam Spectra 0-553-37808-2, \$13.95, 375pp, tp, cover by Bruce Jensen) SF novel. A man freezes himself and his dying wife in hope of finding a future cure, and wakes millions of years in the future.

\* Smedman, Lisa **Shadowrun: The Lucifer Deck** (Penguin/Roc 0-451-45377-8, \$5.99, 279pp, pb, cover by Carl Gallian) Novelization based on the role-playing games. Copyrighted by FASA.

\* Smith, Guy N. **Water Rites** (Zebra/Pinnacle 0-8217-5553-6, \$4.99, 253pp, pb) Horror novel.

\* Smith, Jennifer Anne **Rice: A Critical Companion** (Greenwood Press 0-313-29612-X, \$29.95, 193pp, hc) Non-fiction, critical guide focusing on Rice's non-erotic supernatural fiction. Includes a brief biography, bibliography and index. Order from Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport CT 06881; credit card orders: 800-225-5800.

\* Stableford, Brian **Fables & Fantasies** (Necronomicon Press no ISBN, \$4.95, 30pp, ph, cover by Joey Zone) Chapbook collection of ten pieces, two original to this volume, with illustrations by Joey Zone. Order from Necronomicon Press, PO Box 1304, West Warwick RI 02893.

Stasheff, Christopher **The Star Stone Book 2: The Sage** (Ballantine Del Rey 0-345-39244-2, \$5.99, 341pp, pb, cover by Stephen Youll) Reprint (Del Rey 1996) fantasy novel, second in the series.

\* Stone, Del, Jr. **Dead Heat** (Mojo Press 1-885418-10-8, \$24.95, 187pp, hc, cover by Dave Dorman) Horror novel about a zombie biker out to save the world. Illustrations by Dave Dorman and Scott Hampton. A first novel by a noted short horror writer. Available from Mojo Press, PO Box 140005, Austin TX 78714; [www.eden.com/comics/mojo.html](http://www.eden.com/comics/mojo.html)

\* Stork, David G., ed. **HAL's Legacy: 2001's Computer as Dream and Reality** (The MIT Press 0-262-19378-7, \$22.50, 384pp, hc) Non-fiction collection of 16 articles that look at the way computers have developed, using Clarke's creation HAL as a touchstone. There is a foreword by Arthur C. Clarke.

+ Storm, L. Elizabeth **Quantum Leap: Angels Unaware** (Boulevard 1-57297-206-8, \$5.99, 308pp, pb, cover by Stephen Gardner) Novelization based on the TV show. Copyrighted by MCA Publishing Rights.

\* Tiptree, James, Jr. **Houston, Houston, Do You Read?** (SFBC #13970, \$7.98, 150pp, hc, cover by Bob Eggleton) SF novella; first individual book publication. A Hugo and Nebula Award winner, part of the SFBC Collection. The introduction is by David



## Books Received

G. Hartwell. Special price of \$2.98 with any purchase.

+ Tolkien, J.R.R. & Christopher Tolkien **The Peoples of Middle-Earth** (Houghton Mifflin 0-395-82760-4, \$27.95, 482pp, hc) Collection of early texts showing the evolution of Tolkien's Middle Earth, along with later writings of Tolkien, looking back on his work. Volume 12 of "The History of Middle Earth". First American edition (HarperCollins UK 1996).

\* Turtledove, Harry **Thessalonica** (Baen 0-671-87761-5, \$5.99, 408pp, pb, cover by Darrell K. Sweet) Roman fantasy novel. A shoemaker defends his city from pagan forces from the north.

Vance, Jack **Night Lamp** (SFBC #14438, \$11.98, 380pp, hc, cover by Vladimir Nenov) Reprint (Underwood 1996) SF novel. A young man searches for the past hidden by his recently murdered adoptive parents. This is similar to the Tor 1996 edition, except it lacks a price and has the SFBC number on the back jacket.

\* Verne, Jules **Paris in the Twentieth Century** (Random House 0-679-44434-3, \$21.00, 222pp, hc, cover by Marc Burkhardt) SF novel, a dystopian view of the future as seen in 1863. This is the trunk novel published in 1994 by Hachette Livre as **Paris au XX<sup>e</sup> Siècle**, translated by Richard Howard, with an introduction by Eugen Weber.

Watkins, Graham **Virus** (St. Martin's 0-312-96003-4, \$5.99, 438pp, pb) Reprint (Carroll & Graf 1995) SF thriller about computer viruses that affect humans.

\* West, Paul **Sporting With Amaryllys** (Overlook

Press 0-87951-666-6, \$19.95, 158pp, hc, cover by Michael Hornburg) Literary fantasy. Young John Milton encounters living myth in London, a woman who teaches him about sex and poetry.

Williams, Tad **The Dragonbone Chair** (DAW 0-88677-384-9, \$6.99, 783pp, pb, cover by Michael Whelan) Reissue (DAW 1988) fantasy novel, first volume of "Memory, Sorrow, and Thorn". 14th printing.

Williams, Tad **Stone of Farewell** (DAW 0-88677-480-2, \$6.99, 749pp, pb, cover by Michael Whelan) Reissue (DAW 1990) fantasy novel, second volume of "Memory, Sorrow, and Thorn". 12th printing.

Williams, Tad **Tailchaser's Song** (DAW 0-88677-374-1, \$6.99, 375pp, pb, cover by Braldt Bralds) Reissue (DAW 1985) feline fantasy novel. 15th printing.

\* Williams, Walter Jon **City on Fire** (HarperPrism 0-06-105213-2, \$22.00, 498pp, hc, cover by Tim White) Urban fantasy novel, sequel to **Metropolitan**.

\* Wulffson, Don **Future Fright: Tales of High-Tech Terror** (Lowell House Juvenile 1-56565-393-9, \$5.95, 95pp, pb, cover by Scott Fray) Original collection of six SF horror stories for young adults. Lowell House Juvenile, 2029 Century Park East, Suite 3290, Los Angeles CA 90067.

Yolen, Jane, ed. **Xanadu 3** (Tor 0-312-86303-9, \$15.95, 319pp, tp, cover by Tony Roberts) Reprint (Tor 1995) original fantasy anthology.

\* Zeuschner, Robert B. **Edgar Rice Burroughs: The Exhaustive Scholar's and Collector's Descriptive Bibliography** (McFarland 0-7864-0183-4, \$46.50,

287pp, hc) Non-fiction, reference. A bibliography of Burroughs' works, with a short biography, an autobiographical sketch by Burroughs, and foreword by Philip José Farmer. Illustrated with reproductions of pulp magazine covers and first-edition dust jackets. Supplementary lists of other bibliographies, fanzines, works about Burroughs artists, works based on Burroughs' work, and collectors' information are also included. Available from McFarland & Company, Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640; credit card orders 800-253-2187; add \$3.00 postage.

December 1996		Year to Date	
SF Novels	13	SF Novels	224
Fantasy Novels	21	Fantasy Novels	178
Horror Novels	4	Horror Novels	86
Anthologies	5	Anthologies	118
Collections	4	Collections	84
Reference	3	Reference	28
History/Criticism	6	History/Criticism	43
Media Related	9	Media Related	176
Young Adult	4	Young Adult	107
SF	1	SF	27
Fantasy	1	Fantasy	43
Horror	2	Horror	36
Other	0	Other	1
Omnibus	2	Omnibus	34
Art/Humor	4	Art/Humor	29
Miscellaneous	3	Miscellaneous	87
Total New:	78	Total New:	1194
Reprints & Reissues:	59	Reprints & Reissues	708
Total:	137	Total:	1902

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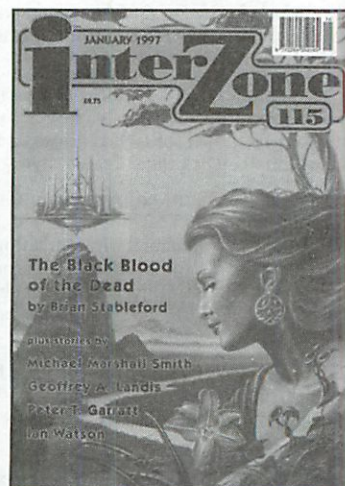
**August 1995:** Fiction by Paul J. McAuley, Charles Stross, Mary Soon Lee, Barrington J. Bayley, Geoffrey A. Landis.

**July 1995:** Fiction by Jennifer Swift, Don Webb, Ben Jeapes, Brian Stableford, Mike O'Driscoll.

**June 1995:** Fiction by Eric Brown, Paul Di Filippo, Stephen Bowkett, Neil Jones, Alastair Reynolds.

**March 1995:** Fiction by David Garnett, Brian Aldiss, Lilith Moon, Geoff Ryman, Astrid Julian.

**February 1994:** Fiction by Paul Park, Mary A. Turzillo, Brian Aldiss, Ben Jeapes, Thomas Marcinko.



January 1997

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## Distillations by Mark R. Kelly

Continued from page 14

planet Tempest, a colony world where young Civ lives with his father Illie and Illie's new woman friend Yun. They are on a hike in the wilderness together, climbing over glaciers where animals lie trapped in ice, ready to revive when the planet's cycle of extreme climatic changes swings back to warmth. Civ's mother died recently in an accident, and Civ is uncomfortable and sullen to both his father and to Yun. They see a large creature, a surus, almost melted out of the ice, and that night Civ lies awake wondering if the creature has gotten loose. Reed does an excellent job portraying the confused emotions of a troubled young boy. Fortunately for the story, the implied danger of the story's illustration doesn't occur; instead the SFnal premise about thawing monsters serves as an illuminating metaphor to an insight into human feelings.

Thomas M. Disch's "The Children's Fund to Save the Dinosaurs: A Charity Appeal" is a two-page letter addressed to [Name Here] soliciting funds to mount expeditions to remote parts of the world to find the last remaining dinosaurs, if any. It's a perfect replica of such all-too-familiar letters, and Disch plays on the public's gullibility and ignorance of science by slyly suggesting that the survival of dinosaurs is no more unlikely than, say, the existence of UFOs! If this letter were sent out, people would send money.

Paul Di Filippo's "The Jackdaw's Last Case" is an alternate history, of sorts, about Franz Kafka and superman. Or rather, Franz Kafka as superman. In 1925, New York thugs engaged in white slavery are foiled by a caped crusader called the Jackdaw. Meanwhile, Franz Kafka is employed by a newspaper writing an advice column called "Ask Josephine" that offers obscure, metaphorical answers to his readers' domestic turmoils. He has a pet coworker Millie who chides him for being out of touch and notices that his name is like "kavka", the Czech word for jackdaw. Subsequently, Kafka as Jackdaw faces a villain whose Zionist rant recalls disturbing feelings from his past. The story combines comic-strip action with lurid examples of Kafka's worldview, parts that don't mesh easily into a single story, though they're inventive and insightful in turn.

The lead story in the March *Asimov's* is Ian McDonald's "After Kerry". Set in early 21st-century Dublin, it begins at the funeral of the narrator's mother, who was roundly disliked by all her children; one sibling, Kerry, disappeared three years ago without a word, as if to escape. Now brother Stephen O'Neill sets about tracking her down, to bring her back into a family free of the mother's oppression. He comes into contact with "multis," people who are "channeling" aliens from Epsilon Eridani, and he visits Kerry's psychotherapist, who tells him about dissociative reactions and multiple personalities. Kerry has become involved in a multi research project to build a device that can rewrite memories – she has found a way to escape into being another person.

A recurring theme in the story is how fragmented 21st-century society has become, broken into various tribal groups or micro-cultures. But the themes and story elements don't quite hang together; this reads like one in a series of stories, probably centering around the coming of the Eridani aliens, who are peripheral to Kerry's story. This is, rather, a character-driven story, with an especially forceful portrait of the mother's oppression and its impact on her family.

William Sanders, a writer whose Indian-themed stories have turned up in the last couple Dozois annual best anthologies, provides "The Undiscovered", a title which is a clue to the identity of the central figure. A Cherokee narrator tells of the time when a white man came to his town, a man marooned on a sea voyage to Virginia in 1591. The man's name, pantomimed by waving a spear in the air, is apparently Spearshaker. He picks up the native tongue and is soon explaining to the bemused natives the idea of a "play," which is like pretending, and something like a dance, but not exactly like either. Eventually Spearshaker composes

a version of the Hamlet story suitable for his audience, and Sanders describes the sometimes hilarious problems of putting on the show. Sanders ends with a set of notes about Elizabethan spelling, the Cherokee language, etc., which don't seem particularly necessary except to reassure us of the author's authority.

Andy Duncan achieves a different kind of linguistic intensity in "Beluthahatchie", a story told in steep southern vernacular by John, a blues singer on a train ride to Hell. John decides to stay on the train one further stop, where at the deserted station at Beluthahatchie he's met by the devil himself, a sunburnt white man in an old Terraplane car who is an image of embedded white racism. Their interaction is both a contest of wits and battle of wills.

New writer Kage Baker's "Noble Mold" is set in historical California at the Mission in Santa Barbara. The players are immortal operatives for the "Company" who get a priority-one order to procure a certain grape vine. The local operative then has to engage in delicate negotiations with the family that owns the vine, a task that quickly complicates through a series of misunderstandings. I wish there had been a bit more about the nature and purposes of the Company; instead the scope of the story focuses on the seriocomic of the vine negotiations, which is handled amusingly enough. (Except I wondered why the whole vine was necessary; wouldn't any small genetic sample suffice?)

Stephen Dedman's "Tour de Force" describes several scientists gathering at a remote spot in western Australia. The time is some decades after aliens called the Lagva have contacted Earth and upset its economy with all sorts of new technology. Now an alien spaceship has been found buried in the rocks of Australia, not a Lagva ship, but something from even more advanced aliens. Scientists arriving to examine it are confronted by mercenary thieves, and two sides try to bluff each other with speculation on the function of the alien craft and the devices inside. The story gently parodies the presumption of a perspective influenced by reading science fiction – obviously, goes one suggestion, a spaceship would need a manual control for the airlock, right? The danger of making such rash assumptions provides the neat twist of the story's climax.

Brian Stableford's "Inside Out" concerns a woman undergoing therapy for the trauma she's suffered in a Great War that has been underway for 17 years. She's being given drugs that cause unsettling dreams of strange times and places. Scientists in her world are aware of parallel worlds, but none that correspond to anything in the woman's dreams. They argue among themselves about the benefit of continuing the woman's treatment as part of a research project in psychic boosting. The premise is less hard-edged than in most of Stableford's work, but the story does give insight into rivalry among scientists and how remote scientists' concerns can be from those of the patients.

Ben Bova and Rick Wilber's "The Babe, the Iron Horse, and Mr. McGillicuddy" is a baseball fantasy that begins with a collection of famous players (including, incidentally, Fidel Castro) gathering in a field while a morose Babe Ruth watches from the stands. Unlike the baseball stories of a few years ago by John Kessel and Bruce McAllister, which focused more on character, this story quickly gets deep into a play by play account of a long game. The story requires readers with more knowledge of and interest in baseball than I can muster.

S. N. Dyer's "The Nostalgonauts" provides a welcome antidote with a science fictional bite as two high school technonerd debate going the prom. Time travel has been, or will be, discovered, but a very limited time travel that allows only trips 25 years into the past, for 30 seconds at a time. The only way people of the story experience it is in anticipating their future selves – the nostalgonauts – appearing at events like weddings and proms to advertise their prosperity to their earlier selves. Gar, who hopes to be the one to invent time travel, and his friend do go to the prom, and what happens there more than fulfills their expectations.

In the course of compiling the year-end list of recommended reading over the past few weeks (of December), I spot read stories in a number of magazines and anthologies that I didn't get around to reviewing in full this past year.

My sporadic reading in *Analog* first turned up G. David Nordley's "Martian Valkyrie" in the January issue, a new story in his near-future series about the exploration of the solar system. Two manned expeditions embark for Mars, the first a UN-sponsored mission, large, elaborately planned, and conservatively crewed (mostly by Islamic men), the second a daredevil rival mission by an ex-UN planner using riskier maneuvers and a smaller crew – including an outspoken, uninhibited woman, the Valkyrie of the title. Inevitably, the safe mission has problems and the daredevils come to the rescue. The story shows, dramatically and excitingly, how complex missions are subject to spectacular failures – all too reminiscent of some recent NASA failures. Nordley's premise that the dichotomy between over-engineering and lean & mean corresponds to personality differences between men and women is not particularly convincing; a better distinction might have been bureaucratic over-planning vs. individualism.

February's issue included a fine James White story, "Un-Birthday Boy". The title character is a boy who is estranged from his family; he's kept in a separate room, he washes himself so he doesn't smell, and he doesn't have birthday parties like the other children in the family. And sometimes his father comes into his room and does nasty things to him. These oddities are explained in a revelation that depends on a classic science fictional shift of perspective; things we thought literal turn out to be figures of speech, and vice versa. David Brin's "An Ever-Reddening Glow" in the same issue describes an encounter between a human starship and aliens from the intergalactic Corps of Obligate Pragmatists. The starship's propulsion, using "basic implosive geometrodynamics," is having drastic effects on the ecology of the universe, and the aliens beg the humans to stop. The premise is a clever bit of physics-based technobabble, more abstruse yet more plausible than the Star Trek equivalent.

April's issue has Paul Levinson's "The Copyright Notice Case", a sequel to a couple of earlier stories about a forensic scientist, Phil D'Amato, who doubles as a criminal investigator. This one is a puzzling murder mystery: a scientist working on the human genome project is found dead of mysterious causes beneath a computer screen displaying the words "copyright notice." Levinson relates as D'Amato investigates into the genome project in huge chunks of explication, and then raises the stakes with further deaths in the same mysterious circumstances. The hypothesis that D'Amato pursues involves a message encoded in DNA from some ancient branch of humanity – something like the god-code in pi in Sagan's *Contact*. Levinson strains plausibility with endless speculative dialogue about how such a code could trigger modern day computers to cause someone's death – but that he can suggest a way it could happen at all is pretty amazing.

The same issue has Sarah Zettel's "Under Pressure", a prototypical hard-SF puzzle story of the near future. It's about an ambitious project to restore life in the Great Lakes using artificial symbiotes to leach out toxins from host organisms, like fish. Now the fish have mysteriously started dying, and the project director is ready to scapegoat the designer of the symbiote and shut down the project, unless the scientists working on the lake can find the correct answer first. The speculative hypothesis – the artificial symbiotes – is an essential though not central component of the story; the payoff is in perceiving unforeseen consequences of the complexity of a system, a fundamental and seldom depicted aspect of the pursuit of science.

In the June issue is Ben Bova's "Appointment in Sinai", which refers to an area on Mars that is the site of the first manned expedition there. Through VR technology, millions of people on Earth witness the



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event. Bova follows four of them, in cyclic fashion: a female astronaut rejected for the mission; a Latino student lacking motivation in L.A.; a scientist who believes robot explorers could do the job just as well; and a Proxmire-like senator eager to end such wasteful spending. All of them tune in, even the senator, and Bova demonstrates that the near-personal experience of witnessing the landing changes all of their opinions, one way or another, and not necessarily the way one might predict.

The August issue has Spider Robinson's "Orphans of Eden", a meditation about a story more than a story. The narrator is the author, sitting down in his dining room to write, when a man, obviously a time traveler, pops into the room. The traveler has come to Robinson, as the writer of certain novels dealing with human dilemmas, for help with an ancient problem: how to solve human conflicts and create a perfect society. Their dialogue comprises a thought experiment about isolating a group of infants and raising them free of any cultural constraints. The discussion is interesting to a point, but then disappointing because Robinson gives no clue that he's aware of the possible answers to these questions that real science of the past couple of decades (namely "evolutionary psychology") has offered. Instead the story only asks the questions, as if the answers are too horrible to contemplate even in fiction.

November's issue has a novella by G. David Nordley, "Fugue on a Sunken Continent", set on the fictionally engineered planet of Epona. (An accompanying article by Wolf Read describes the details, and the genesis, of Epona.) Humans have set up a colony on Epona among the native Uthers, avian beings whose names are sequences of four tones. The Uthers are primitive technologically compared to humans but are catching on fast. Two humans get lost in the jungle and are captured by an Uther faction competing with humans to build a starbase in the inner system. There's a lot of good stuff in the story – especially a scene in which the two humans have to crawl up inside a giant, living snail – but it doesn't add up to a cohesive whole, as if this is only the first story in a series. (Thus a strong-willed character named Anna, and a cybernetic theme, are introduced at the beginning of the story and then forgotten.)

The Williamson Effect is a tribute anthology to Jack Williamson composed mostly of stories that play off the themes of Williamson's most famous works – the humanoids, seetee, etc. The best stories are those that do something a little different.

Frederik Pohl's "The Mayor of Mare Tranq" is an alternate-history exercise that traces the life of Johnny Williamson from humble beginnings in Arizona to an elected office in Washington and then a military career during the war. He's in Dallas on a certain fateful day in 1963, and as a reward for saving JFK's life, he's granted a waiver to the age requirement for becoming an astronaut. A berth on Apollo 11 leads to a further sequence of events that ends with the his involvement in establishing an actual lunar colony. It's a far-fetched but clever story, as if Pohl tried to imagine what possible history could have put Jack Williamson on the moon.

Ben Bova's "Risk Assessment" starts on a lunar colony run by a triumvirate of two people and one master computer called Alpha One. The two people, one a woman named C.T. Shockley, argue about the risks of staging an experiment using antimatter, an experiment crucial toward the launching of a starship to Alpha Centauri. The computer dispassionately sides with her opponent because of the small but finite risk

that the moon will be blown out of its orbit. The story makes a valid point about considering potential rewards as well as risks, but the story's main accomplishment is to imitate the flat, gosh-wow style of science fiction from the early part of Williamson's career.

John Brunner's "Thinkertoy" is something of a cross between "The Humanoids" and "Mimsy Were the Borogoves". Two children become fascinated by department store gizmos with which they build an over-protective robot. Their father is concerned; he doesn't understand his children ever since an accident killed their mother. The story is unfortunately thin, ending with a weak payoff involving a revelation about the accident that killed the mother rather than anything essential to the SFnal premise.

Fred Saberhagen's "The Bad Machines" brings together Williamson's Humanoids and Saberhagen's own famous SF machines, the berserkers. A two-person ship reaches a battle zone surrounding a region of negative gravity space, where lies a space station besieged by berserkers. On board they find other machines, guardian Humanoids, who refuse to let the humans fight at all for their own protection. In their frustration, the humans gradually perceive that maybe the two races of machines need each other, in some symbiotic fashion. This is a fascinating idea, but it's laboriously arrived at and might have better served as the premise, rather than the conclusion, of a more interesting story.

Poul Anderson's "Inside Passage" plays off the theme of Williamson's *Darker Than You Think*, about a race of vampire-like creatures. Anderson tells of Bulosan, a physicist, and Ed Mihalek, a detective, who become friends through the Sierra Club in the San Francisco Bay area. Ed describes a crazy case about someone who believes in a mutant race that can take other shapes. Soon thereafter, Bulosan witnesses a wraithlike creature attack Ed, and then Ed collapses with a heart attack. Now Bulosan is pursuing Ed's story on a cruise ship heading up the coast to Alaska. He follows a suspect from the ship via a private airplane deep into the interior of the Alaskan wilderness. The story is better written, more fleshed out, than most of the stories in the book, with an unusual setting and an effective sense of ominous dread. There's also an interesting subtheme, recalling Saberhagen's story, about the dependency of this mutant race on humans, compared to humans' dependency on other creatures.

The best story in the book is Connie Willis's "Nonstop to Portales", a story that, like Pohl's, concerns Jack Williamson as subject. Carter Stewart arrives in Portales, New Mexico, the day before an interview for a job he's not even sure he wants. There's nothing to do in town except hitch along with a bus tour he spots. The bus goes to various sites connected to a certain famous writer, one that Carter has never heard of; it stops at the ranch where he grew up, the shack where he did his writing, etc. Carter begins to wonder why the tourists aboard the bus have no cameras, and about the host's odd turns of phrases, and sets off to research this writer on his own. What he learns helps him resolve his dilemma about his new job. The story is both a nifty science fictional mystery as well as a tribute to Jack Williamson through his life and his ideas.

Michael Stearns's *A Nightmare's Dozen* is a Young Adult anthology of 14 horror stories, most of which, unsurprisingly, feature youthful protagonists, basic horror themes, and familiar aspects of contemporary life such as absentee parents and nasty teachers. A good example is Nina Kiriki Hoffman's "Wonder Never Land", about Sarah, her parents, and her pesky

brother Bradley, all on a trip to the eponymous theme park. Sarah is annoyed that Bradley always seems to get his way, so when the two get stranded inside the Abracadabra Fantasti-Ride, and the ride attendants encourage Bradley to stay inside the mountain with them, Sarah is not particularly concerned. There are some subtleties, like the implication that the parents helped arrange Bradley's fate, and the creepy suggestion about the origin of a certain class of people.

Also worthwhile are Nancy Springer's "Yeah, Yeah", in which Jessie feels guilty over the recent death of her brother Jeremy. Now she starts dressing slovenly like him, and encouraging people at school to call her by his name. The predictable occurs, and then more – Jeremy somehow appears and starts taking over for real. In Jane Yolen's "Bolundeeers" a sibling tease about "volunteers" in a compost heap (that is, vegetables that grow from discarded seeds) grows into a bogeyman fear in a young boy, whose rash reaction triggers an unexpected resolution to the family's crisis over the father's death.

The best story in the book is Martha Soukup's "Alita in the Air", which has a particularly intriguing setup. Alita is a young girl flying to Arizona to spend the summer with her Uncle Roy, whom she dislikes. When she disembarks at the airport, she pulls a prank and exclaims that the man meeting her isn't her uncle at all. The flustered airport personnel send Uncle Roy away, and put Alita back on the plane home. Then, worried over her mother's reaction to her prank, Alita pulls the same prank again on her mother. From there the story slides gently in Twilight Zone land and Alita's fate leads to an insight into the secret lives of an anonymous class of service personnel. The story's effective for young adults not because it puts the youthful character in a position of vulnerability, but by creating a situation where only a young person would get herself into trouble the way she does.

— Mark R. Kelly

### Recommended stories this month:

- Poul Anderson, "Inside Passage" (The Williamson Effect)
- Stephen Dedman, "Tour de Force" (Asimov's 3/97)
- M. John Harrison, "The East" (Interzone 12/96)
- Vilma Kadleckova, "Longing for Blood" (F&SF 1/97)
- Ian McDonald, "After Kerry" (Asimov's 3/97)
- G. David Nordley, "Martian Valkyrie" (Analog 1/96)
- Robert Reed, "Blooming Ice" (SF Age 1/97)
- William Sanders, "The Undiscovered" (Asimov's 3/97)
- Martha Soukup, "Alita in the Air" (A Nightmare's Dozen)
- James White, "Un-Birthday Boy" (Analog 2/96)
- Connie Willis, "Nonstop to Portales" (The Williamson Effect)
- Robin Wilson, "Faster than a Speeding Bullet" (F&SF 1/97)
- Gene Wolfe, "No Planets Strike" (F&SF 1/97)
- Sarah Zettel, "Under Pressure" (Analog 4/96)

*Semi-professional magazines, fiction fanzines, original collections, original anthologies, plus new stories in outside sources, should be sent to Mark R. Kelly, 17959 Tribune Place, Granada Hills CA 91344 for review. A second copy should go to Locus for listing and cataloging in the "Magazines Received" or "Books Received" sections (where address and price will be mentioned) and in our yearly library index. Comments and suggestions may be sent to mrkelly@compuserve.com or mark.r.kelly@boeing.com*

## Reviews by Gary K. Wolfe

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its newness but its ageless enthusiasm: after all these decades, Williamson has never lost the explosive wonder that he discovered in SF as a child, and that he described so definitively in his autobiography.

The *Black Sun* is a dark book, both literally and figuratively – it takes place on an ancient frozen planet circling a dead star and features a good deal of violence, duplicity, and death – but it carries distinct echoes of a young Williamson still enamored of the possibilities of the universe. The marvelously evocative 1930s-style title – the sort of phrase that makes you

hope the narrative can live up to it – is only one of several devices that echo this earlier era. Williamson takes the old notion of the sense of wonder seriously enough to make it a central motivation of not one but two viewpoint characters: Carlos Mondragon, an illegal Mexican immigrant whose dreams of seeking a better life in space lead him to stow away aboard a



starship with an indeterminate destination (the quantum drive permits only random exploration), and Kip Virili, the son of the ship's biomedical officer who is enamored of pulp-style adventure stories clearly modeled on Williamson's own "Legion of Space" series (the hero is even named Captain Comet of the Legion of the Lost). The innocent enthusiasm of the young SF reader is literally transmuted into a survival mechanism, as perhaps it once was for Williamson himself.

And Williamson gives his characters a lot to survive. Since the quantum ships can't return and can't choose their destinations – they re-emerge into normal space wherever a sufficiently large gravitational well stops them – Kip, Carlos, and the other crew members find themselves stranded on an icebound planet near a dying black dwarf sun. They soon find monumental structures that suggest the planet was once inhabited by an advanced civilization, and even detect what seem to be intelligent signals – but, of course, how could any civilization survive after a billion years of darkness and near-absolute zero temperatures? Complicating matters further are a vengeful saboteur named Roak, who (when he's not molesting Kip's mom) persuades the spineless mission director to undertake a hopeless attempt at relaunching the quantum drive, and the discovery of mysterious black beads which seem to control minds – most notably that of Kip's younger sister Day, who (in the novel's most chilling and poignant moments) becomes convinced that a stuffed panda she left behind on earth is stranded out on the ice, stalked by monsters.

For all its appealing characters, *The Black Sun* is a grim book that offers its characters only the hope of surviving as a tiny isolated settlement in an unbelievably bleak world. It imagines planetary colonization, through the Starseed program which has sent out 98 ships before this one, as literally a shot in the dark: some of the ships will never reach a destination, others will find worlds as hostile as this one. It is not even particularly sanguine about human nature; Roak may be in many ways a cardboard pulp villain, but other characters are imperfect as well, and there's no guarantee that the community will survive its own internal conflicts. What this leaves us with is little more than Kip's pulp idealism and Carlos's dream of freedom – both aspects of the SFnal sense of wonder that has so defined Williamson's career. Even an existential hell, he suggests, can be subsumed by strong enough dreams.

I'm probably more interested than I ought to be in Charles Sheffield's project to revive the SF boys' book, but the very idea of such a project seems to suggest so many assumptions about incipient reader-

ship that it's worth keeping track of. Sheffield formally launched his "Jupiter" series of novels last year with his and Jerry Pournelle's *Higher Education* (reviewed in May), which concerned a surly, rebellious, working class kid who learns maturity and responsibility by working in an outer space mining colony. In Sheffield's new novel, *The Billion Dollar Boy*, a surly, spoiled, *ultra-rich* kid learns maturity and responsibility by working in an outer-space mining colony. Not since Dickens's Mr. Gradgrind have we seen such a consistent and heartfelt attempt to send kids off to work in the mines, but it's not entirely clear what young readers – who probably do not perceive this as much of an option – are supposed to make of it, or of Sheffield's depressing picture of a 22nd-century earth polarized between the unemployed masses and the super-wealthy few.

As in his earlier novels, Sheffield keeps the pace going and works out his space frontier in good movie-western tradition (there's even a *barn dance*). Shelby Crawford Jerome Prescott Cheever V begins the novel as a fat, obnoxious twit who bullies his mother into taking him on a cruise in space. Fortunately for the plot, the space cruiser has fewer precautions against unauthorized exits than your average subway train, and soon Shelby finds himself floating in space and passing through a "node" and into a mining region 27 light-years away, where he is rescued by the ship *Harvest Moon*, whose crew is unimpressed by his claims of wealth and privilege. In this environment he has to earn his keep. So in a jiffy he learns technical skills, loses weight, falls for the captain's daughter, and faces down perils from both a shadowy deep-space monster and crooked competing miners. When he returns (and his parents understandably don't seem to have made much effort to look for him), there's a strong suggestion that he'll use his wealth and privilege to right a number of social injustices.

There's nothing particularly wrong with any of this, and in fact the novel is relatively free of the kind of ideological swipe-taking that characterized *Higher Education*. Were it not for the fact that the plot is built on that earlier book's template, *The Billion Dollar Boy* would clearly seem the superior novel. But at the same time, it doesn't do much with its SF resources, and hardly seems to be the sort of thing that would prepare any young readers for the kinds of SF they are likely to encounter in the 1990s. As I've suspected before, the agenda here is not merely to recreate the giddy feel of the old Heinlein juveniles, but to recreate the industrial space milieu of that whole era of SF. Sheffield must have a hell of a good time writing these things, and it's not at all hard to have a good time reading them, but the question is

still open as to whether they're going anywhere.

Speaking of returning to old milieux, *The Dealings of Daniel Kesserich: A Study of the Mass-Insanity at Smithville* is a recently rediscovered novella by Fritz Leiber dating from the days when he counted himself a member of the Lovecraft circle (the story was first drafted in 1936, when Leiber was 26). Anything by Leiber is interesting, but an original Lovecraft-circle story not only gives us a chance to see how Leiber was already putting his own stamp on inherited kinds of material, but how such work compares with more recent Lovecraftian pastiches and hommages. The novella in question is not related to the Lovecraft cosmos itself – in fact its plot unfolds in that dimensional horror/SF mode somewhere between Frank Belknap Long and John Taine – but it certainly shoots for Lovecraftian effects, and often makes it.

But at the same time, there's a distinctly Leiberesque edge to the narrator's voice. George Kramer is not a feverish survivor who Must Set This Down On Paper Lest I Go Mad; in fact, he's a professional writer who has withheld the story from the world until later events have made it saleable. Like many of Leiber's protagonists, he's a bit of an opportunist, but soft-hearted enough to divert his vacation to rural California when he learns that the wife of a former college roommate, John Ellis, has died. But when Kramer arrives in Smithville, neither that ex-roommate nor another, an eccentric scientist named Kesserich, are anywhere to be found. Furthermore, stones appear to materialize out of the ground at random, and Kesserich's house explodes. Later, the residents of the town become haunted by the conviction that Ellis's wife, who died of accidental poisoning, may in fact have been buried alive.

Leiber sets up these mysteries and marvels in ways that could lead either to Lovecraftian elder gods or to pulpish pseudoscience, and one of the charms of the pulp mode is that it didn't really matter much which way you were headed as long as things got explained. But the explanations, when they come, reveal how ingeniously interlocked all the clues have been, and provide more satisfaction at the mystery level than as either SF or horror. For the record, *The Dealings of Daniel Kesserich* finally turns out to be SF involving time travel, not supernatural horror, and the way Leiber handles time paradoxes here is about as unconvincing as anything I've seen. But his prickly characters, enjoyable puzzles, and evocative setting – an isolated California town on the edge of a vast desert – make the novella worth reading. It's not major Leiber, but it's Leiber, and it's fun. – Gary K. Wolfe

## Reviews by Russell Letson

Continued from page 19

destiny from which they arise.

I fear, though, that Anderson may now have gone one book too far with this material, and that in going for argumentative closure – in trying, finally, to win the debate that informs the first two volumes – he has flattened the ambiguities and simplified the intellectual and emotional complexities that kept the whole enterprise from tipping over into propaganda. (And since specifying just what bothers me involves revealing part of the payoff, you may want to skip the minor spoiler five paragraphs ahead.)

The new book takes place more than a thousand years from now, after the first interstellar colony, Demeter, has met its fate by colliding with a rogue planet in the Alpha Centauri system. The descendants of Anson Guthrie's colonist-adventurers, however, have already spread to other nearby star systems, terraforming their worlds and establishing the planetary Mothers – mergings of human and machine intelligences in world-girdling systems – that manage the ecosystems and, incidentally, offer effective personal immortality by creating new bodies for down-loaded minds.

Anson Guthrie, still around in his Nth body on one

of the newer colonies, wants to see what's been going on back in the home system, which is still dominated by the artificial intelligences, the "sophotects" of the benign but conservative cybercosm. So he downloads again into a robotic body and starts the decades-long trip Sol-ward. While he's on the way, we get snapshots from the life of Fenn, a misfit/throwback yearning for the stars (read "freedom"), reminiscent of the more neurotic and immature Jesse Nichol of *Harvest the Fire*.

Fenn's urge to be a spaceman takes him to a project of the Keiki Moana, who dream about sending a part of their culture of humans and intelligent seals to a space habitat and maybe to the stars. The cybercosm is, needless to say, against it, arguing that such adventures could destabilize the hard-won sanity and balance of the settled worlds (Earth, Moon, and Mars). And there is also a secret that the cybercosm is keeping, and that Fenn is determined to reveal, about discoveries made by the gravitational-lens observatories that look toward the galactic center.

So there it is again: the McGuffin hunt, which takes the misfit-hero and us on a tour of selected points of interest (all depicted with the skill and care that we expect from this writer), while the basic arguments get restated repeatedly with minor variations, as the plot slowly, slowly unwinds toward revelation. This

time, though, it seems less a genuine debate than a put-up job. Where in *The Stars Are Also Fire*, for example, Guthrie's debating partner, Venator, was given both dignity and decent arguments, the cybercosm's representative here (though every bit as decent and human/humane a person as the fleshly Venator was) is eventually undermined by an authorial decision to turn the larger debate into a moral melodrama.

(And here comes the minor spoiler.) Finally, Anson Guthrie declares, the cybercosm-dominated Synesis is a government, and "it acts, always has and always will, according to the nature of the beast." Thus the old rules of engagement apply, and Guthrie and Fenn step on a few flowerbeds in their quest for the secret the cybercosm has been hiding. That information also justifies the adventure that resulted in the death of the woman Fenn loved and validates all of Guthrie's philosophical and Fenn's gut-level rebellion, and in a science fiction dénouement that was old when I was young, will send the most venturesome out to the stars.

Two things bother me about this book. The first is that flattening of argument I've already mentioned. The other is a matter of SF esthetics. Earlier in the series, it looked as though Anderson were taking on one of the genre's most ambitious and difficult tasks: to portray an alien intelligence (in this case, artificial



## Reviews by Russell Letson

intelligence) as it might be in itself, as an autonomous creation rather than a metaphor. In flattening the argument, Anderson has also flattened the cybercosm down to a metaphor for the merely-rational, well-meaning, over-cautious forces of social control. Give me a few ounces of inspired imagining about those other minds any day, rather than kilos of political opinion, however passionately held.

J.S. Russell's *Celestial Dogs*, a first novel, is a much less ambitious book, which may be why I feel so uncomfortable about having mousetrapped myself in to a review by finishing it. This really is a high-concept project (as even the promo copy admits by making fun of the idea) right out of the story-pitch opening scene of *The Producers*: There's this down-at-the-heels PI, see, and he's tracking a really ugly serial killer who turns out to be a bunch of *Japanese demons*. But he's also a real show-biz smartass, see, so it's kind of *Millennium* with a laugh track.

I am not, as they say, making this up. Marty Burns, the D.A.T.H. PI, used to be a kid TV star, and his tagline – "Hot enough for you?" – haunts him wherever he goes. The trail of mutilated hookers leads him to a

powerful Hollywood producer, whose pet-projects film company seems to be making snuff films with very convincing special effects and makeup. What we know all along is that someone is arranging a series of blood sacrifices in order to summon up a kind of prince of Japanese demons, Shuten Doji, who will give the summoners incredible powers, etc., etc.

When I started the book, I wondered whether I could finish it. The Prologue, set in medieval Japan, describes the final battle of Shuten Doji's previous incarnation, in more detail (disembowelings, skewerings, slicings) than I usually find appealing, though with considerable energy and the apparent goal of showing us how transcendently inhuman this being is. While the gore-meter never again registers quite as high, the nasty violence of the bad guys and their supernatural pals is never far away or completely out of mind.

I am only moderately squeamish (I think *The Wild Bunch* is a great film, in part because of its violence), but I have this neopuritanical belief that in a work of art, any excesses, pleasant or nasty, have to earn their keep. And in *Celestial Dogs* they don't. The horror organs grafted onto the body of this rather lightweight hard-boiled detective story don't share a blood supply, let alone any DNA, and they ought to be rejected

by the body.

But this horror doesn't go anywhere. It doesn't resonate (unless you think that portraying a shitheel producer as a devil-worshiper is profound), it doesn't have the paranoid fascination of real horror (try Oliver Onions's "The Beckoning Fair One"), and worst of all, it doesn't cost anybody you care about anything. Lots of extras get sliced and diced, but Marty Burns beats the demon-lord (admittedly while possessed by the spirit of a kind of Eternal Champion), saves the lady, gets laid a lot, and even goes back to acting.

So why did I finish the book? Partly it was my weakness for hardboiled detectives, and partly Russell's storytelling skills – the brisk pacing, well-sketched (if genre-based) characters, and smart-ass sensibility that are the requirements for any self-respecting PI novel. *Celestial Dogs* could have been a perfectly acceptable straight hard-boiled mystery – OK, you'd have to lose the blood sacrifices and Japanese demons, but the milieu and main characters are well-suited enough to that genre that they shouldn't need tarding up with digital special effects and buckets o' blood. Horror is much too serious to be wasted on mere entertainment.

—Russell Letson

## Reviews by Edward Bryant

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specific that works well for me.

It's the last third when the novel really kicks into gear and starts to kick tail. Sonja finally blinks and comes fully awake. Things happen. People act. The faded cleric who's been lurking about the moribund Deadtown church finally leaps into action. Cloudy, the old hippie with the fully functional scattergun, gets to shine. The author even manages to wangle walk-ons by some of her interesting subsidiary characters from previous novels, the merchant demon Malfeis and the demon's protégé, Grendel.

So far as Deadtown is concerned, the climax does, in fact, literally allow all Hell to break loose. In Collins's world, community-based inner city action really can work. Nobody else in the city seems to notice, perhaps because of magic, maybe, no doubt, because they're distracted by the occasional errant grain freighter colliding with a river-front mall.

Sonja Blue continues to triumph as a smart, tough, heroic type. A good role model? Hey, why not? But still I have the feeling that this book could have functioned perfectly well without hybridizing with the "World of Darkness" scenario. The gaming connection distracts a little, but it's nothing critical if you're a reader who knows nothing of the game. On the other hand, savvy gamers should get a major kick out of the plot's machinations.

I do miss the sensual texture and the even more sexual undercurrents of Sonja's previous adventures. But dilute plasma is still far better than no transfusion at all.

### SHORT TAKES

Even the *Queen and Other Short Stories* is the latest Connie Willis collection. It also happens to be a beautifully produced audio album on which Willis reads Willis. Issued as the debut offering by a start-up audio publisher called Wyrmling, it bodes well for the company's future. Those of you who have had the pleasure of hearing Willis perform as toastmaster

or read her works live know well that she's among the minority of writers who should be allowed to speak in public. She's neither Ellison nor Lansdale in terms of oral interpretation, but she's certainly ahead of the rest of the pack. Even the *Queen* reprints five of her stories, filling 180 minutes on two audio cassettes. Remember, these are readings of text, as opposed to dramatizations. The publisher has laid in some stock musical bridges and a very few audio effects, but the burden of communication throughout is laid upon the capable shoulders of the author. Humor, whether broad (at least as broad as Willis gets) or deadpan, is the common thread. The title story is her splendid comedy of social manners in which four generations of future females argue the issues of a culture in which technology has freed women from their menses. There was a time when Willis wondered whether only women would cotton to the story. Nope; men get it too. It's funny, sharp, and tweaks targets along the spectrum from right-wing fundamentalists to certain shades of radical feminists. "Why the World Didn't End Last Tuesday" is a one-trick pony, but still funny, treating, as it does, a meeting of God's minions as they plan Armageddon. Unfortunately for them, and fortunately for humankind, their meetings run as efficiently as most earthly church bazaar meetings – which is not very. "Close Encounters" is a manic unified field theory catalog of linkages among the talk-show phenomenon, hospital care, bad hair days, aliens, and a variety of other concerns. This one is Willis writing from her own experience after a deceptively simple accident screwed up her spine. "Death on the Nile" is a mordant novella about three American married couples on an ill-fated trip to see the pyramids. Funny, yes, but the story functions also as a startlingly melancholy reflection on midlife marital relationship strains. The second novella, "At the Rialto," is a pure delight. It isn't so much science fiction as it is fiction about science. Think Thomas Pynchon and C.P. Snow, except warmer and wackier. Willis gives us a convention of quantum physicists in Hollywood, and then extends her conceit to suggest that Hollywood is the best possible model for dem-

onstrating the fantastical quarks and quirks of quantum physics. It's great comedy. The collection is mostly-familiar stories, but presented with the added dimension of sound, much like having Connie Willis as a welcome house-guest for three hours. This album's a keeper.

*Nightcast* is effectively a single-author original story collection in audio format. This is a compilation of six horror stories by Ronald James, dramatized with sound effects, original music, and digital sound. The nice thing about audio albums is that I can check them out in my car. Can't usually do that with those great hulking paper texts. The trouble came when I was in an Arbie's parking lot, squeezing horsie sauce onto my take-out beef-'n'-cheddar when the tape unexpectedly got to the scene in the title story of *Nightscape* where the two main characters are locked in tight embrace, and where they graphically start disassembling each other's face. A reviewer's life is tough. I survived – and I enjoyed most of the album. *Nightscape's* tone reminds me of classic pot-boiler radio drama. Much of that effect may come from the stark keyboard music riffs. The title story, "Nightcast", is a gritty Ellisonian urban fable about the nature of violence. "The Infinite Killer" is essentially a change rung on the previous story as a conscientious cop tries to figure out how a notorious serial killer could come back from the dead. "The Appetites of War" offers up a varietal twist on the horrors of Vietnam. "Backstage" is a slight portrait of a contemporary musician encountering a classic – but very deceased – rock group. "None of It Will Happen To You" brings the focus in close and personal, treating domestic violence. The best production in the set is "Ghost in the Master's Theater", an affecting ghost story about a magnate and his estranged, vengeful, dead daughter. Though the approach to these productions is essentially narration rather than heavy-duty dramatization, they work fairly well. At two hours, the tape delivers a substantial diversion.

—Edward Bryant

## Reviews by Shira Daemon

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throne and win for herself the crown of England. Vivian's deep love for Gawain, and his unwavering devotion to chivalric virtues, make this a touching and highly romantic tale.

The second piece, which is the most mystical and stirring one, is about Lynett, who becomes "The King's Damsel". Here, Chapman expands on the traditional story of the hoyden who was championed

by Gareth. Her creation of the spunky, tomboyish, young woman who is raped and wronged, and then learns how to forgive her tormentor, is a miraculous wonder piece, and Lynett is a terrific character who lets nothing get in her way. When she and her sister are sore besieged by ruffians, she decides the only way to solve the situation is to ignore her ladylike upbringing and dress as a kitchen boy, so she can bravely sneak away from home and run to Camelot and get help.

Chapman interweaves medieval politics with

hearty common sense and large touches of pagan and Christian magic. Endearingly, Lynett gets to ride with the boys, but still be a lady with a lover. Not only does priggish Sir Perceval get his comeuppance, but a woman, that most sinful of objects, is granted a boon from the Holy Grail and spends healing time in the presence of the mysterious Fisher King.

The final short novel, "King Arthur's Daughter", postulates a daughter, Ursulet, born to Arthur and Guinevere. Chapman states this is a perfectly reasonable invention since, "Nobody can say that Arthur



did not have a daughter. Kings' daughters, unless they make dynastic marriages, are apt to slip out of history and be ignored." Ursulet, who was also hidden in a convent, avoids rape at the hands of the Saxons and becomes a slave to the Jutes. Ambris, Gawain's son and Lynett's grandnephew, quests for her, so as to continue Arthur's line and save the throne from Mordred and Morgan le Fay. While this story is doomed to the usual unhappy ending all Arthurians are consigned to (it's hard for most authors to completely ignore the Dark Ages), Chapman manages to make the tale uplifting through visiting Arthur drowsing with his knights in their enchanted hiding place,

and emphasizing that Ursulet and Ambris together will breed a race of Britons to carry the dream of Camelot with them down through the Ages.

Chapman's detailing is splendid and helps make these charming and moral tales entertaining. She states in her introduction to the third story, "As to period, I have followed Malory's lead, with something from Geoffrey of Monmouth; that is, a civilization more of less that of the twelfth century (with pardonable overtones from the fourteenth) but with the political situation as about the sixth century – the Romans not long gone, the Jutes and Angles settled here and there, the old Celtic kingdom broken up and struggling for

survival, and the Saxons about to descend in an avalanche."

Her enlightened Christian protagonists tolerate what is best about pagan and feminist ideals. Even Merlin, who admits that many believe him to be the son of the devil, is welcomed into Christian settlements, and he makes sure those seeking the Holy Grail are "all shriven and houseled" before they set out on their quests. While virginity and its virtues are prominently discussed, Chapman, like Sturgeon, believes that virtuous is as virtuous does, and that rape doesn't stop you from getting that unicorn.

—Shira Daemon

## Short Reviews by Carolyn Cushman

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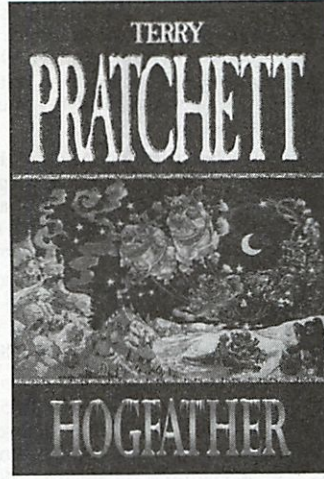
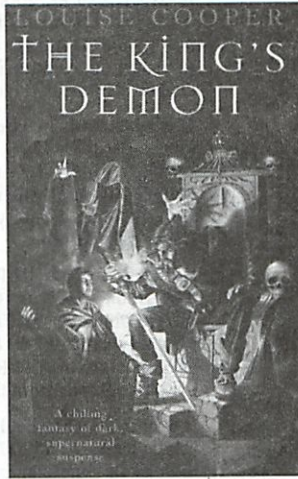
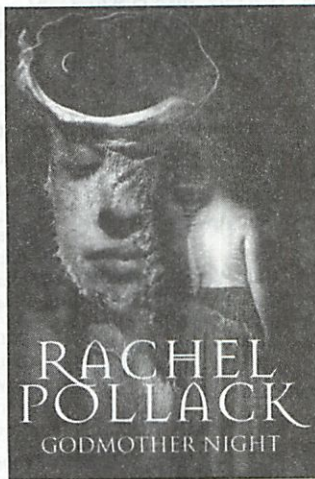
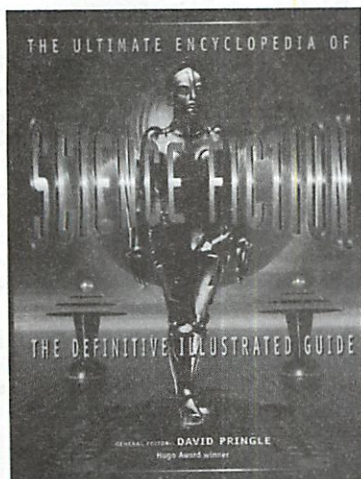
A.S. Byatt, translated the six 17th-century French fairy tales gathered here. For all that, the stories have a surprisingly similar tone, or attitude, pretending to be bits of fluff and frippery, while offering some very pointed satiric jabs. I found them generally less successful as fairy tales (some of the time-worn, more familiar versions work better on that level) than as a fascinating look at the time in which they were written. And since the bulk of these stories were written by women, it's not too surprising that sex-roles come in for much of the satire. I wouldn't call it feminist, or even proto-feminist (these stories barely dare to

suggest that young people, male or female, should be allowed to choose their own mates), but women here are allowed to be strong, and rescue themselves from seductive princes; they are encouraged to believe there is more to them than their looks. Men on occasion get to be sensitive, and in the one story attributed to men, "The Counterfeit Marquise" by Charles Perrault and François-Timoléon de Choisy, translated by Ranjit Bolt, the main character is a boy raised to believe he is a girl. (There's no magic, and modern readers will see the ending coming a mile away, but the twists on sex roles are fun.) In "Starlight" by Henriette-Julie de Murat, translated by Terence Cave, the shipwrecked prince Izmir ends up on Quietlife Island, where the men stay home and the women fight,

and Izmir's offers to teach the men to kill are definitely unwanted. Beauty is a constant concern for both men and women; in "The Great Green Worm" by Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy, translated by A.S. Byatt, a very ugly princess learns to overcome her revulsion and love an even uglier serpent – a story based on "Cupid & Psyche", not "Beauty and the Beast". The stories, as stories, are too frippery; their plots have little structure, and everything is solved a little too easily in the end with magic. But for the fairy-tale enthusiast, these are delightfully different selections, with their period flavor intact, and often closer to Thurber than Grimm.

—Carolyn Cushman

## British Books - November



Note: This information, unlike the *Locus* main list, is put together by Ian Covell; send corrections to him at 121 Homerton Road, Pallister Park, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS3 8PN, England. First world editions marked with an asterisk. We have not corrected anything but obvious errors. Review comments by Ian Covell.

Aldiss, Brian **The Secret of This Book** (HarperCollins UK 0-00-649793-4, £5.99, 334pp, tp, cover by Gary Embury) Reprint (HarperCollins UK 1995) collection of more than 20 stories and vignettes – several original – each introduced by a comment, vignette, or anecdote. Appeared as **Common Clay** in the US (1996). This edition has illustrations by the author.

Anderson, Kevin J. **Star Wars: Darksaber** (Bantam UK 0-553-40880-1, £5.99, 430pp, pb, cover by Drew Struzan) Reprint (Bantam Spectra; Bantam UK 1995) *Star Wars* novelisation.

Ashley, Michael, ed. **Classical Whodunnits: Murder and Mystery from Ancient Greece and Rome** (Robinson 1-85487-463-2, £5.99, x+374pp, tp) Reprint (Past Times 1996) associational anthology of 21 stories about murder and detection in the ancient world. This is actually exactly the same edition as the Past Times version except for the publisher name and price.

\* Ashley, Mike, ed. **The Chronicles of the Holy Grail** (Robinson/Raven 1-85487-433-0, £5.99, xvi+391pp, tp, cover by Julek Heller) Original fantasy anthology of 20 stories and a poem (6 of the stories are reprints).

Attanasio, A.A. **The Dark Shore** (NEL 0-340-64947-X, £5.99, 500pp, pb, cover by Mick Van Houten) Reprint (Hodder & Stoughton 1996) SF/fantasy novel.

Aycliffe, Jonathan **The Lost** (HarperCollins UK 0-00-225239-2, £15.99, 243pp, pb) Reprint (Harper-Prism 1996) Dark fantasy novel, told in the form of letters, diary extracts, tapes, and journals. This is a pseudonym of Denis McEoin, who also writes as Daniel Easterman. A simultaneous paperback (-649615-6, £4.99) was announced but not seen. [First UK edition]

\* Baxter, Stephen **Voyage** (Voyager 0-00-224616-3, £16.99, 595pp, hc, cover by Chris Moore) SF novel set in a timeline where the space program worked out differently, leading to the first Mars landing.

Beagle, Peter S. **The Unicorn Sonata** (Headline 0-7472-1943-5, £9.99, 154pp, hc, cover by Michael J. Walsh) Reprint (Turner 1996) fantasy novel. A teenage girl follows the sound of music to the magical realm of Shei'rah. Illustrated with colour plates by Robert Rodriguez. [First UK edition]

Belle, Pamela **Blood Imperial** (Pan 0-330-34653-9, £5.99, 417pp, pb, cover by Tim Gill) Reprint (Severn House 1996) fantasy novel. Last in the "Zithirian" trilogy.

Chapman, Vera **The Three Damosels** (Gollancz 0-575-06340-8, £16.99, 383pp, hc, cover by Splash) Reprint (Magnum 1978) fantasy omnibus of three Arthurian novels, **The Green Knight** (Collings 1975), **The King's Damosel** (Collings 1976) and **King Arthur's Daughter** (Collings 1976).

Cherryh, C.J. **Lois & Clark** (Boxtree 0-7522-2297-X, £9.99, 319pp, hc) Reprint (Prima/Proteus 1996) SF novelisation. [First UK edition]

\* Cooper, Louise **The King's Demon** (Headline 0-7472-1715-7, £16.99, 314pp, hc, cover by J. Sullivan) Fantasy novel. A young woman, bereft of memory but possessed of a ghostly vampiric twin, becomes a pawn in a plan of murderous revenge.

Delany, Samuel R. **Neveryóna** (HarperCollins/Voyager 0-586-20271-4, £5.99, 544pp, pb) Reprint (Bantam 1983) fantasy novel. This follows the 1988 revision (Grafton).

Dick, Philip K. **The Game-Players of Titan** (HarperCollins/Voyager 0-586-20971-9, £5.99, 223pp, tp, cover by Chris Moore) Reprint (Ace 1963)



## British Books Received

### SF novel.

\* Erskine, Barbara **Distant Voices** (HarperCollins UK 0-00-225238-4, £16.99, 432pp, hc, cover by Kevin Tweddell) Collection of over 30 stories, including a number of fantasy, ghost and supernatural tales.

Feintuch, David **Midshipman's Hope** (Orbit 1-85723-434-0, £5.99, 391pp, pb, cover by Stephen Youll) Reprint (Warner Aspect 1994) SF novel. Book 1 of "The Seafort Saga". [First UK edition]

Fowles, John A **Maggot** (Vintage UK 0-09-948041-7, £6.99, 460pp, tp) Reprint (Little, Brown 1985) literary SF novel.

\* Gemmell, David **Winter Warriors** (Birmingham Science Fiction Group no ISBN, £3.00, 17pp, ph, cover by Dave Mooring) Extract from the forthcoming fantasy novel of the same name. This edition is limited to 300 numbered copies.

Goodkind, Terry **Stone of Tears** (Orion 1-85798-305-X, £6.99, 1056pp, pb, cover by Keith Parkinson) Reprint (Tor 1995) fantasy novel. Book Two of "The Sword of Truth" sequence, after **Wizard's First Rule**.

\* Gordon, Giles, ed. **Selected Ghost Stories** (Bloomsbury 0-7475-2914-0, £10.95, 232pp, hc, cover by Jeff Fisher) Anthology of 13 classic ghost stories.

Grant, Rob **Backwards** (Penguin UK 0-14-017150-9, £5.99, 342pp, pb) Reprint (Viking UK 1996) humorous SF novelisation. An original **Red Dwarf** novel, by the other half of 'Grant Naylor'.

\* Herbert, James '48 (HarperCollins UK 0-00-224287-7, £16.99, 333pp, hc) Alternate history SF/dark fantasy novel. Three years after a 1945 in which Hitler unleashed the Blood Death on Britain, the few immunes are being tracked by dying fascists desperately seeking a cure.

\* Johnson, Wentworth M. **The Angel of the Vail** (The Book Guild 1-85776-122-7, £12.95, 101pp, hc, cover by David Johnson) SF/fantasy novel of a 1950s university dropout whisked through time to fight alongside Arthur and another English folk hero.

\* Jones, Diana Wynne **Minor Arcana** (Gollancz 0-575-06325-4, £16.99, 287pp, hc, cover by Splash) Collection of six stories, and the short novel, **The True State of Affairs** (from **Everard's Ride**, NESFA Press, 1995).

Jones, J.V. A **Man Betrayed** (Orbit 1-85723-402-2, £6.99, 598pp, pb, cover by Darrell K. Sweet) Reprint (Warner Aspect 1996) fantasy novel, second in "The Book of Words" trilogy. A hardcover edition (-451-0, £16.99) was announced but not seen. [First UK edition]

Jordan, Robert **Conan the Unconquered** (Legend 0-09-970411-0, £4.99, 286pp, pb, cover by Kevin Tweddell) Reprint (Tor 1983) fantasy novel.

\* Kalogridis, Jeanne **Lord of the Vampires** (Headline 0-7472-1383-6, £16.99, 240pp, hc, cover by Keith Scaife) Dark fantasy novel. Last in the trilogy, "The Diaries of the Family Dracul", which overlaps and acts as a prequel to Bram Stoker's **Dracula**. Simultaneous with the US (Delacorte) edition.

Kearney, Paul **Hawkwood's Voyage** (Vista 0-575-60034-9, £5.99, 382pp, pb, cover by Steve Crisp) Reprint (Gollancz 1995) historical alternate-Earth fantasy novel. Book One of "The Monarchies of God".

\* Kearney, Paul **The Heretic Kings** (Gollancz 0-575-06312-2, £16.99, 320pp, hc, cover by Steve Crisp) Historical alternate-Earth fantasy novel. Book Two of "The Monarchies of God".

Lansdale, Joe R. **Cold in July** (Indigo 0-575-40059-5, £5.99, 234pp, tp) Reprint (Bantam 1989) associational thriller. Copyrighted as Ziesing, 1990. [First UK edition]

Lansdale, Joe R. **Savage Season** (Indigo 0-575-

40060-9, £5.99, 178pp, tp) Reprint (Ziesing; Bantam 1990) associational thriller. First in the Hap Collins/Leonard Pine series.

Le Guin, Ursula K. A **Fisherman of the Inland Sea** (Gollancz 0-575-06324-6, £15.99, 193pp, hc, cover by Steve Crisp) Reprint (HarperPrism 1994) collection of eight stories, one original, with an introduction by the author. [First UK edition]

\* Lewis, Paul & Steve Lockley, eds. **Cold Cuts II** (Alun Books 0-907117-68-6, £6.99, 168pp, tp) Original anthology of 19 horror stories. This was published in 1994, but has only just been seen.

\* Lewis, Paul & Steve Lockley, eds. **Cold Cuts III** (Alun Books 0-907117-72-4, £6.99, 160pp, tp) Original anthology of 16 horror stories. This was published in 1995, but has only just been seen.

McCrumb, Sharyn **The Rosewood Casket** (NEL 0-340-64690-X, £5.99, 354pp, pb) Reprint (Dutton 1996) mystery with fantasy elements. [First UK edition]

McDevitt, Jack **Ancient Shores** (HarperCollins/Voyager 0-00-648228-7, £5.99, 399pp, pb) Reprint (HarperPrism 1996) SF novel. A sailboat made of alien materials is found buried 2000 miles from any ocean. [First UK edition]

McDonald, Ian **Chaga** (Vista 0-575-60022-5, £5.99, 413pp, pb, cover by Mark Harrison) Reprint (Gollancz 1995) SF novel. Published in the US as **Evolution's Shore**.

\* McDonald, Ian **Sacrifice of Fools** (Gollancz 0-575-06075-1, £16.99, 286pp, hc, cover by Mike Posen) SF novel. The alien Shian have bartered their technology for the right to settle on Earth. In Ireland, the massacre of an entire Shian family precipitates a crisis between the two races.

Michaels, Barbara **The Walker in Shadows** (Severn House 0-7278-4924-7, £16.99, 308pp, hc, cover by Derek Collings) Reprint (Dodd, Mead 1979) supernatural romantic thriller. Restless ghosts re-enact their tragedy when a family moves into a cursed house. [First UK edition]

Miller, Rand, Robyn Miller & David Wingrove **Myst: The Book of Atrus** (Corgi 0-552-14386-3, £4.99, 387pp, pb, cover by Bill Gregory & Cyan Inc.) Reprint (Hyperion 1995) fantasy novel. First in a series of prequels to the CD-ROM game. This edition lacks the photographs from the hardcover.

\* Moorcock, Michael, ed. **New Worlds No. 221** (Jaye Design 0-9520074-2-8, £10.00, 64pp, tp) Anthology in large magazine format, published to celebrate the 50th anniversary of **New Worlds** magazine. Internally dated 'Winter 1996'. Available from 45 St Marys Mansions, St Marys Terrace, London W2 1SH.

Nasaw, Jonathan **The World on Blood** (NEL 0-340-67447-4, £5.99, 361pp, pb, cover by George Underwood) Reprint (Penguin/Dutton 1996) associational dark non-fantasy "vampire" novel about blood addiction.

\* Nichols, Adam **The Pathless Way** (Millennium 1-85798-435-8, £9.99, 407pp, tp, cover by Kenson Low) Fantasy novel, set in the same world as **War of the Lords Veil**. A hardcover edition (-434-X, £15.99) is also available.

Noon, Jeff **Automated Alice** (Doubleday UK 0-385-40808-0, £14.99, 252pp, hc, cover by John Tenniel & Ian Murray) Reprint (Crown 1996) literary fantasy novel, illustrated by Harry Trumbore. [First UK edition]

Noon, Jeff **Pollen** (Pan 0-330-33882-X, £5.99, 327pp, pb) Reprint (Ringpull 1995) literary SF novel. A sequel to **Vurt**.

\* Pepper, Mark **The Short Cut** (Hodder & Stoughton 0-340-68220-5, £16.99, 230pp, hc, cover by Chris Moore) Dark fantasy novel. A struggling actor gets a new agent with a wicked way with clients. A first

novel.

Perry, S.D. **Aliens: The Labyrinth** (Millennium 1-85798-485-4, £14.99, 216pp, hc, cover by John Bolton) Reprint (Bantam Spectra 1996) SF novelisation. Volume 9 overall in the series. First world hardcover. [First UK edition]

Pollack, Rachel **Godmother Night** (Abacus 0-349-10836-6, £9.99, 355pp, tp) Reprint (St. Martin's 1996) lesbian contemporary fairy tale. [First UK edition]

Potter, J.K. **Neurotica: Images of the Bizarre** (Paper Tiger 1-85028-359-1, £13.99, 128pp, tp) Reprint (Overlook Press 1996) Photographic art collection of work from books, magazines, and his private portfolio. Text by Potter, with an Introduction by the performance artist and model, Lydia Lunch. [First UK edition]

\* Pratchett, Terry **Hogfather** (Gollancz 0-575-06403-X, £16.99, 285pp, hc, cover by Josh Kirby) Humorous fantasy novel. Book #20 in the "Discworld" series.

Pratchett, Terry **Maskerade** (Corgi 0-552-14236-0, £5.99, 381pp, pb, cover by Josh Kirby) Reprint (Gollancz 1995) humorous fantasy novel. Volume 18 in the "Discworld" series.

\* Pringle, David, ed. **The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Science Fiction: The Definitive Illustrated Guide** (Carlton Books 1-85868-188-X, £19.99, 304pp, hc) Heavily illustrated reference work.

\* Roberts, Gareth **Doctor Who: The Plotters** (Doctor Who Books 0-426-20488-3, £4.99, 289pp, pb, cover by Alister Pearson) Novelisation based on the TV series. This is a world-wide edition, available in the US for \$5.95.

\* Rusch, Kristine Kathryn **Star Wars: The New Rebellion** (Bantam UK 0-593-04084-8, £12.99, 383pp, hc, cover by Drew Struzan & Jamie S. Warren Youll) **Star Wars** novelisation. Simultaneous with the US (Bantam Spectra) edition.

\* Sinclair, Alison **Blueheart** (Millennium 1-85798-459-5, £9.99, 348pp, tp) SF novel. The planet Blueheart is being colonised by humans adapted to its alien reality, but there are growing pressures for the planet to be terraformed instead. A hardcover edition (-458-7, £15.99) is also available.

\* Spruill, Stephen **Daughter of Darkness** (Hodder & Stoughton 0-340-64941-0, £16.99, 312pp, hc) Dark fantasy novel, sequel to **Rulers of Darkness**. The vampire cop dedicated to killing other vampires must confront his own son and granddaughter.

\* Wood, N. Lee **Faraday's Orphans** (Gollancz 0-575-06392-0, £16.99, 351pp, hc, cover by Steve Crisp) SF novel.

Wood, N. Lee **Looking for the Mahdi** (Vista 0-575-60109-4, £5.99, 351pp, pb, cover by Steve Crisp) Reprint (Ace 1996) SF espionage novel. [First UK edition]

November 1996		Year to Date	
SF Novels	8	SF Novels	54
Fantasy Novels	10	Fantasy Novels	87
Horror Novels	5	Horror Novels	54
Anthologies	5	Anthologies	26
Collections	2	Collections	22
Reference	1	Reference	8
History/Criticism	0	History/Criticism	1
Media Related	4	Media Related	80
Young Adult	0	Young Adult	54
SF	0	SF	15
Fantasy	0	Fantasy	23
Horror	0	Horror	16
Other	0	Other	0
Omnibus	0	Omnibus	11
Art/Humour	1	Art/Humour	9
Miscellaneous	3	Miscellaneous	31
Total New:	39	Total New:	437
Reprints & Reissues:	19	Reprints & Reissues	341
Total:	58	Total:	778



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1995: January (#408) - World Fantasy Convention report, international SF, interview with Tad Williams, reviews: **The Diamond Age**, Neal Stephenson; **Remake**, Connie Willis; **Everville**, Clive Barker; February (#409) - 1994 in Review, interviews with Jack McDevitt, Allan Cole & Chris Bunch, reviews: **Waking the Moon**, Elizabeth Hand; **Assassin's Apprentice**, Robin Hobb; March (#410) - interviews with Elizabeth Moon, Wilhelmnia Baird, reviews: **Blood**, Michael Moorcock; **Nobody's Son**, Sean Stewart; April (#411) - Clive Barker interview, Ian Ballantine obit & appreciations, international SF reports, reviews: **The Steamship Trilogy**, Paul DiFilippo; **The Lions of Al-Rassan**, Guy Gavriel Kay; **Metropolitan**, Walter Jon Williams; May (#412) - 1994 Nebula Awards, reports on International Conf. on the Fantastic and World Horror Con, interviews: George R.R. Martin, Donald E. McQuinn, more Ian Ballantine appreciations, reviews: **Invader**, C.J. Cherryh, more; June (#413) - 1995 Nebula Week-end, interviews with Nancy Springer, Jack Womack, reviews: **Kaleidoscope Century**, John Barnes; **Slow River**, Nicola Griffith; July (#414) - Roger Zelazny obit & appreciations, interviews: Pat Cadigan, John Clute, reviews: **Sailing Bright Eternity**, Gregory Benford; **Rose Maddier**, Stephen King; August (#415) - Roger Zelazny in Memoriam, Locus Awards & poll results, international SF, 1995 SFRA Conference, interview: Lois McMaster Bujold, reviews: **Four Ways to Forgiveness**, Ursula K. Le Guin, **Memnoch the Devil**, Anne Rice; September (#416) - 1995 Hugo Awards, 1995 Locus Survey results, NASFic/DragonCon report, international SF, interviews with Kathleen Ann Goonan, Brian Aldiss, reviews: **The Time Ships**, Stephen Baxter; **Alvin Journeyman**, Orson Scott Card; October (#417) - John Brunner in Memoriam, Hugo ceremony & voting, interview: Elizabeth Hand, reviews: **Blade Runner 2**, K.W. Jeter; **The Bloody Red Baron**, Kim Newman; November (#418) - 1995 Worldcon (Intersection) reports, interviews: Samuel R. Delany, Brian Jacques, reviews: **Evolution's Shore**, Ian McDonald; **Pollen**, Jeff Noon; December (#419) - 1995 World Fantasy Awards, interviews with Gwyneth Jones, Kevin J. Anderson, obits/appreciations of Kingsley Amis, reviews: **Endymion**, Dan Simmons; **The Ganymede Club**, Charles Sheffield.

1994: January (#396) - article on SF by Terry Bisson, 1993 World Fantasy Con, interviews with Peter Straub & Tim Powers, French SF publisher, Anthony Burgess obit/appreciations reviews: **Mirror Dance**, Lois McMaster Bujold; **Drawing Blood**, Poppy Z. Brite; February (#397) - 1993 in Review, Terry Brooks interview, Frank Belknap Long obit/apprec. reviews: **Mefisto in Onyx**, Harlan Ellison; **Crashlander**, Larry Niven; March (#398) - interviews with John Crowley, Steven Brust, reviews: **Foreigner**, C.J. Cherryh; **Rhinegold**, Stephan Grundy; April (#399) - SF Around the World, interviews: Patricia Anthony & Mary Rosenblum, obits: Robert Shea, Verna Smith Tretilast (apprec by F. Pohl), reviews: **Larque on the Wing**, Nancy Springer; **Witch and Wombat**, Carolyn Cushman; May (#400) - International Conference on the Fantastic 1994,

1993 Nebula Awards, article on utopias by Brian Aldiss, interviews with Joe Halde-mason, Lisa Mason, reviews: **Diamond Mask**, Julian May; **I. Asimov: A Memoir**, Isaac Asimov; June (#401) - Nebula Week-end report by Edward Bryant, interviews: Terry Dowling, Dan Simmons, reviews: **Towing Jehovah**, James Morrow; **Love & Sleep**, John Crowley; July (#402) - Stoker and Hubbard Award winners, SF Around the World, interviews: Sheri S. Tepper, Tom Shippey, reviews: **Feersum Enjinn**, Iain M. Banks; **The Voices of Heaven**, Frederik Pohl; August (#403) - Apollo 11: A Look Back by noted SF writers, 1994 Locus Awards and poll results, interview with Charles Sheffield, reviews: **Furious Gulf**, Gregory Benford; **Soul Music**, Terry Pratchett; September (#404) - Locus Survey results, interview with Greg Bear, reviews: **Beggars and Choosers**, Nancy Kress; **Heavy Weather**, Bruce Sterling; October (#405) - 1994 Hugo winners & voting, worldcon (Con-Adian) report, article on Star Trek and Vietnam; interviews with Nina Kiriki Hoffman, Delia Sherman, reviews: **Shadow's End**, Sheri S. Tepper; **Talitos**, Anne Rice; November (#406) - Robert Bloch, Karl Edward Wagner obits & appreciations, ConAdian reports & photos, Dean Koontz interview, reviews: **Everville**, Clive Barker; **Quarantine**, Greg Egan; December (#407) - 1994 World Fantasy Awards, interviews with Nancy Collins, Sean Stewart, reviews: **Ring**, Stephen Baxter; **Matter's End**, Gregory Benford.

1993: January (#384) - 1992 World Fantasy Convention, interviews: Michael Whelan, C.J. Cherryh, reviews: **The Call of Earth**, Orson Scott Card; **Nightside the Long Sun**, Gene Wolfe; February (#385) - 1992 in Review, interviews with Ron Goulart, Vincent Di Fate, reviews: **Beggars in Spain**, Nancy Kress; **The Destiny Makers**, George Turner; March (#386) - obituaries/appreciations for Scott Meredith & Keith Laumer, interviews with Anne McCaffrey, James White, reviews: **The Porcelain Dove**, Delia Sherman; **Cold Allies**, Patricia Anthony; April (#387) - 25th Anniversary Issue with a look back over the years, interviews with Harry Turtledove, Dave Duncan, international SF, reviews: **Skin**, Kathe Koja; **Glory Season**, David Brin; May (#388) - 1992 Nebula Awards, interviews with Ursula K. Le Guin, Poppy Z. Brite, Bob Eggleton, obit/appreciations for Baird Searles, reviews: **The Hammer of God**, Arthur C. Clarke; **Forward the Foundation**, Isaac Asimov; June (#389) - obits/appreciations for Lester del Rey & Avram Davidson, reports on 1993 Nebula Banquet, World SF/Helicon, reviews: **Anno Dracula**, Kim Newman; **The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction**, Clute & Nicholls, eds.; July (#390) - In Memoriam Lester del Rey & Avram Davidson, cont'd; interviews: Peter S. Beagle, Michaela Roessner, David Gerrold, reviews: **Virtual Light**, William Gibson; **Red Dust**, Paul J. McAuley; August (#391) - 1993 Locus Awards & poll results, 1993 Stoker Awards, ABA Report, interviews with David Zindell, John Kessel, reviews: **Harm's Way**, Colin Greenland; **The Broken God**, David Zindell; September (#392) - Locus Silver Anniversary Letters and photos, 1993 Locus Survey results, 1993 Campbell & Sturgeon Awards, interviews: Neal Barrett, Jr., Karen Joy Fowler, reviews: **The Innkeeper's Song**, Peter S. Beagle; **The Iron Dragon's Daughter**, Michael Swanwick; October (#393) - 1993 Hugo Awards and voting, Worldcon (ConFrancisco) report, more Silver Anniversary letters, interview with Michael Moorcock, reviews: **Green Mars**, Kim Stanley Robinson; **Lasher**, Anne Rice; November (#394) - more ConFrancisco reports & photos, interview: Gregory Benford, reviews: **Moving Mars**, Greg Bear; **Lovedeath**, Dan Simmons; **Rama Revealed**, Arthur C. Clarke; December (#395) - 1993 World Fantasy Awards, interviews with Maureen F. McHugh & Jack Williamson, international SF, reviews: **Parable of the Sower**, Octavia E. Butler; **The Ships of Earth**, Orson Scott Card.

1992: January (#372) - 1991 World Fantasy Convention, interviews with Orson

Scott Card, Kathe Koja, reviews: **Stopping at Slowyear**, Frederik Pohl; **Mars**, Ben Bova; February (#373) - 1991 in Review, interviews with Paul J. McAuley, Allen Steele, reviews: **Was**, Geoff Ryman; **The Memory of Earth**, Orson Scott Card; March (#374) - Fritz Leiber at 81, interviews with Alexander Jablokov, Joan D. Vinge; obituary of Angela Carter, reviews: **Snow Crash**, Neal Stephenson; **Doomsday Book**, Connie Willis; April (#375) - International SF, interviews: Emma Bull, Ellen Kushner, reviews: **The Hollow Man**, Dan Simmons; **Sideshow**, Sheri S. Tepper; May (#376) - 1991 Nebula winners, Isaac Asimov obit. & appreciations, reviews: **Steel Beach**, John Varley; **China Mountain Zhang**, Maureen F. McHugh; June (#377) - Asimov in memoriam, cont'd, 1992 Nebula banquet, 1992 Conference on the Fantastic, interview: Paul Park, reviews: **Hellburner**, C.J. Cherryh; **Small Gods**, Terry Pratchett; July (#378) - July (#378): Leiber Marries, International SF reports, interviews: Connie Willis, Brian Aldiss, reviews: **Chanur's Legacy**, C.J. Cherryh; **Red Mars**, Kim Stanley Robinson; August (#379) - 1992 Locus Awards & poll results, ABA Report, interviews: Kim Stanley Robinson, Patricia A. McKillip, international SF, reviews: **Lost Boys**, Orson Scott Card; **Dinotopia**, James Gurney; September (#380) - 1992 Locus Survey results, interviews with Suzy McKee Chamas, Michael Swanwick, obits & appreciations for Alan Nourse, Reginald Bretnor, reviews: **The Tale of the Body Thief**, Anne Rice; special review by Philip José Farmer: **How the Wizard Came to Oz**, Donald Abbott; October (#381) - 1992 Hugo winners and voting, obit/appreciations for Fritz Leiber, reviews: **Mostly Harmless**, Douglas Adams; **A Million Open Doors**, John Barnes; November (#382) - Worldcon (MagiCon) reports, Leiber in memoriam cont'd, interviews with Pat Cadigan, Joe Halde-mason, reviews: **The Call of Earth**, Orson Scott Card; **Dolores Claiborne**, Stephen King; December (#383) - 1992 World Fantasy Awards, interviews with Lucius Shepard, Nancy Kress, reviews: **Ammonite**, Nicola Griffith, more.

1991: January (#360) - interviews with Jane Yolen, Cecelia Holland; obituaries: Roald Dahl, Donald A. Wollheim; international reports by James Gunn, Brian Aldiss, more, reviews: **Pacific Edge**, Kim Stanley Robinson; **The Illusionists**, Faren Miller; 1990 World Fantasy Convention report (30 left); February (#361) - 1990 in Review; interviews with Samuel R. Delany, Alis A. Rasmussen, reviews: **Carve the Sky**, Alexander Jablokov; **The Singers of Time**, Pohl & Williamson (46 left); March (#362) - 1991 Nebula Awards nominations; interviews with Terry Pratchett & Neil Gaiman, Charles de Lint, reviews: **The Little Country**, Charles de Lint; **Achilles' Choice**, Niven & Barnes (34 left); April (#363) - interviews with Ben Bova, Gordon R. Dickson; 1990 British Book Summary; international SF reports; reviews: **Xenocide**, Orson Scott Card; **Sexual Chemistry**, Brian Stableford (48 left); May (#364) - reports on 1991 Conference on the Fantastic, World Horror Convention; interviews with Dan Simmons, William Gibson & Bruce Sterling; reviews: **Reaper Man**, Terry Pratchett; **Synners**, Pat Cadigan (51 left); June (#365) - 1990 Nebula Awards winners, 1991 Hugo Awards nominations; interviews with Gene Wolfe, Andre Norton; obituary of Chester Anderson; reviews: **Beauty**, Sheri S. Tepper; **Heavy Time**, C.J. Cherryh (45 left); July (#366) - 1991 Locus Awards; World SF Meeting in China; interview with Terry Bisson; obituary of Sharon Baker; reviews: **Sherwood**, Parke Godwin; **Needful Things**, Stephen King (66 left); August (#367) - ABA 1991; international SF coverage; interviews: Sheri S. Tepper, Brian Stableford; reviews: **Heaven Chronicles**, Joan D. Vinge; **The Garden of Rama**, Clarke & Lee (44 left); September (#368) - 1991 Locus Survey results; Campbell, Sturgeon Awards winners; interviews: Alan Dean Foster, Elisabeth Vonarburg; reviews: **The Summer Queen**, Joan D. Vinge; **Barrayar**, Lois McMaster Bujold (54 left); October (#369) - 1990 Hugo

winners; reviews: **The Face of the Waters**, Robert Silverberg; **Boy's Life**, Robert J. McCammon (47 left); November (#370) - Worldcon reports (Chicon V), interview: S.P. Somtow; reviews: **The Time Patrol**, Poul Anderson; **All the Weys of Pern**, Anne McCaffrey (57 left); December (#371) - 1991 World Fantasy Awards, interview with Lisa Goldstein, Arkady Strugatsky & Gene Roddenberry obits; reviews: **The Waste Lands**, Stephen King; **Jack the Bodiless**, Julian May (47 left).

1990: January (#348) - Farewells to Voyager by Bear, Benford, Williamson; interviews: Ursula K. Le Guin, Charles Sheffield; reviews: **Mystery**, Peter Straub; **Rama II**, Clarke & Lee (34 left); February (#349) - 1989 in review; article by Arthur C. Clarke; interview with Pat Cadigan, reviews: **The Fall of Hyperion**, Dan Simmons; **Tehanu**, Ursula K. Le Guin (18 left); March (#350) interview with Dan Simmons; reviews: **Arachne**, Lisa Mason; **Mine**, Robert R. McCammon (20 left); April (#351) - interview with Peter Straub; reviews of various reading guides to SF, Fantasy, Horror (47 left); May (#352) - 1990 Hugo nominations; interviews with Suzy McKee Chamas, Walter Jon Williams; reviews: **Voyage to the Red Planet**, Terry Bisson; **Wolf and Iron**, Gordon R. Dickson (49 left); July (#354) - 1990 ABA Report; reviews: **Good Omens**, Pratchett & Gaiman; **Queen of Angels**, Greg Bear (54 left); August (#355) - 1990 Locus Awards; article by Gregory Benford; interviews with Robert Silverberg, Mike Resnick; reviews: **Use of Weapons**, Iain M. Banks; **The Rowan**, Anne McCaffrey (33 left); September (#356) - Brian Aldiss surprise party; 1990 Locus Survey results; interviews: Megan Lindholm, Kristine Kathryn Rusch; Ed Emshwiller obituary; reviews: **The Difference Engine**, Gibson & Sterling; **Summertime**, Charles Sheffield (34 left); October (#357) - ConFiction/Worldcon report; 1990 Hugo winners; interview with David Wingrove; reviews: **The Witching Hour**, Anne Rice; **Four Past Midnight**, Stephen King (50 left); November (#358) - ConFiction report, part 2; 1990 World Fantasy Awards nominations; interview with Wolfgang Jeschke; reviews: **Summer of Night**, Dan Simmons; **Outnumbering the Dead**, Frederik Pohl (78 left); December (#359) - 1990 World Fantasy Awards Winners; ConDiego/NASFic report; interview with Guy Gavriel Kay; reviews: **Synners**, Pat Cadigan; **Houses Without Doors**, Peter Straub (11 left).

1989: January (#336) - Interview with Peter Dickinson; 1988 World Fantasy Con reviews: **The Empire of Fear**, Brian Stableford; **Eva**, Peter (25 left); March (#338) - interviews with Jonathan Carroll, Terry Pratchett; reviews: **Carrión Comfort**, Dan Simmons; **The Satanic Verses**, Salman Rushdie [short take]; international SF (14 left); April (#339) - interviews with Diana Wynne Jones, Mary Gentle; international SF; reviews: **Rimrunners**, C.J. Cherryh; **Imago**, Octavia Butler (43 left); May (#340) - 1988 Nebula Awards; interview with Joe Halde-mason; 1989 International Conference on the Fantastic; reviews: **Out on Blue Six**, Ian McDonald; **Novelty**, John Crowley (58 left); June (#341) - interviews with George Alec Effinger, Brian Aldiss; reviews: **A Child Across the Sky**, Jonathan Carroll; **Geek Love**, Katherine Dunn (96 left); July (#342) - Interview with Greg Bear; SF at the ABA; Bram Stoker Awards; reviews: **The Stress of Her Regard**, Tim Powers; **The Book of the Dead**, Skipp & Spector (95 left); August (#343) - 1989 Locus Awards; interviews with Lois McMaster Bujold, Connie Willis; reviews: **Good News From Outer Space**, John Kessel; **A Fire in the Sun**, George Alec Effinger (30 left); October (#345) - 1989 Hugo Awards, C.J. Cherryh interview; reviews: **Escape From Kathmandu**, Kim Stanley Robinson; **Knight of Shadows**, Roger Zelazny (24 left); December (#347) - World Fantasy Awards; interview: David Brin; photos of Ellen Datlow, Harlan Ellison, John M. Ford; reviews: **Only Begotten Daughter**, James Morrow; **Moon Dance**, S.P. Somtow (44 left).



## LOCUS BESTSELLERS

	Months on list	Last month		Months on list	Last month
<b>HARDCOVERS</b>			<b>MEDIA-RELATED</b>		
1) <b>Infinity's Shore</b> , David Brin (Bantam Spectra)	1	-	1) <b>Star Wars: Tales of the Bounty Hunters</b> , Kevin Anderson, ed. (Bantam Spectra)	1	-
2) <b>Worldwar: Striking the Balance</b> , Harry Turtledove (Del Rey)	1	-	2) <b>Star Trek, the Next Generation: A Fury Scorned</b> , Sargent & Zebrowski (Pocket)	1	-
3) <b>Blood of the Fold</b> , Terry Goodkind (Tor)	2	1	3) <b>Star Wars: The New Rebellion</b> , Kristine Kathryn Rusch (Bantam Spectra)	1	-
4) <b>Otherland: City of Golden Shadows</b> , Tad Williams (DAW)	1	-	4) <b>Star Trek, Voyager: Bless the Beasts</b> , Karen Haber (Pocket)	1	-
5) <b>Idoru</b> , William Gibson (Putnam)	3	2	5) <b>Star Wars: Darksaber</b> , Kevin J. Anderson (Bantam Spectra)	3	1
6) <b>Exodus From the Long Sun</b> , Gene Wolfe (Tor)	2	9	<b>GAMING-RELATED</b>		
7) <b>Memory</b> , Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)	3	4	1) <b>DragonLance: Dragons of Summer Flame</b> , Weis & Hickman (TSR)	9	1
8) <b>A Crown of Swords</b> , Robert Jordan (Tor)	5	10	2) <b>Forgotten Realms: Stormlight</b> , Ed Greenwood (TSR)	1	-
* <b>Quicker Than the Eye</b> , Ray Bradbury (Avon)	1	-	3) <b>DragonLance: The Lost Histories: The Dragons</b> , Douglas Niles (TSR)	1	-
10) <b>Firebird</b> , Mercedes Lackey (Tor)	1	-	4) <b>Battletech 30: Impetus of War</b> , Blaine Lee Pardoe (Roc)	1	-
<b>PAPERBACKS</b>			5) <b>DragonLance Fifth Age: The Dawning of a New Age</b> , Jean Rabe (TSR)	4	2
1) <b>Brightness Reef</b> , David Brin (Bantam Spectra)	2	1	David Brin has a big lead in the hardcovers, and also leads for a second month in paperbacks. There were 87 hardcover nominees, down from 91, with no new runner-up.		
2) <b>Worldwar: Upsetting the Balance</b> , Harry Turtledove (Del Rey)	1	-	For the paperback list, the Turtledove came close to the very popular Brin book. We had 107 nominees, up from 102. New runner-up: <b>The Sacred Seven</b> by Amy Stout (AvoNova).		
3) <b>Endymion</b> , Dan Simmons (Bantam Spectra)	1	-	Bruce Sterling jumped straight to the top in trade paperbacks. The new runner-up is <b>Exile's Challenge</b> by Angus Wells (Bantam Spectra). Nominees: 68, up from 66.		
4) <b>Expiration Date</b> , Tim Powers (Tor)	1	-	In media-related books, most of the entries are new, but <b>Star Wars</b> and <b>Star Trek</b> battle it out as usual; no new runner-up. We had 44 nominees, up from 30.		
5) <b>Mathemagics</b> , Margaret Ball (Baen)	1	-	<b>Dragons of Summer Flame</b> continues to hold its strong lead, for gaming-related books, and again there was no new runner-up. Nominees: 22, down from 25.		
6) <b>Ancient Shores</b> , Jack McDevitt (HarperPrism)	1	-			
7) <b>Beowulf's Children</b> , Niven, Pournelle, & Barnes (Tor)	2	2			
8) <b>All the Way to the Gallows</b> , David Drake (Baen)	1	-			
9) <b>The VMR Theory</b> , Robert Frezza (Del Rey)	1	-			
10) <b>The Healing of the Crossroads</b> , Nick O'Donahoe (Ace)	1	-			
* <b>Traveling With the Dead</b> , Barbara Hambly (Del Rey)	2	4			
<b>TRADE PAPERBACKS</b>					
1) <b>Schismatrix Plus</b> , Bruce Sterling (Ace)	1	-			
2) <b>Master and Fool</b> , J.V. Jones (Warner Aspect)	2	1			
3) <b>The Stars My Destination</b> , Alfred Bester (Vintage)	3	2			
4) <b>Cordelia's Honor</b> , Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)	2	5			
5) <b>The Necronomicon</b> , Robert Price, ed. (Chaosium)	1	-			

Compiled with data from: Adventures in Crime & Space (TX), Bookshop Santa Cruz (CA), Borders Bookstores (US), Dangerous Visions (CA), DreamHaven (MN), Flights of Fantasy (CA), Future Fantasy (CA), Future Visions (TX), Gene's (PA), Heroes & Dragons (CO), J.J. Perry's (CA), Lange's (IL), Lone Star (TX), Merchant of Venus (NE), Musicland Group (MN), Mysterious Galaxy (CA), Other Change of Hobbit (CA), Puss 'n' Books (WA), Regulator Books (NC), St. Mark's (NY), SF & Mystery (GA), SF Shop (NY), Slow Glass (Australia), Space-Crime Continuum (MA), Stars Our Destination (IL), Toadstool (NH), 20th Century Books (WI), Uncle Hugo's (MN), University Bookstore (WA), R. & P. Weinberg Books (IL), White Dwarf (Canada), Mark Ziesing (CA). Data period: November 1996.

## NEW AND RECOMMENDED

**Voyage**, Stephen Baxter (HarperPrism 1/97, \$23.00, hc) SF novel of an alternate space program – the way it *should* have been – leading to the first manned landing on Mars.

**Acts of Conscience**, William Barton (Warner Aspect 1/97 \$12.99, tp) An ordinary 26th-century man must represent the entire human race in a struggle for survival in this powerful SF novel.

**Love in Vein II**, Poppy Z. Brite & Martin H. Greenberg, eds. (HarperPrism 1/97, \$12.00, tp) New original anthology of erotic dark fantasies by Neil Gaiman, Pat Califia, Lucy Taylor, and many more.

**Black Wine**, Candas Jane Dorsey (Tor 1/97, \$22.95, hc) This sophisticated literary SF novel is both feminist and darkly provocative.

**Modern Classics of Fantasy**, Gardner Dozois, ed. (St. Martin's 1/97, \$35.00, hc) This massive, and impressive, anthology of work from the '30s through the '90s, by such noted writers as Leiber, Vance, Zelazny, Waldrop, Beagle, Charnas, and many more, is one of the best surveys of the literature. There is also a fine introduction about fantasy.

**Jed the Dead**, Alan Dean Foster (Ace 1/97, \$5.99, pb) Amusing SF novel of a Texas country guy and an alien corpse as unexpected traveling companions.

**Blue Limbo**, Terence M. Green (Tor 1/97, \$22.95, hc) Gripping SF thriller/police procedural of a burned-out cop in near-future Toronto.

**American Gothic Tales**, Joyce Carol Oates, ed. (Penguin/Plume 1/97, \$14.95, tp) Anthology ranging from Poe and Melville to Rice and King, along with many great names in both the literary and the genre fields.

**Tomorrow and Tomorrow**, Charles Sheffield (Bantam Spectra 1/97, \$13.95, tp) Epic Stapledonian hard-SF novel of a cryogenically preserved man's tour of the far future, from here to the Eschaton. Some of the concepts are as startling as anything in Stapledon.

**Thessalonica**, Harry Turtledove (Baen 1/97, \$5.99, pb) Here Turtledove takes on fantasy in the manner of Thomas Burnett Swann, featuring a Christian shoemaker in an ancient world beset by both Greek gods and pagan demons.

**Paris in the Twentieth Century**, Jules Verne (Random House 12/96, \$21.00, hc) This lost, unpublished Verne SF novel, written in 1863 and recently rediscovered, is a dark, pessimistic vision which may change your perception of one of the founders of SF.

**City on Fire**, Walter Jon Williams (HarperPrism 1/97, \$22.00, hc) Urban fantasy novel of a world city powered by Plasm, sequel to *Metropolitan*.

### NON-FICTION

**Myth, Magic, and Mystery: One Hundred Years of American Children's Book Illustration**, Hearn, Clark, & Clark (Roberts Rinehart 1/97, \$29.95, tp) Not just an art book (with numerous b&w and full-color illustrations), but also a history of the past cen-

tury in the field, examining the literature as well as its illustrators.

**Jules Verne: An Exploratory Biography**, Herbert R. Lottman (St. Martin's 1/97, \$26.95, hc) A revisionist biography of the SF founder shows him as a much more complex man than we thought.

**Michael Parkes**, John Russell Taylor (Steltman 1/97, \$19.95, tp) Sumptuous gathering of the subtle, often erotic/fantastic lithographs and sculpture of Parkes, with biographical material and a brief history of his career.

**Edgar Rice Burroughs: The Exhaustive Scholar's and Collector's Descriptive Bibliography**, Robert B. Zeuschner (McFarland 1/97, \$46.50, hc) An updating, through 1996, of the 1964 Heins bibliography. A must for Burroughs collectors.

### REPRINTS

**The Final Encyclopedia, Vol. One**, Gordon R. Dickson (Tor 1/97, \$25.95, hc) This revised and corrected version of the first half of the 1984 major novel in the "Childe Cycle" is one of Dickson's most provocative works.

**In Search of Wonder**, Damon Knight (Advent 1/97, \$20.00, hc) Expanded, revised third edition of a classic gathering of essays on the SF field, with six new essays, including autobiography, coverage of Clarion, and a piece on writing SF.



## B&N/B. DALTON BESTSELLERS

### HARDCOVERS

- 1) **Blood of the Fold**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 2) **Worldwar: Striking the Balance**, Harry Turtledove (Del Rey)
- 3) **Otherland: City of Golden Shadows**, Tad Williams (DAW)
- 4) **Infinity's Shore**, David Brin (Bantam Spectra)
- 5) **The Voyage of the Basset**, Christensen, St. James, & Foster (Artisan)
- 6) **Quicker Than the Eye**, Ray Bradbury (Avon)
- 7) **A Crown of Swords**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 8) **Idoru**, William Gibson (Putnam)
- 9) **Storm Breaking**, Mercedes Lackey (DAW)
- 10) **The Dragon King**, R.A. Salvatore (Warner Aspect)

### PAPERBACKS

- 1) **Worldwar: Upsetting the Balance**, Harry Turtledove (Del Rey)
- 2) **Brightness Reef**, David Brin (Bantam Spectra)
- 3) **Endymion**, Dan Simmons (Bantam Spectra)
- 4) **The Hobbit**, J.R.R. Tolkien (Ballantine)
- 5) **Beowulf's Children**, Niven, Pournelle & Barnes (Tor)
- 6) **Stone of Tears**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 7) **Luthien's Gamble**, R.A. Salvatore (Warner Aspect)
- 9) **Wizard's First Rule**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 10) **The Eye of the World**, Robert Jordan (Tor)

### TRADE PAPERBACKS

- 1) **Master and Fool**, J.V. Jones (Warner Aspect)
- 2) **The Mists of Avalon**, Marion Zimmer Bradley (Del Rey)
- 3) **The Stars My Destination**, Alfred Bester (Vintage)
- 4) **The Transition of H.P. Lovecraft: The Road to Madness**, H.P. Lovecraft (Del Rey)
- 5) **The Hobbit**, J.R.R. Tolkien (Ballantine)

### MEDIA-RELATED

- 1) **Star Wars: Tales of the Bounty Hunters**, Kevin J. Anderson, ed. (Bantam Spectra)
- 2) **Star Wars: The New Rebellion**, Kristine Kathryn Rusch (Bantam Spectra)
- 3) **Star Trek, the Next Generation: A Fury Scorned**, Sargent & Zebrowski (Pocket)
- 4) **Star Trek VIII: First Contact**, J.M. Dillard (Pocket)
- 5) **Star Trek, Voyager: Bless the Beasts**, Karen Haber (Pocket)

### GAMING-RELATED

- 1) **DragonLance: Dragons of Summer Flame**, Weis & Hickman (TSR)
- 2) **Myst: The Book of Atrus**, Miller, Miller & Wingrove (Hyperion)
- 3) **Myst: The Book of Ti'ana**, Miller, Miller & Wingrove (Hyperion)
- 4) **Forgotten Realms: Stormlight**, Ed Greenwood (TSR)
- 5) **DragonLance Fifth Age: The Dawning of a New Age**, Jean Rabe (TSR)

## WALDENBOOKS BESTSELLERS

### HARDCOVERS

- 1) **Blood of the Fold**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 2) **Otherland: City of Golden Shadows**, Tad Williams (DAW)
- 3) **A Crown of Swords**, Robert Jordan (Tor)
- 4) **Storm Breaking**, Mercedes Lackey (DAW)
- 5) **Worldwar: Striking the Balance**, Harry Turtledove (Del Rey)
- 6) **The Dragon King**, R.A. Salvatore (Warner Aspect)
- 7) **No One Noticed the Cat**, Anne McCaffrey (Roc)
- 8) **Infinity's Shore**, David Brin (Bantam Spectra)
- 9) **Quicker Than the Eye**, Ray Bradbury (Avon)
- 10) **Starshield: Sentinels**, Weis & Hickman (Del Rey)

### PAPERBACKS

- 1) **Worldwar: Upsetting the Balance**, Harry Turtledove (Del Rey)
- 2) **Wizard's First Rule**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 3) **Roc and a Hard Place**, Piers Anthony (Tor)
- 4) **Brightness Reef**, David Brin (Bantam Spectra)
- 5) **Stone of Tears**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)
- 6) **Luthien's Gamble**, R.A. Salvatore (Warner Aspect)
- 7) **A Man Betrayed**, J.V. Jones (Warner Aspect)
- 8) **The Fire Rose**, Mercedes Lackey (Tor)
- 9) **The Hobbit**, J.R.R. Tolkien (Ballantine)
- 10) **Storm Rising**, Mercedes Lackey (DAW)

### TRADE PAPERBACKS

- 1) **Beowulf's Children**, Niven, Pournelle, & Barnes (Tor)
- 2) **Master and Fool**, J.V. Jones (Warner Aspect)
- 3) **The Transition of H.P. Lovecraft: The Road to Madness**, H.P. Lovecraft (Del Rey)
- 4) **The Mists of Avalon**, Marion Zimmer Bradley (Del Rey)
- 5) **Darkenheight**, Douglas Niles (Ace)

### MEDIA-RELATED

- 1) **Star Wars: The New Rebellion**, Kristine Kathryn Rusch (Bantam Spectra)
- 2) **Star Wars: Tales of the Bounty Hunters**, Kevin J. Anderson, ed. (Bantam Spectra)
- 3) **Star Trek VIII: First Contact**, J.M. Dillard (Pocket)
- 4) **The X-Files: Trust No One**, Brian Lowry (HarperPrism)
- 5) **Star Trek Next Generation: A Fury Scorned**, Sargent & Zebrowski (Pocket)

### GAMING-RELATED

- 1) **Myst: The Book of Ti'ana**, Miller, Miller & Wingrove (Hyperion)
- 2) **DragonLance: Dragons of Summer Flame**, Weis & Hickman (TSR)
- 3) **Forgotten Realms: Stormlight**, Ed Greenwood (TSR)
- 4) **Forgotten Realms: Passage to Dawn**, R.A. Salvatore (TSR)
- 5) **DragonLance: The Dragons**, Douglas Niles (TSR)

## GENERAL BESTSELLERS

### HARDCOVERS

- Desperation**, Stephen King (Viking)
- The Regulators**, Richard Bachman (Dutton)
- Star Wars: The New Rebellion**, Kristine Kathryn Rusch (Bantam Spectra)
- The Law of Love**, Laura Esquivel (Crown)
- Blood of the Fold**, Terry Goodkind (Tor)

N Y Times Bk Review					Publishers Weekly					Washington Post*					Wall St. Journal				
11/3	10	17	24		11/4	11	18	25		11/3	10	17	24		11/6	13	20	27	
2	3	3	6		4	5	7	11		5	8	10	-		4	4	6	4	
4	6	9	12		6	9	11	-		10	-	-	-		8	11	14	15	

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### PAPERBACKS

- The Lost World**, Michael Crichton (Ballantine)
- Intensity**, Dean Koontz (Ballantine)
- The Green Mile, Part 6: Coffey on the Mile**, Stephen King (Signet)
- Goosebumps: Vampire Breath**, R.L. Stine (Scholastic)

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\*lists top 10 only  
\*\* on tp list

## USA TODAY

- 3) **Goosebumps: Calling All Creeps!**, R.L. Stine (Scholastic) [6]
- 9) **Goosebumps: Vampire Breath**, R.L. Stine (Scholastic) [17,36]
- 14) **The Lost World**, Michael Crichton (Ballantine) [20,29,38]
- 26) **Desperation**, Stephen King (Viking) [31,38,42]
- 28) **Intensity**, Dean Koontz (Ballantine) [39]
- 38) **Star Wars: Tales of the Bounty Hunters**, Kevin J. Anderson, ed. (Bantam Spectra)
- 46) **Goosebumps: Attack of the Jack-O'-Lanterns**, R.L. Stine (Scholastic)

The list from *USA Today* is a monthly representation of their weekly bestseller list. The number on the left is the book's highest position for the month. The numbers in brackets are the lower, or same, list positions for any other week of that month. The published list is of 50 books.

## Children's Fiction Bestsellers Publishers Weekly, 11/96

PW's Children's Bestsellers includes both hardcover and paperback books. Five of the top ten fiction books are science fiction, fantasy or horror.

- 1) **The Giver**, Lois Lowry (Dell/Laurel-Leaf)
- 7) **Bunnicula**, James & Deborah Howe (Aladdin)
- 8) **Matilda**, Roald Dahl (Puffin)
- 9) **James and the Giant Peach**, Roald Dahl (Puffin)
- 10) **Wayside School Gets a Little Stranger**, Louis Sachar (Avon/Camelot)

Two of the top five Paperback Series are horror. **Animorphs** is science fiction/fantasy.

- 1) **Goosebumps**, R.L. Stine (Scholastic)
- 2) **Fear Street**, R.L. Stine (Pocket/Archway)
- 3) **Animorphs**, K.A. Applegate (Scholastic)



## Obituaries



Carl Sagan with Viking Moon lander (from *Cosmos* 1980)

**Carl Sagan**, planetary scientist/astronomer, Hugo-winning science popularizer, Pulitzer Prize winner, and one-time SF novelist, died of pneumonia December 20, 1996, after two years fighting the rare bone disease/immune disorder myelodysplasia. He was 62.

While a guest speaker at an early Nebula Banquet in the 1970s, Sagan talked about his early love of science fiction, especially Edgar Rice Burroughs. He said it influenced his choice of a career.

Born in Brooklyn in 1934, Sagan earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees in astronomy at the University of Chicago, spent five years as an assistant professor at Harvard, then went on to join the astronomy department at Cornell University in 1968 as a full professor. He also served as director of Cornell's Laboratory of Planetary Sciences. In the '70s, Sagan worked on the Mars and Jupiter projects involving spacecraft Mariner 9, Viking, Voyager, and Galileo, and was responsible for the message to possible alien life forms included on interstellar mission Pioneer 10.

From his first published book, an updating of a translated 1963 work by Russian astronomer I.S. Shklovskii published under both their names as *Intelligent Life in the Universe* (1966), Sagan was fascinated with the idea of sentient beings elsewhere. In 1973, he published *The Cosmic Connection: An Extraterrestrial Perspective* and edited *Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence*. Other interests included the related topic of intelligent life on Earth; he won a Pulitzer Prize in 1977 for *Dragons of Eden: A Speculative Essay on the Origin of Human Intelligence*.

Even in his early years at Harvard, Sagan was controversial among his fellow scientists for his

insistent advocacy of planetary exploration and unshakeable belief in the existence of intelligent lifeforms throughout the galaxies. It seemed quite likely to him that we would one day explore the universe in near-light-speed craft, with the help of crews from other galaxies.

In 1980, he became well-known to the general public, and something of a household word ("billions") with his Peabody and Emmy-winning PBS TV popular-astronomy documentary series *Cosmos*. He also won a 1981 non-fiction Hugo for the book version of the series. It was followed by *Comet*, a popular study of comets co-written with his wife, Ann Druyan. Then came the much-discussed SF novel *Contact* (1985), which brought him a then-record \$2 million advance before it was written, and was later rumored to have been co-authored by Druyan (though Sagan and Druyan insisted they worked together only on an unproduced screenplay based on the book).

In the 1990s, he became increasingly pessimistic about the future, with "a foreboding of an America in my children's or grandchildren's time..."

when, clutching our crystals and consulting our horoscopes, our critical faculties in decline, unable to distinguish between what feels good and what's true, we slide, almost without noticing, back into superstition. We've arranged a civilization in which most crucial elements ... profoundly depend on science and technology. We have also arranged things so that almost no one understands science and technology. We might get away with it for a while, but eventually this combustible mixture of ignorance and power is going to blow up in our faces.

Sagan is survived by Ann Druyan and five children.

### CARL SAGAN, 1934-1996 by Stephen Baxter

The untimely death of Carl Sagan has come as a sad footnote to a year full of scientific wonders.

Sagan was an astronomer, planetary scientist and author. He became widely known to the SF public and beyond for his accessible and uplifting pop-science books, from *The Cosmic Connection* (1973) to *Pale Blue Dot* (1994), and TV series like *Cosmos* (1980). He entered the SF field directly with his novel *Contact* (1985). The novel may be best remembered for Sagan's involvement of the physicist Kip Thorne in fleshing out the concept of a space-time wormhole – an involvement which led Thorne and co-workers to found a whole new sub-field of relativity theory, and led to today's theoretical interest in time travel. But Sagan's importance as a scientist should not be underestimated.

Sagan played an active role in spaceprobe projects such as Mariner 9 to Mars – Sagan ensured the probe was positioned to photograph Mars's moons – and Pioneer 10 to Jupiter and beyond, on which Sagan was responsible for placing a message to alien life. Sagan's speculations on terraforming Venus – the first serious scientific speculation on the subject – the possibility of permafrost on Mars, and conditions on Saturn's moon Titan, helped influence the thinking of subsequent workers.

In his books Sagan was not afraid of sharing himself and his experiences; *The Cosmic Connection*, for example, is enriched by accounts of battles with NASA bureaucracy and Cold War politicking. Like H.G. Wells, Sagan seems to have believed that the future of mankind would be a race between education and catastrophe; in 1984 he co-



authored the concept of nuclear winter which may, perhaps, have helped avert that very catastrophe from befalling us all. As we near the end of a millennium still largely gripped by the madnesses which dominated its opening, we cannot afford to lose Sagan's brand of clear-thinking, cheerful, communicative rationality.

I still have a copy of *The Cosmic Connection* on my study shelf. And in the current draft of my next novel I have my astronauts, bound for Titan, meeting a spry Carl Sagan early in the next century: "Sagan came out of his retirement to give them a pep talk about his studies ... Sagan was in his seventies now, and he was a little bent, that famous voice even more gravel-filled, and his hair white as snow; but he was still as handsome as all hell ..." Already this is alternate history: but what the hell, I think it should stay in.

—Stephen Baxter,  
from *Ansible* 114

**H(erbert) R(oland) "Bill" Percy**, one of Atlantic Canada's leading writers, died on December 17, 1996 at his home in Granville Ferry, Nova Scotia. He was 76.

He was the author of several books, including the collection *The Timeless Island* (1960), which contains a number of fantasy stories, and the novel *Painted Ladies*, which was shortlisted for Canada's most prestigious literary prize, the Governor General's Award. His alternate-history story "Letter from America" appeared in two genre anthologies, *Beyond Time* (1976), edited by Sandra Ley, and *Visions from the Edge* (1981), edited by John Bell and Lesley Choyce.

Born in Burham, Kent, England in 1920, Percy served in the Royal Navy from 1936 to 1952, mostly as a marine engineer. His wartime naval career included service on HMS *King George V* during the sinking of the *Bismarck* and on HMS *Hawkins* during the Normandy landings.

In 1952, Percy moved to Canada and joined the Royal Canadian Navy. He retired in 1971. A member of the Writers' Union of Canada, he was the founding chairman of the Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia. His many contributions to Nova

Scotia's culture were recognized in 1992, when he received a Cultural Life Award from the Cultural Federation of Nova Scotia.

—John Bell

British humorist, cartoonist, and occasional writer of SF and fantasy, **William Rushton** died December 11, 1996, age 59. Best known as co-founder of the satiric magazine *Private Eye*, he also wrote what Dave Langford has described as "the extravagantly silly self-illustrated alternate-world novel" *W.G. Grace's Last Case, or, The War of the Worlds – Part Two* (1984), and postmodern cartoon fantasy *The Geranium of Flut* (1975).

Horror writer and small-press publisher **Mike Baker** died of pneumonia in Las Vegas, Nevada in the first week of January 1997. He was 31 years old.

Brought up in Seattle and Hawaii, Mike moved to Los Angeles when in his mid-twenties, and for several years published and edited the horror news magazine *Afraid*, as well as the short-lived fiction magazine *Skull*. Ill-health and a series of financial and professional setbacks caused him to cancel both publications and relocate to Nevada early last year. While the move seemed to do him some good in terms of finding regular employment, his health apparently never really recovered.

Although he didn't achieve his dream of becoming a published novelist, at least some of Mike's dreams came true; his short fiction appeared in several magazines, and in anthologies (*Love in Vein*, *Celebrity Vampires*, *Frankenstein: The Monster Wakes*, etc.), and he was the editor of the anthology *Young Blood*. Projects left unfulfilled at the time of his death include the anthology *The Ultimate Horror* and the novel *Vampires*, both complete in manuscript form but as yet unpublished.

—Peter Atkins

**Clyde Tombaugh**, discoverer of the planet Pluto and a popular figure in several SF books and stories, died January 17, 1997, at his home in Mesilla Park, New Mexico. He was 90.

Tombaugh discovered the ninth planet from the

sun on February 18, 1930, at the age of 24, as a helper in the "Planet X" search at Arizona's Lowell Observatory. At that time, he was a Kansas farm boy who did not yet have a college degree. His find was the result of 10 months of comparing 14x17" photos of the night sky, looking for any sign of a shift in position that would distinguish a planet from a star. "For three-quarters of an hour, I was the only person in the world who knew exactly where Pluto was," he later said.

He earned a full scholarship in astronomy at the University of Kansas, and went on to be a professor – and founder of the research astronomy department – at New Mexico State University, where he arrived in 1955 and retired in 1973.

*Belated Obituary: Although she died over four years ago (at the age of 105), the death of author Hester Gorst has only just come to our attention, as she never received any obituaries in Britain, America, or elsewhere.*

**Hester Gorst**, British novelist and painter, died in October 1992, one month after her 105th birthday. She was a professional artist for more than 75 years, exhibiting her paintings annually into her 90s at London's Embankment Gallery. A great-niece of Cranford author Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell, Hester Gaskell Holland was born in Liverpool, England, on 25 September 1887; she married lawyer Elliot Gorst in 1914. During the 1930s, she contributed several horror and supernatural short stories to the British anthologies *Creeps* and *Not at Night*, under variations of her own name (Hester Holland Gaskell, Hester Holland, and Hester Gaskell Gorst), including "Dorner Cordianthus", "The Doll's House", "High Tide", "The Library", "Little Smith", and "The Scream" (which was filmed for TV in 1954 with Constance Cummings and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.). She also published a few mainstream novels as Hester Holland.

When she was 100, I included a horror tale by her in my anthology *The Virago Book of Ghost Stories* (1987); but throughout her career she was better known as an artist than for her novels and short stories, and she wrote virtually nothing after the late 1940s.

—Richard Dalby

Dear *Locus*:

As the creator of the "Recommended Fantasy Author List" mentioned by C. Dale Brittain in your December issue, I would like to note that the genuine home site of the list is: <http://www.sff.net/people/Amy.Sheldon>

Jani Joki's homepage (the address used by Ms. Brittain) is one of at least a dozen sites on the Net where copies of my list can be found (and Jani is one of only two who have actually asked permission). It's flattering in a way to realize that my efforts were attractive enough that people all over the world have been motivated to steal it, but it is also a very graphic illustration of why authors and others are wary about Net publishing. At this point, there is no real way to stop someone from grabbing your work and claiming it as their own.

Finally, another site pointing to lots of SF author home pages (both personally maintained and fan maintained) is at: [http://www.sff.net/sff/aut\\_page.htm](http://www.sff.net/sff/aut_page.htm)

—Amy I. Sheldon

Dear *Locus*:

While reading your December 1996 issue, I came across a photo on page 11 which has an incorrect title and caption. Your caption claims that the photo of Mr. Ackerman, Mr. Harryhausen, Mr. Bradbury, and Mr. Schwartz was taken during the First Fandom Awards at Archon 20. This photo was, in fact, taken at Archon 20, however, they were the convention guests and no official

## Locus Letters

First Fandom Award ceremony was held there. The 1996 First Fandom Awards were held during Worldcon.

This year's First Fandom Awards will be held April 4-6, 1997 at the Name That Con convention in St. Louis, Missouri. As this is our first year to host the First Fandom Awards, we were naturally concerned that people might be confused by your caption as to whether the award ceremonies were being held in April or not.

—Mary K. Stadter,  
Chairman, NTC 10

Dear *Locus*:

The picture of Julius and me you published in #432 has been the subject of numerous inquiries by my wife, Rosemary. I would like to set the record straight. Julius was separated at birth. Therefore, although I am identical, he is not. Gary is younger than both of us put together.

Thank you for the opportunity to end the confusion.

—Gene Wolfe

Dear *Locus*:

In your December 1996 issue, page 64, your listing of British Books Received for September includes an entry for a reissue of Daniel Evan Weiss's 1990 *The Roaches Have No King*, with a comment that this "Bizarre tale of intelligent cockroaches [is] so graphic its planned Ameri-

can edition was cancelled."

But the Los Angeles Public Library has the 1994 1st US edition.... Also, it was reviewed in the March 1, 1994 *Kirkus Reviews*, which lists a May 1994 publication date for it.

Incidentally, I certainly agree with the implication in the comment. This satiric fantasy is highly imaginative and sardonically intellectual, but reading it requires a strong stomach. "Brilliantly nauseating" would be a good description for it.

—Fred Patten

[We accept the information provided by Mr. Patten (photocopied from the book) as a correction of our listing; the US edition does exist.]

Dear *Locus*:

I am looking for editions of books by R.E. Howard and/or later "Conan" novelizations from any of the following countries: Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, the former Yugoslavia. Perhaps some fans might be willing to send some of these to me in exchange for either money or US books.

In other news, the lawsuit against Kirby McCauley and myself, filed by Conan Properties Inc., was discontinued on March 1, 1996. My lawyer termed it a SLAPP suit, meant for intimidation purposes only. (You ran a story on that in the May 1995 issue.)

—Glenn Lord  
P.O. Box 775  
Pasadena TX 77501



It's time for the annual Locus Poll & Survey again. The pullout ballot in the center should be returned by April 15, 1997 – the same day your taxes are due. We give a free issue to subscribers of record when we count ballots in April/early May, so put your name *exactly* the same way as it is on your subscription label. You have to at least make an effort to vote in some categories, and fill out the survey, to qualify. Photocopies are fine for ultimate collectors, and we'll count ballots from second and third readers of your copy – but only one freebie issue per subscription.

The categories are mostly self-explanatory, except for the short fiction ones. A novella is between 17,500 and 40,000 words; a novelette between 7,500 and 17,500; a short story up to 7,500. You don't actually count the words. You call five characters plus a space an average word and count the characters and spaces in one full line, then multiply out for the column, the page, and the story. If it's close, we usually use the lower category.

Please do not vote for any item more than once in a category. The only items that can be voted on more than once are first novels, which can also be included in the various best SF, fantasy, or horror novel categories. In the magazine category, please disregard *Locus*, and in the editor category disregard me. We've proved often enough that it's easy to win your own poll. (Besides, it could be embarrassing to lose.)

The lists on pages 40, 41, and 42 are recommendations only. You can vote for anything else you want. Also remember that the Hugo and Nebula awards have very different eligibility requirements, if you're using the list for other awards.

#### NOW IT CAN BE TOLD

Last editorial, I casually mentioned going off to Chicago for New Year's. "Chicago!" everyone said. "But it's cold. Why not stay in California?" Well, my friends (*Locus* columnist) Gary Wolfe and Ellen Weil were getting married on New Year's Eve, and I felt it was important to go, even though it was a casual ceremony, mostly for the family. I've skipped too many hair-brained troublesome trips for friends' weddings or special celebrations because of money, time, or other logical considerations. But you're *supposed* to inconvenience yourself for friends, so I was adamant about going (while telling everybody how terrible it was to have to go to Chicago in the winter). Too late, I realized I might have to wear *shoes* or might actually have to walk through *snow*. I packed my foul weather gear, but needn't have worried. It was 0°F the week before, but it was mostly in the 40s and 50s the week we were there. They even had a record 66°

## Editorial Matters

one day. We visited museums, restaurants, outdoor sculpture, and were able to explore the city on foot. The week after we left, it went back to 0°. The wedding? Oh yes, it was fine, and I annoyed the quasi-rabbi by snapping too many pictures – which I left there, so we don't even have one to run! Congratulations to the happy couple.

#### INTERNET

We just got another e-mail from someone who wants to be "helpful" and put the *Locus* Forthcoming Book List on the Internet for us. We wrote back a nasty letter; this sort of help we don't need. We sell those issues constantly for three months until the new one comes out; we also sell back issues with recent book listings, interviews, reviews, etc. We put the older *Locus* database with lists of books and stories on the Web, and there are a couple of other things, including indexes, but we do *not* want material, especially photos, reprinted from the magazine without permission and payment. It takes quite a bit of money to put out the magazine, and without as much income as possible, it can't continue to exist.

#### LATE ISSUE

Last issue was late because of the printer and the holidays; this one's lateness is mostly my fault. The February issue is our most complex, and it just took most of an extra week to get the writing done. This issue, alas, will probably not be mailed until the first week in February. We will try to pick up time with the March issue, but February is a short month.

#### THANK YOU

I'd like to especially thank Michael Swanwick and Paul DiFilippo for their clippings for the QuotePage and the Data File. We need as much help as we can get.

—C.N. Brown

#### IN OTHER WORDS

The February issue has always been a favorite. As a subscriber, I liked reading the reviewers' year-end summaries, figuring that if several people raved about the same book it was worth taking a look at. I'm still fascinated by that, but I'm also interested in the state of the book and magazine publishing industries – and I look forward to reading those reports if Charles and Carolyn ever finish writing them. The Recommended Reading list is always a bit frustrating, especially if I try to vote in the poll; it makes me realize how few current books I've read during the year. There are always books I know I'd vote for if I'd only read them already (like Paul J. McAuley's *Fairyland*, or Robin

Hobbs's *Royal Assassin*), but there are few that I've actually read. Of those, I strongly recommend *Fair Peril* by Nancy Springer and *Sabriel* by Garth Nix, as well as *The Jigsaw Woman* by Kim Anteau, a fascinating first novel that's part Frankenstein story and part voyage of self-discovery. I'm also partial to Ralph Steadman's wonderfully illustrated edition of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. **WE'RE LATE, WE'RE LATE...**

As many of you have surmised, the January issue was mailed late – an unfortunate circumstance due to the combination of Christmas and New Year's holidays, and our printer having three pressmen out. Periodical rate subscription copies went out as late as January 6 or 7. The February issue will likely be even later. No technical excuses this time. Charles says I can blame him, so I'll leave it for him to elucidate. Nuff said.

#### ON THE BOOKSHELF

Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice* (Bantam Spectra 1995), first in series, is an absorbing novel about a royal bastard (literally) who fits into the world as best he can. This was hard to put down; luckily the second in the series is already on hand (and the third is in galleys). Sheri S. Tepper is an author whose books I greatly admire, but *Gibbon's Decline and Fall* (Bantam Spectra 1996) fell short of my expectations. Not that it wasn't readable (it was), not that it didn't have neat SF ideas (it did), but it was too much of a polemic, at times sounding more like a political tract for the women's movement than a work of fiction. *Aunt Dimity and the Duke* (Viking 1994) by Nancy Atherton, second in the Aunt Dimity series, is a highly readable romance/mystery with, perhaps, a touch of fantasy. And Jane Austen's *Emma* (1815) (OK, so it's not a genre work) was a delight, even after multiple viewings of *Clueless* and the newest *Emma* movie.

#### FINAL POLL QUESTION

I think this year's final poll question is an interesting one; it's already provoked a lot of discussion between Kirsten and me, who seem to interpret it in different ways. It wasn't easy to come up with SF or fantasy novels I found disturbing, but Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* falls under that category for me, as does (perhaps) George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Patricia A. McKillip's *Deerskin* is another one that came to mind, but even though it was upsetting in places, I don't think it rocked my world in the same way that *Clockwork* did. So I guess what we're looking for are works that have uncomfortable, yet profound, impact. It will be interesting to see what people come up with.

—Marianne Jablon

### The Data File

Continued from page 9

**Game of Universe and Dry Water** at the following California bookstores in February and March: Mysterious Galaxy, San Diego, Feb. 22, 1:30-3 p.m.; Flights of Fantasy, Santa Monica, Feb. 23, 1-3 p.m.; Future Fantasy, Palo Alto, Feb. 28, 6-7 p.m.; and Dark Carnival, Berkeley, March 1, 3-5 p.m.

**Awards News** • The newsletter *Science Fiction Romance* has announced the winners of its second annual Best Science Fiction Romance of the Year award. First Place: Laurell K. Hamilton, *Bloody Bones* (Ace). Second Place: Mercedes Lackey, *The Fire Rose* (Baen). Third Place: Marion Zimmer Bradley, *The Exile's Song* (DAW). Nominees were published between December 1995 and November 1996 (the Lackey was the mass-market version, not the hardcover), with the 10 nominees receiving the most nominations as finalists, and winners chosen in a readers' poll.

*Publishers Weekly's* 1996 eighth annual Off-the-

Cuff Awards, the Cuffies, chosen by children's book-sellers, include a number of genre works in their lists of bests (and less-than-bests). Honorable Mention for Favorite Novel went to *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman – also listed for Didn't Meet Publisher's Expectations. Tied for Best Bet to Win Newbery Medal was *A Girl Named Disaster* by Nancy Farmer. Most Unusual Book was *Starry Messenger* by Peter Sis. And tied for Most Overdone Subject was "Goosebumps imitators." The full list appeared in the January 6, 1997 issue.

**Publishing News** • In honor of the April 1997 25th anniversary of the first publications from DAW Books, all DAW titles from April 1997 to March 1998 will have a special 25-anniversary logo.

Major Dutch publisher Meulenhoff has bought Amsterdam-based publisher Arena, founded in 1989. The company announcement calls the acquisition "a significant starting point for the further development of a young line of successful translations and Dutch originals...." The deal is expected to be complete as of February, when Arena will become an autonomous

part of Meulenhoff, with its own publisher and a staff of four. No publisher has been named as yet.

Ash-Tree Press, a small press specializing in limited editions of "classic supernatural literature," has moved from England to Canada. The new address is P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft BC V0K 1A0, Canada.

Pirate Writings Publishing has moved to P.O. Box 329, Brightwater NY 11718-0329. Phone/fax: (516) 666-5276. E-mail: pwpub@aol.com; Web site: <http://www.panix.com/~solan/pirate.writings>

**Financial News** • Crown Books reported net income of \$110,000 on sales of \$63.3 million in the third quarter ending November 2, 1996, up from a net loss of \$670 million for the same quarter in 1995. Both figures were affected by the loss of cash reserves due to store closings. Meanwhile, Crown, parent company Dart Group, and sister company Trak Auto filed two lawsuits against Dart Group Chairman/CEO Herbert Haft: a claim of \$43 million related to the 1993 firing of Haft's son Robert from Crown and Dart; and another seeking unspecified damages related to "a series of real estate and equipment lease transac-



tions." Haft family infighting has long been a concern for the companies; in 1995, Herbert Haft and another son, Ronald, were stripped of their voting shares of Dart Group stock, in a move by Dart executives.

**Bookstore News** • Musicland announced a "restructuring" of its Media Play division resulting in the January closures of 18 Media Play stores, in addition to five December store closings and six previous closures, for a total of 29 stores eliminated since January 1996; 69 stores will remain. Musicland Chair/CEO Jack W. Eugster declared, "these actions will generate cash and eliminate stores that lost money in 1996." All Media Play stores will close in Indianapolis, Salem OR, Canton OH, and Daytona Beach FL, and stores will also close in Atlanta, Nashville, and Denver.

Specialty bookstore Future Visions, in Houston TX, closed permanently as of January 5, 1997.

Space-Crime Continuum SF/Mystery Bookstore, Northampton MA, announced its 1996 bestsellers. In the SF and SF-Media category: 1) *The Diamond Age*, Neal Stephenson; 2) *Snow Crash*, Neal Stephenson; 3) *Waking the Moon*, Elizabeth Hand; 4) *Brightness Reef*, David Brin; 5) *Assassin's Apprentice*, Robin Hobb; 6) *Babylon Five: Clark's Law*, Jim Mortimore; 7) *Alvin Journeyman*, Orson Scott Card; 8) *Babylon Five: Betrayals*, S.M. Stirling; 9) *Red Prophet*, Orson Scott Card; 10) *Archangel*, Mike Conner. The store is owned by Chris Aylott and his wife, Deb Tomaselli. Aylott reported on the past year, "In an environment where superstores are regularly crushing independent bookstores, we've steadily built sales and doubled our customer base. We're one of the few local businesses that opened back in the summer of 1995 that's still around, and we feel very lucky."

**Book News** • St. Martin's delayed publication of its US edition of David Pringle's anthology *The Best of Interzone* from April to May 1997, in order to restore text dropped from the British edition (from the beginning of story "The Tourist" by Paul Park).

The December 1996 books from TSR were delayed until January 1997 due to printing problems.

**Online News** • Omni Online will begin its second fiction Round Robin on March 1, with Karen Joy Fowler, Jonathan Lethem, Rosaleen Love, and Maureen F. McHugh participating in the Omni Salon. Omni Visions, the interview program, has announced its upcoming schedule: Feb. 13: John Kessel, James Patrick Kelly; Feb. 20: Roberta Lannes; Feb. 27: Stephen Baxter; Mar. 6: Lucy Taylor; Mar. 13: Elizabeth Hand; Mar. 20: Jay Russell; Mar. 27: John Clute; Apr. 3: David J. Schow; Apr. 24: Laura Mixon & Steve Gould, Michaela Roessner, Paul Witcover.

**Market Update** • White Wolf's schedule is down to two books per month, and publisher Stewart Wieck is currently "returning 95% of submissions unread," but he is still interested in a few works which "seem to fit the direction we're going" as indicated by February releases *Zod Wallop* by William Browning Spencer and *Silicon Karma* by Thomas A. Easton. He notes, "1998 will see the return of more SF & F originals and perhaps a return to a heavier schedule." Contact White Wolf, Stewart Wieck, Suite 1007, 780 Park N. Blvd., Clarkston GA 30021; e-mail: lecarus@white-wolf.com

*Keen Science Fiction!* magazine's April and June issues are now closed to submission, but it is looking for more time travel stories for its November 1997 issue on that theme. Response time is now "two months, tops." Editor Teresa Keene is also looking for stories on terraforming. They pay 1½¢ per word on publication. Address: *Keen Science Fiction!* magazine, P.O. Box 9067, Spokane WA 99209-0067; phone/fax: (509) 744-0987; e-mail: ZLSK20A@prodigy.com; Web site: <http://pages.prodigy.com/KeenSciFi>

**Court Cases** • Zoetrope, the production company owned by Francis Ford Coppola, filed suit against Warner Brothers and the late astronomer/author Carl Sagan over forthcoming Warner film *Contact*, alleging that Sagan's novel of the same name was based on ideas created by Coppola for a TV project, with Sagan as a collaborator, and claiming the 1975 contract required Sagan to share book revenues with Zoetrope.

**Multi-Media Update** • Talk radio program "Sci Fi Talk" (on WEVD-AM) has moved to a prime-time starting time of 8:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, as of January 8, 1997. The show covers SF, fantasy, horror, comics, media, and collectibles, with interviews and reviews.

**Publications Received** • *ASFA Quarterly*, Summer/Fall 1996, publication of The Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists, with directors' and regional reports, convention art show listings, reviews, artwork, etc. Free to members. Information: ASFA, c/o Stuart C. Hellinger, P.O. Box 561, New York NY 10150-0561.

*The SFWA Bulletin*, Winter 1996, with an article on "The Making of Majipoor" by Robert Silverberg, the "The Second Random Audit" (an analysis of a publisher's payment to Roger MacBride Allen), plus market reports, etc. Free to SFWA members, \$3.00 as back issue, \$15 per year to others. Information: *SFWA Bulletin*, 404 Oceanside Street, Islip Terrace NY 11752-1203.

*Burroughs Bulletin*, Fall 1996, quarterly magazine of the Burroughs Bibliophiles, with interviews, articles, and fiction related to Edgar Rice Burroughs. Subscription: \$28 per year US, \$35 elsewhere, to George T. McWhorter, Curator, The Burroughs Memorial Collection, University of Louisville, Louisville KY 40292.

*Clarion Newsletter*, Fall 1996, stapled 'zine with news from Clarion '96, reports on the doings and publications of past workshop members, and a report on plans for a 30th Reunion to be held at the end of this year's June 15-July 26 workshop, with a party July 26th. For further information, contact Clarion 1997, c/o Mary Sheridan, Lyman Briggs School, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48825-1107.

*HWA Newsletter*, Dec/Jan '96-'97, with messages from officers of the Horror Writers' Association, plus contract news, a Top 40 list of best all-time horror books (voted on by members), market news, etc. Information: Horror Writers' Association Newsletter, 2923 Old Sewell Rd., Marietta GA 30068.

*Linguistics & Science Fiction*, January/February 1997, with updates on linguistics in religion, healthcare, women and language, etc. Free to members of the Linguistics & Science Fiction Network. Membership: \$10 per year; for other rates and information, contact OCLS, Box 1137, Huntsville AR 72740-1137; e-mail: ocls@ipa.net

"The Plot Thins", Winter 1997 addendum to Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore publication *The Plot Thickens*, with news of January events, some February events, available signed books, etc. Information: Mysterious Galaxy, 3904 Convoy Street #107, San Diego CA 92111; (619) 268-4747; e-mail: Mgbooks@ax.com

*Radio Free PKD*, November 1996, 'zine for readers of Philip K. Dick, with an article on "Phil Dick on the Internet" by John Allen Fairchild, plus other articles, news, reviews, etc. Information: *Radio Free PKD*, 27068 S. La Paz Rd. #430, Aliso Viejo CA 92656.

*Star\*line* Nov./Dec. 1996 and Jan./Feb. 1997, magazine of the Science Fiction Poetry Association, with poetry, a report on poetry at the 1996 Worldcon (Nov./Dec.), plus reviews, etc. Free to members. Membership: \$15 per year US to John Nichols, SFPA Secretary/Treasurer, 6075 Bellevue Dr., North Olmstead OH 44070.

"Star-Spangled Shadows: Poetry in American SFazines - The 1930s to 1960s" by Steve Sneyd, pamphlet which is also *Data Dump Special*, #s15-16, an alphabetical listing plus brief bibliography, available for £1.75/\$5.00 from Hilltop Press, 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD5 8PB, UK.

**Multi-Media Received** • From Bridge Publications, a book/CD-ROM "gift package" featuring L. Ron Hubbard's novel *Battlefield Earth* plus an interactive CD-ROM game (for Windows 95) based on the book, along with related SF art, selections from a *Battlefield Earth* soundtrack by Chick Corea, etc. The package we received notes that it has "a \$29.95 value," but is being sold for \$10.99. Information: Bridge Publishing, 4751 Fountain Ave., Los Angeles CA 90029; Web site: <http://www.bridgepub.com>

From Byron Preiss Multimedia Co., Inc., PC CD-ROM Virtual Comix box set with arcade interactive comics games based on characters from "They Call Me ... The Skull"™ and "The Suit"™, new superhero comics, for Windows-based computers, estimated street price \$19.95. Information: Byron Preiss Multimedia Co., Inc., 24 West 25th Street, New York NY 10010. Distributed by Simon & Schuster Interactive Distribution Services. Web site: <http://www.byronpreiss.com>

From Second Nature Software, six full-color screen saver collections on CD, for Mac and Windows 3.1 and '95, each with 22 artwork images (all these collections can also be downloaded from Second Nature's Web site: <http://www.secondnature.com>): #3130, "The Art of Guardians" (illustrations for the card game, by Maitz, Parkinson, Rowena, Warhola, etc.); #2750, "Worlds of Wonder" (fantasy art by Barr, Bober, Crisp, Hescoc, Hickman, Jael, Mattingly, Romas, Ruddell, and Warren); #3120, "Dream Dimensions" by Jean-Paul Avisse, "dreamlike paintings depicting exquisite women and nature"; #2930, "David A. Hardy's Fantastic Space", with space and SF artwork; #3110, "Celestial Odyssey II" by John Foster, his second collection of space and SF artwork; and #2970, "Celestial Impressions" by Raymond S. Wilson, space art by a NASA illustrator. For further information, contact Second Nature, 1325 Officers' Row, Vancouver WA 98661; (360) 737-4170; e-mail: dorothy@secondnature.com (Dorothy Hitt).

## Recommended Reading

Continued from page 39

that I heartily recommend. Nancy Springer twisted the spirit of fairy tale to produce the delightfully satiric *Fair Peril*, in which a contemporary storyteller (and divorced mother) finds fairyland at the local mall. Judith Merkle Riley's *The Serpent Garden* is an intriguing historical, with fantasy elements, about a female artist trying to survive medieval court intrigues.

Also heavily interested in the topic of art and the medieval period is *The Golden Key*, by Melanie Rawn, Jennifer Roberson, and Kate Elliott; it's big - almost overblown - but rich in social detail, and full of memorable images and characters, and a really compelling system of magic. One of the biggest, and most unexpected, publicity pushes went to *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman (published in the UK in 1995 as a young adult novel, *His Dark Materials 1: Northern Lights*). More complex than

the usual young-adult fantasy, it's the story of a young girl in a fascinating alternate England who discovers that kidnapped orphans are being taken to the Arctic, and tries to rescue them; it's full of colorful characters and odd details, but I'm waiting for future volumes to decide if it's really a new classic.

New novels appeared in several series I've been following with pleasure: Steven Brust's latest "Vlad Taltos" novel, *Orca*, gives Vlad a solid mystery to get him out of his recent (two books, at least) funk.



## Recommended Reading

Sean Russell's *Sea Without a Shore*, takes the fascinating, and often mysterious, alternate-Victorian world built in *World Without End*, and sets about wrapping up more plots, more successfully, than I had thought possible. Ellen Foxe's *Season of Storms*, second book in "The Summerlands" series, turned out to be an entertaining sea-adventure, with pirates, assassins, and a lost queen in an alternate New World. Michelle West's *Hunter's Death* concluded the action of *Hunter's Oath*, going beyond the fascinating culture of the hunter lords to introduce a great city full of unusual characters and customs – not to mention a spectacular final battle between good and evil. Terry Pratchett had two "Discworld" novels out this year: *Hogfather* takes a satiric look at Christmas, with mixed success; *Feet of Clay* is a very entertaining golem story/murder mystery that brings back the mostly disreputable characters of *Men at Arms* for a chaotic romp.

Other humorous fantasy novels I enjoyed this year include Jody Lynn Nye's *The Magic Touch*, which mixes inner-city gangs with genies and fairy godmothers, and Margaret Ball's *Mathemagics*, about a barbarian swordswoman from another world trying to make it as a suburban housewife in ours. Holly Lisle's *Sympathy for the Devil* proposes a devilishly entertaining idea: what would happen if God let a predetermined number of the damned (demons, devils, etc.) loose in a prescribed area of Earth, to give them a second chance at salvation? Unholy chaos and a lot of fun is the answer, continued nicely in the sequel *The Devil & Dan Cooley*, by Holly Lisle and Walter Spence.

The big standout among the first novels I read this year was N. Lee Wood's cynical near-future thriller, *Looking for the Mahdi*, about a female journalist in an Islamic country with an android spy. For far-future SF and impressive world building, I recommend Sarah Zettel's first novel *Reclamation*, in which rebels and fanatics struggle for control of a "lost" colony world. Also of interest is *Quantum Moon* by Denise Vitola, a gritty near-future mystery about a police detective who thinks she's a werewolf, and has a serious struggle to cover her unusual medical expenses while solving a murder. I seem to have a soft spot for genre-crossing mysteries this year; one of my favorite fantasy first novels is Francine G. Woodbury's *Shade and Shadow*, an academic murder mystery set in a world where magic has its own department at Oxford, and computers are used to analyze antique spells. Perhaps most impressive was *Waterborn* by J. Gregory Keyes, the beginning of a new epic fantasy series set in a land where the all-devouring god of a great river gives uncontrollable powers to a chosen few mortals. Also of interest: Jane Routley's *Mage Heart* is an apprentice mage story told with uncommon thought and depth; Ann Marston produced a strong Celtic-style lost-prince fantasy in *Kingmaker's Sword*, the first volume in the "Rune Blade" trilogy. Lynn Flewelling's *Luck in the Shadows* is a memorable "thieves" adventure with a particularly engaging protagonist; also amusing, if not quite as solid, is Anne Lesley Groell's more humorous assassin adventure, *Anvil of the Sun*; both novels are just the start of series that promise to be entertaining.

—Carolyn Cushman

### RECOMMENDED SF by Gardner Dozois

The best original science fiction anthology of the year, with little real competition, clearly was *Starlight 1*, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden; runner-up was *Intersections: The Sycamore Hill Anthology*, edited by John Kessel, Mark L. Van Name, and Richard Butner. *War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches*, edited by Kevin J. Anderson, was uneven and too repetitive, but had some good stories in it. There were few fantasy anthologies this year, unlike last year. The year's best collections would include *Unlocking the Air and Other Stories*, Ursula K. Le Guin; *The Invisible Country*, Paul J. McAuley; *Synthesis* and

*Other Virtual Realities*, Mary Rosenblum; *All One Universe*, Poul Anderson; *None So Blind*, Joe Haldeman; *Schismatrix Plus*, Bruce Sterling; and *Microcosmic God*, Theodore Sturgeon. As usual, I haven't read a lot of novels this year. Of those I have, I would recommend *Fairyland* by Paul J. McAuley, *Blue Mars* by Kim Stanley Robinson, *Holy Fire* by Bruce Sterling, *Whiteout* by Sage Walker, *Distress* by Greg Egan, *River of Dust* by Alexander Jablokov, *Nadya* by Pat Murphy, *Idoru* by William Gibson, *The Bones of Time* by Kathleen Ann Goonan, *Humpty Dumpty: An Oval* by Damon Knight, and a special mention of Jack Vance's best novel in years, *Night Lamp*.

—Gardner Dozois

### 1996 SHORT FICTION SUMMARY by Mark R. Kelly

The short fiction field continued to skew against magazines and against science fiction in 1996 compared to previous years. The selection of what I track as the "principal" magazines shrunk this year, losing *Amazing* and *Pulp* entirely, leaving just *Analog*, *Asimov's*, *F&SF*, *Interzone*, *Tomorrow*, *SF Age*, *Realms of Fantasy*, *Omni Online*, *Century*, and *Crank!* – and *Aboriginal SF*, which came back with two issues. *Century* managed only one, though; *Crank!* two; while *Analog* lost one issue, *Asimov's* two, (and these issues were shorter) compared to the previous year; *Tomorrow* slipped one issue. The net result is a total of 452 stories from these magazines in 1996, compared to 548 in 1995, a 20% drop!

Meanwhile, there were more anthologies than ever, but fewer significant ones. I counted 70 altogether, compared to 58 in 1995, of which perhaps a dozen were SF rather than fantasy or horror. Total stories, 1100, up 10% from 1000 last year. The increase in books – based in part on my scanning *Locus's* own Books Received listings for titles I never saw – is in part due to a bunch of small-press erotic anthologies. The number of genuine SF anthologies is so small that it's easy to name them: *Intersections*; *Starlight 1*; *War of the Worlds: Global Dispatches*; *The Williamson Effect*.

What about quality of the short fiction itself? Fewer stories struck me as clear stand-outs in 1996. I have no need to name both a top ten and a second ten, as I did last year. This doesn't necessarily mean that fiction overall was worse, and in fact from month to month I've had no problem finding plenty of worthwhile fiction to read in the magazines and the occasional anthology. On average, the short fiction field is as robust as ever. The biggest difference from 1995 was the dearth of outstanding novellas. *Omni's* Online stories continued, but with only one novella, while there were no equivalents in '96 to books like 1995's *Far Futures* and *New Legends* that between them included several substantial novellas. Also, there were no Greg Egan stories this year; no Brian Stableford novellas; only one Ursula K. Le Guin story.

In settling on a top ten selection, I ended up cheating slightly and including two stories which have already, in other contexts, been counted for 1995, though I didn't have a chance to include them in last year's list.

The first of these is Michael Swanwick's novelette "Radio Waves" from the last print issue of *Omni* magazine, dated Winter 1995 though it didn't actually hit the racks until the middle of January, 1996. As a consequence, the story was listed among *Locus's* recommended reading last year – and, it's already won a World Fantasy Award. Nevertheless, it appeared in print for the first time in 1996, and that's when I saw it. It's a dazzling fantasy about what happens after death: the world turns upside down and you fall away into space, unless you're lucky enough to grab on to something when you die.

The other technical holdover is Lucius Shepard's novella "Human History", which also has a World Fantasy Convention connection – it appeared in the 1995 WFC Program Book (an edition of, presumably, under 1000), before seeing print in the April '96 *Asimov's*. This is a rare pure SF story from Shepard, set in a far future when villagers who have rejected

technology learn the truth about the "Captains" who protect them from orbit; it's also a personal story of maturity told in Shepard's most impassioned, poetic prose.

After one (major) story last year, Gene Wolfe appeared frequently in 1996, and his most affecting story was "The Man in the Pepper Mill" in the October-November *F&SF*. Starring the author's trademark innocent young boy, the story combines a broken family, a lovingly preserved dollhouse, toy dinosaurs, and an acquaintance with an irascible lighthouse keeper in a magical tale of emotional need and fulfillment.

The most thoughtful short story of the year is John Crowley's "Gone" (*F&SF* 9/96), a tale about alien visitation that's about as far from the comic-book extravaganza of *Independence Day* as it's possible to be. Aliens dubbed "elmers" roam neighborhoods on Earth offering household services, washing windows or cutting grass, while offering a placard with a strange message that seems to promise love and good will if only the human hosts will answer "yes." What does yes mean? Like all the big questions of life, that's for humans to decide.

Another provocative short story is Paul Park's "The Last Homosexual" (*Asimov's* 6/96), a frightening story of a future balkanized US in which the southern states are under the sway of a religious revolution that holds all "human problems" such as alcoholism and homosexuality to be viral in nature, and thus curable, or at least controllable. It's a dramatic example of how politics and religion can influence scientific research, and vice versa.

Mike Resnick's controversial Kirinyaga series came to a conclusion in that same issue of *Asimov's* with "The Land of Nod", in which the "witch doctor" Koriba deals with the dissolution of his dreams for an orbital Kikuyu utopia, returning to Earth among people who don't understand, including his own son. This series has always caused one to wonder – as one does with Park's story, in fact – just what the author believes, though that's not a fair basis for critique. On its own terms, Koriba's saga ends the only way it can, leaving the reader to ponder the ways in which culture and idealism are affected by the future.

Ursula K. Le Guin's one story this year, "Mountain Ways" (*Asimov's* 8/96), is set on the planet O, where the humans live in combination marriage of four adults each, two women and two men in intermixed heterosexual and homosexual relationships. The problems of two star-crossed lovers among these people make us view our own relationships with a new perspective.

The most prolific SF writer of note in 1996 was Stephen Baxter, and his best was a collaboration with Eric Brown, "The Spacetime Pit" from the May *Interzone*. It tells of a space traveler marooned on a planet with primitives eetees; unable to repair her escape pod, the traveler sets about molding the native race to suit her own ends, while she leapfrogs the centuries and millennia in cold sleep. It's an expansive, audacious premise, with the kind of sense of wonder that would presage Hugo Award if it weren't for the difficulty most American voters have seeing stories in *Interzone*.

Michael Cassutt's "The Longer Voyage" (*F&SF* 7/96) is an unflinching extrapolation of the bureaucratic approach to space travel on the mounting of an interstellar expedition. Cassutt's starship *Mission to Alpha Centauri* is in its second generation of construction, with people working aboard who were born there. It's a rare application of the complexities of the real world to the fantasies of space travel, more plausible (alas) than the optimistic visions of traditional SF, let alone those in cinematic space operas.

The final top ten selection is Ian R. MacLeod's "Verglas" (*F&SF* 10-11/96), a novella about a human family transforming themselves into the avian creatures of an alien planet. The father hesitates after the rest have undergone the change, and he meditates on what it means to be human and on the purpose of life. It's a mature story that doesn't assume, as so much SF does, that transcendence lies in abandoning the physical limitations of being human.



Other stories of particular note from 1996 include Bruce Sterling's "Bicycle Repairman" (*Intersections*, and *Asimov's* 10-11/96), a companion story to "Deep Eddy" from a couple years ago, and another high-concept glimpse at life in the near future.

Tony Daniel's "A Dry, Quiet War" (*Asimov's* 6/96) is a tale of a vast war fought across time and the amazing sacrifice made by one warrior to preserve his side.

Terry Bisson published two extravagant comedies, "The Edge of the Universe" (*Asimov's* 8/96), about a cosmic cataclysm focused on Huntsville, Alabama; and "In the Upper Room" (*Playboy* 4/96), a tale of romance in virtual reality.

A rare short story from Gardner Dozois, "Community" (*Asimov's* 9/96), describes how a rural community deals with members whose behavior steps out of line.

Robert Reed was as prolific as ever in 1996. His two best stories were "First Tuesday" (*F&SF* 2/96), a look at how politicians reach out to the common people via virtual reality; and "Decency" (*Asimov's* 6/96), about an instinctive human reaction to an inci-

dent of alien suffering.

James Blaylock's enchanting fantasy "Thirteen Phantasms" (*Omni Online* 10/96) used a mail order coupon from a decades-old SF magazine to achieve a reunion with a simpler past.

Gene Wolfe's "Counting Cats in Zanzibar" (*Asimov's* 8/96) is an elegant SFnal mystery that describes the tense confrontation between a self-aware machine and the woman who created it aboard a ship at sea.

Fritz Leiber's lost novella "The Dealings of Daniel Kesserich" (*Omni Online* 2/96) incorporated a fascinating theory of how changes to the time stream propagate in a story about mass insanity affecting a small desert town.

Gregory Feeley's "The Weighing of Ayre" (*Starlight* 1) is a tale of historical science, as Anton van Leeuwenhoek's connection to the technological warfare of the 17th-century.

Kate Wilhelm's "Forget Luck" (*F&SF* 4/96) offers a neat techno-medical drama about how genes are the secret masters of the universe.

There were also a number of excellent interplan-

etary and space stories this year, including G. David Nordley's "Martian Valkyrie" (*Analog* 1/96), Alastair Reynolds's "Spirey and the Queen" (*Interzone* 6/96), Astrid Julian's "Blowup" (*F&SF* 5/96), Charles Sheffield's "Cloud Cuckoo" (*Asimov's* 7/96), and several more by Stephen Baxter, "Columbiad" (*SF Age* 5/96), two sets of "Saddle Point" stories (*SF Age* 7/96 and 11/96), and "Prospero One" (with Simon Bradshaw, *Interzone* 10/96).

To recap the top ten short fiction of 1996 (by title):

John Crowley, "Gone"  
Lucius Shepard, "Human History"  
Mike Resnick, "The Land of Nod"  
Paul Park, "The Last Homosexual"  
Michael Cassutt, "The Longer Voyage"  
Gene Wolfe, "The Man in the Pepper Mill"  
Ursula K. Le Guin, "Mountain Ways"  
Michael Swanwick, "Radio Waves"  
Stephen Baxter & Eric Brown, "The Spacetime Pit"  
Ian R. MacLeod, "Verglas"

— Mark R. Kelly

## 1996 Book Summary

Continued from page 45

the same as in 1995. Also in third with nine books, Putnam/Ace moved up from tenth place with five more books than before. Morrow/Avon also moved up from eighth to fifth place, with eight books, up three. Sixth place was a three-way tie between Random House/Ballantine, HarperCollins UK, and Penguin USA, all with seven books. That left Harcourt Brace in ninth place with five books, up one from last year. Tied at ninth, Gollancz was down four books, dropping from third place in 1995. With four books DAW held steady, but dropped down one notch. Two UK publishers dropped from the list: Millennium and Random UK. No new publishers were added. Eighteen small presses were represented by 22 recommended books; six academic presses had one book each.

### COMMERCIAL SUCCESS

Charts #6 and #7 (p. 75) are our best indicators of commercial success, showing the bestseller percentage by publisher. The chain lists are separated from the Locus list because of the variations in buying patterns. On the Locus list, Bantam regained its top spot,

after losing to Tor/St. Martin's last year. Close behind, Tor and Random/Ballantine/Del Rey tied in second place. Putnam held steady at fourth, and Baen at fifth. DAW moved up from ninth to sixth place, knocking HarperCollins, Warner, and Penguin USA each down a notch.

On the chain list, Random House held onto first place, with Tor coming in second. Bantam remained a distant third. Warner moved up to fourth place, with DAW and Putnam tied for fifth. Baen dropped a notch to seventh. With 3% of the list, HarperCollins, Penguin USA, Avon/Morrow, and Turner tied for eighth place.

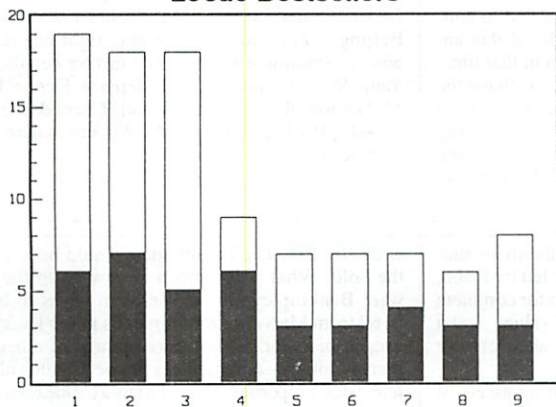
The big surprise in bestsellers came in a category we don't normally bother to count. For the first time since we began counting media-related books separately, Pocket did not win that category. We originally eliminated game- and media-related bestsellers from the figures here mostly because they were foregone conclusions, with Simon & Schuster/Pocket dominating the media-related category with its Star Trek novels, and TSR taking the gaming-related category. But this year Bantam/Doubleday/Dell beat Pocket in the media-related category — at least on the Locus bestseller lists. Between Bantam's Star Wars

and Dell's Babylon Five series, BDD took 39% of the available spots, Pocket 34%, and HarperCollins 13%. On the chain lists, Pocket still holds a strong lead, but not total domination, with 45% of the spots, followed by BDD with 28%, HarperCollins with 16%, and Putnam/Boulevard with 7%.

In gaming-related books, TSR still has the edge, taking 73% of the spots on the Locus lists, and 83% on the chains'; only minor competition came from Penguin/Roc, which had 18% of the spots on the Locus lists (with both "Battletech" and "Shadowrun" series). Penguin/Roc had no spots on the Waldenbooks lists, but still had enough on the B&N/B. Dalton lists to take 7% of the combined chain spots. Hyperion managed 8%, on the strength of the "Myst" books. Last year, HarperPrism looked like a double threat, moving strongly onto the media lists with its *X-Files* novelizations, in addition to its "Magic: The Gathering" and White Wolf gaming lines. The "Magic" seems to have faded, and repeated postponement of new novels in the *X-Files* adult line (we don't count the numerous YA novelizations) has hurt their media-related showing.

The chain list covers between 50% and 60% of SF sales (35% of general fiction sales), while the Locus

Locus Bestsellers



TOP PUBLISHERS - LOCUS BESTSELLERS

	1996	95	94	93	92	91	90	89
1. Bantam/Doubleday/Dell	19%	18	25	27	21	30	24	23
2. Tor/St. Martin's	18%	24	17	14	15	17	12	12
3. Random/Ball/Del Rey	18%	13	19	19	15	13	13	18
4. Putnam/Berkley/Ace	9%	9	8	-	12	13	11	14
5. Baen	7%	8	7	7	6	4	4	3
9. DAW	7%	4	8	6	4	4	5	3
6. HarperPrism	7%	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Warner	6%	6	4	-	-	-	3	6
8. Penguin USA	5%	5	-	-	4	3	5	4

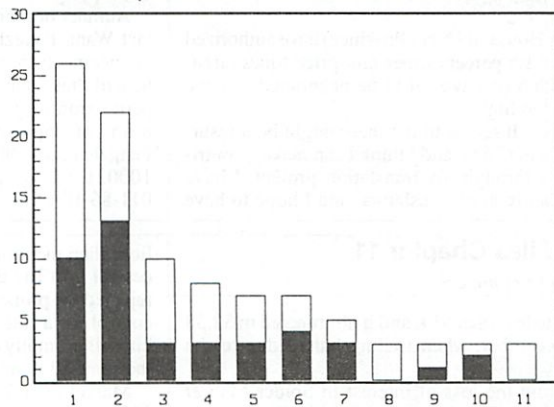
■ PAPERBACK

□ TRADE AND HARDCOVER

(- indicates a figure of less than 2 %)

\*tie

Barnes & Noble/B. Dalton & Waldenbooks Bestsellers



TOP PUBLISHERS - B&N/B. DALTON & WALDENBOOKS BESTSELLERS

	1996	95	94	93	92	91	90	89
1. Random/Ball/Del Rey	26%	25	28	19	22	16	16	24
2. Tor/St. Martin's	22%	22	16	9	6	9	5	3
3. Bantam/Doubleday/Dell	10%	12	17	19	19	21	15	13
4. Warner	8%	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. DAW	7%	7	9	7	3	5	5	2
* Putnam/Berkley/Ace	7%	10	9	7	6	12	11	10
7. Baen	5%	5	7	5	6	3	3	-
8. HarperPrism	3%	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
* Penguin USA	3%	4	4	-	2	-	-	-
* Avon/Morrow	3%	-	-	-	2	3	7	4
* Turner	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



<b>1996 Book Summary</b> <p>list covers the specialty bookstores, who probably account for 10% of sales – unfortunately, a percentage that is probably dropping. There were fewer specialty stores in 1996.</p> <p><b>CONCLUSIONS</b></p> <p>1996 was a cautious year for SF publishing. Many publishers cut back, but not as severely as expected.</p>	<p>They also weren't taking chances on marginal books or dying trends, but sticking with "sure" sellers, like media-related books. Magic realism has become a constant background noise, something we try to filter out unless it has a definite genre theme running through it. Share-cropping is out, unless of course it's media-related; horror seems to be in decline, with even juvenile horror showing signs of decrease. The number of publishers and the number of books have</p>	<p>both gone down, and a number of small-press publishers seem to be holding off for now; maybe that implosion of the field we half-predicted last year has arrived – but if so, it's moving slowly enough for savvy publishers to avoid serious collapse. Next year, we get to see what happens with the sale of Putnam/Berkley to Penguin. Ooooh, fun.</p> <p>– Carolyn Cushman/C.N. Brown</p>
<b>Major Publishing Changes</b> <i>Continued from page 8</i> <p>tam/Doubleday SF team put together after Bantam bought Doubleday, but left in 1989 when he burned out from various personal disasters. He spent several years in freelance advertising, then was at Zebra from</p>	<p>1993 to 1995, before being lured away to Wings publishing in 1995. He went back to freelancing when Wings cancelled its new publishing programs.</p> <p>"I've been comfortable in SF since 1970, when I attended my first convention, and it's good to be back in it," LoBrutto notes. "It seems very odd to be at a company I've worked at before, with some of the same</p>	<p>people. It's great working with Jack Dann and other old friends. I look forward to doing the Star Wars program – it's always been a favorite of mine – and working with Tim Zahn, Chris Claremont, and others. Life is certainly stranger than SF."</p>
<b>1996 Chain Bestsellers</b> <i>Continued from page 8</i> <p><b>Trade Paperbacks</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>The Mists of Avalon</i>, Marion Zimmer Bradley (Del Rey)</li> <li>2) <i>Royal Assassin</i>, Robin Hobb (Bantam Spectra)</li> <li>3) <i>Forest House</i>, Marion Zimmer Bradley (Roc)</li> <li>4) <i>Master and Fool</i>, J.V. Jones (Warner Aspect)</li> <li>5) <i>The Hobbit</i>, J.R.R. Tolkien (Ballantine)</li> </ol> <p><b>Media-Related</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Star Wars: Before the Storm</i>, Michael P. Kube-McDowell (Bantam Spectra)</li> <li>2) <i>Star Wars X-Wing: Rogue Squadron</i>, Michael A. Stackpole (Bantam Spectra)</li> <li>3) <i>Star Wars: Shield of Lies</i>, Michael P. Kube-McDowell (Bantam Spectra)</li> <li>4) <i>Independence Day</i>, Devlin <i>et al.</i> (HarperPrism)</li> <li>5) <i>Star Wars X-Wing: Wedge's Gamble</i>, Michael A. Stackpole (Bantam Spectra)</li> </ol> <p><b>Gaming-Related</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>DragonLance: Dragons of Summer Flame</i>, Weis &amp; Hickman (TSR)</li> <li>2) <i>DragonLance: The Second Generation</i>, Weis &amp; Hickman (TSR)</li> <li>3) <i>Forgotten Realms: Passage to Dawn</i>, R.A. Salvatore (TSR)</li> <li>4) <i>DragonLance: The Dragons at War</i>, Weis &amp; Hickman, eds. (TSR)</li> <li>5) <i>DragonLance Fifth Age: The Dawning of a</i></li> </ol>	<p><b>New Age, Jean Rabe (TSR)</b></p> <p><b>Musicland</b></p> <p><b>Hardcovers</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Crown of Swords</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> <li>2) <i>First King of Shannara</i>, Terry Brooks (Del Rey)</li> <li>3) <i>Blood of the Fold</i>, Terry Goodkind (Tor)</li> <li>4) <i>The Ringworld Throne</i>, Larry Niven (Del Rey)</li> <li>5) <i>The Silver Gryphon</i>, Lackey &amp; Dixon (DAW)</li> <li>6) <i>Otherland: City of Golden Shadows</i>, Tad Williams (DAW)</li> <li>7) <i>Belgarath the Sorcerer</i>, Eddings &amp; Eddings (Del Rey)</li> <li>8) <i>The Great Hunt</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> <li>9) <i>Blue Mars</i>, Kim Stanley Robinson (Bantam Spectra)</li> <li>10) <i>Stone of Tears</i>, Terry Goodkind (Tor)</li> </ol> <p><b>Paperbacks</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Lord of Chaos</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> <li>2) <i>Belgarath the Sorcerer</i>, Eddings &amp; Eddings (Del Rey)</li> <li>3) <i>Stone of Tears</i>, Terry Goodkind (Tor)</li> <li>4) <i>Eye of the World</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> <li>5) <i>The Fires of Heaven</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> <li>6) <i>The Hobbit</i>, J.R.R. Tolkien (Ballantine)</li> <li>7) <i>Fahrenheit 451</i>, Ray Bradbury (Ballantine)</li> <li>8) <i>Witches Brew</i>, Terry Pratchett (Del Rey)</li> <li>9) <i>The Dragon Reborn</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> <li>10) <i>The Great Hunt</i>, Robert Jordan (Tor)</li> </ol> <p><b>Trade Paperbacks</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Dark Destiny</i>, Edward E. Kramer, ed. (White Wolf)</li> <li>2) <i>Mostly Harmless</i>, Douglas Addams (Ballantine)</li> <li>3) <i>A Map of Tolkien's Middle Earth</i>, Sibley &amp; Howe (HarperCollins)</li> <li>4) <i>Forest House</i>, Marion Zimmer Bradley (Roc)</li> <li>5) <i>Elric: Tales of the White Wolf</i>, Kramer &amp; Gilliam, eds. (White Wolf)</li> </ol> <p><b>Media-Related</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>The Truth Is Out There: The Official X-Files Guide</i>, Brian Lowrey (HarperPrism)</li> <li>2) <i>Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire</i>, Steve Perry (Bantam Spectra)</li> <li>3) <i>Independence Day</i>, Devlin <i>et al.</i> (HarperPrism)</li> <li>4) <i>The Unofficial Guide to the X-Files</i>, N.E. Genge (Random House)</li> <li>5) <i>Star Wars: Before the Storm</i>, Michael P. Kube-McDowell (Bantam Spectra)</li> </ol> <p><b>Gaming-Related</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>DragonLance Fifth Age: The Dawning of a New Age</i>, Jean Rabe (TSR)</li> <li>2) <i>Forgotten Realms: Passage to Dawn</i>, R.A. Salvatore (TSR)</li> <li>3) <i>Forgotten Realms: Siege of Darkness</i>, R.A. Salvatore (TSR)</li> <li>4) <i>Myst: The Book of Atrus</i>, Miller <i>et al.</i> (Hyperion)</li> <li>5) <i>DragonLance: Dragons of Summer Flame</i>, Weis &amp; Hickman (TSR)</li> </ol>
<b>Copyright Requests for Translations</b> <i>Continued from page 9</i> <p>Publishing House of Hebei Province) have authorized him to pay "six percent times unit price times circulation," with a prepayment to be negotiated, "if the rate is not too high."</p> <p>He notes, "It seems to me there might be a resurgence of SF in China, and I think I can make a contribution to it through my translation project. I have organized a group of translators, and I hope to have</p>	<p>the books published around the end of next year, if the copyrights can be settled smoothly."</p> <p>Authors or their representatives are asked to contact Wang Fengzhen within two months of this announcement; for anyone not heard from in that time, he will "take it as granted that you have given me the permission to go on with my work" at their usual terms of copyright. He can be reached at Wang Fengzhen, Apt. 901-106, Section 9, Jinsong, Beijing 100021, China; phone 011-86-10-6775-2432; fax 011-86-10-6512-5094.</p>	<p>Meanwhile, the International SF conference announced for Chengdu, China, July 27-30, 1997 (see <i>Locus</i>, January 1997, page 35) has been moved to Beijing, China, to facilitate copyright negotiations with international writers. For further details, write Yang Xiao, Editor-in-Chief, <i>Science Fiction World</i>, 11 Section, 4 Renminnan Road, Chengdu, Sichuan 610041, P.R.C., or e-mail Mr. Wu Yan: wuyan@sun.ihep.ac.cn</p>
<b>Marvel Files Chapter 11</b> <i>Continued from page 9</i> <p>was down to less than \$14, and it plummeted to \$2.38 by late December, when trading halted due to the bankruptcy.</p> <p>Aside from the loss of interest in Spider Man <i>et al.</i>, Marvel's problems were confounded by a power struggle between Ronald Perelman, owner of about 81% of Marvel through the Andrews Group and his other companies, and bondholder Carl Icahn. It has been described as "two sharks biting their tails." Perelman offered a restructuring plan, involving his purchase of about 80% of new shares for \$350 mil-</p>	<p>lion, then merging the company with the more successful firm Toy Biz Inc. But investors, led by Icahn, rejected the proposal, labeling it a move for complete control for a fraction of Marvel's true value; Icahn himself promptly offered a bondholder takeover – for the same \$350 million.</p> <p>Marvel then filed for bankruptcy, citing assets of \$229.6 million and liabilities of \$693.2 million – the losses due to both problems with the comic and trading card lines, and other acquisitions that added to the debt. Marvel's restructuring plan under Chapter 11 is similar to the earlier \$350 million plan, with an offer of \$365 million for approximately 81% of restructured shares, and retention of ideas for merger</p>	<p>with Toy Biz. The bondholders would be left out in the cold. What will happen is now up to the Delaware Bankruptcy Court. Perelman hopes to borrow \$160 from Marvel Entertainment's major lenders, for use, in part, for further development of other company holdings – among them Marvel Studios film and television properties, Marvel Mania theme restaurants, and Marvel Interactive software. Will Spider Man fly on into the 21st century, clinging to dinner plates and CD-ROMs?</p> <p>Meanwhile, Marvel Comics goes on publishing and selling comics, operating pretty much the same on a day-to-day basis while the corporate giants fight over control.</p>
<b>UPC Awards</b> <i>Continued from page 9</i> <p>tions went to the following works (all by writers from Spain except as noted): "Dar de comer al sediento" by Eduardo Gallego Arjona (La Cañada) &amp; Guillem</p>	<p>Sánchez (Mataró); "El día del dragón" by Pedro Domingo Mutiño (Barcelona); "El alfabeto del carpintero" by Rodolfo Martínez (Gijón), and "A Wrinkle in Space Time" by Robert J. Defendi (Utah, USA).</p> <p>The Honorable Mention to a writer from the UPC</p>	<p>went to "Cena recalentada" by Jordi Miró Miranda (Teià, Spain), with runner-up "L'onze habitant" by Santiago Iranzo i Jardí (Barcelona).</p> <p>The jury consisted of Lluís Anglada, Miquel Barceló, Jordi José, Josep Casanova, and Manuel Morena. They worked with 130 entries, up from 114</p>



# DEL REY INTERGALACTIC MEMO

**DATE:** March 1997

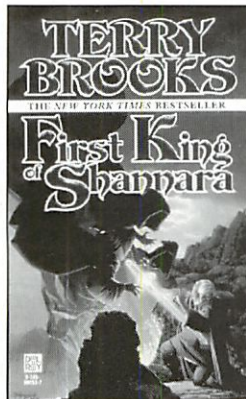
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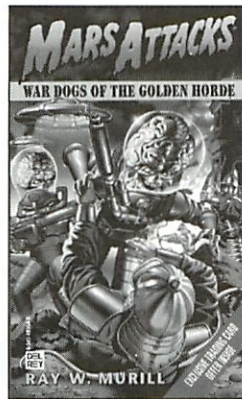
**TO:** All intelligent life (You know who you are)

**RE:** Extremely essential reading (of the extraordinary variety)

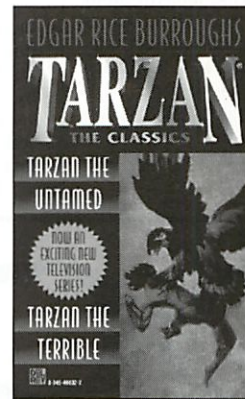
We'll keep it short and sweet. *Our mission:* Provide maximum stimulation for every imagination. *Our means:* This month's Del Rey titles, as detailed below. *Our advice:* Check it out!



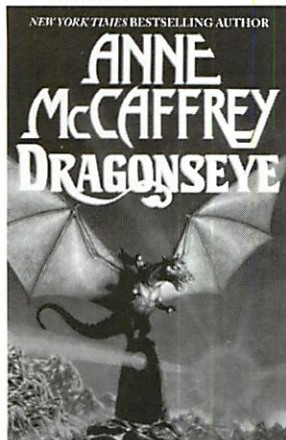
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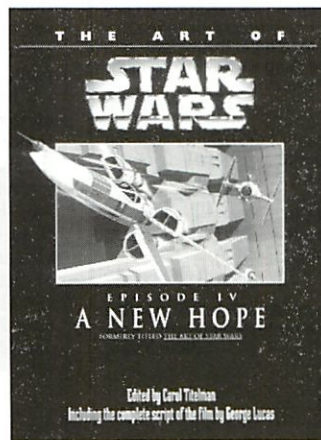
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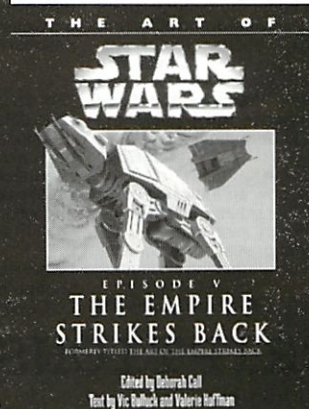
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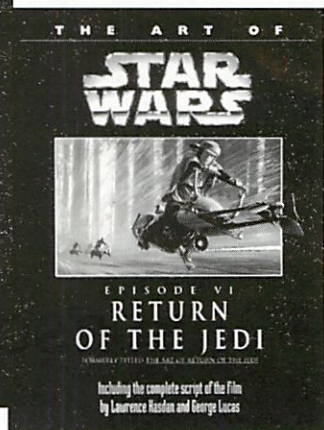
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## UPC Awards

for 1995, and well over the 83 received in the award's first year, 1992. 76% of the manuscripts were in Spanish, 15% in English, 8% in Catalan, and 1% in French, with 90 entries from Spain, 40 from the rest of the world. Twelve different outside countries were represented: the US (16 entries), Columbia (6), Israel (4), Canada (3), Mexico (2), the UK (3), and one each from France, Argentina, Australia, Cuba, Brazil, and Chile.

The awards ceremony was held December 18, 1996, at the Campus Nord of the UPC in Barcelona, with Gregory Benford as lecturer (on the theme of "Mixing Reality and Imagination").

The 1997 UPC Award contest is now open to any unpublished narrative work of SF between 25,000 and 40,000 words, written in Catalan, Spanish, English, or French. Send two copies of a typed, double-spaced manuscript, signed with a pseudonym, along with a sealed envelope giving the author's full name, identification number, address, and contact telephone or fax; to be sent (clearly marked "UPC Science Fiction Award 1997") to Consell Social de la UPC, Edifici NEXUS, Gran Capita, 24, 08034 Barcelona, Spain. (This is a new address.) Fax: 34-3-401.7766. Deadline for entries will be in early September 1997.

## Linda Nagata

Continued from page 5

basically at a level of medicine. All these forces come together at the end of the book, I hope for a good conclusion!

"Deception Well is in the same story-world as the other two books, but takes place very far in the future, on another world. We have slower-than-light travel between planets, and people have been expanding outward from Earth basically since the time of *The Bohr Maker*. In the direction this book takes place, the people have encountered an alien wave front of machines. They're not inhabited by any living creatures, but they are very adaptable, they exchange information with one another – and they're very hostile. So human communication between even reasonably close stars doesn't take place, because it's best to keep quiet and not attract attention.

"It's on the edge of the Expansion, and the people there are basically like us – which is the trick of getting away from what 3,000 years of nanotechnology might do to the core civilization. They don't live there by choice – they were marooned there. They have a very closed lifestyle, because they don't have the resources for any major expansion. They may be trapped there, but it's their world, and it works for them.

"Deception Well follows the story of two young

men who live near a planet which is also very dangerous. They live in a city on a space elevator about 200 miles up, and they believe that if you go down to the planet, you will very likely die of some sort of virus or plague, and the nanotech defenses they have can do nothing about this. The main protagonist is something of a prophet – it's a materialistic kind of thing, but it has all the overtones of religion. He finally does accept the challenge of going down into Deception Well, and that's the adventure – what he finds there, and what he discovers about himself. Freedom and individual choice seems to be a recurring theme for me.

"Deception Well does end, and it's a novel in itself, but I thought there was a lot more that could be done with the characters, so now I'm working on a sequel. It's the first direct sequel I've written. The working title is *Point Zero*. I think it will probably be the last, at least for now, in that story world. The time scale for the four novels may be 4,000 years by the time the last is done; I've been far out enough long enough that I want to come back a little closer to home! I would like to write something Earth-based again.

"I think that when change happens, it's going to happen fast, so fast people aren't going to know which way is up. If a real nanotech gets developed that includes a lot of computational and design abilities, from that point forward there's going to be so much change so fast, it's going to be almost impossible to track. Life extension will be the *glamor* end of it. Companies could be racing to make a huge profit – which, of course, is a lot of the background in *Tech-Heaven*. At the end of the book, it's this severe competition of what we have learned to do with this very entry-level nanotechnology, and what that implies, and who's going to make the rules about how we deal with it.

"I think it's going to be extremely difficult to control, if not impossible. Once you get that computational and design ability, it's not going to be at all easy, probably not possible, to monitor who does what with it. In *The Bohr Maker*, I tried hard with the checks and balances – that was certainly something I thought needed to be in the book, or else, even at the time of that book, things would have just been unrecognizable. When I wrote it, it was like, 'Well, let's say this *does* work for a little while.' But my personal feeling is that things will be essentially under no one's control. It's going to be a kind of bottom-up, point-to-point evolutionary process.

"I think there are very few people who even have an inkling of the chaos ahead. Outside of the science fiction community, most people haven't got a clue what the word 'nanotechnology' means, even now. I did an interview with a Maui news reporter, and she asked me, 'How far off do you envision the events in *The Bohr Maker*?' And I said, 'Oh, maybe 100 years.' She was just floored by that. I pointed out to her, the pace of change is not slowing down.

"There are reasons that I hang out in a country neighborhood, on a mountain far away! And I'm not complaining."

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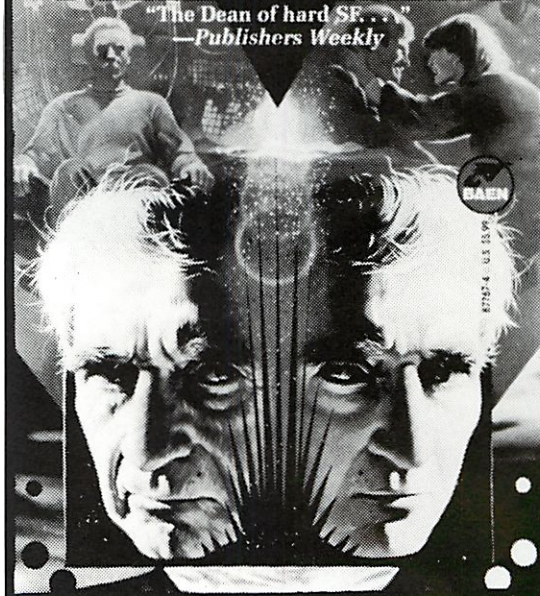
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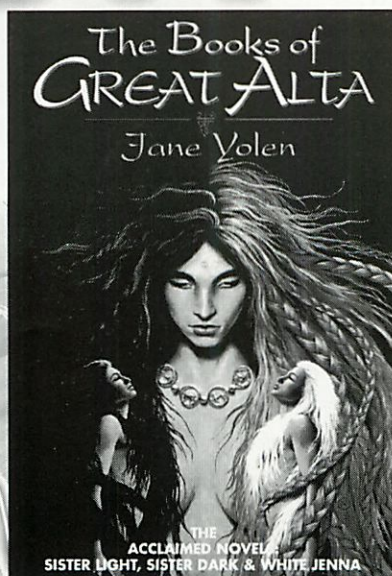
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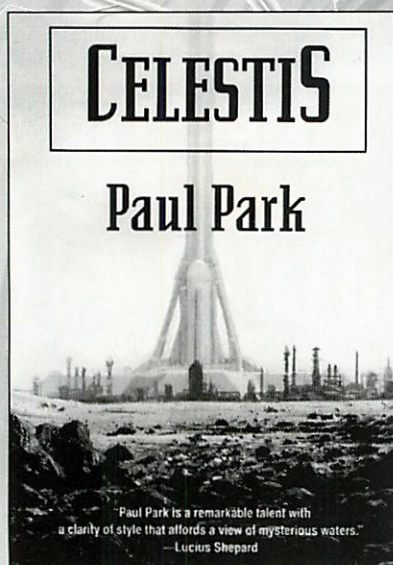
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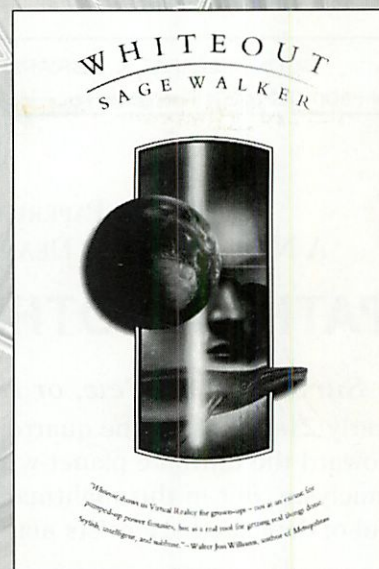
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