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SUBMISSIONS

The *SFRAReview* editors encourage submissions, including essays, review essays that cover several related texts, and interviews. Please send submissions or queries to *both* coeditors. If you would like to review nonfiction or fiction, please contact the respective editor and/or email sfra_review@yahoo.com.

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Awards:

Tales From Earthsea by Ursula K. Le Guin (Harcourt) won the fourth **Endeavour Award**, the first collection of stories to win. The Award was announced November 23 during a reception at OryCon, Oregon's annual science fiction convention. The other finalists were *The Free Lunch* by Spider Robinson (Tor); *Getaway Special* by Jerry Oltion (Tor); *Homefall* by Chris Bunch (Roc); *Past the Size of Dreaming* by Nina Kiriki Hoffman (Ace); *The Year the Cloud Fell* by Kurt R.A. Giambastiani (Roc). Judges were Howard V. Hendrix, Harry Turtledove, and Elisabeth Vonarburg. Thirty-one books were entered for this year's award, which honors a distinguished science fiction or fantasy book created by a writer from the Pacific. The 2003 Endeavour Award will be presented at next year's OryCon for a book published during 2002. For additional information, contact James W. Fiscus, Fiscus@sff.net

The **Sunburst Award** committee is pleased to announce the winner of its 2002 award, *When Alice Lay Down with Peter*, by Margaret Sweatman (Alfred A. Knopf Canada). On Thursday, September 26, at the Canwest Global Performing Arts Theatre as part of the Winnipeg International Writers Festival, Margaret Sweatman was awarded a cash prize of \$1,000 and a "sunburst" medal. Ron Robinson, host of CBC's *The Weekend Morning Show*, presented the award at the awards ceremony. The other short-listed works for the 2002 award were: *Paradigm of Earth*, by Candas Jane Dorsey (Tor); *The Kappa Child*, Hiromi Goto (Red

President's Message

Michael M. Levy

Although this message will appear in what is officially the last issue of 2002, it will be well into 2003 before you read it. Christine Mains has done a good job of moving into one of the co-editors' positions, but we're still looking for a replacement for Shelley Rodrigo-Blanchard, who is retiring in order to put more time into her dissertation. I would like to thank Shelley, as well as Barb Lucas, who left us earlier this year, for their volunteer work as co-editors. Also worthy of thanks are our fiction review editor Phil Snyder and our non-fiction review editor Ed McKnight, as well as our retiring secretary Wendy Bousfield and our continuing website honcho, Peter Sands.

As I type this, it's December 31st, New Year's Eve. In five hours I will no longer be president of the SFRA. Peter Brigg will be the new president and he will have an excellent group of officers to help him, including new vice president Janice Bogstad, new secretary Warren G. Rochelle, and returning treasurer Dave Mead. Somehow I managed to get elected past president and will continue to serve the organization in that capacity.

Peter and the board have their work cut out for them. Our membership has declined by about 40 over the past decade and rebuilding that membership base will be their greatest responsibility. The board also needs to consider what can be done to get the Review back on time. I would like to suggest that they consider the possibility of either going quarterly (with a possible reduction in membership cost) or going on line, with hard copy still provided to those who request it. Another alternative might be to simplify the Review, cutting back on size (and presumably the work involved in producing it) in order to increase timeliness.

The board has other tasks at hand as well. We have a conference coming up in Guelph, Ontario in 2003, which will be hosted by Peter Brigg, Douglas Barbour, and Chrissie Mains. I believe that the 2004 conference is scheduled for Chicago, but plans need to be finalized on that front. Beyond 2004 we've talked about the possibility of College Station, Texas, Las Vegas, Nevada, and even, after the success of the Scotland conference, Lublin, Poland, an alternative I find really exciting. I also plan to continue urging cooperation between the SFRA and the IAFA. Since I will officially become vice president of the latter organization at the exact instant that I cease to be president of SFRA I will volunteer to act as liaison between the two groups. I've enjoyed being president of the SFRA for the past two years, in part because it was simply less stressful than being treasurer, but also because it allowed me to get to know and work with an awful lot of really neat people. I hope to talk to as many of you as possible in Guelph this summer. Happy 2003.

NONFICTION REVIEW

Monsters from the Id

-Javier A. Martinez

Jones, Michael E. *Monsters From the Id: The Rise of Horror in Fiction and Film*. Spence Publishing Company, Dallas, Texas, 2002. xii + 298 pages. \$27.95 ISBN: 1-890626-06-6 (cloth).

The editor of the right wing magazine *Culture Wars* and the author of three previous books, each a conservative critique of contemporary U.S. culture, Michael E. Jones now turns toward horror in his most recent

study. He argues that the development and subsequent popularity of horror is a result of our culture's denial of an objective moral order. According to Jones, society's refusal to accept a transcendent moral code leads to, among other things, sexual immorality, which in turn results in a psychological state of guilt that expresses itself via the collective imaginary that has come to be known as the horror tradition. Furthermore, although there exist a wealth of critical exchanges about the origins and functions of horror, Jones is adamant that none of these investigations can touch on the true nature of the horror field because they are rooted in Enlightenment values. Only someone who stands outside that tradition, as Jones claims to be, can reveal the true source of horror and its function in society.

Jones opens his analysis of the history of horror with a biographical essay on the sexual promiscuities of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. It is out of this stew of sexual wantonness that Mary Shelley, the focus of his second chapter, enters the world. Jones recounts the sexual tragedies of Mary Shelley's private life, and he claims that it is her guilty conscience that drives her to compose her famous novel, *Frankenstein*. In the third chapter, titled "*Frankenstein*," I was expecting a more focused reading of the text, but instead Jones devotes more time to Sade's *Justine*, drawing parallels between that character's life and Mary Shelley, and to Sade's philosophy of extremism and indulgence. Jones devotes very little of his opening ninety-eight pages to Shelley's novel, which he implies is the first horror text, if only because he never refers to the long history of the supernatural prior to Shelley's classic work.

The source of Jones' starting point owes much to ongoing critical studies of the Gothic tradition and to Brian Aldiss' well known claim that sf is a product of the Gothic tradition meeting the Industrial Age. Yet never does Jones refer to any previous criticism nor to any critical model. His starting point is as valid as any other, but there is little justification for it outside the fact that Mary Shelley and her parents had tantalizing personal lives. Another very serious problem with Jones' approach is that he never, either in the first part or in subsequent sections, discusses other forms of supernatural horror that were in place before *Frankenstein* was written.

Jones changes strategy in part two of his book, most notably chapter four, "Dracula and Sin," where in place of biography we find a reading that is grounded in two primary texts, Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and *The Lair of the White Worm*. Jones claims that the figure of Dracula reflects sexual wantonness and unchecked desire. And because promiscuity very often leads to contact with infected partners, the unstated nature of the vampire is one of infection and corrupt desire. The vampire thus becomes a means of mentioning that which in Victorian society is unmentionable, syphilitic infection. Those familiar with even the most basic work in Vampire Studies will not find anything new in this argument. The only difference is that here it is mixed in with a moral warning: "Lust, in other words, is parasitic, and as such, there exists between it and the blood parasite syphilis a natural affinity. This is expressed through a symbolic figure like the vampire, who infects his host and drains him of vitality—of blood" (126). The one chapter where Jones focuses on a text, while competent, is disappointing in that it offers nothing particularly new. Others have tilled this textual soil and provided a better harvest.

Chapter five, which brings to a conclusion part two, is an odd discussion of Hitler, the spread of homosexuality and the city of Berlin, which "between the wars eclipsed Paris as the capital of European decadence . . . dada and jazz and nudism were unleashing anarchy, arbitrariness, and formlessness, from which flowed a general sense of anxiety" (145). Even on rereading, I cannot fathom

Deer Press); *Salamander*, by Thomas Wharton (McClelland and Stewart); *Chronoliths*, by Robert Charles Wilson (Tor). The jurors for the 2002 Sunburst Award were Douglas Barbour, Nalo Hopkinson, Tanya Huff, Hazel Hutchins and Don Hutchison. For information about eligibility and the selection process, visit the Sunburst Award web site, www.sunburstaward.org.

This year's **World Fantasy Awards** were presented on November 3 at the World Fantasy Convention in Minneapolis, MN. Life Achievement: George Scithers and Forrest J Ackerman; Best Novel: *The Other Wind*, by Ursula K. Le Guin; Best Novella: "The Bird Catcher," by S.P. Somtow; Best Short Story: "Queen for a Day," by Albert E. Cowdrey; Best Anthology: *The Museum of Horrors*, edited by Dennis Etchison; Best Collection: *Skin Folk*, by Nalo Hopkinson; Best Artist: Allen Koszowski.

Obituaries:

Jerry Sohl (b. 1913) passed away in Thousand Oaks, CA. The cause of death was not announced, but Sohl had been in declining health for some time. He wrote a number of science fiction books, including *The Transcendent Man*, *The Mars Monopoly* and *The Altered Ego*. As a television writer in the late fifties and sixties, he worked on episodes of *Star Trek*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Outer Limits*.

Raymond McNally (b. 1931). Co-author of several books of Dracula scholarship and Professor of History at Boston College. He had been ill for some time, having undergone surgery for liver

cancer a couple of years ago. McNally was also one of the organizers of the Lord Ruthven Society.

Charles Sheffield (b.1935), who was diagnosed with a brain tumor earlier this year. His novelette "Georgia On My Mind" won the 1993 Nebula and the 1994 Hugo Award, and his novel *Brother to Dragons* won the 1992 John W. Campbell Memorial Award. He was also a physicist and contributed numerous articles to *Analog*. Sheffield was married to author Nancy Kress.

Birth Announcement:

On October 21, 2002, **David G. Hartwell** and **Kathryn Cramer** became the parents of Elizabeth Constance Cramer Hartwell, a little sister for Peter.

News Items:

Anti-War Petition

Writers from around the world, including science fiction & fantasy authors, have signed their names to the "Artists and Writers' Petition Against War on Iraq," presented by Ursula K. Le Guin on December 6. Writers whose names appear on the petition, which was co-written by New Zealand author Tim Jones, include Suzy Charnas, Ellen Datlow, Lisa Goldstein, Phyllis Gotlieb, John Kessel, Michael Moorcock, and Jessica Amanda Salmonson. The petition states that "Artists have both the ability and the moral obligation to combat deceit and distortion. It is this ability to illuminate even difficult truths that defines an artist." The petition is available on the internet: <<http://>

how Jones can justify lumping together Hitler, jazz, syphilis, and homosexuals in a confusing and for the most part unnecessary chapter. The homophobia continues in a brief two page reading of the film *Interview with a Vampire*. Jones makes the observation that the film reflects our latent desire to function as a being that "possesses power but no morals, and is therefore not subject to remorse" (163). Not a bad, if unoriginal, observation, but Jones then takes it a disturbing and inaccurate step further: "Absence of regret also ensures that the machine-like vampire sexual activity will continue, especially among homosexuals" (163). He then provides a quote from Joseph Nicolosi's *Reparative Theory of Male Homosexuality* that portrays all gay men as addicted to anonymous sex.

The opening of part three, chapter six, "The Difference Between Us and Them," while no less conservative, is at least grounded in its reading of the film and print versions of *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and the film *Forbidden Planet*. According to Jones, the true horror in *Body Snatchers* is divorce. The protagonist and the love interest both have a ruined marriage in their past, but by the end of the film it is hinted at that they will remain together: "The reference to marriage is again unmistakable, as is the reference to divorce, which is a repudiation of the marriage vow. So perhaps the final message is repudiation of divorce. But since both Miles and Becky are themselves divorced, the ambivalence remains, which is why *Body Snatchers* remains part of the horror genre" (201). The "ambivalence" which Jones is alluding to is the acceptability of divorce and its steady increase in U.S. society since the fifties, when the novel and film appeared. The narrowness of Jones' ideas surface once again. I'm sure there are many battered women for whom marriage is the real horror movie.

Jones' ultra-conservatism is even more in effect in chapters seven and eight, where he defends the Reece Commission, which he claims "did a remarkable job of bringing out ideas that were both difficult for the average man to understand and extremely damaging to the plans of the elites" (215); takes a stand against birth control and reproductive technologies; and critiques pornography on the basis of Linda Lovelace's biography, *Ordeal*. Pornography is a complex social phenomenon, but Jones' critique of it seems superficial at best. I don't get the sense that he is genuinely concerned with the exploitation of female and male bodies, nor is his argument informed by any critical position of the last twenty-five years, with one exception. Oddly enough, he cites Andrea Dworkin and her critique of the pornography industry, which is to anyone familiar with her work part of an extended critique of penetrative sex in general. Jones' scattershot approach never satisfactorily connects these topics to the horror genre and the results are two disjointed, almost free-floating chapters.

Jones regains some focus in his final chapter, "Alien and Contraception." Not surprisingly, Jones views the monster of Ridley Scott's *Alien* as "sex disconnected from morals, now returned as a destructive force. Like the Alien, the moral order cannot be destroyed. It can be repressed, but as Ripley learns, the repressed always returns. What could have been embraced as a principal of order returns as a principle of destruction. What could have been a child was destroyed as a fetus, which now achieves immortality in the guilty conscience of the woman who destroyed it" (257). Just how this leap between aborted fetus and Alien creature is made is never clear, aside from the general thesis that all monsters are violations of the moral order. This chapter is also odd in that Jones seems to be accusing H. R. Giger, the creature's designer, of prolephobia, the hatred of children, and goes so far as to conflate the use of contraception with the hatred of children (248).

In his Conclusion, Jones once again states that only someone

outside of horror can truly understand it (260). He uses David Cronenberg as an example of a horror auteur who, while capable of creating some fine horror films, is incapable of truly understanding them. Jones uses Cronenberg's early film *Shivers* as an example of what happens when an artist repudiates the moral order, a phrase that is repeated throughout the book but never explained or defined. Because of his strict adherence to this moral order, Jones is able to dismiss Cronenberg's intent to portray the final orgy scene of the pool as positive, and it is here that Jones misses the point of horror's most powerful qualities. Horror is not merely a guilty conscience; it is a willful search for alternatives to moral paradigms which very often do not work. The true allure of horror lies in portraying the horrific as something intimately rooted in our most basic selves, not as something that results from deviating from that identity.

One of the most frustrating moves Jones makes is his refusal to define the moral order he refers to throughout. I assume he means a Christian morality, but he never says as much. There is a long history of Christian intellectual tradition, and while some of us on the Left may not always agree with their positions, the best Christian thinkers are grounded in a philosophy that drives and provides a moral and theoretical integrity to their work. Jones, however, never seems grounded in anything but a series of vague references to moral codes. Furthermore, I find it intellectually dishonest that he cites Andrea Dworkin to support part of an argument that is, on the whole, anti-feminist. Similarly, in his discussion of Freud, Jones refers to the dissemination of psychoanalysis throughout the European community as "The intellectual equivalent of venereal disease" (176) only to borrow from that school when discussing the genesis of the novel *Frankenstein* and interpreting H. R. Giger's dreams (246-49).

After reading this study I could only wonder about the intended audience. Most of us interested in horror would not be convinced by its arguments, while those who would agree with Jones most likely do not follow closely the field of horror. Michael E. Jones has written a flawed, at times confusing, at times maddening, investigation of horror as rooted in society's refusal to live by a moral order. What this moral order may be is never made clear, although it is certainly homophobic, anti-feminist, undemocratic, and, I think, anti-jazz. What kind of moral order is that?

NONFICTION REVIEW

THE FRANKENSTEIN ARCHIVE

Margaret McBride

Glut, Donald F. *The Frankenstein Archive: Essays on the Monster, the Myth, the Movies, and More*. McFarland and Company, Inc., Box 611, Jefferson, North Carolina, 28640. 2002. 1-800-253-2187. 225 pages, trade, \$28.50. ISBN 0-7864-1353-0

When I teach *Frankenstein* in my science fiction and mythology class, we spend time discussing the book's mythopoeic qualities and the myriad of images that have come from Mary Shelley's book and from the Boris Karloff film. I have collected nearly 100 cartoons (editorial and otherwise) with connections to Frankenstein icons, so I was curious about a new book on the topic. The book deals more with trivia than with literary themes and "revisioning" motifs. Mr. Glut promises on page six that he will answer "searing questions" about inconsistencies and other puzzles about the many Frankenstein films.

www.douglaslain.com/aawii.html>.

Research Collection Sold

The University of Winnipeg Library is selling off several items from its science fiction holdings. The collection of more than 30,000 books and periodicals was left to the university in the late 1990s by Robert Stimpson. Because of space limitations, the collection, valued at C\$250,000, was stored in a basement storage room at a Greyhound Bus Station. Last month, the collection was sold to rare book dealer L.W. Currey for a reported C\$140,000. The university retains about 4,000 hardcovers from the collection.

Special Issue of SFS

A special issue of *Science Fiction Studies* focusing on British SF and scheduled for November 2003 is being edited by Andrew Butler and Mark Bould. They're looking particularly for articles up to 8500 words on British writers who have become prominent in the last decade or so. The deadline for submissions is July 1, 2003; submissions should be sent to mark.bould@bcuc.ac.uk or ambutler@enterprise.net.

Upcoming Worldcons:

Worldcon 61: Torcon III: Toronto, August 28 - Sept. 1, 2003. <www.torcon3.on.ca>

Worldcon 62: Noreascon Four: Boston, MA: Sept. 2-6, 2004. <www.noreascon.org>

Worldcon 63: Interaction: Glasgow, August 4-8, 2005. <www.interaction.worldcon.org.uk>

Graduate-Student.com

There's a new graduate oriented on-line journal, titled *Graduate-Student 101*, focusing on the balance between study and professionalization for the stressed graduate student. Feature articles in the first issue include Applying for a Conference, Publishing the Academic Article, Job Search Hints (On the Market), Graduate Advice, TA-to-TA: A TA's Journal, and Constructing the Vitae. The editors are actively seeking contributions for the next issue, 'Culture Clash', focusing on the difficulties of the sexual\racial\ethnic minority graduate student in the diverse sphere of the university. The deadline for articles is January 15 (2 pp minimum – MLA format). Please forward submissions in MS Word or HTML. For more information, contact Anita Nicholson at <anita.nicholson@villanova.edu> or go to <Graduate-Student.com>. Finally, the editors are looking for students, post-graduates and newly appointed assistant professors to regularly (or irregularly) provide content for the site. This includes entertainment/travel reviews, book reviews, digital movies and articles on the concerns of racial\ethnic\sexual minority students. There is no deadline for these submissions.

SFRA2003 - Conference Planning Report

The conference programming committee wishes to thank all SFRA members who got their proposals in by the early deadline. The grant application which your early submissions helped to complete is now submitted, and we ex-

Although I was amused by some of his points and incredulous about the amount of time he must have spent to discover some of the information (for example, a Frankenstein actor in one of the later films forgot to take off his wedding ring), much of the information would be of interest only to someone who was a fanatic on the subject.

Most of the chapters were previously published in fanzines and are on stunt doubles, the many actors who portrayed Frankenstein in film, *Young Frankenstein*, film versions in other languages (Mexican wrestling movies!), Frankenstein cartoons (animated not print), comic books, misconceptions about the Frankenstein novel and movies. Some chapters include excessive discussions concerning the problems the author faced developing amateurish personal projects. As a consequence, the essays are a bit odd in tone and self-absorbed with personal material that is of little interest to the average reader.

The book does have fun photographs. My favorite shows Boris Karloff in Monster makeup at a baseball game in 1940 with a "fainting" Buster Keaton in catcher's gear. I wonder if Michael Bishop had seen that before he wrote his wonderful *Brittle Innings*. Another has an elegantly dressed, non-made-up Boris shaking hands with an actor in Monster make-up. I can't recommend the book for most libraries but it might be of interest to students to show how obsessed people have become with the "myth" of Frankenstein.

NONFICTION REVIEW

REFERENCE GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, AND HORROR

Neil Barron

Burgess, Michael & Lisa R. Bartle. *Reference Guide to Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror*. 2d ed. Libraries Unlimited/Greenwood Press, December 2002. xvii + 605 p. \$75. 1-56308-548-8.

Burgess, perhaps better known as R(ob) Reginald and owner of Borgo Press, and fellow Cal State San Bernardino librarian Bartle, have extensively updated the 1992 first edition by Burgess alone. The key word is reference, as a librarian usually uses it, to describe books that are typically consulted (referred to) for specific information, not normally read cover-to-cover, as are critical, historical or descriptive narratives (which can of course also be used for reference purposes). A better title for the non-librarian might be *Science Fiction: A Guide to the Reference Literature*.

A decade is a long time in these fields, with Johnson's "harmless drudges" continuing to compile bibliographies of many subjects, indexes, lists, price guides, etc, issued by standard publishers and fan presses. Some statistics suggest the magnitude of the changes:

	1 st ed	2 nd ed	Change
Entries	551	705	+28%
Half of original entries revised			
Pages	403	605	+50%
Price	\$45	\$75	+67%
Somewhat more than inflation			
Cost per 100 p.	\$11.27	\$12.40	+11%
A lot less than inflation alone			

The new edition adds three categories to the 28 in the first edition: printed guides to the internet (one entry, judged worthless), professional writers' [market] guides (two, from Writers' Digest Books, but excluding more general guides like Card's Hugo winner, *How to Write Science Fiction and Fantasy*, 1990, also Writers' Digest), and major on-line resources (21, ranging from highly recommended to worthless). The type is the same size but slightly cleaner and more readable in this new edition.

The annotations are very detailed, describing the scope, organization, physical features, ease of use, adequacy of indexing—"so that even a casual user will be able to tell at a glance how the volume works and what it contains." All annotations conclude with specific recommendations from high praise to dismissal, based mostly on their own judgments but also incorporating other critical reaction. Because this guide is aimed primarily at librarians, most annotations note the type of library for which the book is recommended. The 17-page list of "core collections" lists all the recommended titles by type and size of library (academic, public, and personal). This list is followed by thorough author, title, and subject indexes, greatly improving access, as does the generous use of cross-references and compare/contrast statements. A handful of entries provide bibliographic details but conclude [not seen], such as for a 26 page 1965 bibliography of Poul Anderson or a 40 page index of Finlay illustrations; no loss.

The guide, from internal evidence, is current through 2001. I don't know when Lloyd Currey, the bookseller, began to offer the CD-ROM update of his 1977 collector's bibliography, but it isn't mentioned, nor is the CD-ROM version of the Owings/Chalker index to science fantasy publishers (I've seen neither). 2002 saw updates of annotated books such as Richard Bleiler's update of his father's *Supernatural Fiction Writers, Fantasy and Horror* (1985) and Darren Harris-Fain's two-volume supplement to his DLB volume devoted to pre-WWI British SF and fantasy writers. So it goes.

Because most of these books are long OP, relatively specialized, often with small printings, the audience for this guide, like its predecessor, remains large public and university libraries and the more devoted scholar. For this audience, however, it is a valuable, authoritative and probably essential resource.

NONFICTION REVIEW
**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PULP FICTION
 WRITERS**

Neil Barron

Server, Lee. *Encyclopedia of Pulp Fiction Writers*. Checkmark Books/Facts on File, 132 W. 31st St, New York, NY 10001, November 2002. xvi + 304 p. \$19.95, trade paper. 0-8160-4578-X.

Server is well qualified to write these profiles of 202 authors. He wrote two Chronicle Books, *Danger Is My Business: An Illustrated History of the Fabulous Pulp Magazines: 1896-1953* (1993) and *Over My Dead Body: The Sensational Age of the American Paperback: 1945-1955* (1994), both of which are extensively illustrated, often in color, unlike the many fewer b&w illustrations in this new book, a 7x9 inch trade paperback. The six-page bibliography also shows Server did his homework.

Pulp is defined not merely as magazines from the 1880s to 1950s whose

pect to have a response in early February, at which time we'll be able to finalize conference fees. We are in the initial stages of roughing out a program; currently, we have 47 individual presentations and 2 panel discussions, in addition to author readings and plenary sessions. We would like to make it very clear that we are still accepting paper proposals, and will continue to do so until March 31, 2003. So, if you have not already submitted a proposal for SFRA2003, to be held in Guelph, Ontario, Canada June 26-29, 2003, please visit www.sfra.org to look at the Call for Papers. We're looking forward to hearing from you, and to seeing all of you in Guelph.

**Recent & Forthcoming
 NonFiction**

Anatol, Giselle Liza, ed. *Reading Harry Potter: Critical Essays*. Praeger, Apr 03

Bloom, Harold, ed. *Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451; Bram Stoker's Dracula; Aldous Huxley's Brave New World*. Chelsea House, Jan 03

Chance, Jane, ed. *Tolkien the Medievalist*. Routledge, 2003

Cottegnies, Line & Nancy Weitz, eds. *Authorial Conquests: Essays on Genre in the Writings of Margaret Cavendish*. Fairleigh Dickinson UP, Jun 03

DePaolo, Charles. *Human Prehistory in Fiction*. McFarland, 2003

Edwards, Justin D. *Gothic Passages: Racial Ambiguity and the American Gothic*. U of Iowa Pr, 2003

Hendershot, Cynthia. *Anti-Communism and Popular Culture in Mid-Century America*. McFarland, Feb 03

Hintz, Carrie & Elaine Ostry, eds. *Utopian and Dystopian Writ-*

ing for Children and Young Adults. Routledge, 2003

- Jameson, John H., John E. Ehrenhard & Christine Finn, eds. *Ancient Muses: Archaeology and the Arts*. Univ of AL Pr, May 03. Includes essay on archaeology in SF and mysteries
- Lodbell, Jared. *Tolkien's Word of the Rings: Language, Religion and Adventures*. Open Court, 2003
- Lyden, John. *Film As Religion: Myths, Morals, Rituals*. NYU Pr, May 03. Chapters on SF, thrillers, horror, children's and fantasy films
- Morse, Donald E. *The Novels of Kurt Vonnegut: Imagining Being an American*. Greenwood, Jul 03
- O'Keefe, Deborah. *Readers in Wonderland: The Liberating Worlds of Fantasy Fiction*. Continuum, May 03
- Palmer, Christopher. *Philip K. Dick: Exhilaration and the Terror of the Postmodern*. Liverpool UP, Jan 03
- Palumbo, Donald. *Chaos Theory, Asimov's Foundations and Robots, and Herbert's Dune: The Fractal Aesthetic of Epic Science Fiction*. Greenwood Press, Nov '02
- Partington, John S. *Building Cosmopolis: the Political Thought of H.G. Wells*. Aldershot, UK; Ashgate, US, Dec 03
- Pharr, Mary, ed. *Fantastic Odysseys: Selected Essays from the 22d ICFA*. Praeger, Apr 03
- Rahn, Suzanne, ed. *L. Frank Baum's World of Oz: A Classic Series at 100*. Scarecrow, Apr 03
- Ranciere, Jacques. *Short Voyages to the Land of the People*, trans. By James Swenson of *Courts Voyages au Pays du Peuple*. Stanford UP, Apr 03. Early utopia
- Weldes, Jutta, ed. *To Seek Out New Worlds: Science Fiction and World*

pages were made from cheap pulpwood paper but has "an expanded meaning both categoric and aesthetic: pulp as a genus of imaginative reading matter distinguished by mass production, affordability, an intended audience of common as opposed to elite readers, a dependence on formula and genre; and pulp as a literature aimed at the pleasure centers of the reader, primarily concerned with sensation and escape, variously intended to excite, astonish, or arouse." His introduction provides a useful succinct survey of Anglo-American pulp fiction as it evolved in dime novels, popular magazines and their successors, mass market paperbacks. He is necessarily very selective, including "a representative sampling, including both names of legend and those writers whose obscurity remains almost complete. A few significant pulp fiction contributors—and much-written about names—have been left out altogether in favor of some little-known writers who might otherwise not ever be written about at all. I have tried to include both some description of a writer's work and some salient facts regarding the writer's personal history, particularly in regard to its influence on the written work." Such selection criteria provide Server with wide leeway and strongly stamp this work with his own personal tastes. This is reflected in his choices, which I roughly tabulated in these overlapping categories: detective/mystery/crime/espionage/spy/suspense, 80 (40%); melodrama (sex novels, thrillers)/historical, 48; adventure/war, 20; horror, 12; multi-category, 11; SF, 9; westerns, 9; fantasy, 6; juvenile delinquent, 3; and romance, 2.

The entries mix description and analysis and are much more readable and knowledgeable than similar encyclopedia entries (Server has met some of his subjects) and are filled with obscure but often fascinating information. The entry on Walter Gibson, who wrote 238 Shadow novels as Maxwell Grant, is by a small margin the lengthiest (about 4 pages), but John Creasey (UK, 1908-73) was the most prolific under many names, with 600+ novels in a variety of genres published over 40 years (that's one or two novels a week). Each profile concludes with a bibliography (selective for the more prolific authors) by book title and year and, for most writers, short stories and years. A handful of writers wrote only one or two books that appealed to Server, such as Emmanuelle Arsan's *Emmanuelle* (1966), a fictional memoir that was the basis for a soft-core Dutch film of the same name. Unlikely choices include the actor, Errol Flynn, whose adventurous life outside films was the basis for two novels and a tell-all autobiography, or the very eccentric writer, Harry Stephen Keeler (1890-1967), whose book titles are deliciously strange. The b&w repros of authors, book covers or interior illustrations are enjoyable; my favorite is one of a teenage Leigh Brackett (1915-1978), taken about 1930, in an outfit that would qualify her for an SF con masquerade.

The appeal of this breezy but energetic guide will be mostly to pulp freaks. Libraries will have to decide how many of the authors aren't duplicated in other standard sources and if those unique to Server are of likely interest to users. (Most of the magazines and the mass market originals were never acquired by any save a few large libraries.) I checked every fourth entry (50 authors) against Gale's Contemporary Authors and the Dictionary of Literary Biography series and found 37 or 74%. The Gale/St. James guides to category fiction writers would probably add a few more, as would the SF and fantasy encyclopedias. The book is very thoroughly indexed, with the subjects' names followed by boldface page numbers (I would have also welcomed a page preceding the first entry listing all such entries). A useful supplement to this guide is Thomas J. Roberts, *An Aesthetics of Junk Fiction* (Georgia, 1990), which brilliantly explores why we readers love these guilty pleasures.

NONFICTION REVIEW
ZAMIATIN EXAMINED

Neil Barron

One of the eight essays in Janet G. Tucker's (ed.) *Against the Grain: Parody, Satire, and Intertextuality in Russian Literature*, Slavica Publishers, 2002, iv + 224 p (www.slavica.com) is by Jerzy Kolodziej; "Literary Parody as an Instrument of Political Satire: Zamiatin's *Wz*." The other essays deal with topics unrelated to fantastic literature.

NONFICTION REVIEW
SPECULATIVE, ILLUSTRATED FUTURE HISTORIES

Neil Barron

Dougal Dixon is a British paleogeologist who's explored possible futures in vividly illustrated books. The first was *After Man: A Zoology of the Future*, 1981, in which humans are long extinct, replaced by a variety of other species. 1988's *The New Dinosaurs: an Alternative Evolution*, assumes no asteroid catastrophe happened and at least one species of dinosaur becomes fairly intelligent, but doesn't develop a technological civilization. *An Anthropology of the Future* is the subtitle of *Man After Man*, 1990, and takes readers forward millions of years, with speciation occurring and one spacefaring, post-human group returning, utterly unrecognizable. Just published with the help of John Adams is *The Future is Wild: a Natural History of the Future* (Firefly Books, \$35 cloth, \$24.95 paper), which is a companion to the seven-part series on the Animal Planet cable channel. This variation of *Man After Man* is set just a few thousand years hence, after humanity has exited, along with most other species, in a mass extinction. Time wounds all heels and, in quite unexpected ways, heals all wounds. Sic transit gloria mundi.

FICTION REVIEW
A WOMAN'S LIBERATION

Pawel Freluk

Willis, Connie and Sheila Williams, eds. *A Woman's Liberation. A Choice of Futures By and About Women*. New York: Warner Books, 2001. 302 pages, paper, \$ 12.95. ISBN 0-446-67742-6

Even though the increasing presence of women writers in science fiction has been a fact of life for a few decades now, there are not that many anthologies of their writing available – *A Woman's Liberation* seeks to fill that gap. Whether it does so is another matter – as a collection of *stories* it is quite successfully but as a *collection* of stories it may be perceived as coming somewhat short of the mark.

The volume comprises an introduction by Connie Willis, who maps the lines of natural alliances between women and science fiction, and ten texts of varying length. Its title obviously comes from Ursula Le Guin's story, the longest of the contributions strategically placed at the very end. The remaining are

9

Politics. Palgrave/
Macmillan, Apr 03
Westfahl, Gary & George E. Slusser.
*No Cure for the Future: Disease
and Medicine in Science Fiction
and Fantasy.* Greenwood Press,
Nov '02

CFPs

WHAT: Ninth International Summer 2003 Popular Culture Conference

WHEN: August 3 to 9, 2003

WHERE: Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland

TOPICS: While the Conference Committee members are particularly interested in papers dealing with comparative culture, papers on other aspects of Popular Culture Studies will be seriously considered. Complete panels of three to four presenters are encouraged. As was the case with past successful conferences, sessions will be held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Tuesday and Thursday will be reserved for travel in the area. Planned day trips to areas outside of Dublin will be announced in the near future and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Housing will be in Trinity College rooms.

SUBMISSIONS: Abstract of no more than 250 words, complete contact information, including summer address, together with the registration fee and housing deposit for each participant to Mr. Mark Cross, 202 Perkins Building, 521 Lancaster Ave., Richmond, Kentucky 40475

DEADLINE: March 1st, 2003

EDITOR'S NOTE: Information on the registration fee and housing deposit was not included in the CFP that I received. Please contact Mr. Cross directly for further in-

formation.

WHAT: The Birth of Another World: Utopian Visions of Justice and Human Well-Being in Literature, Theory, and Practice

WHO: Contemporary Justice Review

TOPICS: The editors of CJR, a Routledge Imprint, would like to invite authors from all disciplines to submit an essay title/abstract for a special issue. The essays should focus on visions of a new social order in which humanly disabling differences are eliminated and new social arrangements created in which the needs of all are taken into account and met. Submissions might focus on an analysis of the work of authors who have grappled with the creation of a just world in their writing and how their vision of a new world moves us forward to get along as an interdependent global community. Authors selected might include Ursula LeGuin, Marge Piercy, William Morris, Edward Bellamy, Samuel Butler, Charles Nordhoff, R. Buckminster Fuller, B. F. Skinner, George Bernard Shaw, Henry David Thoreau, George Orwell, Walt Whitman, among others. We are also looking for film and book reviews and review essays that are consistent with the theme of the issue. Possible books might include *Spaceship Earth*, *Democratic Vistas*, *Walden Two*, *Brave New World*, *Animal Farm*, *Herself*, *News From Nowhere*, *Woman on the Edge of Time*, *The Dispossessed*, among others.

SUBMISSIONS: The title/abstract of about 200 words to CJR Managing Editor, Lisa Trubitt, University at Albany, LC SB 31, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222, Fax: 518-442-3847,

Nancy Kress' "Inertia," Connie Willis' "Even the Queen," Sarah Zettel's "Fool's Errand," Pat Murphy's "Rachel in Love," Vonda N. McIntyre's "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand," S. N. Dyer's "The July Ward," Katherine MacLean's "The Kidnapping of Baroness 5," Octavia E. Butler's "Speech Sounds," and Anne McCaffrey's "The Ship Who Mourned." All of these are certainly fine stories and several are truly outstanding, with no fewer than seven award winners among them, a ratio hard to match in a non-award related collection. (Not all seven are Hugos and Nebulas, though, as the introduction emphatically states.) One of *A Woman's Liberation's* strongest points is the variety of concerns and conventions represented – a proof that women's SF has more than one or two faces. Le Guin's title novella is science fiction's equivalent of a slave narrative, simple in its quiet narrative voice yet deeply harrowing. "Speech Sounds" is a humanist reflection on the interconnectedness of human nature and language, while the barely more scientifically-oriented "Inertia" offers a unique vision of a non-lethal but stigmatizing illness and its unexpected benevolence. Though not pure fantasy by any stretch of imagination, "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand" vaguely plays with its conventions, as does "The Kidnapping of Baroness 5," where the medieval is humorously combined with the biotechnological. "Fool's Errand," my favorite piece here, is a cyberpunkish incursion into the machinic consciousness, while "Even the Queen" offers a take on menstruation, strongly feminist yet not devoid of tongue in cheek. "Rachel in Love" features the most unusual feminine subject here – a girl's mind struggling to maintain its humanity in a chimpanzee body. Finally, the hospital-set "The July Ward" is the most mundane (in the worldly meaning of the word) contribution. McCaffrey's story surely needs no introduction. All in all, as a collection of "futures by and about women" *A Woman's Liberation* seems to lack nothing and clearly demonstrates that women are as versatile SF writers as men.

It is the "a choice" bit that may – though it may as well not – prove problematic. While Connie Willis' lead-in surveys the whole field of women's writing and name-checks practically all important writers back to Mary Shelley, the selection of stories does not reflect her broad stroke. Russ, Piercy, Cherryh, Sargent, and a number of other prime-time names are conspicuously missing. The reason is simple – all featured contributions have been previously published in either *Analog* or *Asimov's*, which also explains the presence of the other name on the cover, the executive editor of both magazines. Nothing wrong in that plus one cannot expect a collection of writing by and about women, or for that matter any collection, to be all-inclusive, and this one is specifically subtitled as "a" choice. Still, the sweeping introduction seems to promise more in terms of representability than the volume actually delivers.

In its own right, *A Woman's Liberation* is a very sensible and engaging anthology and as such it constitutes an excellent choice for the general public interested in women's science fiction, also because of its relative tameness. Not that I am trying to root for exclusively radical feminist vantage points, but the fact is that only Le Guin's and Willis' stories engage in serious, specifically feminine issues. Needless to say, this does not in the least mean that all others are lacking in literary quality or depth – quite the opposite. On the other hand, those readers interested in a more comprehensive survey of women's writing will find this edition somewhat unrepresentative, compared to, for instance, Le Guin's own *The Norton Book of Science Fiction*. Although not specifically women-oriented, the latter features, I feel, a fairer cross-section of the field. Still, Willis and Williams' volume is a good, solid read and a welcome addition to any library.

FICTION REVIEW

COYOTE

Jeff Prickman

Steele, Allen. *Coyote*. New York: Ace, 2002. 390 pages, \$23.95 hc. ISBN 0-441-00974-3.

Allen Steele's *Coyote* is billed as "A Novel of Interstellar Exploration," but the book is a fix-up, containing stories all published from January 2001 to December 2002 in *Asimov's Science Fiction* (with one exception, a tale from a Martin H. Greenberg anthology). While the focus is on a somewhat continuous set of characters and their adventures in colonizing a new planet, *Coyote* simply does not hold up as a novel; instead, the book is best read as an anthology of linked short stories and novellas. For example, each new tale in the book meticulously fills the reader in on key backstory elements from previous stories. It is more than a bit distracting when characters present from the "start" of the novel are continuously being re-introduced as if brand new.

Beyond my quibble about how this book is being marketed, what about the stories themselves? I imagine most science fiction readers have already made up their mind about Steele, and have even sampled some or all of the contents already. Despite writing in the well worn genre groove of establishing a life on a new world, he has definite talent in laying out the science that makes the discovery of and cryogenic journey to Coyote possible. Steele adds the intriguing political element of a pre-launch mutiny against the ruling far-right Liberty Party, which has created the repressive United Republic of America. Throwaway lines about a Patrick J. Buchanan Education Center and Gingrich Space Center are funny, and the "switch" of dissidents with original passengers is entertaining, if implausible.

However, the politics of the mutineers and any attempt on their part to create a new ideology once established on the new world are strangely muted. The settlement eventually dubs Captain Robert Lee, mutiny leader, Mayor, although we are privy to no debate or any wrangling over what form of government the people desire. If Steele is arguing that a middle of the road politics is most desirable between the extremes of left (and I won't give away whom the colonists must flee from at this book's cliffhanger ending—sequel *Coyote Rising* is forthcoming) and right, then such reasoning is up to the reader. To some his lack of emphasis may be preferable, but I was surprised that a narrative that seemed to base its premise on political rebellion dropped that theme so quickly, particularly when the ending brought the question of who should have power roaring back into the plot.

Steele certainly has the ability to describe the technology of sustained spaceflight convincingly, and to depict the intriguing and dangerous aspects of a new world. His best characters are the colony's teenagers, and for me the highlight of the book is "Across The Eastern Divide," where the relationships among the various young people are effectively rendered by the first person account of Wendy (from her perspective as an adult decades later). This story effectively combines depth of character, plot development, and the thrills and terrors of surviving in a new world in a compelling manner absent from much of the rest of *Coyote*.



E - m a i l :

LTrubitt@uamail.albany.ed.

DEADLINE: March 15, 2003

WHAT: Polygraph, an international journal of culture and politics

TOPICS: Forthcoming issue on immanence, utopia, and totality.

This issue is intended to interrogate the limitations and potentialities of forms of power in the contemporary political moment. Is immanence the organizing principle of society? If this were the case, what kind of utopia could we imagine? If both global capital and the multitude stand for the universal producing an autarchy of absolute immanence, a relation without a relation, or an absolute totality, how can one account for the singularities subsumed under the logic of the universal? How can we interrupt the absolute character of immanence without falling into transcendence? Do we need a transcendent move in order to reach utopia? Is there a way out of transcendence without falling into immanence? Is there a mode of alterity or difference that remains incommensurable to both immanence and transcendence? We invite articles addressing the political implications of imagining a time to come beyond the duality immanence-transcendence.

SUBMISSIONS: Marta Hernandez Salvan (mh5@duke.edu) and Juan Carlos Rodriguez (jcr3@duke.edu)

DEADLINE: February 15, 2003

INFORMATION: guidelines for submission available at <<http://www.duke.edu/web/polygraph/>>

WHAT: Exit 9

WHO: Graduate Program in Comparative Literature of Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey.

TOPICS: From its inception in Autumn of 1993, *Exit 9* has fostered discussions concerning the following issues and representations: literary, multicultural, multilingual, political, gender, racial, mythical, psychoanalytical, historical, and religious. *Exit 9* currently is accepting manuscripts for its next issue, slated for publication in the Fall of 2003. The upcoming issue will focus on the representation of heroines across myriad cultures/traditions, historic periods/eras, racial/ethnic lines, and gender/sexual orientations.

SUBMISSIONS: MLA format (endnotes and complete bibliography); two hard copies, an electronic copy (on disk), and a short biography (50 words). Please mail submissions to: *Exit 9*: The Rutgers Journal of Comparative Literature Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey Graduate Program in Comparative Literature, 205 Ruth Adams Building, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-0270.

DEADLINE: February 14, 2003

INFORMATION: For more information, please visit <<http://complit.rutgers.edu/exit9/>> or write to the Editorial Board at exitninecl@yahoo.com.

WHAT: First International Doris Lessing Conference

WHO: The Doris Lessing Society, an Allied Organization of MLA

WHEN: April 1-4, 2004

WHERE: New Orleans

TOPICS: Any topic pertaining to Lessing is welcome. Possibilities include Lessing's relationship to postcoloniality, postmodernism, spirituality, narrative, memory and nostalgia, connections with other modern or contemporary writers, politics, fairy tales and fantasy, her attitudes toward gender, older

Sorcery Rising

Christine Mains

Fisher, Jude. *Sorcery Rising: Book One of Fool's Gold*. New York: DAW, 2002. (Reviewed in uncorrected page proofs.) 528 pages, hardcover, \$23.95. ISBN: 0-7564-0083-X.

I must admit that my initial response to the subtitle of this book was less than enthusiastic. I am not one of those who enjoy traveling through the same narrative world book after endless book. The trend towards Big Fat Fantasy may delight the average reader seeking adventure and escape, but often the scholar, on a quest for critical insight, finds that the trek through thousands of pages of subplots and minor characters all too often ends in the final volume with a frustrating lack of substance and meaning. Or worse yet, never ends in a final volume at all.

However, there's really no way to know whether and how the multivolume quest will end without embarking on the journey to begin with. This is even more true when we don't have an author's past work as a guide. Jude Fisher is a pseudonym used by Jane Johnson, a publishing director at HarperCollins and the author of the official Visual Companions to Peter Jackson's film version of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Her previous fiction writing experience includes a couple of cat-as-hero fantasies written with M. John Harrison and published under another pseudonym, Gabriel King.

Sorcery Rising is described on the back cover as "a brilliant fantasy epic filled with magical quests, war, mystery and deception, sex and romance." But, like many first volumes of Big Fat Fantasy, it provides more of a hint or promise of such things rather than the fulfillment. Set for the most part at the Allfair, a multicultural gathering of celebration and trade, the story thus far features not quests but the beginnings of the motivation for a quest; not war, but many drunken brawls; very little romance but certainly lots of sex. The requisite elements of epic fantasy are introduced although not developed: warriors and wizards, mysteries and magic, figures out of religious myth waking to take part in human events. There's enough storytelling promise in these beginnings to entice the average reader into waiting for Book Two.

The same tantalizing potential exists for the scholarly reader, as Fisher raises a number of issues that, if developed carefully and coherently, could make a journey through the world of Elda worthwhile. Those interested in the representation of cultural conflict might find intriguing the depiction of the three central cultures of Elda, drawn, as is often the case, from the storehouse of our own cultural history: the nomadic and gypsy-like Footloose; the Eyrans of the northern island nation, obviously based on Vikings; their enemies to the south, the Istrians, just as obviously reminiscent of Muslims — or at least how Muslim culture is popularly conceived. And herein lies the potential for both success and failure from the point of view of a critic of the genre. If the cultures of the fantasy world are well researched and well presented, if the author draws deeply from the roots of that culture rather than simply using the stereotypical iconography to create atmosphere, then something of significance can be revealed about the world of the author and readers. In *Sorcery Rising* this potential is enhanced by the reference to the conflicting religious viewpoints held by each culture, their different interpretations of the same tales and the same figures. But whether Fisher intends to develop this conflict in a deep and meaningful way, or is satisfied with simply using the cultural material to provide color-

ful window dressing, cannot be determined in a reading of the first volume.

A similar potential regarding issues of gender lies in Fisher's portrayal of strong female characters and the social constraints placed on them. The central protagonist is Katla Aranson, the daughter of an Eyran merchant, who is seemingly granted a great deal of freedom by her culture; she is an expert rock climber and forges some of the most prized weapons at the Allfair. But Katla's father is more than willing to sell her in marriage to a man nearer his own age and noted for his brutality, in exchange for the money and ships he needs to begin his quest for gold. Even this much freedom is denied Katla's Istrian counterpart, Selen, a veiled virgin whose marriage price is carefully negotiated by her father in order to provide him with enough gold to purchase yet another woman, the mysterious and magical Rosa Eldi, who provokes a maddening lust in any man who sees her. The lives of all three women change dramatically by the end of the first volume, with a promise that women, their power and their lack of it, will play a significant role in the epic to come.

Sorcery Rising does pretty much what it should as the first volume in a new series, not only introducing readers to the narrative world and the characters who live there, but also making them begin to think about the kinds of conflicts between cultures, religions, and people that matter not only to the inhabitants of the fictional world but to us. Fisher does an adequate job of setting the stage; we'll have to wait for future volumes to see whether or not she can fulfill that promise.

FICTION REVIEW

The Great Escape

Warren G. Rochelle

Watson, Ian. *The Great Escape*. Urbana, Illinois: Golden Gryphon Press, 2002. 283 pages, cloth, \$23.95. ISBN 1-930846-09-6

This is a hard review to write. Yes, *The Great Escape* is the latest short story collection of a star of British science fiction and fantasy, Ian Watson; that's clear enough. But to echo the book jacket blurb's description of Watson's stories as a combination of "science fiction and fantasy" that is an "eclectic mix" is something of an understatement, to say the least. A casual sampling of the stories makes that quite clear. The title story, "The Great Escape," is one of fallen angels in Hell, mounting an escape. "A Day Without Dad" offers an odd twist on the issue of how to live with aging parents: let them become guests in the adult child's brain. Hosting them, as it were. And being sure the parent has a "good six hours' experience a day," otherwise they would become "stir-crazy." The privacy issues that arise are mind-boggling. "The Boy Who Lost an Hour, the Girl Who Lost Her Life" combines autism and the switch to daylight savings time and the question of just where does the lost hour go? If a little boy gets caught in it, is he left behind? Is an autistic child forever left behind? And there is a vampire story, a tale of mental reprogramming on a planetary scale, the return of the gods, de-evolution—just how does one describe such a story collection? Is eclectic the only word that works? Perhaps so.

Clearly this collection demonstrates the range of Watson's imagination and the strength of his often lyrical and fluid language. It is no wonder he has been a finalist for both the Hugo and the Nebula Awards "and widely anthologized," or that he worked with Kubrick on "story development for the

women, men, Africa, teaching Lessing, and reviewing. Any topic pertinent to Lessing, however, is welcome. Special award for the best student paper.

SUBMISSIONS: Send one-two page proposals to both Debrah Raschke, English Dept., MS 2650 Southeast Missouri St. University Cape Girardeau, MO 63701, :draschke@semovm.semo.edu and Phyllis Perrakis, Dept. of English, University of Ottawa, Canada, K1N6N5; <pperrak@uottawa.ca>; **DEADLINE:** Panel Submissions: April 15, 2003. Individual Submissions: June 15, 2003.

WHAT: "Estimations of Value: Economic Perspectives on Doris Lessing's Writing"

WHO: The Doris Lessing Society

WHEN: 2003 MLA

WHERE: San Diego.

TOPICS: Lessing's fiction and/or nonfiction may include (but are not limited to): Political, domestic, or narrative economies; considerations of class, global money, media of exchange; economies of pleasure; gift, debt, investment, waste; re/production, consumption; the literary marketplace.

SUBMISSIONS: Please submit 1-2 page abstracts to: Cynthia Port, Dept of English, U of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104, <cport@english.upenn.edu> **DEADLINE:** March 15, 2003

WHAT: PAL 2003 Conference: Out of this World: Escapism in Literature

WHO: The Philological Association of Louisiana (PAL)

WHEN: March 21-22, 2003

WHERE: New Orleans, Louisiana

TOPICS: (topics in fantasy and science fiction, the retreat from civilization/technology, utopias, al-

ternatives to modern bourgeois subjectivity) Topics of interest include this year's theme, and also all topics related to: Minority voices in literature, art, film, culture Women's studies, feminism, psychoanalytic theory Race, class and/or gender studies Louisiana, Southern, or American literature, British literature, World literature, Creative writing.

SUBMISSIONS: Please mail (or email) a one-page typed, double-spaced (not to exceed 250 words) abstract to: Deborah Lewis, Assistant Professor, English Department, Dillard University, 2601 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70122. 504/816-4858. email address dlewis0@netzero.net and indicate under what area or areas you'd like your presentation to be considered.

DEADLINE: February 10, 2003

INFORMATION: Registration fee of \$40 will include evening reception, Friday, March 21st and all-day conference March 22, to be held at the Queen and Crescent Hotel in the Central Business District.

WHAT: The Eighth Annual International Comic Arts Festival (ICAF)
WHEN: Thursday – Saturday, October 30 – November 1, 2003

WHERE: Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

TOPICS: We welcome proposals for thesis-driven papers suitable for presentation in 20 minutes from a variety of disciplines and theoretical perspectives. All proposals should address the history, aesthetics, cultural significance or critical reception of comic art (including comic books, albums, graphic novels, comic strips, panel cartoons, caricature, or comics in electronic media).

SUBMISSIONS: Proposals will be

movie *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*." I wish I had read more of his work, so I could place it in that context. So, instead let me describe his fiction as one that blurs science fiction and fantasy in ways that are both pleasing and that are of "the strange, the eerie, the weird." Both genres become malleable in the hands of this experienced writer, as he both echoes the style of 19th century-storytellers and explores the cutting edge themes of nanotechnology, computer games (one haunted by the ghost of the murdered wife of the game's creator—the murderer), and artificial intelligence and the radical right.

In this context, it is clear that Watson is a writer who is exploring both the contemporary human condition and the human condition itself. Indeed, he is exploring the idea of *Homo narrans*, humans as the storytelling animals, as creatures whose consciousness "is the product of tales." As Watson puts it, storytelling "is no more entertainment compared with the serious business of real life. It is fundamental to our whole existence and to our knowledge of the world" (ix). Given that, how could one pass up this collection? Or, at the very least, make use of it in a class that covered both contemporary British and American science fiction and fantasy. Recommended.

FICTION REVIEW

Dimensions of Sheckley

Warren G. Rochelle

Sheckley, Robert. *Dimensions of Sheckley: The Selected Novels of Robert Sheckley*. Ed. Sharon L. Sharsky. Farmingham, MA: NESFA Press, 2002. 538 pages, paper (uncorrected bound galleys), \$29.00. ISBN 1-886778-29-9

In Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*, when the fifth dimension, a tesseract, is added to "the other four dimensions . . . you can travel through space without having to go the long way around" (L'Engle 78). Space—and time—get bent, wrinkled, folded. And that pretty much sums up how space and time is handled in the five Sheckley novels in this collection. *Dimensions* is an apt name, as there are many—a lot more than five—and they are most varied, and reality is bent and folded and wrinkled and occasionally spindled and mutilated over and over. The five—*Immortality, Inc.* (1958), *Journey Beyond Tomorrow* (1963), *Mindswap* (1966), *Dimensions of Miracles* (1968), and *Minotaur Maze* (1990)—span over thirty years of Sheckley's career and they take the reader for quite a ride.

Ride is perhaps not the most apropos word here. Quest seems a better choice, as all five are Hero and Quest tales of one kind or another. Tom Gerencer, in the Afterword to *Dimensions*, succinctly summarizes the plots of *Immortality, Inc.*, *Mindswap*, and *Dimensions*: "a lost Earthling searching for home through alternate dimensions and various versions of the planet" (535), with some variations. *Immortality, Inc.*'s Hero, Blaine, a man of 1958, wakes up in another body in 2110, when one does buy their way into heaven. Blaine's Quest is to survive this strange new world, a survival complicated by multiple body switches. *Mindswap*'s lost Earthling, Marvin, experiences multiple bodies, strange worlds, and a long journey home. *Journey Beyond Tomorrow*'s Hero, Joenes, doesn't leave Earth, but he is on no less a quest, as he leaves his South Pacific island to find his destiny in America, a destiny he eventually finds, in typical Sheckley circuitous fashion, back home. And the America Joenes finds is certainly various: a Hellenic America, yet one still an adversary of Russia. To add another layer of meaning, or of confusion, this tale's narrator is a thousand years in Joenes's future, his Quest is now part of that future's origin myth. Theseus is, of course, on a Quest for

the Minotaur in *Minotaur Maze*, and the elements of the original Greek myth are there: Daedalus, the maze, Ariadne. And the surreal permeates this short novel: a stolen Paris, a Chinese restaurant where Jason works as a resident hero, an Alien Observer from the planet Fang, just for starters.

In addition to describing these novels as Quest stories, I could easily also describe them as alternate histories—if you want to think of history as having being a stage with incredibly fast and probably drunk scene changers. Possible histories might work better, along the lines of the television program, *Sliders*. Change one thing, then two, three, four ... But more than any of these subgenres, Sheckley's fiction presented here is science fiction of the absurd: life as irrational, random, crazy, arbitrary, with no center to hold on to anything. This is satire with a razor-sharp edge. Razor-sharp? No, this satire does more than cut: it skewers, vivisects, and quite often barbecues, fries, and fricassees. Herds of sacred cows are gored. Everything—and I do mean everything—is fair game. Sheckley goes after the military, government bureaucracy, the academy, logic and philosophy, the law, psychology, God, religion, faith (“a heavenly sideshow”), political correctness, advertising, truth, justice, and most definitely the American way.

Yet, while this stuff cuts and sharply, it's funny. Think Douglas Adams and *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and his “neurotic robots, spaceborne hippies, the man who made the Earth” (535). Or “cynically slanted science fiction,” as Gerencer puts it (537). Just don't forget Sheckley was doing this long before Adams. As Mike Resnick says in his Introduction, *Dimensions of Miracles* is “the most brilliant work of humor ever to appear in this field . . . [This novel is] not only brilliant, it's not only hilarious, but it's Campbell's missing breakthrough: a humor that can only work as science fiction” (15).

Dimensions of Sheckley, along with Vonnegut, Adams, and Dick, would make the nucleus for a fine course on science fiction as satire and social commentary and criticism. For Sheckley scholars, I would think this book would be a quick sale. My only reservation is that all five of these Sheckley novels together approach overkill. The similarity of the plots, the relentless pace, the constant shifts, sometimes can blur characters and actions. So take long breaks between each, and prepare for an origami-like approach to space and time.

FICTION REVIEW

The Omega Expedition

Bill Dynes

Stableford, Brian. *The Omega Expedition*. New York: Tor Books, 2002. 544 pages, cloth, \$27.95. ISBN 0-765-30169-5.

Brian Stableford's sweeping future history reaches its conclusion with this sixth novel, a thoughtful and absorbing work. More concerned with ideas than with action, the novel explores our fears of death and the consequences – some horrifying, some quite magical – of asserting the value of life. Drawing together a number of hard-SF “big ideas,” including space arks and galactic colonization, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, the interaction of economics and ecology, and of course the extension of human life, Stableford delivers a powerful climax to his series.

refereed via blind review. Proposals should not exceed 300 words. At the bottom of the proposal, the author should precisely state her/his audiovisual equipment needs. Proposals requiring computers or data projection equipment should include exact system specifications. Send to: Prof. Charles Hatfield, Dept. of English, California State University, Northridge, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge CA 91330-8248.

Email: charles.hatfield@csun.edu.
DEADLINE: February 28, 2003
INFORMATION: To subscribe to ICAF's email announcement list, go to <<http://www.topica.com/lists/icaf>>.

WHAT: The Undying Fire: The Journal of the H.G. Wells Society of the Americas

TOPICS: Essays on any topic relating to Wells's life and work will be considered for publication. Interdisciplinary essays welcomed. Published annually, each volume includes from five to seven essays ranging from 10-25 pages in length. Longer essays will be considered in the case of extreme merit only.
SUBMISSIONS: Submit paper copy and the file on disk (in Word format). Be sure to include your e-mail address on your cover letter. We also accept shorter pieces (2-7 pages) for our “Bits” section, in addition to book and movie reviews concerning Wells and Wellsiana. Essays will be weighed by juried selection of our editorial board. Eric Cash, editor, The Undying Fire, ABAC 32, 2802 Moore Highway, Abraham Baldwin College, Tifton, GA 31793-2601.
DEADLINE: Has passed for the June 2003 edition, but submissions will be accepted for the next

edition after Jan. 1, 2003.

INFORMATION: Membership dues for the society are \$15 for one year. Please write for more info concerning membership. Membership in the H.G. Wells Society of the Americas is NOT a requirement for submission or consideration. Back issues of Volume I are currently available for \$6, post paid.

WHAT: WisCon 27

WHEN: Memorial Day weekend: May 23-26, 2003.

WHERE: Concourse Hotel, downtown Madison, Wisconsin

TOPICS: We invite 20 minute papers and presentations on science fiction and fantasy, with an emphasis on issues of feminism, gender, race, and class. We especially welcome papers on the work of this year's guests of honour, Carol Emshwiller and China Mieville.

SUBMISSIONS: 50-100 word proposals to: Justine Larbalestier <jazza@english.usyd.edu.au>

DEADLINE: 16 March, 2003.

INFORMATION: <<http://www.sf3.org/wiscon/>>

WHO: Science Fiction & Utopian & Fantastic Literature Discussion Group

WHEN: 2003 MLA

WHERE: San Diego

TOPICS: Imagining Peace. How has science fiction, utopian literature or fantasy (in any medium) tried to imagine peace: approaches to it and/or costs of it? Possibilities might include: efforts between nations, genders, races, species, ideological or theoretical camps.

SUBMISSIONS: Abstracts via email are fine but please do not send attachments, to Lisbeth Gant-

In a helpful introduction, Stableford recounts the plots of the other five novels that comprise this series, while at the same time asserting that each was designed to be readable on its own. That may be the case; while knowing the back-story of its characters is useful, *The Omega Expedition* certainly holds the reader's interest easily. The overarching story follows Adam Zimmerman, born in 1958, whose unyielding refusal to accept the inevitability of death gives rise to the quest for "emortality" that radically transforms human society and, for that matter, humanity itself. *The Omega Expedition* is set in the year 3263 as Zimmerman is awakened from cryogenic storage into the strange new world his monomania has helped create.

Stableford distinguishes "emortality" from immortality, defining the former as "a state of being in which an organism does not age," but remains susceptible to death through violence; "immortality" implies a divine-like inability to die (10). Nanotechnology can cure disease, cryogenics can preserve physical existence, but the search for true emortality is a search for the meaning of consciousness and the self. Yet arresting the aging process risks the "robotization" of the individual, who becomes more and more attuned to particular repetitive patterns of behavior and perception. Constant change, on the other hand, risks overwhelming one's memory capacity; if we cannot remember our past, can we truly claim to be the same people we once were? "Posthumans" have sought a wide variety of solutions; we meet a centuries-old prepubescent child, an infinitely adaptable shape-shifter, and artificial intelligences that offer a permanent escape from the tyranny of the flesh. One of the fascinating elements here is the manner in which Stableford connects this search with the narrative patterns of the novel itself. The art of story telling itself is implicated in profound ways with the quest for an emortal identity.

While the series as a whole centers upon Adam Zimmerman, *The Omega Expedition* is told in the first person by Madoc Tamlin, who appears to have been awakened from a cold storage that has lasted more than a thousand years. Understandably, Madoc struggles both to make sense of the world in which he finds himself and with the plausibility of the situation as a whole. Advances in "virtual experience" make it impossible for him to accept with absolute confidence that anything he is seeing or feeling is real, with the result that he is in constant search for the truth – true experiences, true motives, true reality – that may be lurking beneath his experiences. This skeptical, analytical narrator makes for long passages of frequently tortuous speculation and explication, but Stableford maintains an energy and wit that keeps the reader closely engaged. Madoc's status as skeptic and analyst, in fact, becomes crucial to the series of arguments that serves as the climax for the novel and for the series as a whole.

An important pattern in this weave of identity and awareness is Stableford's use of a variety of story types that help illuminate Madoc's perspective and experiences. Madoc is fascinated by the symbolic power of names – his own connects him with medieval Welsh legends of metamorphosis and immortality. His narrative style draws upon Judeo-Christian religious tradition, European and Greco-Roman mythology, fairy tales, and children's literature. In less able hands this variety might be divisive or confusing, but Stableford successfully uses this wide range to suggest that the story he is telling, the questions he is asking, are rooted in the deepest parts of our collective histories and consciousness. Alice, far from her familiar Wonderland, leads Madoc and Zimmerman to Vesta, named for the Roman goddess of the hearth and home. The search for a lasting and meaningful identity culminates in a community where each member tells his or her story, where the creation of meaning is both a personal and a public act.

I don't want to give away the central plot twist that precipitates the characters' journey from the microworld in counter-Earth orbit where Madoc first awakens to the asteroid Vesta and draws in companions and combatants from the reaches of the solar system and beyond. Mirroring Madoc's efforts to make sense of both "real" and "virtual" experience, Stableford surprises with new characters and new expectations in often unsettling ways. The plot, clearly, is not incidental to this thoughtful and philosophical novel. Yet it is decidedly secondary, a means of organizing the increasingly complicated search for a satisfying answer to death.

Perhaps the most satisfying aspect of the novel is that this search, begun as an act of defiance and denial, reaches its climax in ways that are affirming and productive. In his introduction, Stableford admits that "utopian fiction has a notorious tendency to be boring" (15), but he also knows that "the future is a big place" (18), and is more likely to get stranger than otherwise. As a self-contained work, *The Omega Expedition* successfully engages its readers with concerns that are both timely and timeless. It's clearest mark of success, however, is that it will encourage readers who haven't had the pleasure of the other books of the series to discover them for themselves.

FICTION REVIEW

The Fantasy Writer's Assistant

Matthew Wolf-Meyer

Ford, Jeffrey. *The Fantasy Writer's Assistant and Other Stories*. Introduction by Michael Swanwick. Urbana, IL: Golden Gryphon, 2002. 247 pp., hardcover, \$23.95. ISBN: 1-930846-10-X.

There's something undeniably *earnest* about Jeff Ford's writing. Even in his most fantastic stories, those that are pure flights of fancy, with characters fishing for bats on the precipice of cliffs, Ford's style underlies the incredible. Inasmuch as the reader might want to deny Ford his fantastic conceits – if his presentation were different they would surely be conceited stories, too pretentious to read – his grounded style is so pervasive that all this fantasy seems down to earth. The arrangement of the collection further solidifies this: If there were only fantastic stories, it would be a much different read; the stories that present Ford the author as Ford the character help to situate all these stories in real life. It might be, as Michael Swanwick writes in the introduction, that these stories are like the dreams of a friend, recounted the day after having been dreamt, but it's that these are the stories of a *friend* that makes them worth listening to. Ford's earnest approach is so balanced that it's difficult to not identify with him.

Writers like Ford are the exception rather than the rule in science fiction and fantasy. It comes as no surprise to most readers of the genres, upon reading a first sentence, to settle into the spare and balanced prose that is so often the practice of even the most widely read authors. With predecessors like Heinlein and Asimov, this really comes as no shock: It's more often the plot that counts, rather than the prose that carries it. But that's what makes Ford such a prize: Not only are his plots wonderful, but his prose has a practiced magnetism to it. The stories are generally of two sorts: Those that are entirely fantastic, sorts of lucid dreams, and those wherein the uncanny interacts with the author's everyday life. And it's this second school of stories that are the best of the lot.

The Fantasy Writer's Assistant brings together 13 previously published stories from the past 8 years — from some rather out of the way places — and

Britton, UCLA Bunche
Center for African American Studies,
153 Haines Hall, Box 951545,
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1545;
<lbritton@ucla.edu>.
DEADLINE: March 1, 2003

WHAT: Mary Shelley (Special Session), RMMLA

WHEN: October 9-11, 2003

WHERE: Missoula, Montana

TOPICS: As we approach the tenth anniversary of the publication of *The Other Mary Shelley: Beyond Frankenstein*, the first extended scholarly collection to address the need to examine the more complete body of Shelley's work, I invite paper proposals on this important writer that consider how her status has changed, if at all, in the last decade. Critical interpretations of her lesser-known works are especially encouraged, though discussion of any of her other texts will be considered.

SUBMISSIONS: paper proposals of no more than 350 words AND 100 word paper abstracts for presentations of fifteen to twenty minutes in length (eight to ten pages) should be emailed as a Word attachment to <lmekler@morgan.edu> or sent to: L. Adam Mekler, Ph.D., Dept. of English and Language Arts, Morgan State University, 1700 E. Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore, MD 21251.
DEADLINE: February 15, 2003.

WHAT: Nature in Science Fiction & Fantasy

WHEN: November 14-16, 2003

WHERE: SAMLA

TOPICS: Picture the deserts and sandworms of Arrakis, the Ramtop mountains in Discworld, the barren planet of Red Mars slowly coming to life in Green Mars. The natural settings created in

science fiction and fantasy novels, television, and films play unforgettable roles. Why? What makes them unforgettable, and what roles do they play? Do they pose a challenge or become a trusted friend? What makes Middle Earth still resonate with readers 50 years after appearing in print while its numerous imitators have been forgotten? And think about all those worlds are in the Star Wars saga. Are alien worlds significant because they are truly alien or are they significant because some aspect touches an archetypal reaction? Do interactions with these places reveal something essential about being "human?" Where does technology fit into all this, or does it? Memorable characters live in memorable places: Amber, Winter, Hogwarts, Pern, even the Earth in a future time.

SUBMISSIONS: Submit a 1-page abstract to Deborah Vause, Department of English and Humanities, York College of Pennsylvania, York, PA 17403; 717-815-1704; <dvause@ycp.edu>.

DEADLINE: 1 March

WHAT: The City and its Discontents (MLA Proposed Special Session)

WHEN: 27-30 Dec. 2003

WHERE: San Diego, CA

TOPICS: The citizens of Western societies increasingly live in cities. The contemporary metropolis is often a center of cultural sophistication and a haven for political and social non-conformity. The city as a vast, anonymous, and uncontrollable space has traditionally supported the growth of a critical discourse on culture, society, and politics. However, as critics Richard Sennett, Naomi Klein, or

3 previously unpublished stories. It's rather difficult, though, to say which of the included stories is Ford at his best: The array is so diverse, and so strong, that no one story stands out as being that which all the rest revolve around. It is, conversely, rather easy to pinpoint Ford's weaker pieces, arranged in the middle of the collection. But this he seems aware of, sometimes making excuses and veiled apologies in the notes that he provides for each of the selections. But these weaker selections are in the minority, and are radically overshadowed by the rest of the collection.

"Creation" begins the collection, a coming of age story loosely based upon Ford's own childhood. In the neighborhood woods, a young boy, having learned from the creation story of Genesis, goes about the creation of his own Adam, constructed of the materials of nature – sticks, bark, leaves – just as humanity was built from mud and imbued with the breath of life. Later returning to the creation site, the boy finds that his "man" is gone, having left no scrap behind, leading the creator to think that his "man" has come to life rather than having been dispersed at the hands of other children. The boy finds himself plagued by the scarecrow man (although it could be just the *idea* of his creation come to life), and it is only through a strange alliance with his powerful and silent father (of typical 1950s fashion) that he is able to rid himself of his guilt. Maybe it's my own young life spent in the woods that made this story seem so perfectly real, such a wonderful approximation of my own youth, and the imaginative splendors that I so often found in nature with my friends and younger brother; or maybe Ford's creation myth is an even truer one than we find in the Bible. Maybe God does feel guilty, or, if he doesn't, we think he should.

Similarly, "The Honeyed Knot" deals with the author's later guilt, his sense of disappointment in himself, when he finds himself unable to stop his students' lives from going awry subtly before his eyes. From another writer, this sort of story might seem an unnecessary indulgence, or, worse, a blatant attempt to curry the favor of the reader, to align him- or herself with the feelings of a reader who too lives in a world rather chaotic. "The Honeyed Knot," like the mystery of the title's meaning, is alms for a social life. Writers, generally, and teachers, specifically, find themselves embroiled in the lives of their readers and students, and for Ford (who is both), this position of being a part and yet apart is problematic. Too often privy to the thoughts and feelings of his students, Ford tries to find a way out of the objectivity his pedagogical stance has forced upon him in order to affect, and to be affected by, his students.

Ford's predilection for incorporating the fantastic into his everyday life aligns him more with Philip K. Dick than Franz Kafka (who, in one of the previously unpublished stories, Ford bemoans – one of my favorites in the collection), but where Dick failed in his clunky prose, Ford is able to imbue the stories with the sense of *really* being fantastic rather than simply fiction. Unlike Kafka, who was too often flirting with his anxieties, and like Dick before him, Ford seems more concerned with the anxieties of the cultural milieu of which he is a part. Ford tells beautiful, convincing stories of the world in which we live, of the fantasy that sometimes elides our attention, and, hopefully, will keep telling them for years to come. These are the sorts of fantasies that we need, earnest and true.

FICTION REVIEW
Leviathan Three

Michael Levy

VanderMeer, Jeff and Forrest Aguirre, eds. *Leviathan Three*. Tallahassee, FL: Ministry of Whimsy Press, 2002. \$21.95. 476 pages. ISBN 1-894815-42-4. To order check out www.ministryofwhimsy.com.

This is the third in a series of landmark anthologies of original weird and avant garde fiction edited by Jeff VanderMeer and various co-conspirators. An enormous book, it features a wide range of superb stories, some by writers with whom you will be familiar, like Carol Emshwiller, Michael Moorcock, and Brian Stableford and others by people of whom you should have heard if you've been keeping up with the field, like L. Timmel Duchamp, Jeffrey Ford, and Philip K. Dick Award-winner Stepan Chapman. Zoran Zivkovic, an enormously talented Serbian writer who has been appearing more and more frequently in English translation, is represented by a suite of six separate short stories interspersed throughout the book, including "Virtual Library," in which a writer discovers an Internet site that lists all of his publications, including those he hasn't yet written, and "Infernal Library," in which a non-reader, recently damned to Hell, finds himself sentenced to an eternity doing you know what. Other highlights include James Sallis's "Up," set in a contemporary America in which more and more people seem to be simply igniting, going up in flames for little or no apparent reason; Jeffrey Thomas's surreal "The Fork," which describes a man with no past who must escape from the what appears to be the basement of an out-of-control, automated factory; Jeffrey Ford's "The Weight of Words," which concerns a man who perfects the science of typography to the point where he can hide words in advertisements to overwhelming effect; Brian Evenson's "The Progenitor," perhaps the most bizarre story in the volume, a piece of fictional non-fiction which describes the upkeep of a bizarre alien being; and Brian Stableford's "The Face of an Angel," which tells the tale of a plastic surgeon who is hired by the Devil to recreate the face God gave Adam. Among the authors of other noteworthy stories are James Bassett, Remy de Gourmont, Tamar Yellin, Scott Thomas, Michael Cisco, Lance Olsen, and Rikki Ducornet. The sheer quality of the stories in *Leviathan Three* is amazing although it's worth noting that many of these pieces will not appeal to fans of the more traditional forms of science fiction. If, however, you have an occasional yen for the really very good and really very strange, this volume comes heavily recommended.

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James Howard Kunstler have argued, cities are changing drastically, and so is the role that cities play in society. With the disappearance of public space and the continuing growth of suburbia, urbanity itself seems at stake. More and more, cities lose their critical potential and are transformed into corporate and cultural conformity. This panel will study the tension between the liberating and the debilitating functions of cities, particularly as they surface in contemporary fictional texts. With this aim in mind, the panelists will investigate the urban consciousness and subconsciousness of fictional cities and city-dwellers.

SUBMISSIONS: Please send 2 page abstracts by surface mail to Gerd Bayer, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, Case Western Reserve University, 10900 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH, 44106 7118 or electronically to gdb@cwru.edu. Please send in the body of the email and not as attachments.

DEADLINE: 10 March 2003

Science Fiction Research Association

www.sfra.org

The SFRA is the oldest professional organization for the study of science fiction and fantasy literature and film. Founded in 1970, the SFRA was organized to improve classroom teaching; to encourage and assist scholarship; and to evaluate and publicize new books and magazines dealing with fantastic literature and film, teaching methods and materials, and allied media performances. Among the membership are people from many countries—students, teachers, professors, librarians, futurologists, readers, authors, book-sellers, editors, publishers, archivists, and scholars in many disciplines. Academic affiliation is not a requirement for membership.

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