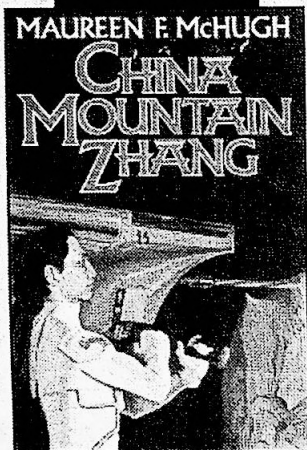




# Program Book

February 10 – 12, 1995  
Waterfront Plaza Hotel, Jack London Square,  
Oakland, California

## TOR SALUTES PRIOR TIPTREE AWARD WINNERS



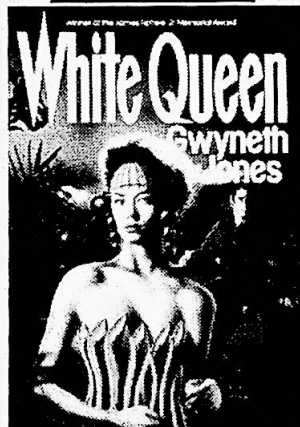
### China Mountain Zhang Maureen F. McHugh

"A first novel this good gives every reader a chance to share in the pleasure of discovery..."—*The New York Times*

"An astonishing *tour de force!*"—*Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*

"Brilliant!"—*Locus*

CHINA MOUNTAIN ZHANG  
Maureen F. McHugh  
0-812-50892-0 \$3.99/\$4.99 CAN



### White Queen Gwyneth Jones

"This year is unlikely to produce a better SF novel than *White Queen* by Gwyneth Jones."—*Washington Post Book World*

"Thoroughly original, genuinely weird, and stuffed to bursting with deep-eyed genre virtue. And with its lounging, verminous, hypercivilized space visitors, it boasts a truly unforgettable treatment of the theme of the alien."

—Bruce Sterling

WHITE QUEEN  
Gwyneth Jones • An Orb Trade Paperback  
0-312-89013-3 • \$12.95/\$18.95 CAN



# Potlatch 4

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## **Potlatch 4**

Potlatch 4 is a non-profit literary convention for science fiction readers and writers. Proceeds benefit Clarion West and the Second Start Adult Literacy Program of the Oakland Public Library. All inquiries may be addressed to:

Potlatch 4, c/o Spike Parsons  
P.O. Box 20132  
Castro Valley, CA 94546

## **Committee**

Publicity: *Allen Baum*. Publications: *Tom Becker*. Treasurer & Tiptree Bake Sale Coordinator: *Sheila Bostick*. Programming: *Janet Lafler*. Hotel & Tiptree Ceremony: *Debbie Notkin*. Registration & Dealers' Room: *Spike Parsons*. Hospitality: *Patty Peters* and *Donya White*. Native Guy: *Guy Thomas*. Clarion West Auction: *Tom Whitmore* and *Linda McAllister*.

## **Thanks**

Carol Squires, who had way too much going on to be on the committee, somehow managed anyway to be a lot of help. Thanks! When we're all done, can we keep having meetings over at your place?

Thanks to Tor Books for copies of the Book of Honor, *The Starry Rift*.

## **Credits**

The Potlatch 4 logo is by Freddie Baer, who has been a big supporter since the beginning. She also does the fabulous Tiptree T-Shirts every year.

The illustrations are by Beckett Gladney, who has left the game industry to start a free-lance art career, but still managed to find the time to express just how I felt about Potlatch and our Bay Area and West Coast heritage.

## **Fine Print**

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## **Technogeek Info**

Produced with ClarisWorks 3.0 on an Apple PowerBook 100, Quadra 800, Power Macintosh 8100, StyleWriter I and LaserWriter 630. Fonts used are Futura and Bookman.

# P o t l a t c h 4

**Potlatch:** *n.* [Chinook Jargon, fr. Nootka *patshatl*, giving.] **1.** a ceremonial feast of the Indians of the northwest coast, marked by the host's lavish distribution of gifts. **2.** *Northwest:* a social event or celebration. **3.** *Contemporary:* a gathering devoted to the discussion, creation and appreciation of modern speculative fiction. **4.** **Potlatch 4: California: A place where readers and writers meet on common ground.**

## The Turn of the Squid\*

On behalf of our many-tentacled committee, welcome to Potlatch 4!

Potlatch 4 is a non-profit, volunteer run, educational and literary convention. It benefits the Clarion West Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Workshop, and the Oakland Public Library's adult literacy program.

Naturally, you expect great programming at a Potlatch. As Alfred Bester learned in Hollywood, "start with a bang, then build to a climax!" This year the program starts by combining our Book of Honor, *The Starry Rift* by James Tiptree, Jr., with a writers workshop-style critique.

Algonquins are informal round-table discussions. You don't have to think you're as clever as Dorothy Parker to join one, just sign up at the Con Suite (or start your own).

A very special event this year is the presentation of the fourth annual James Tiptree, Jr. Memorial Award(s). This will be the first time the award is presented on the Left Coast where it was instigated. You won't want to miss the Tiptree Awards Banquet; do you have your ticket yet?

Following the Awards Ceremony will be the

Clarion West Benefit Auction. If you have been concerned about auctioneers behaving outrageously and provoking excessive hilarity at previous Potlatches (not to mention the notorious ReaderCon auction), we're warning you now: Don't over-eat at the banquet.

The Con Suite is the place to hang out, converse, sample tasty delicacies and comfort foods from other planets, and always expect the unexpected. The Con Suite is also host to the Tiptree Bake Sale table, where you may indulge your craving to support feminist SF.

There is a nice Dealers' Room just off the hotel lobby, by the pool. Please be sure to visit; feeding the dealers is allowed.

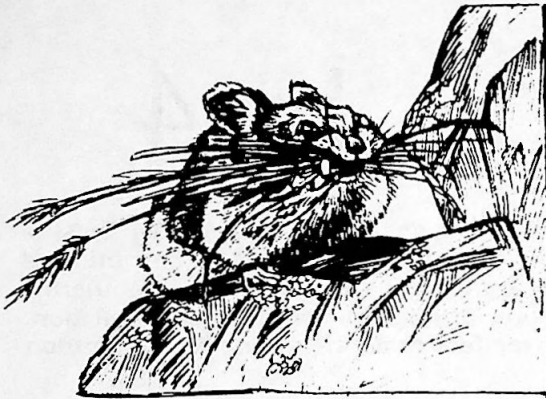
The Waterfront Plaza is a new hotel and a quite wonderful one indeed. This is their first science fiction convention; we would like it to be a memorable one for them, but in the nicest possible way. On the next page are some helpful hints on how to be nice. Miscreants will have to sleep under the dock.

Usually we end with a plea to send in your membership for Potlatch 4. But now Potlatch 4 is happening, and it's a pleasure to be able to say: thank you for supporting Potlatch, enjoy the con, and I'll see you around. Oh, and Potlatch 5 in Portland is going to be great. Join now; avoid the rush!

— Tom Becker

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\*When we started planning Potlatch 4, we were wondering who was going to run it. Most of the committee members have chaired conventions larger than Potlatch, or at least been department heads at a WorldCon or something. So we decided we could go by consensus. This has worked out very well for running the convention, but it left us without a symbol (Potlatch II had the four-legged chair). We don't have a chair. A squid is not a chair. We have many legs. A squid has many tentacles. Hence the squid.



## Miss Manners Visits the Waterfront Plaza

The staff at the Waterfront Plaza are friendly, courteous, and helpful. We like it that way. Presumably, they like it when we behave that way.

Just in case your mother never told you these things:

- Running in the halls means there's a fire: a serious fire.
- Writing on the walls means you're either an outsider artist or in a lot of trouble with the committee (and the latter seems more likely).
- Not tipping the maids means you have less money than they do (in which case, why are you staying in the hotel?).
- Eating in the hotel restaurant (Jack's) makes the hotel happy (and gives you a really good meal).

In general, please treat the hotel as if it were a home in which you were a guest; don't destroy it, treat the possessions with respect, and just use common sense and good manners.

Thanks.

— Debbie Notkin

## The Tiptree Awards Banquet

We encourage everyone at Potlatch to come to the Tiptree Awards banquet on Sunday morning at 10:30. The banquet will be held in the Spinnaker Room, which you will all know well by then from programming during the days and the con suite in the evening.

Tickets for the banquet are \$18 for a lavish all-you-can-eat buffet brunch, with choices to satisfy everyone from the most health-conscious vegetarian to the cholesterol king of Alameda County (a position not yet selected). Entertainment at the banquet will be our very own comedy troupe of Loud Women (Ellen Klages, Eileen Gunn, Ellen Kushner, Jeanne Bowman, and perhaps more). Admit it — you'd pay whatever it takes to hear those women laugh, even if you didn't get any food!

After food and entertainment, we'll have the Tiptree Award ceremonies themselves. Although Ursula Le Guin is unable to attend, Nancy Springer will be present to accept her award, and the entire panel of this year's judges will also be present. Susanna Sturgis will present the award.

Coming to the banquet guarantees you good food, good company (everyone at Potlatch is good company), and front row seats for the entertainment and award ceremonies ... not to mention the Clarion West auction, which will immediately follow the Tiptree festivities.

Banquet tickets can be purchased at Registration. Please buy your tickets as soon as possible so we can make sure the caterer gets enough food for everyone.

— Debbie Notkin

## Clarion West Auction

The Clarion West Auction is a place to get whatever you really want, and to help one of the premier writing workshops in the SF world. Donated books, artwork, software, and Weird Stuff are put up before you: you get to set the price you're willing to pay! How often is that the case in your everyday life? The money brought in by this helps fund scholarships to Clarion West, a workshop devoted to generating new SF and fantasy authors.

The auction will happen after the Tiptree Awards Ceremony on Sunday. Auctioneers include Ellen Klages, well-known *Loud Woman*; and Tom Whitmore, expatriate *Hobbit*. We Expect Everyone To Be Amused. Even if you don't buy anything, come and be entertained.

As of press time, we're still gathering material to be auctioned: don't hesitate to tell us if you have something you want to donate. We know we have books, uncorrected proofs, t-shirts, and software: we plan to have a list of what will be auctioned available at Registration. Donations will be cheerfully accepted at Potlatch any time before the auction.

— Tom Whitmore and Linda McAllister

## About Clarion West

Clarion West is a non-profit literary and educational organization based in Seattle whose main project is to put on the Clarion West Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers Workshop every summer. The Workshop is taught by six successful writers and editors, each of whom is in residence for a different week. These professionals work closely with about twenty students, who intensively write and critique each other's writing for all six weeks. The Workshop costs about \$2,000 (aside from lost wages), and Clarion West scholarships help needy students defray the cost. Clarion West also sponsors a writers-in-the-schools program, readings, lectures and other special events.

— Jane Hawkins

## Community Charity

Our community charity for Potlatch 4 is the Second Start Adult Literacy Program of the Oakland Public Library. It is in its 11th year and has brought 2000 students together with volunteer tutors.

In the Con Suite, we'll have some *Oakland Readers* for you to look at. Second Start produced these books, which are edited for different reading levels. They feature stories from the lives of the Second Start students. The voices of the students come through loud and clear and the books show the richness and vitality of the Oakland community.

— Tom Becker



## Con Suite

Stop by and sample some of Donya & Patty's hors d'oeuvres and wash them down with homebrew compliments of Terry Floyd, Pam Davis, Gary Mattingly and Jay Kinney.

— Patty Peters

## Con Suite Hours

Friday	3 PM – Midnight	Spinnaker
Saturday	9 AM – 6 PM	Chart
	7 PM – Midnight	Spinnaker
Sunday	9 AM – Noon	Chart

All day Friday and on Saturday night, the Con Suite will be in the Spinnaker room, the big room that will be the main meeting space. During the day Saturday and on Sunday morning the Con Suite will be in the smaller Chart room, which is located next to the hotel lobby and the pool.

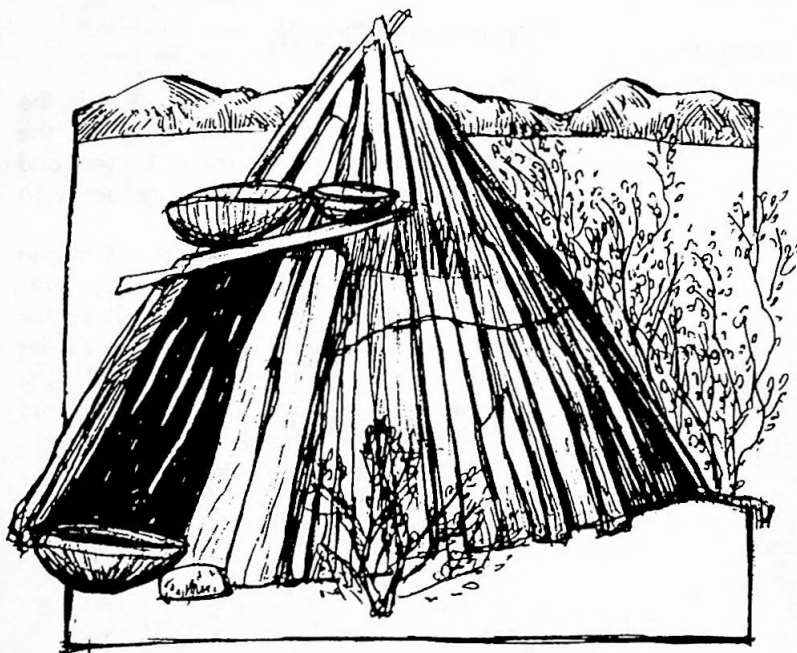
## James Tiptree, Jr. Bake Sale

You mustn't come to this convention without visiting the bake sale. Bake sales are the main source of funds for the Tiptree Awards; your contributions support the awards and give you something for your money. We'll have many delicious goodies from which to choose.

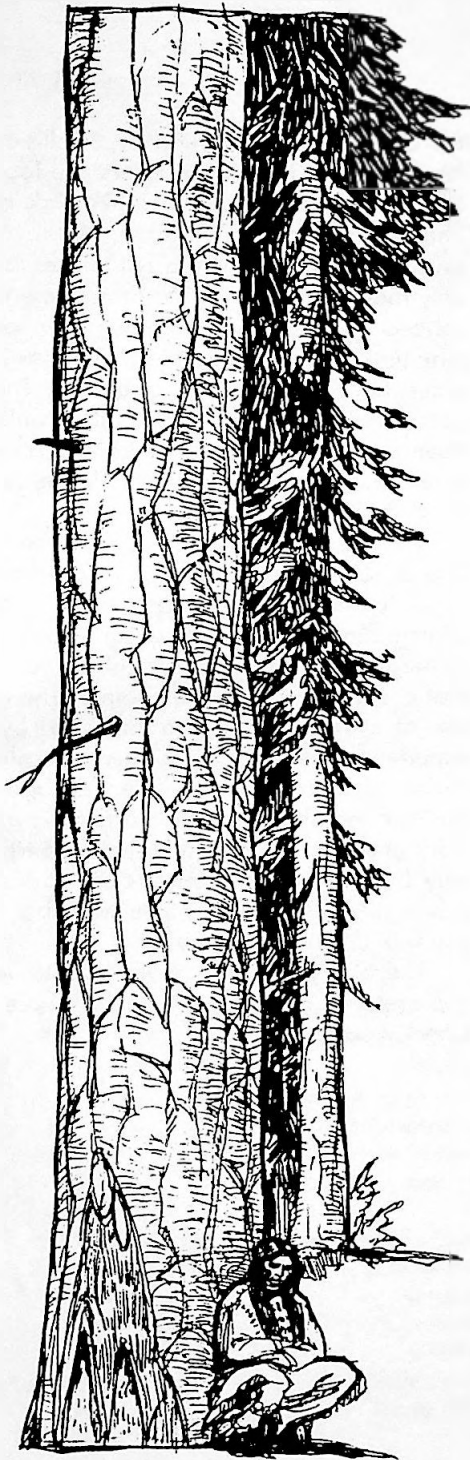
When Pat Murphy first announced the Tiptree Award, she said "If you can't change the world with chocolate chip cookies, how can you change the world?" This spurred the fabulous fen of Madison, Wisconsin to organize a nationwide series of fundraising bake sales, cookbooks, and other fabulous projects. This effort has made the Tiptree Award one of the few cash prizes and made a lot of ~~sweet tooth~~ people very happy at the same time.

The bake sale is a traveling show at this convention, like the con suite, and keeps the same hours. When you feel the urge for something sweet, find our table and buy, buy, buy. Prices are posted on individual items. Ingredient cards are posted next to each item. Donations are on the honor system. Throw your money into the hat! Goodies will be replenished from time to time. If you don't see something that you want now, wait a bit. Tiptree cookbooks and t-shirts are also for sale.

— Sheila Bostick







## Dealers' Room

We wish to welcome the following book sellers to Potlatch 4. Please visit our Dealers' Room early and often. It is located in the Compass Room, off the hotel lobby and across from the daytime Con Suite.

— Spike Parsons

### Locus

P.O. Box 13305  
Oakland, CA 94661

### Mama Bears Bookstore

6536 Telegraph Avenue (at 66th Street)  
Oakland, CA 94704  
(510) 428-9684

### Michael Tallan

3477 Yuba Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95117

### The Other Change of Hobbit

2020 Shattuck Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94704  
(510) 848-0413

### Dealers' Room Hours

Friday	3 PM – 6 PM	Compass
Saturday	9:30 AM – 6 PM	
Sunday	10 AM – 2 PM	

## Book of Honor — *The Starry Rift*

*The Starry Rift* is James Tiptree, Jr.'s final published work: three tales of misunderstanding, heroism and sacrifice.

"The Only Neat Thing to Do" tells of an alien contact gone horribly wrong —or has it? A young girl makes a solo journey to the interstellar frontier near the Rift. Searching for lost worlds, she finds herself in the middle of a deadly mystery. The setting is meticulously realized, the writing sings, the characters almost jump off the page. But I wonder if the story would have the same impact if the heroine had been a teenage boy or a little old lady.

"Collision" is a story of two civilizations, the human Federation and the alien Harmony, meeting each other and ramping up for total war. The way in which the conflict begins is depressingly realistic: it's started by human bad guys. The aliens hold all humans responsible, and prepare to wipe out humanity. Meanwhile, a Federation exploration vessel has been crossing the Rift. When it shows up at the aliens' headquarters planet, consternation ensues. Can the explorers stop the war before they're captured and killed? Can the aliens ever trust a human? The politics of the story are interesting, considering it was written during the Cold War by someone who had worked for

the CIA. Overall, unfortunately, "Collision" is a let-down. The human explorers are foolhardy to an extreme that would make Kirk blanch. The exposition is overdone. A distracting paranormal phenomenon is unnecessary and only moderately funny. The dramatic ending is robbed of much of its meaning by a *deus ex machina*. And get this, the aliens have three sexes, but they act like 50's squares. The story just doesn't live up to its potential. It could have been a classic, but what we have is an earlier draft. And we no longer have Tiptree to finish it.

On the surface, "Good Night Sweethearts" is a classic space opera, about a resourceful hero forced into desperate action. Under examination, the story shows an offbeat notion of heroism and a deeply cynical view of society that could only come from Tiptree. The hero is an alienated loner, traumatized by war experiences he can't remember. The plot is a series of incredible coincidences against a background of manipulation and betrayal. The story makes sense only if it's a setup from the very beginning, but it's not clear if our hero ever figures it out. A nice little story that leaves you with plenty to think about.

*The Starry Rift* is complex, controversial, unforgettable and uniquely Tiptree. Three stars. Check it out.

— Tom Becker

## Writers' Workshops

The Potlatch 4 Writers' Workshops will be taking place on Saturday and Sunday in the Waterfront Plaza Hotel.

Workshop participants submitted short story manuscripts in January. Each workshop session will last two hours, during which participants' short stories will be critiqued by professional writers.

The workshops, based on the successful Potlatch II Writers' Workshop, reflect the convention theme: Readers and Writers Meet on Common Ground. Our philosophy is to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each manuscript and the craft of storytelling and writing in a friendly and helpful atmosphere, writer to writer.

The Writers' Workshops will be holding an open house in the Workshop Suite on Friday and Saturday nights beginning at 7:30. Please feel free to come by and get acquainted.

This year Potlatch will be featuring a workshop-related panel discussion immediately after the Opening Ceremonies on Friday at 6:00 p.m. "Workshop Tiptree" will feature Jonathan Lethem, Karen Joy Fowler and Richard Russo offering their critiques of a story by James Tiptree, Jr. This promises to be an entertaining and unusual panel, and I hope you'll attend.

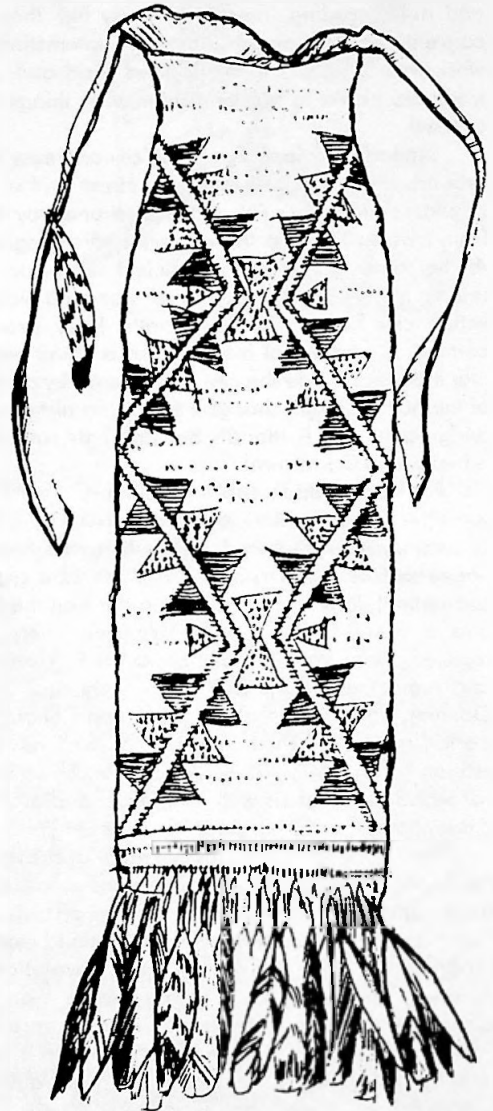
— Bridget McKenna

### Section Coordinators

Phoebe Reeves, Karen Voorhees, Kathy Watts

### Instructors

Kent Brewster, Ann Chamberlin, Howard V. Hendrix, Daniel Marcus, Patricia MacEwan, Michael Marano, Marti McKenna, Lorelei Shannon, Delia Sherman



## Just Wait Till Next Year!

Ever since I attended the first Potlatch in Seattle, I've felt that Potlatch and Portland have a lot in common. Potlatch is a small convention, easy to get around and not sprawling, messy, or noisy like those big conventions. The people there are interesting and work well together; there is good food and drink; there are books to buy and interesting things to do and see.

Similarly, Portland is a small city and easy to get around. It's flat enough that the street grid is fairly regular, which gives you more than one way to get from here to there so there's less traffic congestion. At the same time, there's sufficient terrain to keep things interesting, including a dormant volcano within city limits. The Willamette River provides commerce and visual interest, but is small enough that it doesn't divide the city; it is crossed by a variety of intriguing bridges that give the city its nickname of Bridgetown. And Portland's bus and light rail system is free within Downtown!

Portland's people are interesting and work well together. Portland's convention-running fan community is experienced, tightly-knit, and friendly. We've put on 16 OryCons, 7 Cons (the generic convention), 2 WesterCons (with a third on the way), and a SMOFCon, and they've been very well received. Many Portland fans are active in Worldcons and major regionals. But we're fluffy, not stuffy. Opening ceremonies at Portland conventions are world-famous for their silliness. As well as these veteran con-runners, the Portland Potlatch committee will include fresh faces with new ideas, and probably a few people from other parts of the country.

You'll find plenty of good food and drink in Portland, too. Portland has a host of great restaurants of every ethnicity in every price range. Not to mention microbreweries — Portland was the birthplace of the handmade beer revolution in America, and has more microbreweries than any other American city. As far as espresso is concerned, Portland may not be Seattle but it's close to it. (And nothing in Seattle can top the Black Tiger blend at Coffee People: "The Coffee That Drinks You!")

And — saving the most obvious for last — there are books to buy. Not only is Portland the home of Powell's Books, the largest bookstore in the world

and a major tourist destination in its own right, but there is a wide variety of other bookstores to suit every taste. There are plenty of other things to see, do, and buy in Portland, including such nearby attractions as the Columbia River Gorge, Mount Hood, Multnomah Falls, and the Oregon Coast.

Not, of course, that you would ever leave the convention. After all, Potlatch 5 in Portland will offer everything you've come to expect from other Potlatches: meaty programming (featuring people who actually care about the program topic and are prepared to speak on it), a well-stocked hospitality suite, microprogramming (we have microchips and microbrews, why not microprogramming?), a Clarion-style writers' workshop, the Clarion West Auction, a small but selective dealers' room, and of course lots of intelligent and charming people to schmooze with.

While we'll do everything we can to uphold the traditions of Potlatch, we also plan to put our own laid-back Portland stamp on Potlatch 5. You can look forward to silly opening ceremonies, opportunities for creative crafts, playing of games ("party" games like Charades and board games, not role-playing or wargames), and general nonspecific tomfoolery.

At this writing we do not yet have a hotel. Membership rates will be:

\$25 through Westercon (July 4, 1995)

\$30 after that

More later (dates and rates to be announced)

If you want to know more, you can talk to me at Potlatch 4 or contact me at any of the following addresses:

Potlatch 5, c/o David D. Levine

1905 SE 43rd Ave.

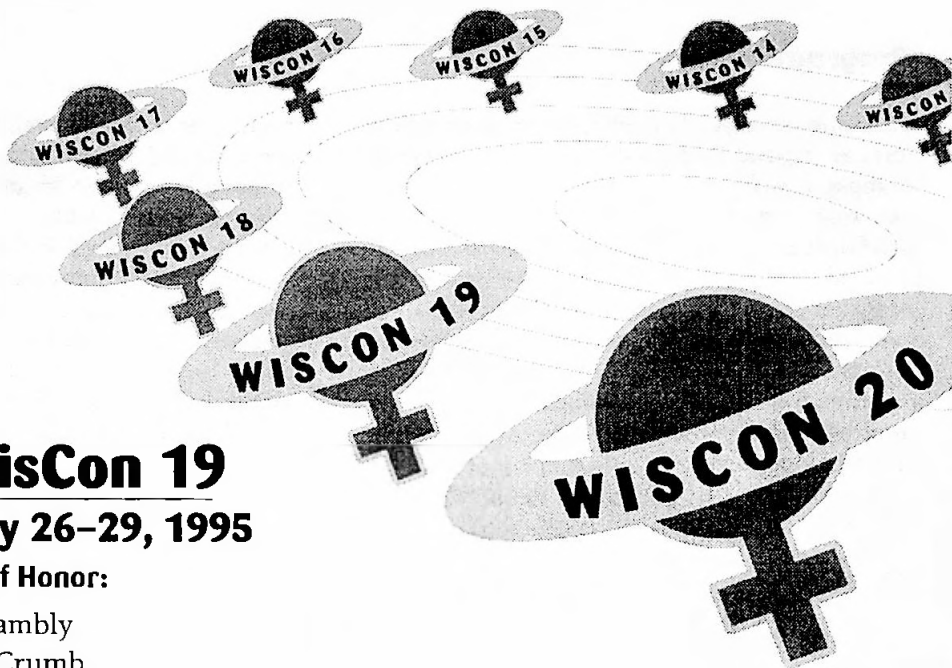
Portland, OR 97215

Phone: (503) 232-1727 (home number)

E-Mail: daviddl@ssd.intel.com

Hope to see you in Portland next year!

— David D. Levine



## **WisCon 19**

**May 26-29, 1995**

**Guests of Honor:**

Barbara Hambly  
Sharyn McCrumb

**Special Guest**

Nicola Griffith

**Rates:**

Attending \$20 adults  
\$10 youth  
\$10 supporting  
kids-in-tow free

## **WisCon 20**

**May 24-27, 1996**

Celebrating 20 years

The 5<sup>th</sup> Tiptree Award Ceremony

**The world's foremost  
feminist SF convention**

**Concourse Hotel  
in downtown Madison, Wisconsin**

Now a *Springtime* event

The Farmer's Market replaces  
sledding parties as a featured entertainment



**For more information . . .**

Write to SF<sup>3</sup>, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624

or, send an e-mail message to: [wiscon.register@cs.wisc.edu](mailto:wiscon.register@cs.wisc.edu)

## Programming

What it boils down to is this: we want everyone to have a good time, to think, to talk, to listen, to make new friends, to have new ideas, to find new meaning in old ideas, to be serious, to be playful, to be audacious, to be profound. Sound like a tall order? Not a bit! I hope we've created programming that will inspire this kind of interaction among our members. Thanks to the efforts of our ringleaders, idea-mongers, panelists, and instigators, I think we have. Just remember, whatever your role, you are an essential ingredient.

— Janet Lafler

### Friday

#### Welcome to Potlatch 4

**6:00 PM - 6:15 PM**

Tom Whitmore (R)

What is Potlatch 4? This is your chance to learn the mysterious secrets of how Potlatch 4 came to be, made up here for the very first time.

#### Workshop Tiptree **6:15 PM - 7:30 PM**

Karen Joy Fowler, Jonathan Lethem (R), Richard Russo

Join us as we kick off the convention with a workshop-style discussion of Tiptree's famous story, "The Only Neat Thing To Do." If you've never been involved in a writer's workshop, this is your chance to find out what it's like!

### Saturday

#### How Much Originality is Enough?

**10:00 AM - 11:15 AM**

Eileen Gunn, Debbie Notkin (R), Nancy Springer, Chelsea Quinn Yarbo

Does the answer to this question change with the Generations™? Can legitimate comparisons be drawn between writers of licensed fiction and the artists' studios of the Renaissance? Is it possible to write a good

novel, even a fine novel, based on another Bard's Tale®? Of two good books, one set in someone else's world and one set in the author's own world, is the second one automatically better? Is the first by definition "hack work"? Or can writers of licensed fiction be considered legitimate archaeologists of other peoples' Forgotten Realms™? Anyone who wishes to dismiss all licensed fiction as trivial should read *The Final Reflection*, by John M. Ford, before trying to defend this position in public.

#### Down the Rabbit Hole: The Uses of Non-Linear Narrative **11:30 AM - 12:45 PM**

Sarah Goodman (R), Ellen Kushner, Rudy Rucker, Delia Sherman, Eric Van

Alice was told "begin at the beginning and go on until you get to the end, then stop," but that isn't the only way to tell a story. This panel will consider various ways of telling the tale and their ramifications for both the author/story-teller and the listener/reader.

#### Lunch and Algonquins

**1:00 PM - 2:15 PM**

#### The Care and Feeding of Demon Lovers **2:30 PM - 3:45 PM**

Katharine Kerr, Marti McKenna, Michael Marano, Susanna Sturgis, Karen Shearer Voorhees (R)

So what do you do now that your imaginary companion is part of your life? How do you keep your outer life intact when you constantly hear that secret, seductive whisper at the back of your mind, summoning you into the depths? And, oh dear, what do you do when that voice says, "Feed me"?

This panel will consider the enduring fascination of such subjects as the *Phantom of the Opera*, vampires in general and the Dracula legend in particular, incubi and succubi in various manifestations, mummies,

familiar spirits — in short, anything that might qualify as a Demon Lover.

**The Bay Area Abides: Local Post-Disaster Fiction** 4:00 PM- 5:15 PM

David Bratman (R), Richard Dutcher, Pat Murphy, Michaela Roessner

Many writers have chosen to set post-disaster fiction here in the Bay Area, whether the disaster is a plague, an environmental collapse, a political upheaval, or a war. In this panel, we look at the various ways writers have destroyed the Bay Area, and at the ways they have used the comparatively blank post-holocaust canvas to explore the Bay Area culturally, politically and spiritually.

## Algonquins

Algonquins, which is what we call our small roundtable discussions, provide an opportunity for members of the convention to get together in smaller groups to discuss their favorite subjects and play their favorite games. They are the perfect setting for in-depth discussions of a single book, story, or article, as well as more broad-ranging topics. In the past they have included walking tours, readings, and poker games, as well as discussion groups.

We have one time-slot specifically set aside for Algonquins, (1:00 to 2:30 PM Saturday) but they can happen any time except during panels, the Tiptree Award Ceremony, or the Clarion West Auction, so go ahead and plan Algonquins to meet over breakfast, lunch, or dinner, in the early morning, at midnight, or whenever seems most appropriate! The sign-up board, near the entrance to the Spinnaker room (the daytime programming room and the

evening Con Suite) has everything you need to create and host your own Algonquin— namely, forms you can use to describe your idea, set a time and place, and get people to sign up. Check it out! Nothing but your own stamina limits the number of Algonquins you can instigate or otherwise participate in.

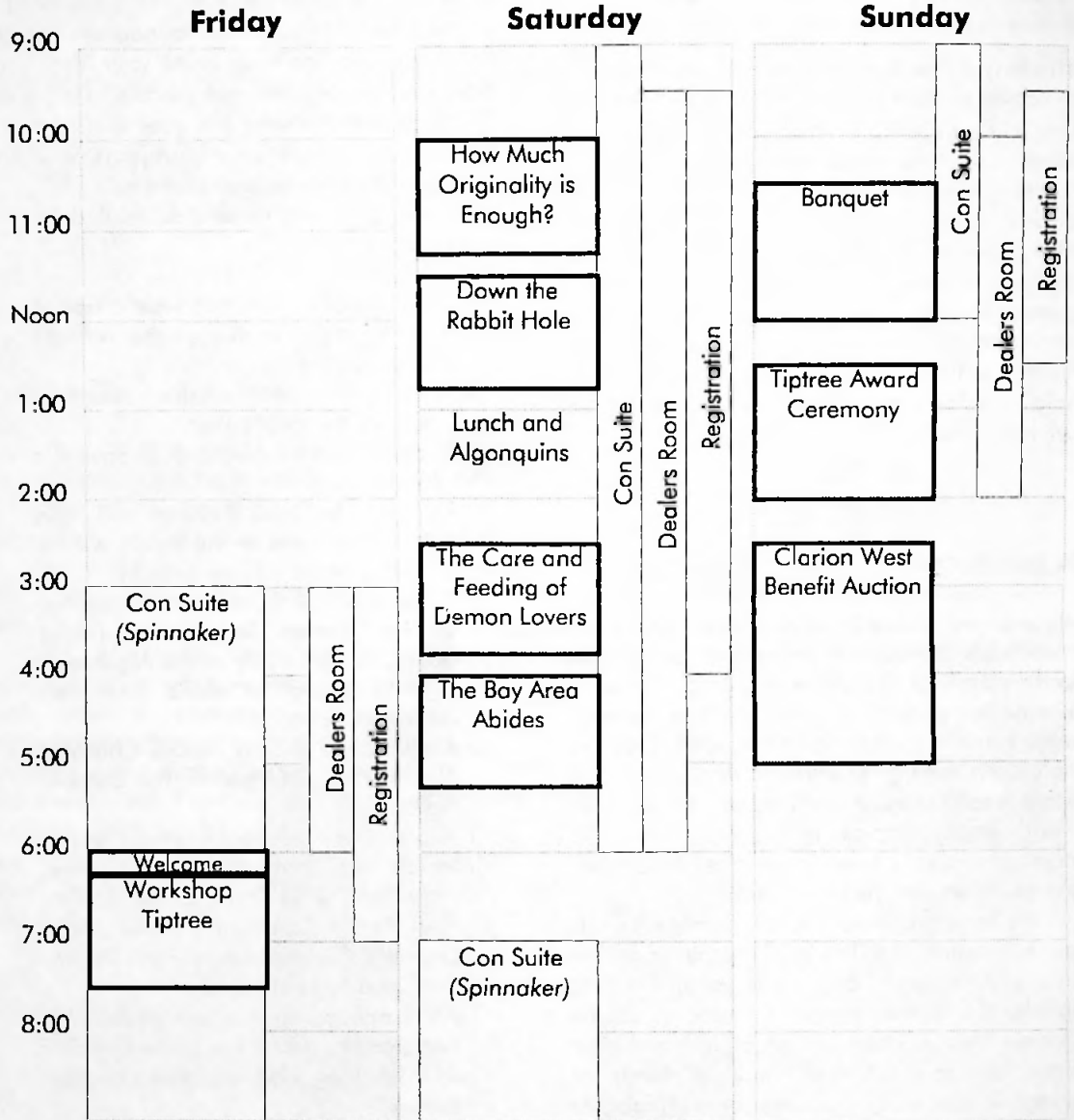
Among the Algonquins scheduled for this weekend are:

- A get-together with this year's Tiptree Award judges to discuss the winners and the award.
- A children's bedtime-story reading, instigated by Janet Lafler.
- A discussion of Michael Swanwick's recent article "In the Tradition of..." instigated by Delia Sherman and Ellen Kushner. (Copies of the article will be available at the sign-up board.)
- A discussion of Cool Books, instigated by Guy Thomas. (See the Cool Books board, in the vicinity of the Algonquin sign-up board, to make your own recommendations.)
- A discussion of Suzy McKee Charnas' *The Furies*, instigated by Debbie Notkin.
- A discussion of controversial books which did not win the Tiptree, including David Brin's *Glory Season*, Paul Park's *Coelestis*, and Mary Gentle's *The Architecture of Desire*, instigated by Tom Becker.
- An evening seminar on probability and statistics (using the game of poker as a teaching tool), instigated by Alan Bostick.

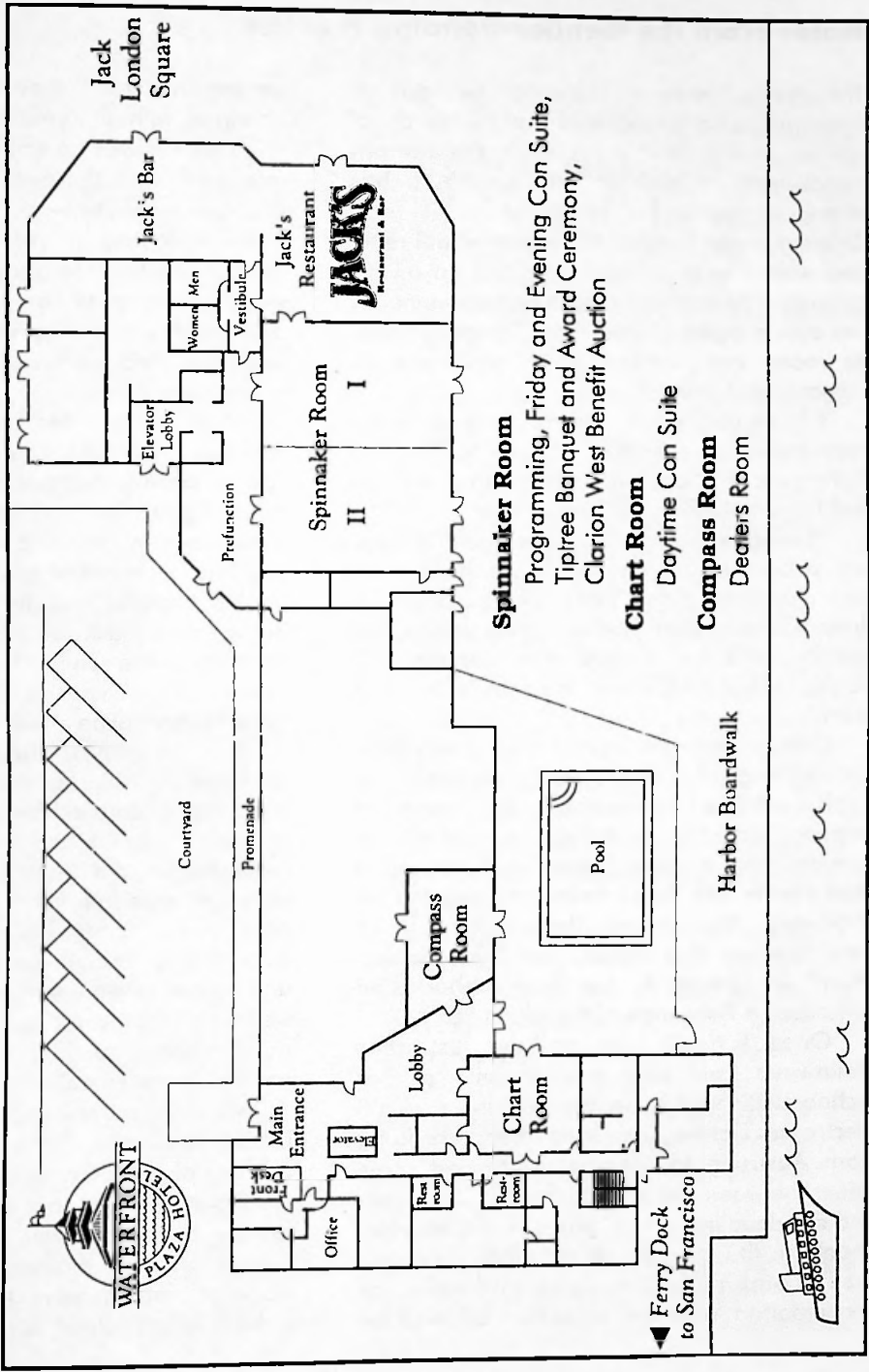
Check the sign-up board, outside the Spinnaker Room, for times and places.

— Janet Lafler

# Potlatch 4 Schedule







## Notes From the Gender-Bending Frontier

The James Tiptree Jr. Memorial Award is an ever-unfolding story, told by hundreds of voices. In the four years since Pat Murphy announced its birth at WisCon 15, it has changed reality for many of us. I read differently now. I expect more from what I read, and what I write. I know now that an award program can do more than elevate a winner or two over a legion of losers; the Tiptree really is, as many have called it, a movement — juggernaut, if you will.

I have also added several recipes to my most-beloved repertoire, thanks to the two Tiptree cookbooks: *The Bakery Men Don't See* and *Her Smoke Rose Up from Supper*.

Playing with such fire, how could a juror not expect to be changed? As consensus emerged among the 1994 jury members — Brian Attebery, Ellen Kushner, Lucy Sussex, Pat Murphy, and me — one of us commented, "Odd, how amiable and agreeable this has been."

Odd, yet not odd. Since April, we had been commenting on what we read, responding to each other's comments. As deadline approached, the exchange intensified; in January I sent a dozen "letters" and received at least twenty. We didn't deliberate, exactly; we churtened. We got from There to Here in no time, together. (For details, read "The Shobies' Story" in Ursula K. Le Guin's shortlisted collection, *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea*.)

Once I finally got on-line, just after Halloween (and after a truly epic case of techno-skittishness), we became the first all-electronic Tiptree jury. With members flung from Australia to Massachusetts and three weeks between the end of the eligibility year and our deadline, e-mail proved indispensable. Thanks to the Internet, we managed a process that combined the give-and-take of conversation with the reflection allowed by

correspondence. Perspectives altered, opinions changed, without formal debate.

That this was no small achievement can be inferred from a glance at the shortlist: well over a dozen excellent works pulling in almost as many directions. It was the best of years for gender-bending fantasy and science fiction; it was the toughest of years for the jurors dedicated to choosing the one, or ones, that best explored and expanded the roles of women and men.

In an early letter Pat Murphy wrote that previous juries had asked her and Karen Joy Fowler, sister instigators and co-administrators of the Tiptree Award, exactly what criteria they should use in choosing a winner. The 1994 jury had a couple of procedural questions: is book X eligible, and do we consider horror? But we didn't ask for a definition of gender-bending. In the spirit of the Tiptree Award — a make-it-up-as-you-go-along phenomenon since its conception — we improvised.

For a main theme we had our predecessors' selections, especially the shortlist and longlist compiled and gloriously annotated by Jeanne Gomoll and her gang last year. Pat reminded us that "the aim is not to look for work that falls into some narrow definition of political correctness, but rather to seek out work that is thought-provoking, imaginative, and perhaps even infuriating." Most important, we had all the novels and stories we read, and our individual takes on the society we live in and the literature we love.

What is gender-bending? What isn't? Does it change over time? If something is commonplace in the society but seldom seen in the literature, does that count? Is it enough to feature a narrator with unrevealed gender? Beings with three genders, or one, or none? A world of women only? A gay protagonist? A lesbian relationship? A feminist retelling of a

sexist fairy tale?

Our discussions, read in roughly chronological order, sound like a top-notch con panel that continues down the hall, into the bar, and maybe all night in somebody's room. Some stories, as one of us noted in September, "jump off the page and remake the world, or at least my perception of it. *The Left Hand of Darkness* did that. So did "The Women Men Don't See." That's what I would like a Tiptree winner to do: install itself in my vision."

In *Larque on the Wing* and "The Matter of Seggri" we found such winners. They, along with the shortlisted works, redefine both the field and the criteria. They blaze new trails; they offer other writers and readers new vantage points to survey terrain that is still, in 1995, underexplored.

Every story and novel we read revealed some unnoticed feature of this strange, familiar territory. How, then, did we decide what to read? Publishers sent us review copies. One of us scanned the major fantasy and SF magazines; another monitored the independent feminist presses; yet another covered Australia and New Zealand (guess who?). All of us kept our ears to the ground, looking for clues.

Last year Jeanne Gomoll compared her jury's reading of recommended works as "an experience not unlike going on a blind date arranged by friends." For us it was more like not being asked out at all! The number of recommendations received from the grass in this grass-roots movement was, to put it tactfully, not large. Would our lists be different if everyone who baked brownies, cookies, or tea bread for a Tiptree bake sale in 1994 also recommended at least one short story or novell!

So that's your assignment for 1995: recommend at least one gender-bending book

or story for the 1996 Tiptree Award by sending its vital statistics to Karen Joy Fowler, 3404 Monte Vista, Davis, CA 95616. By the time you read this, there should be a Tiptree Award topic on GEnie's Science Fiction RoundTable #1, to help foment discussion and solicit both recommendations and recipes to read by. On the World Wide Web there is a Tiptree Award homepage at:

<http://www.cs.wisc.edu/wiscon/tiptree.html>  
(some day soon I will know what that means and how to get there).

You needn't stop there, of course. Write a Tiptree contender yourself, organize a bake sale, dream up some previously unimaginable way to join the great telling that is the James Tiptree Jr. Memorial Award!

For information about the Tiptree cookbooks, the Tiptree quilt, and how to organize a bake sale, contact Jeanne Gomoll, 2528 Union St., Madison, WI 53704 (e-mail: [artbrau@aol.com](mailto:artbrau@aol.com)). The 1996 Tiptree Award will be presented at WisCon 20, and before that there's WisCon 19, the world's foremost feminist SF con, May 26-28, 1995; for more info about that, write WisCon, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701, or e-mail: [wiscon.register@cs.wisc.edu](mailto:wiscon.register@cs.wisc.edu).

— Susanna J. Sturgis  
Chair, 1994 Tiptree Award Jury

## The 1995 Tiptree Judges

Brian Attebery (BA)  
Ellen Kushner (EK)  
Lucy Sussex (LS)  
Pat Murphy (PM)  
Susanna J. Sturgis (SJS)

## **Larque on the Wing, by Nancy Springer (AvoNova)**

When is a middle-aged woman not a middle-aged woman? When she's a ten-year-old girl and a young gay man. In Nancy Springer's *Larque on the Wing*, the main character unintentionally releases her grim and grubby child self as part of a midlife crisis. Her young doppelganger leads her to a place called Popular Street, which is both gay ghetto and enchanted land. There she is transformed from frumpy Larque to handsome Lark, who was, it seems, always there inside. Lark can have the adventures Larque has denied herself: can explore the dangerous night world, wear cowboy boots, beat up homophobic thugs, act on erotic impulses (gay because Larque is attracted to men).

As engaging as Larque (and her husband Hoot) may be, what sticks in the mind from the novel is Popular Street. Cheerfully sleazy and genuinely magical, Popular Street manifests unpredictably wherever the forces of order aren't paying attention. It is a place of desires and of truths, both of a sort that conventional society covers over. On Popular Street, features of homosexual subcultures — the lure of the forbidden and the secret, irreverence toward middle-class values, acknowledgment of the varieties of pleasure, a sense that gender identity is something that can be put together and tried on like a costume — become the basis for a powerful and transforming enchantment.

What fantasy does best is to take the insides of things and express them as outsides. An ent is the inside of a tree, a beast is the inside of a prince (and vice versa). Nancy Springer has used this property of fantasy to get inside gender and sexuality. She shows that the inside of intolerance is fear, the inside of art is truth-telling, and the inside of a woman is a whole cast of characters of all ages and genders. (BA)

Gender is 90 percent of comedy, but seldom does the comedy step outside traditional sex roles. *Larque* is the exception, managing to be simultaneously challenging, disturbingly so at times, and hilarious. (LS)

*Larque on the Wing* was a frontrunner from the day I read it, very early in the year. In this wittily, wildly original contemporary fantasy, Nancy Springer expands, explores, and bends more gender conventions than most authors recognize. Most notably, Larque emerges from a makeover session not with a new hairdo but with the body of a 20-year-old gay man. And Springer restores scruffy, nose-wiping vitality to a useful concept turned tedious cliché: the "inner child." Then there's Larque's mother, Florence, who sees what she wants to see — with a vengeance.

*Larque* does have a weak point or two. Larque's best female friend, Doris, is characterized mostly by her carrot addiction. More significant, and striking in a novel that draws explicit parallels between the Otherness of women and gay men, is the absence of lesbians, from both Popular Street and the ranks of Larque's inner selves. Lesbian characters, erotic love between women: these are still out on the gender-bending frontier. (SJS)

Springer's novel considers the startling, funny, indescribable adventures of Larque, a middle-aged woman whose mid-life crisis takes on concrete form. A ten-year-old version of Larque (blinked into existence by Larque's own uncanny abilities) leads Larque into an exploration of her life and the compromises she made while growing up. Along the way, Larque is transformed into Lark, an adolescent boy, and works magic of many kinds. A rollicking, offbeat, thoughtful fable for our time. (PM)

## Nancy Springer

Nancy Springer is the author of sixteen fantasy/speculative fiction novels, ten children's books, a story collection, two poetry collections, and various short works. She began her career by writing popular-fiction works of mythic fantasy such as bestseller *The White Hart* (1979). In 1987, Springer's fantasy short story "The Boy Who Plaited Manes" was a finalist for the Nebula, Hugo and World Fantasy awards. Tired of writing about "long ago and far away," however, Springer eventually turned to writing contemporary fantasy (*The Hex Witch of Seldom*, *Apocalypse*) and realistic fiction for children and young adults. Her children's fantasy *The Friendship Song* is a Carolyn W. Field Award Notable Book, and her children's novel *Colt* received the Joan Fassler Memorial Book Award and is an IRA Young Adult Choice. Her most recent novels for the SF community



are *Metal Angel* (Roc), about a rebellious angel who incarnates himself to become a rock star, and *Larque on the Wing* (AvoNova), a Nebula nominee and this year's Tiptree Award co-winner, the gender-bending story of a woman's magical midlife crisis.

Springer writes full-time and teaches fiction-writing seminars at various colleges and at Martin Memorial Library in York, Pennsylvania. In her spare time, she is an enthusiastic though not expert horseback rider and volunteers with Easter Seals 4-H Horseback Riding for the Handicapped. Nancy Springer lives in Dallastown, Pennsylvania with her husband — the Springers recently celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary and publication of her twenty-fifth novel. They have two children, Jonathan, 21 and Nora, 17, as well as Nicholas the Ridiculous, a cerebrally-challenged sheltie; Rinny Tig, a Guinea pig; and Finesse, a rather clumsy Morgan mare with regrettably frequent bad hair days.



## "The Matter of Seggri," by Ursula K. Le Guin (Crank! #3)

"The Matter of Seggri" is a story that is bigger than it looks. Within its thirty-some pages the world of Seggri is discovered, explored, and altered. Half a dozen distinct and memorable storytelling voices give us comic misunderstandings, tragedies enacted and averted, histories recounted and dreams revealed, all within the frame of a convincingly strange society. Fourteen hundred years are distilled into a few key moments. One of the ways Le Guin has managed to pack so much into this tale is by making it a gateway — a mental hypertext — to a lot of other stories, including her own explorations of gender and society in *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea* as well as the thought experiments of other gender explorers like Joanna Russ, Eleanor Arnason, Sheri S. Tepper, and James Tiptree Jr. The world of Seggri invites comparison with Gethen and *Whiteaway and Women's Country* without being an imitation or a simple answer to any of them, just as it invites comparison with aspects of our own world without being reducible to an allegory or a simple inversion of existing gender roles.

Whereas *Larque on the Wing* uses the machinery of fantasy to get at the inner experience of gender, "The Matter of Seggri" uses science fiction to map out social implications. It asks how gender enters into institutions like schools and marriages and how it might do so differently. It asks how power and love and justice might be redistributed along gender lines, and what the effect might be on individual lives. It asks what stake society has in enforcing models of femininity and masculinity and what happens to those who fail to follow the template. Most remarkably, Le Guin makes us care about the people we meet: First Observer Merriment and her never-seen partner Kaza Agad, young Iltu and his sister Po, even the fictional-within-a-fiction lovers Azak and Toddra and Zedr. In the few pages each gets on the scene, we recognize their uniqueness even as we learn the social patterns of which they are a part. They make the Matter of Seggri matter. (BA)

A short story perfect in its parts as a snowflake, or Chekhov's "Lady with a Little Dog." This is the

first time the Tiptree has been awarded to a work of short fiction, and "Seggri" proves that explorations of gender can be as efficient pithy as lengthy. (LS)

Just when I was beginning to fear that no work of short fiction could stand up to the powerhouse novels contending for the Tiptree — along came "Seggri." On Seggri, women far outnumber the men, an imbalance that, notes one Hainish observer, "has produced a society in which, as far as I can tell, the men have all the privilege and the women have all the power." Men and boys over the age of 11 live in hierarchically organized "castles." They gain glory by competing in games, cheered on by the women; the women do all the productive and political work of the society, and the two genders meet only in the "fuckeries." The women may enjoy sex with men, but naturally they form their primary erotic and social bonds with other women. Both the society and the story are complex, covering several generations and told from various viewpoints. Though undeniably different from our own society, Seggri eerily echoes it, and like several of this year's shortlisted works — notably Arnason's "The Lovers" and Charnas's *The Furies* — the focus is on those who, by asking questions and/or not fitting in, become harbingers of change. (SJS)

This deals with gender issues in a way that only science fiction can: by creating a society that has different assumptions than ours, thus forcing us to examine our own. It makes stunning use of different viewpoints to give us an understanding of the society that we couldn't obtain any other way. Fascinating for its anthropological detail, "The Matter of Seggri" shows the emotional and societal consequences of a different social organization, and the consequences of changing or disrupting that organization. (PM)

## Ursula K. Le Guin

Ursula K. Le Guin was born in Berkeley, California, on St. Ursula's Day of 1929, the youngest child of a writer and an anthropologist. After a childhood fling with science fiction, she returned to the field in the early 1960s, when the stories of Cordwainer Smith showed her what could be done in the genre. Since then, she has written SF, fantasy, "mainstream" literature, children's books, poetry, essays, and film scripts, and collaborated with others on performance pieces including dances and music. Like many others in the SF field, she was a friend by correspondence with the late James Tiptree, Jr. (Alice Sheldon). She wrote a thoughtful introduction on the significance of Alice being James and James being Alice for Tiptree's collection *Star Songs of an Old Primate* (Del Rey; reprinted in Le Guin's book of essays *The Language of the Night* (HarperCollins)).

Le Guin's noted achievements in the SF field have included the novels and stories set against a shared background known as the Hainish universe. They take place on an assortment of planets whose human inhabitants differ from ourselves in a variety of biological and social ways as a result of experiments ostensibly carried out by an ancient mother-race of humans from the planet Hain, but actually conducted in the mind of the author to throw light on our own biological and social arrangements. Of the many Hainish stories Le Guin wrote during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the best known is *The Left Hand of Darkness*, the Hugo and Nebula winning novel featuring the Gethenians, the famous science fictional race who are neuter except when they come into heat (*kemmer*), which they each experience as both male and female at different times. This concept presented a difficult problem with pronouns, which the author is still contemplating to this day. (See the appendices to the new Walker edition of *Left Hand*, and "Is Gender Necessary? Redux" in either of her essay collections.)

For most of the late 1970s and 1980s Le Guin set aside outer space and worked closer to home. She wrote books such as *Always Coming Home*, a non-linear depiction of a non-sexist and non-invasive but non-utopian society; *Tehanu*, a feminist deconstruction of her earlier Earthsea trilogy; and *Searoad*, a set of character studies of strong and

vividly-imagined women living in a small town on the Oregon coast. (All are Bantam paperbacks.) But in recent years she has returned to the Hainish worlds, writing new stories of imagined societies and the paradoxes of faster-than-light travel, set against the background of these planets and the Ekumen, the multi-world organization that ties them together. Three of these stories appear in her recent collection, *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea* (HarperCollins). Others that have not yet been collected are in recent issues of *Asimov's*, *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Amazing*, and elsewhere, including "The Matter of Seggri" in issue no. 3 of *Crank!* (Broken Mirrors Press). This account of a society horribly disfigured by sexual stereotyping, but struggling to free itself, is the joint winner of the 1995 James Tiptree Jr. Award.

Ursula K. Le Guin's next book will be *Four Ways to Forgiveness*, a collection of stories (HarperCollins). She lives in an old house on a hillside in Portland, Oregon, and keeps a Darwin fish on her desk.

— David Bratman



## The 1995 Tiptree Short List

### Eleanor Arnason, "The Lovers" (Asimov's)

Arnason has explored this territory before but finds new insights this time around. The story concerns heterosexual love in a world that allows no such thing. The lovers convincingly embody gender choices that neither their society nor ours is quite prepared to sanction. (BA)

Like Arnason's other *hwarhath* stories, this poignant tale explores gender on several levels, like a mobile of mirrors that catches new reflections with each turning. Neither Eyes-of-Crystal nor Eh Showin is a revolutionary, yet their love both grows from and profoundly challenges the deepest assumptions of their society. By incorporating comments about the "author" of the tale, and finally its evidently human translator/editor (who might well be Anna Perez of Ring of Swords), Arnason sketches a broader timescape of a culture in transition. I'm impressed! (SJS)

### Suzy McKee Charnas, *The Furies* (Tor)

Charnas follows up her groundbreaking novels about Free Fems and Riding Women with a dark and challenging story of revenge. The Free Fems have returned to Holdfast in order to tear it down. The question that is never resolved is whether they will be able to make a new life for themselves and the remaining men. Amid uncertainty, bitterness, and betrayal, the heroine of the earlier books struggles to keep the Free Fems from becoming what they have escaped from. (BA)

This continuation of *Walk* and *Motherlines* is powerful, brooding, and extremely dark. Somebody commented that the two previous novels embodied key moments in the history of feminism; if that is so, then *The Furies* shows we live in interesting times (in the Chinese sense). It shows women turning on men, then on themselves, but battles in the end towards a type of understanding, if not forgiveness. Very few novels indelibly impress upon the mind, and this is one of them. (LS)

Like its predecessors, *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines*, *The Furies* explores the consequences, for both women and men, of a violently patriarchal society. Here at last the Riding Women, who have never been either slaves or slave owners, see the Free Fems in the latter's own context

— which is to say that they really see the Free Fems for the first time. There are acts of excruciating violence in this book, men against women, women against men, women against women; such is the power of the writing that I couldn't look away.

*The Furies* is one of the most important feminist novels I've ever read — why then did it place a shade behind the winners of this year's Tiptree Award? Because its brilliance lies not so much in exploring and expanding gender roles — here *The Furies* clearly builds on the earlier books — but in asking the unaskable questions about revolutionary change, and in imagining, and facing, the unimaginable answers. What shapes the relationship of liberator and liberated? Leader and led? What to do with the despised but indispensable former oppressor? Langston Hughes asked what happened to a dream deferred; Suzy McKee Charnas asks what happens to a dream on the verge of fulfillment. (SJS)

### L. Warren Douglas, *Cannon's Orb* (Del Rey)

Like *Genetic Soldier*, this novel hypothesizes that pheromones control large areas of human behavior that we think are rational.

Contact with an alien race has altered human pheromones, with the result that everything from sexual cycles to xenophobia is transformed. The book takes a wrong turn toward the end, but in the interim a lot of assumptions about gender and society are questioned. (BA)

The book begins in an interesting fashion—examining the biological roots of human behavior. But starting from there, the story went in a direction that reinforces our cultures biases in what I consider to be a totally wrong-headed fashion. According to my reading of *Canon's Orb*, the biological role of women is to control from behind the scenes by flattering and bolstering the ego of the man they have chosen as the alpha male. Women gain their power by supporting men. It sent chills up my spine — and I mean the wrong kind of chills. Because I had such a visceral reaction to the book, it did force me to examine my beliefs related to gender. (PM)



**Greg Egan, "Cocoon" (Asimov's)**

A frightening, and all too credible account of what might happen if corporate R&D capitalism ever decides to really cash in on homophobia. A scientific thriller par excellence. (LS)

**Ellen Frye, Amazon Story Bones (Spinsters Ink)**

The opening stories, revised myths from a feminist perspective, seem a little smug, and I don't believe traditional mythic figures ever talk quite so much. But when it gets to the central narrative, about the fall of Troy and its impact on the lives of Amazons and other women, the book is powerful and convincing. One of the most interesting touches is that the Amazons are never actually there — they're either anticipated, in the mythic sections, or sought, in the more naturalistic narrative. They're a possibility that changes the world, rather than an actuality that can be pushed into the margins. (BA)

Who says that history has to be written by the winners? A tantalizing, evocative account of some of the lesser-known losers of the Trojan war, and how their herstory might have been; at its best when rewriting Homer. (LS)

A fine, not to mention rare, example of what can happen when feminism and fantasy marry. The myths that open the book read like a First Contact tale; familiar gods and heroes are seen through the bemused, benevolent, and often fatally naive eyes of the goddesses they displace. A generation or so after the fall of Troy, a young girl, Iphito, dreams of the near-legendary Amazons and listens to the stories of two old women, one an Amazon herself. This unconventionally structured novel both describes and embodies how storytelling can expand gender roles, especially by sparking the imagination of girls. (SJS)

This book's Amazons are always off-stage. They are a promise and an inspiration. I like that. (PM)

**Gwyneth Jones, North Wind (Gollancz)**

In this follow-up to the Tiptree-winning *White Queen*, Gwyneth Jones continues to redivide the gender pie in most interesting ways. There is a war going on between Men and Women — but the Men

are not necessarily men. There are also aliens of undoubted sexuality but disputed gender. The narrative itself alternates between masculine and feminine pronouns for one of the main characters, depending on whose perceptions are being echoed. (BA)

A writer friend recently opined, apropos of *White Queen* that there is more in Gwyneth Jones' paragraphs than there is in most novels. *North Wind* is a worthy follow-up to her earlier Tiptree winner, dense with ideas to the extent of almost being too much of a good thing. A fascinating read. (LS)

**Graham Joyce & Peter F. Hamilton, "Eat Reecebread" (Interzone)**

A study in demonizing the Other, in this case hermaphrodites. Even the sympathetic hero is implicated in their oppression, until the seemingly innocuous Reecebread of the title solves the problem. (BA)

The narrator, an English police officer in the not-too-distant future who falls in love with a hermaphrodite, tries to steer a course between the violent hatred of his colleagues and what he perceives as the extremism of some hermaphrodites — with predictably tragic results. Like several other works considered by the 1994 jury, this draws elements of *Romeo and Juliet*, not to mention *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?* and *The Crying Game* into the service of defusing hostility to gender difference. (SJS)

**Ursula K. Le Guin, "Forgiveness Day" (Asimov's)**

Like "Young Woman in a Garden," this novella explores the undermining of the assumptions about class, culture, and gender, dearly held by each protagonist, with immense compassion for both — and, by extension, all the rest of us. I loved the choice of "asset" to describe the slaves/bondspeople; it neatly extends the concept of unfreedom into the so-called free marketplace. (SJS)

**Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea* (Harper)**

The title story interacts intriguingly with "The Matter of Seggri." The world of O could not be more different in its sexual arrangements from the strict separation of Seggri. A marriage on O requires two women and two men, each interacting sexually with two of the others — but not with the partner of the same moiety. That would be immoral. This is a story about having it both ways: not only heterosexual and homosexual but also living two different lives, thanks to the paradoxes of Churten physics. (BA)

"Another Story, or A Fisherman of the Inland Sea," the only 1994 story in this collection, "only" redefines family and provides a scenario whereby one really can, in certain circumstances, go home again. Clearly a shortlist contender in its own right, it's ably amplified by its impressive company here. Read, or reread, "Newton's Sleep," in which what one doesn't see refuses to go away; "The Rock That Changed Things"; and especially "Dancing to Ganam." Reality, said Lily Tomlin's Trudy, is "nothing but a collective hunch"; Ursula Le Guin shows how it works. (SJS)

Though I enjoyed all of the stories in this collection, I recommend it for the shortlist because of one story in particular: "Another Story." Le Guin is second to none in imagining interesting cultures. The culture in "Another Story" has marriage customs that, quietly and matter-of-factly, stand our assumptions on their ear. (PM)

**Rachel Pollack, *Temporary Agency* (St. Martin's)**

I liked about this book for its matter-of-fact use of demons and magic in an otherwise contemporary world. As for the book's gender-bending credentials — Ellen, the main character, is a strong-minded, capable, heroic young woman (she's a teenager at the start and an adult by the end), she ends up in a relationship with another woman; a group of transgender hackers assists her in her work. And (here's the big one for me) in the end, Ellen and her lover, using limited resources and their wits, save the world. I'm always so happy when women save the world. (PM)

**Geoff Ryman, *Unconquered Countries* (St. Martin's)**

"O Happy Dayl," one of the four novellas it includes, is a powerful examination of the consequences of gender and power and violence. In this world run by women, a group of gay men are the cleanup crew in a concentration camp where heterosexual men are exterminated. It's a powerful and gripping story, one that I find impossible to ignore. (PM)

**Melissa Scott, *Trouble and Her Friends* (Tor)**

Wild grrls invade the cyberpunk boys' club. Trouble and her friends are virtual amazons, at home inside the virtual world and outside the law. The story includes a lot of weird hardware, an on-line cross-dressing seducer, and a genuine love story between prickly Trouble and independent Cerise. (BA)

Lesbian relationships in *f/sf*, still lamentably scarce, tend to take place either on the peripheries of the main story or in societies — like those of last year's winner, *Ammonite* — where there are no men. Had Melissa Scott done no more than put Trouble and Cerise front and center in a near-future U.S., this novel would be worth celebrating. But Scott goes much further, exploring the challenges to and implications of unconventional relationships in a vivid social context. She uses the gender ambiguity of the virtual world to play an erotic joke on one of her protagonists, and to have fun with a U.S. mythos that generally excludes women: the Wild Wild Western. Perhaps most important, she examines with compassion and insight the slow recovery of a partnership from desertion and betrayal. (SJS)

**Delia Sherman, "Young Woman in a Garden" in *Xanadu 2* (Tor)**

Delia Sherman delicately undercuts assumptions about gender and art with this time fantasy about an artist, a lover, a model, and a scholar, none of whom are exactly the person one expects. (BA)

A young American graduate student finds more than a dissertation topic in this beautifully written story. True to its central imagery, the tale is about learning how to see what lies in plain sight, and here the "what" has much to do with assumptions

## The 1995 Tiptree Long List

about gender and sexuality, not to mention the complex relationship of artist/scholar and subject. (SJS)

A lovely, haunting story that puts gender considerations in an intriguing historic perspective. (PM)

### **George Turner, *Genetic Soldier* (Morrow)**

In the future Earth of this book, social roles are predestined by genes and enforced by pheromones. Some are mothers, some are soldiers. Turner combines social and biological extrapolation to produce a very strange world that is at the same time a mirror of our own. (BA)

The influence of pheromones on sex roles has been explored recently in sf, but seldom with the narrative edge of Turner. A fascinating exploration that rewrites the theme of star-crossed lovers most nastily and inventively. If anything, this is a metaphysical thriller, with gender ultimately transcended. (LS)

- Milbre Burch, "Metamorphosis" in *Xanadu 2* (Tor)  
Pat Cadigan, "Paris in June" (Omni)  
Karen Cadora, *Stardust Bound* (Firebrand)  
Chris Claremont, *Sundowner* (Ace)  
Allan Cole and Chris Bunch, *The Warrior's Tale* (Del Rey)  
Daniel P. Dern, "Bicyclefish Island" (Tomorrow (2:8))  
Susan Dexter, *The Wind-Witch* (Del Rey)  
Ann Downer, "Somnus's Fair Maid" in *Black Thorn, White Rose* (Morrow)  
Suzette Haden Elgin, *Earthsong* (DAW Books)  
Lisa Goldstein, "Rites of Spring" in *Travelers in Magic* (Tor) and *Asimov's*  
Alison M. Goodman, "One Last Zoom at the Buzz Bar" in *The Patternmaker* (Omnibus Books)  
Barbara Hambly, *Stranger at the Wedding* (Del Rey)  
Phillip C. Jennings, "The Valley of the Humans" (*Asimov's*)  
James Patrick Kelly, "Big Guy" (*Asimov's*)  
Nancy Kress, "Margin of Error" (Omni)  
Marc Laidlaw, *The Orchid Eater* (St. Martin's)  
Lisa Mason, *Summer of Love* (Bantam)  
Ian McDonald, "Legitimate Targets," *New Worlds 4*  
Vonda N. McIntyre, *Nautilus* (Bantam)  
Mary Rosenblum, "Rat" (*Asimov's*)  
Jacqui Singleton, *Heartstone and Saber* (Rising Tide)  
Nancy Springer, *Metal Angel* (Roc)  
Caroline Stevermer, *A College of Magics* (Tor)  
Sheri S. Tepper, *Shadow's End* (Bantam)  
Connie Willis, *Uncharted Territory* (Bantam)

## WisCon, Feminism and the Tiptree Award

The James Tiptree, Jr. Award was announced to the world in 1990 at WisCon 15—a most appropriate place for this event, because of WisCon's long-standing support for feminist science fiction. Author Katherine MacLean and Amanda Bankier, editor of the first feminist SF fanzine, *The Witch and the Chameleon*, were the Guests of Honor at the first WisCon in 1977. In the nearly 20 years since, WisCon has devoted at least a third of its programming to feminist issues, has attracted as guests some of the best women and men writing in the field today, and has nourished an enthusiastic community of feminist fans who attend the convention year after year.

Picture the scene in the WisCon 15 banquet hall, early in March 1990, as Guest of Honor Pat Murphy (author of *The Falling Woman* and *The City, Not Long After*) finished her dinner and strode up to the podium. The audience was already excited by the day's remarkable events, which had been compared to earlier WisCons at which feminist discussion instigated a decade of passionate activity. The spontaneous meta-topic of WisCon 15 programming involved the different perspective that women writers bring to the field of SF, and the importance of remembering and preserving the achievements of earlier women writers.

It had already been a thrilling evening, when Pat announced that she and Karen Joy Fowler (author of *Sarah Canary* and the anthology, *Artificial Things*) were establishing a new award—an award to help preserve and praise gender-bending science fiction and fantasy. The announcement blew the roof off the event. She said:

*"All the major SF awards up to that point had been named after men. WisCon was the natural place to birth the first SF award named after a woman: The James Tiptree, Jr. Award.*

*"James Tiptree, Jr.—winner of multiple Nebulas. James Tiptree, Jr.—who helped break down the imaginary barrier between "women's writing" and "men's writing." James Tiptree, Jr.—revealed in mid-career (and forever after, in every introduction) as Alice Sheldon. The James Tiptree, Jr. Award is presented annually to a*

*fictional work that explores and expands the roles of women and men.*

*"We plan to finance the award—and this is another stroke of genius on Karen's part—through bake sales. If you want to volunteer to run a bake sale, talk to me after the speech."*

The crowd rose and cheered and clapped and laughed for a long, long time. And then Pat was deluged with offers of help. By the end of the evening, a cookbook was in the works, and Madison fan, Laura Spiess came up with the inspired title *The Bakery Men Don't See* which playfully spoofed Tiptree's most famous story, "The Women Men Don't See," and we began to solicit dessert recipes. A year later, we began work on the main course cookbook, whose name—*Her Smoke Rose up from Supper*—again parodied a Tiptree short story title, "Her Smoke Rose up Forever."

Bake sales were in fact organized, and the fundraising movement cascaded into independent life. Even Pat has expressed surprise at how successful it's all been. Several thousand dollars have been raised at bake sales and through the sale of the cookbooks, whose proceeds are distributed as prize and travel money to the winners of the Tiptree.

A third cookbook has been postponed until Elspeth Krisor's team of quilters finish work on the Tiptree Quilt. Designed by Tracy Shannon and me, the quilt is inspired by Tiptree's novel *Brightness Falls from the Air*. The central image represents an exploding star's aurora approaching a planet and is made up of twenty different fabrics, with colors ranging from shades of fuchsia, teal, violet, and periwinkle. Dozens of people have helped sew this huge, king-sized quilt, composed of 304 six-inch, nine-patch blocks. During the summer of 1994, the Madison group hosted several weekend-long quilting bees. We hope that money raised by the quilt will eventually establish a permanent trust fund for the Tiptree award.

In a way, when Pat announced the award, she touched off a chain reaction...a whole movement. The award itself gained almost instant respect as a tangible and valuable reward for gender-bending

fiction. Also, the successful money-raising effort for this award has been an inspiring experience in itself, and put all of us in touch with the still widespread and passionate enthusiasm for feminist science fiction and fantasy.

We Madison fans feel incredibly honored to have hosted the first two Tiptree ceremonies because it has provided a sort of culmination for our 20-year-long tradition of support for feminist ideas and authors, through fanzines (*Janus* and *Aurora*) and conventions. It is an honor, however, that we now share with other fannish groups interested in promoting gender-bending SF. With the move to Readercon in 1994 and Pottlatch in 1995, the award becomes the property of the whole SF community, not merely a WisCon program item. This is a Good Thing! A world in which many groups compete for the honor of supporting gender-bending fiction is a world in which more writers will feel encouraged to deal with that theme in their work. We hope that it will also promote the idea in fandom that feminist programming and concerns need not be segregated in WisCon meeting rooms.

We aim to make the Tiptree Award more than a tradition. We aim to make it a *movement!*

I was honored to chair the committee of judges which chose the winner of the 1994 award. The committee read all the books and stories published in 1993 that were recommended to us, an experience not unlike going on a blind date arranged by friends. It prompts questions concerning the image of oneself that must be held by those friends. Some of the recommendations we received for Tiptree reading prompted similar sorts of questions— "Why was this book recommended? How does the person who recommended this book define gender-bending (or feminist) SF?"

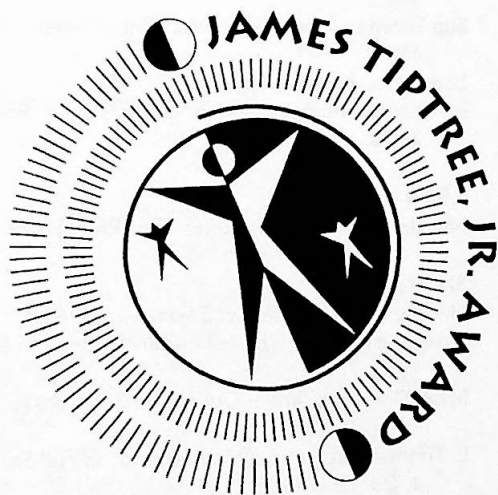
I enjoyed most of the books we read for the Tiptree award, but I've come to realize that my own definition of feminist SF has evolved considerably over the years. During the 1970s, any book which focused upon a strong female protagonist, engaged in non-stereotypical activities, was—to me—feminist. There were so few examples, after all; the exceptions felt like small revolutions. Nowadays I judge a novel

which includes strong, female characters, treated by the author with respect and intelligence, to be (merely!) "not sexist." I expect that much right from the start. No extra points, just deductions for its absence. Feminist SF, according to my current definition, reveals insights into the nature of our gender-specialized culture, or considers ways we might create a different sort of world.

But, based on some of the recommendations the Tiptree Award committee received, the presence of unusual, strong women characters is still all it takes for some people to label a work as feminist. And the presence of unusual relationships (something other than straight, monogamous partnerships) can still label a work as gender-bending. We Tiptree judges attempted to look further than merely the presence of a bisexual, homosexual or lesbian relationship as we choose the Tiptree winner and "shortlisters." But, at the same time, our choices for "the long list," acknowledged that for many a female astronaut or a same-sex couple still reads like a revolution.

Long live the revolution!

— Jeanne Gomoll  
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## Tiptree Award Winners and Short Lists

### 1992

- Eleanor Arnason, *A Woman of the Iron People*, William Morrow, 1991  
Gwyneth Jones, *The White Queen*, Gollancz, 1991

### Short List

- John Barnes, *Orbital Resonance*, Tor, 1991  
Karen Joy Fowler, *Sarah Canary*, Henry Holt & Co., 1991  
Mary Gentle, *The Architecture of Desire*, Bantam Press, 1991  
Greer Ilene Gilman, *Moonwise*, NAL/Roc, 1991  
Marge Piercy, *He, She and It*, Summit Books, 1991

### 1993

- Maureen McHugh, *China Mountain Zhang*, Tor, 1992

### Short List

- Carol Emshwiller, *Venus Rising*, Edgewood Press, 1992  
Ian MacLeod, "Grownups," *Asimov's*  
Judith Moffett, *Time, Like an Ever Rolling Stream*, St. Martin's Press, 1992  
Kim Stanley Robinson, *Red Mars*, Harper Collins, 1992  
Sue Thomas, *Correspondence*, The Women's Press, 1992  
Lisa Tuttle, *Lost Futures*, Grafton, 1992  
Elisabeth Vonarburg, *In the Mother's Land*, Bantam, 1992

### 1994

- Nicola Griffith, *Ammonite*, Del Rey, 1993

### Short List

- Eleanor Arnason, *Ring of Swords*, Tor, 1993  
Margaret Atwood, *The Robber Bride*, Bantam Books, 1993  
Sybil Claiborne, *In the Garden of Dead Cars*, Cleis Press, 1993  
L. Timmel Duchamp, "Motherhood" in *Full Spectrum* 4, Bantam, 1993

- R. Garcia y Robertson, "The Other Magpie," *Asimov's*, 4/1993

- James Patrick Kelly, "Chemistry," *Asimov's*, 6/1993  
Laurie J. Marks, *Dancing Jack*, DAW, 1993  
Ian McDonald, "Some Strange Desire," in *The Best of Omni III*, Omni Publications International Ltd.  
Alice Nunn, *Illicit Passage*, Women's Redress Press, 1992  
Paul Park, *Coelestis*, Harper Collins, 1993

### 1995

- Nancy Springer, *Larque on the Wing*, AvonNova  
Ursula Le Guin, "The Matter of Seggri," *Crank!*, Spring 1994

### Short List

- Eleanor Arnason, "The Lovers," *Asimov's*  
Suzy McKee Charnas, *The Furies*, Tor  
L. Warren Douglas, *Cannon's Orb*, Del Rey  
Greg Egan, "Cocoon," *Asimov's*  
Ellen Frye, *Amazon Story Bones*, Spinsters Ink  
Gwyneth Jones, *North Wind*, Gollancz  
Graham Joyce & Peter F. Hamilton, "Eat Reecebread," *Interzone*  
Ursula K. Le Guin, "Forgiveness Day," *Asimov's*  
Ursula K. Le Guin, *A Fisherman of the Inland Sea*, Harper  
Rachel Pollack, *Temporary Agency*, St. Martin's  
Geoff Ryman, *Unconquered Countries*, St. Martin's  
Melissa Scott, *Trouble and Her Friends*, Tor  
Delia Sherman, "Young Woman in a Garden" in *Xanadu 2*, Tor  
George Turner, *Genetic Soldier*, Morrow

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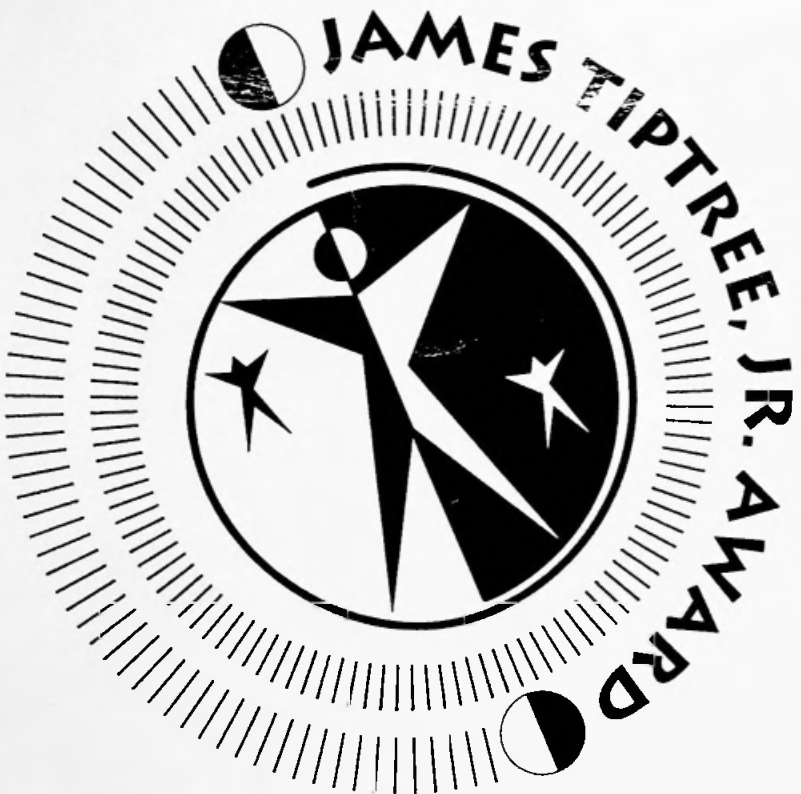
*Winner of the Tiptree Award*

Author of  
LARQUE ON THE WING



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*The Tiptree Award*  
*1953*



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