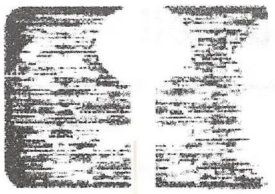
WisCon 23

Souvenir Book



WisCon

The gathering of the Feminist SF Community

Madison Wisconsin • May 27-31, 1999

Welcome!

Table of Contents

WisCon 23 Souvenir Book (editor Beth A. Plutchak) • May 27-31, 1999 • The Concourse Hotel and governor's Club • Madison, Wisconsin

WisCon is sponsored by SF^3, the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction, a non-profit educational and literary society incorporated by the State of Wisconsin. For more information, please contact WisCon and SF^3 at PO Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624.

WisCon 23 Guest of Honor • Mary Doria Russell

An Appreciation

Raymond A Bucko, S. J.

Mary Doria Russell • photograph © Dina Rossi

What do you say to a woman who literally shows up out of a clear blue sky... I mean screen saver, one day on the Internet? If you were in a chat room you might say that you are 27, have blonde hair and blue eyes, are in excellent physical (and mental) condition, and like long walks along the beach. If you are in your e-mail however, and you are confronted with a two page letter that unfolds like a good novel itself, full of warmth and immediacy and unassuming associations such as: I'm also an anthropologist, I've written about a theme which encompasses Jesuits, I have a sense of humor (this by context not confession!); and, at the end of all this you are asked to read her about to be published science fiction novel for accuracy of content, you can only say one thing—yes!

So for two days I had one of the most engaging reading experiences of my life as I relished *The Sparrow* (and had to keep reminding myself that I'm here for the editing not the enjoyment). After reading this superlative work I then spoke for a few hours on the phone, giving the author corrections and suggestions with regard to things Jesuit. On the other end, I heard a person listen, a persona, who had a deep concern not only for what I might suggest (even though she did NOT agree with all my suggestions) but a deep concern for her readers (even though she might write things that they might NOT always want to hear!). She was neither defensive about her creation, nor dismissive of her responsibility to the integrity of her story.

I thought I would never see this person I had never seen before. But, then the e-mails started flying back and forth and these missives, usually short on my end and long on Mary's, became more and more frequent. Soon I had a cyber-friend. We meant no harm! And, unlike the characters in *The Sparrow*, remarkably, no harm was done.

What does your now cyber-friend say when you call from Syracuse telling her your plane to Newark has been cancelled, and they are flying you to Cleveland instead, and here is our chance to finally meet, as Mary's son puts it, "in 3-D"? She says I'll be at the airport waiting for you. So you meet in the airport and you find that you are even deeper soul-mates than you thought possible—she spills her water and you stick yourself in the gums with your fork while eating french fries. You also have two drinks at her insistence because she already knows from the back and forth on e-mail that you are terrified of flying (I believe in God, it's tons of metal moving through the air at 35,000 feet that I have some trouble with).

What do you say the second time your plane is rerouted from Newark to Cleveland, and your connection to Houston, where your own sister is waiting for you, is delayed until the next day? You call your sister and tell her you'll see her tomorrow (Mary can tell you what I actually said when she recovers from this introduction). Still a bit overwhelmed by "the science fiction author", I figured the next day, before my plane took off, she'd show me a few chapters of her new work or we'd hit the science or space or technology museum (I was

not certain Cleveland had such things but I figured if they were there, we would be there also). Instead Mary showed me what she is most proud of in her city; what she has made many contributions to, mostly in terms of her own time—the inner-city school, where teachers struggle to restore a semblance of dignity to children caught in a dire impoverished situation, where teachers struggle simply to make ends meet so they can continue to run the school. Mary absolutely glowed with hope and enthusiasm as she showed me the library, cafeteria, gym. We poked our heads into windows to see the enthusiasm of the students and finally the charm of the woman who is in charge of the whole operation.

What do you say when your author friend calls to say she wants to express her gratitude for your assistance by sending a gift to the reservation where you work; but, that she wants it to go to a Sister who will use every penny of it directly for benefit of the students? You say, "Call Sister Carmelita." Mary has made these kinds of calls many times, to South Dakota, to the impoverished center city of Cleveland, to Puerto Rico, and even to Albania and Kosovo. She is a woman who would not insist her characters and readers struggle with the practical problems of good and evil unless she herself engaged in the same process.

I suspect that most anyone who has read *The Sparrow* and *Children of God* has had their understanding, of women, men, creation and created, belief and disbelief, the problem of evil—and in the midst of all that—the struggle for goodness, challenged. Like the science fiction of the Nineteenth Century (and feminist fiction since its inception) one is not simply to be dazzled by high tech or lost in vicarious romance, but to be transformed by the deeper questions the story presents. To read someone's work is to share part of her soul; and perhaps, to become her friend or confidant for a time. Like any meaningful relationship this experience is ultimately transformative.

This has been the case with many people who have read *The Sparrow* and *Children of God*. After seeing my name in the back of these books (among many other names I'm quick to add) I have had many people feel a responsibility to confess to me the effects these books have had on them.

When Mary thanked me in her acknowledgement for my help with the novel she stated that I was as extravagantly funny and as plainly good as the Jesuit characters she made up. Since I was not able to write the introduction or afterwards to her books I was unable to say that she herself is as deeply spiritual, as firmly committed to equality and justice, as spontaneously loving and accepting, as eclectically funny, and as devoted to her family, friends, and work as the characters she made up. I'm happy that I have the opportunity to say this now.

Mary thanked many people when she wrote her two Science Fiction novels. I have a unique opportunity to thank her now—for her stunning contribution to the genera of feminist science fiction, for her work in physical anthropology, for her loving kindness to family and friends, for her generosity in so many ways including being here this weekend to honor us as we honor her. What do you say to such a woman? Thank you!

An Interview

Roz Kaveney

RK: I gather that SF as such was not particularly your first love.

MDR: Wait! How did you get that impression? As a matter of fact, one of the first gifts my husband-to-be gave me (back in 1687, when we were in high school together) was a copy of *Canticle for Leibowitz*, which remains one of my favorite books. For many years SF was my genre of choice. Most of my favorite books are also SF: Le Guin's *Left Hand of Darkness*, Bruner's *Stand on Zanzibar*, Gibson's *Neuromancer*. More recently, I've moved into historical novels, but they have the same appeal as SF: they take the reader into another time and place. I've always thought that James Clavell's *Shogun* is actually an excellent "first contact" novel!

RK: Were you surprised by the extent to which the SF community took you to their hearts, and by the number of the awards you got for *The Sparrow?*

MDR: Are you kidding? Of course! I was stunned at the time, and still am! But it took quite a while for the book to surface in the American SF community. My US publisher made the decision to market the book as literary fiction, believing that *The Sparrow* would have a wider market than most SF novels. So Random House published it in hardcover under the Villard imprint instead of its SF house Del Rey, and made no effort to make the book known in SF periodicals.

I was distressed by the strategy at first, and argued that SF readers are a passionate and knowledgeable market that should not be overlooked. In hindsight, the publisher seems to have played this game right. *The Sparrow's* readership is in six figures, and that's rare for an SF novel, which typically gets a print run of 4,000 copies in the US. And the SF community did eventually find the book, about half a year after it was published. So I won't second-guess the publisher on this.

What finally broke *The Sparrow* into SF circles in the US was the James Tiptree Jr. Award, which came like a bolt from the blue. Once the Tiptree was announced, SF periodicals began reviewing *The Sparrow* and that got things rolling. As for the personal welcome I've received at SF conventions; it's been so touching and so much fun. I've made wonderful friends in the past three years. It's been very rewarding.

RK: Many reviewers have commented on the adroit handling in both your books of fairly traditional SF themes like "first contact". Given the extent to which the early history of humanity may have been one of meeting, and possibly extirpating, other hominids, do you feel that your background in paleoanthropology has contributed to this?

MDR: Well, I did have in mind that there have been times in hominid history when more than one species of intelligent, upright, tool-using ape was around, possibly in contact with one another. But for the two intelligent species on Rakhat, my ecological model was the relationship between cheetahs and Thompson's gazelles. Cheetahs only eat Thompson's gazelle. It's a very elegant but very fragile ecological arrangement.

In general, my overall background in science certainly comes through very strongly, especially in *Children of God*. I recently had a marvelous e-mail exchange with Sir Arthur C. Clarke (You wanna talk about Major League Thrills!? God, my heart almost stopped when I got that first message from Sir Arthur!) and Father George Coyne, S. J., the Pope's astronomer at the Vatican Observatory. Sir Arthur had arranged for *The Sparrow* to be sent to his old friend Father Coyne, who loved the book but said he really didn't think it was science fiction! I pointed out that they don't give the Arthur C. Clarke Prize to mysteries, and argued that *The Sparrow* most certainly was science fiction.

George Coyne finally admitted that, being an astronomer, he secretly believed that only physics, mathematics and astronomy are "real sciences", so any book that didn't involve those sciences couldn't be SF. I wrote back, "Look, I hold a Ph.D. in biological anthropology, and I call myself a scientist with a straight face. My books don't rely on mathematics or physics, but they do grow directly out of nearly a dozen other sciences: paleontology, ecology, geology, biological evolution, cultural anthropology, economics, sociology, political science, botany and clinical psychology." Father Coyne eventually conceded that he needed to make an attitude adjustment about what constitutes the science in science fiction!

RK: In both books, you show a considerable affection for two of the great intellectual religious traditions of the West. My understanding - and correct me if I am wrong - is that your family background is Catholicism and that you are a convert to Reform Judaism.

MDR: My father is a baptized Catholic and my mother is a Congregationalist (the heirs to the Puritan heritage in New England). Neither is religious and I have never seen either of my parents in a church apart from weddings and funerals. In 1949, when they married, my mother agreed to raise their children as Catholics in order to be married in the Catholic church. She did not convert, but having given her word that her children would be Catholic, she made sure we went to Mass. We went alone, and my parents' indifference to religion set the stage for my later rejection of religious hypocrisy. But for complicated reasons having to do with my younger brother's hearing loss, I did spend 4 years in a Catholic school, from ages 9 to 13. Those years were quite influential intellectually, although I left the Church at the age of 15. After decades of contented atheism, I converted to Reform Judaism in 1988.

RK: Could you talk a little about the way that you write so well about religion as lived experience of daily life, as well as belief system?

MDR: For both anthropologists and novelists, the primary task is to see life from the perspective of the subject. Your job is to get inside the heads and lives of others and see things from their point of view. If you'll notice, I also write with great conviction about what it means to be an atheist and an agnostic, about the experience of a full-blown "bridal mystic," and about the interior life of an autistic savant. It's flattering, if a little disconcerting, when readers fasten onto one perspective offered in 850 pages of prose and assume that it is my own, because I've done a good job of portraying a character's inner life. But a great deal of what I write comes from library research and empathy.

I personally remain an agnostic, but I find that Judaism adds an element of intellectual and aesthetic beauty to my life, very much the way music does. Music isn't rational or scientific either, but nobody argues that music is the opposite of science or rationality or suggests that one must choose between music and religion in order to qualify as an intellectual.

RK: And, particularly given the stock assumption that religion is the refuge of the dim, and the suspicion of braininess, in many fundamentalist sects, as a temptation to sinful pride, can you explain the way you write about both religions as ones in which the use of the intellect is an important part of worship?

MDR: Well, Reform Judaism does not require that we leave our brains just outside the synagogue door. One of the reasons I was drawn to Judaism is its delight in intellect, its celebration of argument and the competition of ideas, its insistence that there can be no one interpretation of life or history or of scripture, its demand that we find 60 meanings in every letter of the Torah and that we study it each year, because we change with every passing day and will bring new insight and understanding to our study.

My response to fundamentalists who believe that science is somehow in conflict with God is to quote Deuteronomy: "You have seen with your own eyes what the Lord your God has done." To deny the scientific realities of the cosmos is to place limits on the tools and intent of God. Reform Judaism requires no such intellectual dwarfism.

RK: You write very well, through your protagonist Emilio Sandoz, about dark nights of the soul and recovery. Is this a theme to which you feel especially drawn?

MDR: Yes, but not because I have some terrible dark wound that I am working out in fiction. Perhaps because I have had such a nice, comfortable life, on the whole, I am drawn to the dramatic and the tragic. I like being slammed up against a vicarious emotional wall. I like Verdi's operas, Shakespeare's histories and tragedies, those great big in-your-face Beethoven symphonies. I have very little interest in drawing room comedies or novels about the divorce of a suburban couple, and no patience at all with string quartets. I like fist-in-the-air heavy metal rock, and the saddest, angriest blues. I want art to take me where I don't live! Wring me out, babe. Let me know I've been someplace new!

RK: My own view is that both your books are intellectual rich open systems which it would be a mistake to interpret as allegory. However, a lot of commentators have seen them as novels about male-female relations, about human-animal relations, about, perhaps most convincingly, First and Third World relations.

MDR: There's a country song writer named Kinky Friedman (leader of a band called Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys) who writes very funny mysteries about a country song writer named Kinky Friedman, leader of a band called Kinky Friedman and the Texas Jewboys. Kinky once said, "When folks find stuff in your book that you didn't put there your own self, you know you done good."

Your very kind assessment of my work is certainly closer to my intent than any conscious allegory on any single theme. One of my greatest convictions is that very few things in life are Either/Or. In my observation, almost every issue is And And And And And. So as I work and rework, revise and add, twist and braid my novels, I am always trying to undermine the reader's certainty, to force the reader to question assumptions and conclusions. The theme song of my intellectual life has always been, "It Ain't Necessarily So." There's no single way to understand anything.

RK: Without assuming any crude allegory, would it be legitimate to consider political concerns about any or all of these as one of your starting points?

MDR: None of them were starting points, but they are all part of what I brought to the computer keyboard. The starting point was Emilio Sandoz. I began with a character. Everything else came later.

RK: Both books are processes of unfolding, in which assumptions we and the characters made in the first place turn out to be based on inadequate information—obviously this is true of the plot of the first book; and, it is particularly true of the setting up of the second book, and the way we are forced to interpret almost everything that happened in the latter stages of the first book as being based on alien misunderstanding of humanity, as much as on human misunderstanding of alien culture. Do you see this as a crucial way of describing relationships between cultures and peoples, and writing about it as a way of keeping our ideas flexible?

MDR: Absolutely. There is no universal truth about human culture that can be discovered and relied on. You name any axiom about human nature, and I'll give you three counter examples from three different continents that disprove its universality. That is our glory and our tragedy as a species. It's the source of art and the root of war.

RK: Is it also perhaps a description of the way you write, constantly undercutting and revising first thoughts?

MDR: Exactly. The less you know about something or someone, the easier it is to have a firm opinion. Certainty is seductive, but it is a jealous god. It requires that you close your mind to anything that makes you doubt or reconsider or change. At the end of Children of God, in the Coda, I permitted myself to step out of the novel and make a direct personal statement: "Without doubt, faith is mere opinion." Doubt is good. The moment you're certain about something, step back and look again.

RK: In both books, particularly the second, you write very well about the glamour and the genuine achievements of brilliant, charismatic, villainous characters,

MDR: Oh, shit. I thought you were going to say "brilliant, charismatic scientists," not villains!

RK: and their eventual comeuppance. (You also write well about virtue.)

MDR: Which also gets its comeuppance!

RK: I felt, especially with Hlavin Kitheri, that you held back a little for fear that you might easily be more than fair to him and his way of seeing things, and make him more attractive even than he is.

MDR: I'm not aware of having done that but I'm not sure what you mean by holding back. I thought I made him comprehensible, not attractive (a trick I'm trying to pull off in my third book, which has a Nazi doctor as a central character—I want the reader to understand him, not admire him). Hlavin Kitheri is based on two historical personages. His personal life is based on biographies of the Marquis de Sade, who was actually a very sad person whose life is practically an instruction book demonstrating how childhood neglect and parental indifference can construct monsters. Hlavin's political life is based on that of Henry II of England, who was also brilliant and amoral, a great political innovator and effective military leader.

RK: And had you done so, you might have risked loading things too far in the direction of his species and against their victims turned destroyers. How do you see the problem of striking a balance here?

MDR: Just another example of "It Ain't Necessarily So". When you saw things only from the Runa point of view in *The Sparrow*, you thought the Jana'ata were vicious. So then I turned it around in *Children of God* and let you see the Jana'ata point of view, which was far more nuanced than you thought. Then I take you back to the Runa and show that there are no innocents in this story but also let you feel sympathy for their drive for freedom. There is no superior culture, no culture with a unique claim to the moral high ground.

I drew on two examples from history. First contact between European explorers, missionaries and settlers was a catastrophe for the native peoples of the two American continents. But it was also the best damned thing that ever happened for millions of immigrants to America from all over the world. Everything good about my life in America rests on the bones of Indian dead, and on the wreckage of their cultures. The slavery which is part of American history was an unmitigated

atrocity, and yet, the European and African populations of the continents have, together, produced a florescence of vibrant and often admirable culture. All those things are true simultaneously. The Runa Revolution is a catastrophe for the Jana'ata, but it's the best damned thing that ever happened to the Runa, and they are creating a vibrant and admirable culture at the end of the book. And if the Jana'ata are clinging to a precarious existence in terrible poverty—is that comeuppance or tragedy? Both. Neither.

The second dilemma I had in mind came from Romanov Russia. Recently the Cleveland Museum of Art had an exhibit of Faberge eggs. They were breathtakingly beautiful, but I could not look at them without trying to calculate the number of lives each one represented. How many serfs labored all their lives to concentrate so much wealth in the hands of a single family so that the husband could afford to give these eggs to his wife for Easter? It was staggering, and reminded me once again that there was a reason for the Russian Revolution of 1917. So yes, Romanov Russia deserved to be overthrown, and yet that culture produced artwork, dance, literature and music that has never been surpassed in world history, let alone by the Soviet culture that succeeded it. Similarly, the Jana'ata were absolute and often brutal despots, but the destruction of their high culture is a tragedy, and there's no way of knowing if the Runa will ever match what the Jana'ata accomplished. Maybe, maybe not. Time will tell.

RK: I noticed—and I may be wrong here—that at no point in *Children of God* did you actually use the word 'genocide'. Was this a deliberate omission of a buzzword which would have cut off the thought experiment involved in the novel?

MDR: It certainly would have narrowed it to a single allegory or analogy, and it would have been pretty ham-handed, if you'll pardon the non-kosher expression.

RK: In both books, particularly in *Children of God*, you use flashes back and forward constantly, and often embed the one in the other so that characters in the future of the assumed common time of the novel are talking about the past of the assumed common time. Was this a thought-out way of writing about the effect and experience of relativity and time dilation, or did it just turn out that way?

MDR: In both novels, "time" itself was a character. I used the past to shine a slanted light on the present, and the present to throw significant events of the past into high relief with the light of hindsight. You never fully understand things as they are happening. The stories in *Genesis* and *Exodus* have survived for 3,500 years, and continue to be told and found resonant across so many cultures, in part because they demonstrate how to give meaning to events, how to make a great, unfolding drama out of isolated incidents, family upheavals, bad luck and good times. And they provide some hope that what seems to be a senseless tragedy today might one day seem to be the seed from which great good grew.

Time is sacred in Judaism. Time is the essence of Jewish theology and ritual. In Jewish thought, God paints on a vast canvas, and his brush is Time.

RK: My impression is that your next novel is not SF...Can you talk a little about it?

MDR: Well, I'm dropping back 55 years instead of going forward. I've said pretty much everything I have to say about religion, science and theology in my first two novels, so with this one, I'm looking at ethics, idealism and pragmatism. *A Thread of Grace* is about the Jewish underground in Genoa during the Nazi occupation of Italy. I am hoping that this will be an historical thriller, but with added value, just as *The Sparrow* and *Children of God* were science fiction, but with something more.

I'm finding that even people who are very knowledgeable about World War II and the Holocaust know very little about Italy, and nothing about northwestern Italy, which was the scene of a conspiracy of peasants, priests and native Italian Jews to save thousands of refugees. There were approximately 41,000 Italian Jews at the beginning of the occupation on Sept. 8, 1943, and about 6,000 refugees who'd poured into Italy because of rumors that the Italians were decent people who would treat them like human beings. At the end of the war, 87 percent of the Jews in Italy had survived a vicious, relentless, 20-month Nazi campaign to find and deport them. This is recognized as the highest survivorship in occupied Europe, where typically only 10 percent of the Jewish population survived, but almost no one knows about it!

You can't say anything about Jewish resistance unless you know about Italy. You can't say anything about the role of the Church unless you know about Italy. You can't say

anything about peasants or Christ-killer theology unless you know about Italy. You can't even talk about fascism unless you know about Italy. It is a complex and tangled political and historical situation, where nothing is as you might expect it to be, and that's exactly why I like it. But I suspect that's why other novelists have tended to avoid writing about it. It's really a hairball, very difficult to sort out intellectually and emotionally.

The other problem is trying to make readers believe in the acts of honorable and decent people. The book is about ¼ done now, and I've been giving the draft chapters to various readers for comment and criticism. They are buying the fiction, but inevitably when I take an incident or quote directly from history, they say, "This isn't plausible," or "I just don't buy someone acting so selflessly," or something like that. The vast majority of Italians behaved magnificently during the occupation, and it's my task to make that believable. It's kind of discouraging that it's so hard to get modern readers to accept plain decency as realistic.

RK: It is clear that you found a need to write a sequel because of the open-ended nature of the themes you were writing about. Do you think it likely that you would be so drawn again? Is the "never again" aspect of Sandoz's reaction to returning to the place of his personal destruction something you now feel about these themes? Or is a sequence the way you always intended this to go?

MDR: If what you're really asking is, Will there be a series of Emilio Sandoz books or even a Rakhat series, then the answer is no. There are no nagging questions about the characters or situation that my mind returns to, no need to go back over that ground. I'm ready to move on. For five years, I lived day and night with Emilio Sandoz. That's longer than most relationships last! Time to let that boyfriend go!

But if you're asking about whether or not I intended to write a sequel from the start of the process—well, I never intended to write a novel at all, so I certainly didn't have any long range plans for a sequel when I was writing *The Sparrow.* I thought I was trying a short story! I started with Emilio, and the story unfolded, character by character, event by event. When I actually finished *The Sparrow,* with that climactic final chapter, I was staggered that the novel existed at all. I am an adoptive mother, so I've never actually given birth myself, but my reaction to finishing that book must be very much like that of a woman who conceives and gestates and labors and labors and labors to bring forth a baby, only to look at the child in wonder and think, "How on earth did THAT happen?"

The first book still seems like an almost miraculous event to me, and I don't expect to duplicate that experience again. But for a month after finishing *The Sparrow,* I was inside the head of Emilio Sandoz, and that was a terrible place to be. Like the Father General, I felt a need to bring this man to some kind of resolution. The second book began when my stepmother mentioned that she had just ordered a custom-made baptismal gown from a convent in Ireland, and that she planned to have each of her grandchildren's baptismal date embroidered on the hem. That was the seed from which the second book grew.

The two books work together fairly seamlessly because it took 18 months to find an agent for the first book. That was awful, but in the slanting light of hindsight, it was the best thing that could have happened to me as an author. I had time to go back and change *The Sparrow* to lay ground work for an event in the sequel, or tie together language and metaphor, or make characters grow and change consistently across both stories. *If The Sparrow* had found a publisher right away, *Children of God* would be far less satisfactory as a sequel. Just goes to show: you never know the significance of things until time has passed!

Bibliography

compiled by Mary Doria Russel

The Sparrow
Villard, Random House, October 1996 (hardcover)
Ballantine, October 1997 (softcover)

Children of God
Villard, Random House, October 1998 (hardcover)

The early works of Mary Doria Russell

"Mortuary Practices at the Krapina Neandertal Site" *American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1987*

"Bone Breakage in the Krapina Neandertal Collection"
American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1987

"Artificial grooves in the Krapina Neandertal Teeth" (with DW Fraye)
American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1987

"Cutmarks on the Engis 2 Calvaria" (with F Le Mort)
American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1986

"Changes in masticatory biomechanics and stress magnitude that affect growth and development of the facial skeleton: quantitative and qualitative analysis of supraorbital bone remodeling responses" (with R Rangel and OJ Oyen)
Clinical and Basic Factors Influencing Bone Growth, 1985

"The Supraorbital Torus: a most remarkable peculiarity"
Current Anthropology, 1985

"The Functional and Adaptive Significance of the Supraorbital Torus"
Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1983

"Histogenesis of the Craniofacial Skeleton and Models of Facial Growth" (with OJ Oyen)
The Effect of Surgical Intervention on Craniofacial Growth, 1982

"Tooth Eruption and Browridge Formation"
American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1982

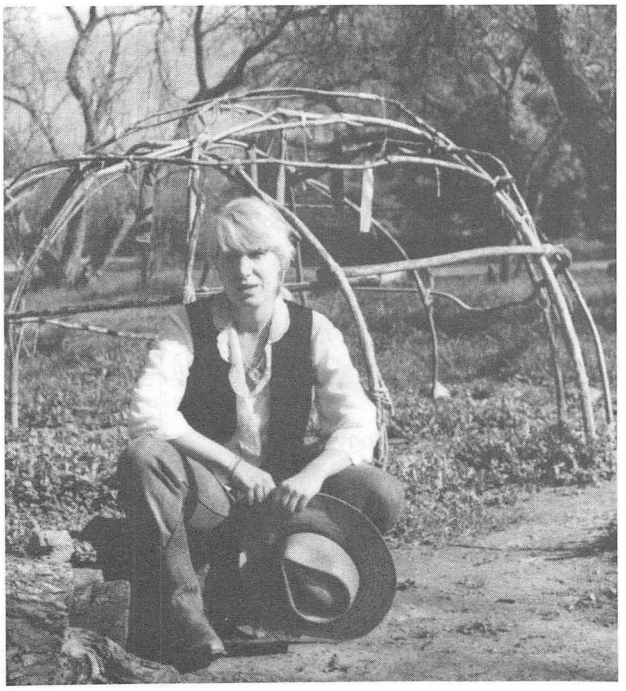
"Demography and Human Origins" (with seven others)
American Anthropology, 1982

"Anterior Dental Cutting at Laetolil" (with M Wolpoff)
American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 1981

WisCon 23 Guest of Honor • Terri Windling

"If there is a single person at the nexus of fantasy literature in the 1980s and 1990s, it is Terri Windling—as editor, as writer, as painter, as muse."

Jane Yolen



Terri Windling • photograph © Elisabeth Robar

I was raised in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, left home at fifteen and spent the rest of my teenage years wandering through Mexico, Yellow Springs (Ohio), Boston, London, and Dublin. I worked as an editor in the New York publishing industry, living at various times in apartments on Staten Island (with the writers Mark Arnold and Robin McKinley), the Upper West Side (with writer Ellen Kushner), and above a rather seedy Indian restaurant in the East Village. I then spent a few years commuting between New York City and Boston, editing countless manuscripts on the train ride in-between.

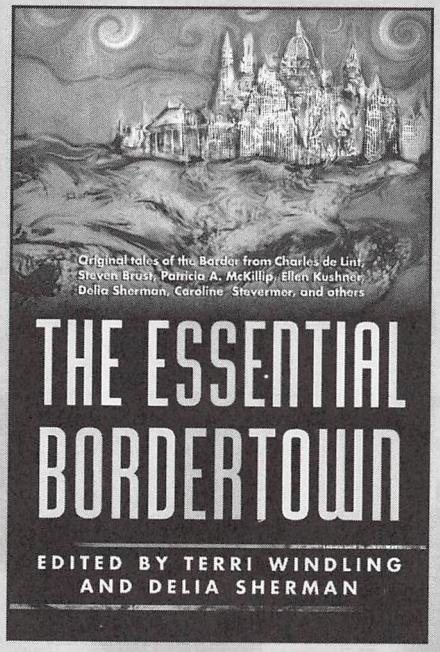
These days I'm as settled as an incorrigible vagabond can be, dividing my time (in a somewhat longer commute) between a 16th century cottage on Dartmoor (Devon, England) and a winter retreat in the Arizona desert—the later shared with the writer Ellen Steiber and three eccentric cats. I'm deeply fond of world music, 19th century Arts-and-Crafts design, literary biographies, strong coffee, motorcycle rides at dusk, and travelling around Europe in search of all of the above." —T.W.

Terri Winding has been a guiding force in the development of the modern literature of the fantastic for two decades. She has received five World Fantasy Awards (WFA), as well as WFA nominations on an almost yearly basis.

As a young editor in the early 1980s, Terri developed the Ace Books fantasy line (as a distinct program separate from the science fiction list), where many of today's top writers got their start. She quickly acquired a formidable reputation for her ability to spot new talent, publishing the first works of Charles de Lint, Sheri S. Tepper, Ellen Kushner, Delia Sherman, Emma Bull, Pamela Dean, Patricia C. Wrede, Megan Lindholm and many others during her tenure at Ace. She encouraged Jane Yolen and Greg Bear's first adult fantasy novels and published other top writers including Robin McKinley, Patricia A. McKillip, Joyce Ballou Gregorian, Jonathan Carroll, P.C. Hodgell, Michael de Larrabeiti, and M. John Harrison. She established the Magic Quest imprint to bring works of classic children's fantasy back into print. She also promoted a more painterly approach to book cover illustration, promoting the early works of Thomas Canty, Robert Gould, Phil Hale, Rick Berry and Kinuko Y. Craft at a time when most fantasy novels featured barbarians, wizards and elves.

Beginning with her award-winning anthology trilogy *Elsewhere* in the early 1980s, Terri has vigorously championed a definition of fantastic literature that ignores all genre

TOR BOOKS WELCOMES
WISCON GUEST OF HONOR AND WORLD FANTASY AWARD–WINNING EDITOR, ARTIST AND AUTHOR
TERRI WINDLING



0-312-86593-7 · $24.95
Available now in hardcover

THE ESSENTIAL BORDERTOWN
edited by Terri Windling and Delia Sherman

Terri Windling created Bordertown, an American city transformed by magical catastrophe to a world where Faerie and humans meet. And now, some of the biggest names in fantasy — Charles de Lint, Steven Brust, Patricia A. McKillip, to name a few — contribute original stories all set in Windling's Bordertown!

"There isn't a weak story in the book: if anyone still thinks that fantasy is an excuse for poor prose, let them read here and think again."
—Vector

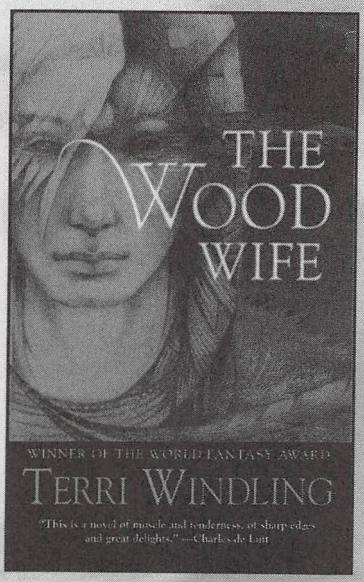
"In addition to its obvious appeal for series fans, this title should attract first-timers who enjoy fantasy with a modern edge."
—Library Journal

THE WOOD WIFE

With this acclaimed novel, Windling, one of fantasy's most honored talents, takes her place beside such names as Charles de Lint, Emma Bull, and John Crowley as one of contemporary fantasy's finest authors.

◆"Distinctive. . . A splendid desert fantasy that flows with its own eerie logic—arresting, evocative, and well-worked out."
—Kirkus Reviews, pointer review

"This is a novel of muscle and tenderness, of sharp edges and great delights."
—Charles de Lint



0-812-54929-5 · $6.99/$8.99
Available now in mass market

TOR www.tor.com

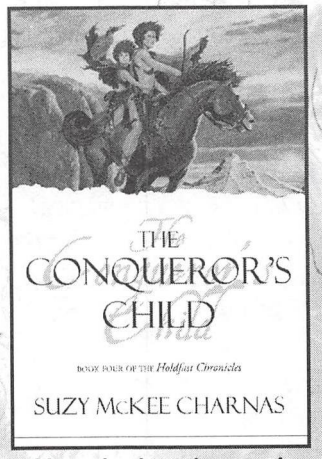
EXPERIENCE

HUGO AND NEBULA AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR

SUZY MCKEE CHARNAS

AND HER HIGHLY ACCLAIMED

HOLDFAST CHRONICLES



New in hardcover!

THE CONQUEROR'S CHILD

BOOK IV OF THE HOLDFAST CHRONICLES

☆"The year is less than half over, but this potent, thoughtful novel by a talented writer at the top of her form clearly counts as one of the best SF novels of 1999."
—*Publishers Weekly,* starred review

0-312-85719-5 • 384 pages • $24.95

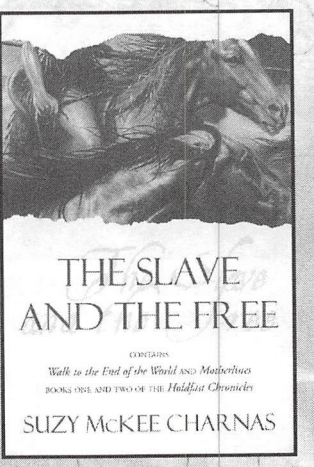
THE SLAVE AND THE FREE

BOOKS I AND II

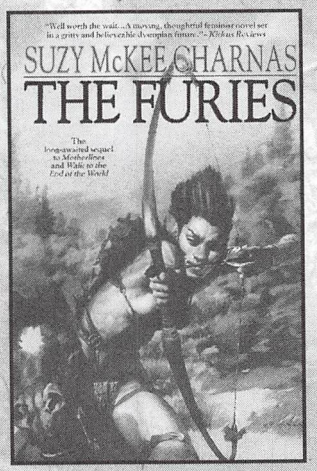
Contains the novels that won the Retrospective James Tiptree, Jr. Award — *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines.*

William Burroughs called the first book "believable and fascinating" and Marge Piercy admired the second's "robust, earthy beauty." How can you resist?

0-312-86912-6 • 448 pages • $16.95



New in tradepaper in one volume!



Available in paperback!

THE FURIES

BOOK III

"A moving, thoughtful feminist novel set in a gritty and believable dystopian future."
—Kirkus Reviews

"Powerful and poignant."
—Publishers Weekly

0-812-54819-1 • 384 pages • $6.99/$7.99

www.tor.com TOR®

boundaries, bringing magical tales by the likes of Angela Carter, A.S. Byatt, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Joyce Carol Oates, Steven Millhauser, evident in the twelve volumes (to date) of the award-winning series *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* (co-edited with Ellen Datlow).

In 1986, Terri moved from full-time editorial work at Ace Books to part-time work at Tor Books—which allowed her to begin to create art and fiction of her own. As a consulting acquisitions editor at Tor, she continues to nurture and promote the kind of literature that has become her trademark: magical realism, mythic fiction, urban fantasy, and modern fairy tale retellings. Adult fairy tales (inspired by the stories of Angela Carter) are Terri's particular passion, explored in the "Adult Fairy Tales" series of novels, the books of the *Snow White, Blood Red* anthology series (co-edited with Ellen Datlow), and in her ground-breaking collection *The Armless Maiden and Other Tales for Childhood Survivors* (shortlisted for the James Tiptree Jr. Award).

Fairy and folk tales also lie at the core of Terri's own fiction: *The Wood Wife* (winner of the Mythopoeic Award for Best Novel, 1996), *The Moon Wife* (forthcoming from Tor, 2000), and various short stories and works for children including *A Midsummer Night's Faery Tale* (illustrated and designed by Wendy & Brian Froud, Simon & Schuster, Oct. 1999). Folk tales permeate her urban fantasy series Haruki Murakami and Amos Tutuola into the same volumes as genre fantasy writers. This cross-genre approach to fantasy literature is for teenagers: *Borderland*, a "shared world" series (co-created with Ellen Kushner, Midori Snyder and Charles de Lint) about runaway children in a magical city, inspired by Terri's own youthful experiences as a homeless teenager.

In 1987, Terri founded The Endicott Studio as a creative center devoted to modern Mythic Arts: literary, visual and media art projects rooted in themes from folktales and myths. When first established, the Studio was based in New York and Boston—in 1991, Terri relocated and the Endicott Studio became transatlantic, based from spring to autumn each year in Devon, England, and each winter in southern Arizona. Originally a "one woman shop," the Studio has grown in the last decade and now supports a variety of collaborative projects drawing upon the visions of artists from both sides of the Atlantic.

In addition to book publishing work, Terri is also a visual artist. Her paintings (on fairy tale and feminist themes) have been exhibited at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the West Virginia Museum of Art, the University of Tucson Museum of Art, Book Arts, The Words and Picture Museum, and in various galleries in the U.S. and U.K. —TOR 1999

Terri Windling • An Appreciation

by Delia Sherman and Ellen Kushner

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who loved fairy tales.

The story of how Terri Winding came to love fairy tales, and how they saved her, is one she has told in her introduction and essay in *The Armless Maiden: Tales for Childhood's Survivors*, which you should go and read immediately, if you haven't already done so. What isn't there is the ways in which fairy-tales still shape Terry's adult life.

Fairy Godmother

Beginning with her work for Ace Books in the early 1980's, Terri has played fairy godmother to a whole kingdom of young fantasy writers. Pamela Dean, Patricia Were, Caroline Steamer, Charles de Lint, Steven Burst, Emma Bull, Midori Snyder, Delia Sherman, all began their writing careers under her wing and with her guidance. We have written novels for her on-going Fairy Tale series, and short stories and poems for the volumes of retold fairy-tales that began with *Snow White, Rose Red.* She is practically the only person who's ever gotten Ellen to write any short stories, through the simple expedient of asking for them, and then saying she really really wants one, and then giving her a deadline, and then saying the first page really doesn't stink.

Terry's writers have founded literary movements: The Minneapolis "Scribblies" came up with the Pre-Joycean Brotherhood, dedicated to the values of plot that ruled the novel before James Joyce came along; the Young Trollopes (our own baby), dedicated to character-driven fiction with an abundance of interconnected characters. For years, there was

a sercon in Minneapolis—The 4th Street Fantasy Convention—run by "her" writers, and dedicated to talking about these kinds of fantasy. It drew other writers whose work Terri had championed at Ace/Berkley: Patricia McKillip, Robin McKinley, Jane Yolen . . . Her choices for each year's monumental *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* continue to bring new, young voices into the field and to expand the SF community's definition of Fantasy.

Urban Fairy

Almost single-handedly, Terri created the subgenre of Urban Fantasy—maybe because she's such an Urban Fairy herself. For years, she was a creature of New York coffeehouses, with her trademark leather fingerless gloves and Salvation Army vests over white men's shirts with just a hint of ink or paint about the rolled-up cuffs . . . and of Boston back-alleys and moonlit rooftops above the seedy artists' studios upstairs from the Avenue Victor Hugo Bookstore. . . back to teenage memories of London squats and Dublin street corners. In the days when "fantasy" meant Tolkien-style adventure through trackless wood and misty mountain, Terri reminded us that much of our magic lives in the streets around us, and assured us that it was a good thing to write about the music and the people we loved. The "Bordertown" shared world series of "punk elf" stories was her own chance to set up a place where art is more important than violence; where kids' communities are stronger than fear—and to let us all play there.

The Mage

It's not what she's best known for in the SF community, but Terri is a fine visual artist. Her graceful pen-and-ink illustrations, a tribute to her teenage passion for William Morris and Aubrey Beardsley, illuminate the two Elsewhere anthologies and Ellen's first anthology, *Basilisk* (Ace, 1979). After Terri moved to Boston, she continued to support herself as an editor, now for Tor Books. But it was clear to her that it was time to give more of herself to her drawing. So she doggedly set about studying the fine points of figure study, perspective, oil painting, and print-making, and she emerged with the skills to communicate her own fierce vision, presenting a powerful show on "Surviving Childhood" at the Boston Public Library.

Somewhere along the line, she met artists Brian Froud and Alan Lee, of *Faeries* fame, and went to England to visit them in the little town of Chagford, off the moors of Devon. She fell in love with the moors and the soft English colors, and soon was spending her summers there and her winters in Tucson, where the colors are as hot and vivid as the desert sun. Now her art is inspired by both Chagford and Tucson, the cool and the heat, the downs and the desert. Her paintings are evocations of the shadow-eyed spirits of coyote and cactus, rabbit and alder, and of the characters of folk and fairy-tale. A Terri piece is a window into the world that inhabits our work-a-day world, where every tree and rock has a soul and words are more powerful than sorrow. Sometimes she scratches words into the very paint with the tip of her brush; sometimes she incorporates bits of lace, or stitches in with hanging needle and thread the leaves of old books of fairy tales.

Like Le Guin's Wizards, Terri has a great reverence for words. She's one of the few writers I know who can write non-fiction that is as beautiful and heartfelt as her fiction. Reading one of Terry's essays on folklore for *Realms of Fantasy* is like sitting down with her over dinner and talking about a subject you both love, even if she knows a lot more about it than you do. Every good magician studies the lore of others. In her encyclopedic introductions to *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror*, Terri brings to our attention the work of Latino magic realists, the music of Australian Aboriginal spirits, the poetry of Native Americans.

Her first adult novel, *The Wood Wife*, reveals the austere and tricksy spirit of the desert, that seems so unfriendly to life, and yet supports so much life, if we only can learn how to see it. There's a lot of magic in *The Wood Wife*, a lot of folklore and a very strong message about conservation. But that's not what makes the book effective. Not for nothing is Terri a Founding Trollope. Like all the best Good Fairies, Terri is interested in human relationships, in characters, and how they deal with each other and with the world around them. And she loves her people: her characters expand beyond the boundaries of a single novel, living rich and complex lives—the heroine's best friend mentioned in *The Wood Wife* gets an entire short story to herself in Terry's remarkable "The Color of Angels" (in *The Horns of Elfland*) . . . and their adventures will continue in her upcoming *The Moon Wife*.

The Fairy on the Hearth

In her own life, Terri is a person who has lived the entire fairy tale: she knows what it is to recreate yourself, to undergo transformation through faith and heart and will. She knows

what it is to create an impossible goal, and to make for it with courage, energy and creativity. She puts into practice Pre-Raphaelite William Morris' dictum that our life must be our art, and that we must try to live surrounded by things both useful and beautiful. In Terry's house, you find the words of poets, from Liesel Mueller to Jane Yolen, running in gold ink along the walls. . . . Ellen remembers writing almost the entire first draft of *Thomas the Rhymer* in two weeks while house-sitting Terry's Boston loft: just thinking of it, she says, I smell the dried flowers; I feel the velvet she's laid on the battered old furniture . . . and the perfect peace that always hangs in the air in a space that she has arranged.

Fairy Tale Companion

As a friend, Terri can play the role of the ultimate faithful comrade along the dusty way; the one who sees the light of a candle burning far into the forest, and tells you to keep on—it won't be much farther now. She lives in a house (two houses, actually) full of books and art and loving notes from friends all over the world. . .

. . . And if she hasn't gone away, she's living there still.

Bibliography

Patrick Kimball

The Elsewhere Trilogy (edited with Mark Alan Arnold)
Ace, 1982-1984

Faery (editor)
Ace, 1984

The Fairy Tale series, (editor)
1986- six volumes to date:
The Sun, the Moon and the Stars, by Steven Brust (Ace)
Jack the Giant Killer, by Charles de Lint (Ace)
The Nightingale, by Kara Dalkey (Ace)
Snow White and Rose Red, by Patricia C. Wrede (Tor)
Tam Lin, by Pamela Dean (Tor)
Briar Rose, by Jane Yolen (Tor), nominee for the Nebula Award.

The Borderland series
1986-
Borderland (N.A.L./Tor), anthology #1
Bordertown (N.A.L./Tor), anthology #2
Life on the Border (Tor), anthology #3
The Essential Bordertown: A Traveller's Guide to the Edge of Faerie (Tor), anthology #4
Elsewhere and Nevermever (Harcourt Brace/Tor), novels by Will Shetterly
Finder (Tor), novel by Emma Bull

The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror (co-edited with Ellen Datlow, packaged by Jim Frenkel)
annual, 11 volumes to date, St. Martin's Press, 1988-

Snow White, Blood Red series (edited with Ellen Datlow)
Avon, US; Signet UK, 1993-1999
Snow White, Blood Red
Black Thorn, White Rose
Ruby Slippers, Golden Tears
Black Swan, White Raven
Silver Birch, Blood Moon
Black Heart, Ivory Bones (forthcoming, 2000)

Brian Froud's Faerielands (editor)
Bantam, 1994
The Wild Wood, by Charles de Lint (TW editor)
Something Rich and Strange, by Patricia A. McKillip. (TW editor) Winner of the Mythopoeic Award

Changeling, by Jim Warren (editor)
Random House, 1995

The Armless Maiden and Other Tales for Childhood's Survivors (editor)
Tor, 1995

The Faces of Fantasy (introduction by TW)
Tor, 1996

The Wood Wife (author), winner of the Mythopoeic Award
Tor, US; Random House, UK, 1996

"The Color of Angels", *The Horns of Elfland* (editors: Ellen Kushner, Donald G. Keller and Delia Sherman)
Roc Books, 1997

The Moon Wife (author)
Tor, forthcoming 2000

"Folkroots" a bi-monthly column on folklore, myth and modern mythic fiction
Realms of Fantasy magazine, 1995 to present

Windling has won the World Fantasy Award five times since 1982, and The Wood Wife has won the 1997 Mythopoeic Society award as Best Novel of the year. Windling's titles regularly appear on "Best of the Year" and "Notable Books" lists published by American library organizations, and Locus Magazine.

Dangerous Women

by Heinz Insu Fenkl

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cry'd—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

John Keats, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"
1819, a year before his death of consumption

In Korea, the most frightening ghosts are the ghosts of young women who have not fulfilled their feminine potential. In other words, women who died without marrying and having children—preferably male children. In the old days there was a custom of burying dead maidens in a flat grave on or near a well-traveled road in the hopes that some passing gentleman would expose to the maiden's spirit his "most precious thing." I had always wondered about this custom, since traditional graves are all constructed with a dome-shaped mound of earth on top. (The larger mounds are so huge a whole school class could picnic on one; they represent royalty. The smallest mounds are about the diameter of a hula hoop, and they represent infants.) When I was ten, my storyteller uncle explained this "most precious thing" to me by telling me this story:

The Maiden's Grave

One evening, a young scholar was staggering down a trail in the mountains, drunk from having imbibed too much at a local celebration. He was in such a hurry that he didn't even have time to go into the woods, and he relieved himself right on the road, pissing for a long time right there. Just as he was pulling his pants up and tying the strings, he heard a young woman's voice. "I am eternally grateful to you," she said. "I died a maiden, and so I was buried here in a flat grave. But now that you have shown me your most precious thing, I can go into the next world fulfilled." The young scholar was frightened out of his wits, but they say the maiden's ghost was kind to him, and eventually, when he went to the capital to take the civil examination, he passed with the highest marks in the land.

This particular scholar was lucky. Consider another story I was told about another young man who relieves himself on the road:

The Bone that was a Fox

One day a man relieved himself on a bone that was lying on the path. "Is it warm?" he said. "It's warm," the bone replied. "Is it cold?" "It's cold," said the bone. The frightened man ran away, hardly able to pull his pants up, and the bone chased him. Finally, he came to an ale house and he escaped out of the back. Years later the same man stopped at an ale house to drink, and he was served by a ravishingly beautiful woman. "My," he said to her, "you look familiar for some reason." "I should," she replied. "Because I'm the bone you made water on all those years ago and I've been waiting for you!" And suddenly she changed into her true form, which was a fox, and she ate him up.

The moral of these stories is not that men in old Korea had to be careful where they urinated. They are tales that seem to be flip sides of one another and yet ones which reflect similar underlying fears about femininity. When I was a boy, we used to terrify each other with ghost stories late at night, and nearly all of the evil ghosts were female. Two of the most frightening images I recall are the broom ghost (an evil being created when a maiden's first menstrual blood happens to pollute a yard broom) and the classic dead maiden's ghost, a figure dressed all in white with long black hair. The maiden's ghost often appears out of the center of a grave mound that splits in two. By the late 60s, when the Dracula films made it to Korea, the maiden's ghost was often depicted with long, bloody fangs. There was also the egg ghost, one whose face was entirely blank, and the ghosts of women who died after they had wrongly lost their virtue. In Korea in the 60's it was still common for someone traveling at

night in the country to challenge a stranger with the question "Are you man or ghost?"

My mother's oldest brother was said to have been enticed by a ghost when he was a young man—that was the story of how he had gotten the wound on his foot that would never heal. Over the years he had to sell off most of his land for expensive Chinese herbal remedies and shamanic ceremonies to cure his foot, but to no avail. Western doctors had told him to amputate the foot nearly 30 years earlier, but he had stubbornly maintained his search for a cure. So when he told me my first fox demon story in a room filled with the faint odor of his festering wound, it was all the more convincing.

The Fox Sister

A long time ago there was a man who had three sons but no daughter. It was his dearest wish to have a daughter, so he went up into the mountains and prayed to the spirits. One night, after months of prayer, he was so desperate he said, "Please, Hannanim, give me a daughter even if she is a fox!"

Soon the man discovered that his wife was pregnant, and in time she had a beautiful girl. The man was happy. But when the daughter was about six years old, strange things began to happen. Every night a cow would die, and in the morning they could never find a trace of what had killed it. So man told his first son to keep watch one night.In the morning, the first son told a terrible story of what had happened.

"Father, I could not believe my own eyes," he said. "It is our little sister who is killing the cattle. She came out in the middle of the night and I followed her to the cattle shed. By the moonlight I could see her as she did a little dance. Then she oiled her hand and her arm with sesame oil. She shoved her whole arm into the cow's anus and pulled out its liver. She ate it raw while the cow died without a sound. That is all I saw, father, for it was too horrible to witness any longer."

The father was outraged.

"That is not possible," he said. "Tell me the truth."

"That is the truth, Father."

"Then you must have had a nightmare. That means you have betrayed my trust by falling asleep when you were supposed to keep watch. Leave my sight at once! You are no longer my son!" And so he threw out his eldest son.

Now it was the second son's turn to keep watch. Everything was fine for a month, but then when the full moon came around the same thing happened, and in the morning he made his report to his father.

"That is not possible," said the father. "Tell me the truth."

"That is the truth, Father."

"Then you must have had a nightmare. That means you have betrayed my trust by falling asleep when you were supposed to keep watch. Leave my sight at once! You are no longer my son!" And so he threw out his second son.

So it was the youngest son's turn to keep watch over his sister, and once again, everything was fine for a month. When the full moon came around, the same thing happened, but having seen the fates of his older brothers, the youngest son lied.

"Father," he said. "Our little sister came out in the middle of the night and I followed her to the outhouse. She made water and came out again. As I passed by the cattle shed in the moonlight I saw that a cow had died. It must have been frightened by the full moon."

"Then you have done your duty as a son should," said the father. "You shall inherit my lands when I have gone to join our ancestors."

Meanwhile, the first two sons were no more than beggars wandering the countryside. Eventually they had both come to the top of a mountain where an old Buddhist master took them in and they studied diligently with him until their hearts grew sore to see their home again. After a year they decided to return to their village for a visit. The old master made the two brothers a gift of three magic bottles, one white, one blue, and one red. "Use these as I have instructed," he told them, "and you shall be able to defeat any foe, even that sister of yours, who is surely a fox demon."

The brothers thanked the old monk and returned to their village to find it entirely deserted. When they reached their house they found the roof in terrible disrepair and yard overgrown with weeds. Inside, the paper panels on the doors were all in tatters. They found their sister all alone.

"Where is everyone? Where is father? Where is our youngest brother? Where is mother?" they asked.

"They're all dead," said the sister. She didn't explain, but the brothers knew why. "I'm all alone now," she said. "Brothers, won't you stay with me?"

"No," they said. "We must be on our way. There is nothing for us here."

"Why, it's nearly dark," said the sister. "Won't you at least stay the night?"

They reluctantly agreed, and somehow the sister prepared them a fabulous meal with wine that night. They were suspicious, and they planned to take turns keeping watch that night, but they had been so starved during their year of poverty that they ate and drank their fill and soon they were fast asleep. In the middle of the night the older brother awoke suddenly with a full bladder. He thought his younger brother was still eating—it sounded like someone chewing—so he turned over in annoyance to tell him to stop. In the moonlight he saw the table still in the room, their leftovers strewn about. But instead of white rice, what he saw were maggots. Instead of wine, there were cups of blood. Instead of turnip kimchi there were severed human fingers. He sat up in horror, realizing what he had eaten, and then he saw what was making the noise—it was his sister straddling his dead brother's body, chewing on his bloody liver.

"Did you sleep well, dear oldest brother?" she said. "I need only one more, and then I will be a human being."

The oldest brother leaped from his sleeping mat and ran out of the house. He was still groggy from the enchanted food, and he stumbled and staggered as he ran down the road in the moonlight. Soon his sister gave chase and she easily caught up to him. Remembering the old Buddhist monk's instructions, the brother took the white bottle and threw it behind him. Suddenly, in a puff of smoke, a vast thicket of thorn bushes blocked the sister's way. She was trapped for a moment, but then she changed into her original form—that of the fox—and easily escaped. In a short time she had caught up to him again.

This time the brother took the blue bottle and threw it behind him. There was a loud splash, and a vast lake appeared. Once again the sister was trapped. She struggled to swim, but then she changed into the fox again and easily paddled ashore. The oldest brother was exhausted and terrified. He could run no more. He took the red bottle and he flung it at the fox, saying, "Ya! Take that!" There was a blinding flash of light, and the fox was engulfed in a ball of fire. She burned to death, screaming, and when there were only ashes left a small, whining insect flew out. And that is how the first mosquito came into the world. And that is why both the fox and the mosquito are afraid of grass fires.

Even now it is hard for me to take a dispassionate view of the story—I still find it rather frightening. In retrospect, as a folklorist, I can see how this particular fox demon story combines several common motifs found throughout Asia and Europe: the three magic bottles, the disowned brothers, the corrupt youngest son, the origin of the mosquito. But as a child, I found the story truly terrifying, particularly because we did not have an indoor toilet, and I dreaded the thought of having to go out into the night to the outhouse.

The ideology imbedded in the story was not apparent to me then, but now it is quite transparent. Note how the mother is mentioned twice but never really appears in the story (she gave birth to the fox daughter, and her job is done). In many folktales, the absence of the mother places the daughter at special risk, or highlights her distinct role in the family, often casting her as a representative for women in general. Note also how in advocating for his daughter, the father disowns his two oldest sons, the very ones at the top of the order of inheritance. It is no accident that it is the female—the daughter/fox that ruins the household. These particulars are all in keeping with a cautionary message to the Confucian listener.

In a culture in which the old Confucian saying, "Namjon Yobi" ("Man high, woman low") is still invoked today, the message of this tale is quite clear: To irrationally keep a daughter at the expense of one's sons is to bring ruin upon the family. In order to make its point, the story invokes one of the most feared feminine figures, the fox demon, and pits it against the most desired male figure, the eldest son, who happens to be the hero of the tale. To remind the listener that the fox has not been entirely vanquished, the story explains the origin of the blood-sucking mosquito by linking it to the fox demon. This seems simply a clever narrative twist at first, but keep in mind that it also serves a rather pointed ideological function.

In Korea, summers tend to be mosquito-infested (even today) because of the rice paddies. The ending of the story ensures that every time someone is bitten by a (female!) mosquito, they recall the cautionary tale that idealizes sons and demonized daughters. It serves as a sharply honed ideological tool disguised as entertainment and tradition.

Of course, foxes in Korean folktales are not always female, but they are predominantly so, and almost always evil. They are generally seductive creatures that entice unwary scholars and travelers with the lure of their sexuality and the illusion of their beauty and riches. They drain the men of their yang—their masculine force—and leave them dissipated or dead (much in the same way La Belle Dame Sans Merci in Keats's poem leaves her parade of hapless male victims). In Korean the term for fox, "yowu," also refers to a conniving and cunning woman, quite similar to the term "vixen" in English, which is not quite as pejorative. Although Americans will use the modifier "foxy" to describe an attractive woman, Koreans would only use that term for its negative connotations.

Korean fox lore, which comes from China (from sources probably originating in India and overlapping with Sumerian lamia lore) is actually quite simple compared to the complex body of fox culture that evolved in Japan. The Japanese fox, or kitsune, probably due to its resonance with the indigenous Shinto religion, is remarkably sophisticated. Whereas the arcane aspects of fox lore are only known to specialists in other East Asian countries, the Japanese kitsune lore is more commonly accessible. Tabloid media in Tokyo recently identified the negative influence of kitsune possession among members of the Aum Shinregyo (the cult responsible for the sarin attacks in the Tokyo subway).

Popular media often report stories of young women possessed by demonic kitsune, and once in a while, in the more rural areas, one will run across positive reports of the kitsune associated with the rice god, Inari. We tend not to draw close parallels between such distant Asian lore and the folklore in the American back yard, but it is not difficult to trace the fox lore directly to more universal themes about dangerous women. In Korea, for example, there is a figure parallel to that of the fox demon—the snake woman, called "sa-nyo" (by coincidence, the word "sa" happens to be a homophone for snake and death).

In Eastern Europe, and even in England, the snake woman, or "lamia," is a well-known

figure associated with images that are almost precisely parallel to those of the fox demon. In his poem "Lamia," the Romantic poet John Keats wrote: "Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!/She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls complete: /And for her eyes: what could such eyes do there/But weep, and weep, that they were born so fair?" The lamia is known for seducing men and then devouring them, also for stealing infants to drink their blood.

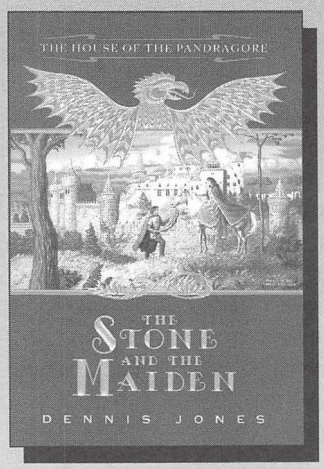
The original Lamia, according to the Greek tales, was a Libyan queen who had an affair with Zeus. She was transformed into the snake-like monster by Zeus's jealous wife, Hera. As one can see, the lamia is associated with vampires, particularly in the Mediterranean, and she is often associated with Lilith, "the mother of all demons," who is often said to be the first vampire. In western lore, Lilith was the original dangerous woman. She is the first wife of Adam who refused to be subservient to him. For refusing to take the bottom position in their lovemaking, God cast her out of the Garden of Eden and transformed her into a demon who, ironically, often shows up in images of the Garden of Eden as a serpent with breasts. Lilith is also known, in Jewish lore, to steal infants at night to devour them. Her spirit is said to abide in mirrors, able to possess girls and women who look too frequently or too long at their reflections. This last feature is probably designed to discourage vanity in Jewish women, but it also suggests a possible origin to the connection between vampires and the lack of a reflection. (In some East Asian fox demon stories, there is a parallel connection to reflections: the mirror will show the fox's true form or the fox, in human form, will cast no reflection.)

Dangerous women, traced from the earliest written Sumerian sources east to Japan and west to the Americas, are a commonplace of patriarchal cultures regardless of how liberal or oppressive they happen to be. The polarizing of female figures in folklore into the unreachable ideal on the one hand and the demonized vampire/snake/fox seductress on the other hand serves as subtle means of social control. One need not look far in current popular culture to find numerous examples of the latter category: Natasha Henstridge in the Species films, Sharon Stone in Basic Instinct, the B starlet-of-the-week in the Poison Ivy series, Theresa Russell in Black Widow; and of course, every daytime and nighttime soap has its verion of the fox demon.

In recent years there has been a conscious move, on the part of women writers, to reclaim and reimagine these negative images. Consider the works of Angela Carter (especially the transformed fairy tales in The Bloody Chamber), the series of new adult fairy tales edited by Terri Windling and Ellen Datlow, the phenomenally popular New Age women's self help book, *Women Who Run with the Wolves* by Clarissa Pinkola Estes. And finally, the most recent among these phenomena, the Lilith Fair. (Lots of dangerous women on stage and in the audience, according to some male music critics.) Unfortunately, in Korea, things aren't quite as optimistic. One of the major domestic box office hits in recent years was the first Korean film in which CGI effects were used in a morphing sequence. It was a woman turning into a fox demon.

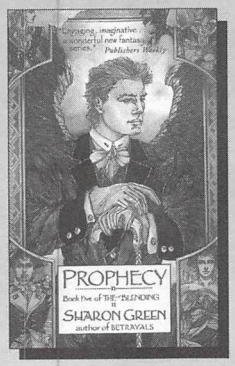
Suggested Nonfiction Readings: *Tales of Times Now Past*, translated and edited by Marian Ury. (Japanese folktales, including several about kitsune.) *Kitsune: Japan's Fox of Mystery, Romance, and Humour* by Kiyoshi Nozaki. *Lilith's Cave: Jewish Tales of the Supernatural*, edited by Howard Schwartz. *The Alphabet of Ben Sira*, translated by Norman Bronznick, et. al. (The origins of Lilith). Suggested Fiction: *Shadow of the Fox* (a young adult novel) and "The Fox Wife" (in the *Ruby Slippers, Golden Tears* collection edited by Windling and Datlow), both by Ellen Steiber.

Summer



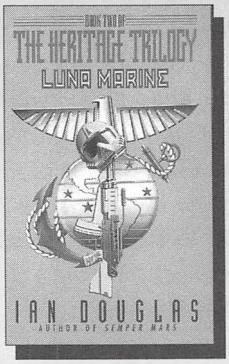
A vast empire is besieged. Its ruling princess must find a **talisman of great power**. For the bloodthirsty advancing army is aided by the awesome and terrifying might of the Black Craft.

THE STONE AND THE MAIDEN:
THE HOUSE OF THE PANDRAGORE
Dennis Jones



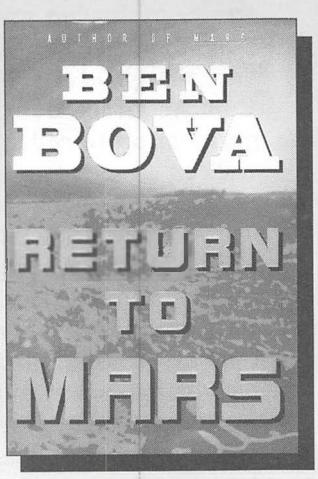
The time has come for the Five to **blend their powers** of elemental magic. Defeat the army that approaches And face their destiny. The spectacular series conclusion is here.

PROPHECY:
BOOK FIVE OF THE BLENDING
Sharon Green



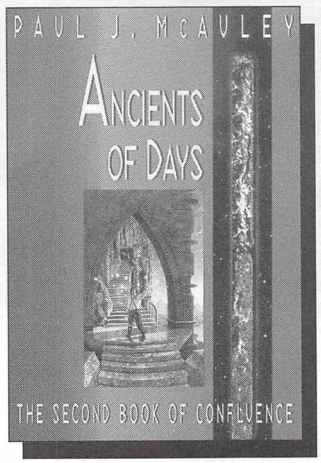
It is known as the Cave of Wonders. It reveals **all the inhabited worlds** of the universe. And it lies at the heart of a 21st century power struggle that extends from the earth to the moon.

LUNA MARINE: BOOK TWO OF
THE HERITAGE TRILOGY
Ian Douglas



On the first Mars mission, he thought he detected **signs of intelligent life**. Now Jamie Waterman will search in secret on the return expedition—and defend a fragile ecosystem against those who would plunder it for profit.

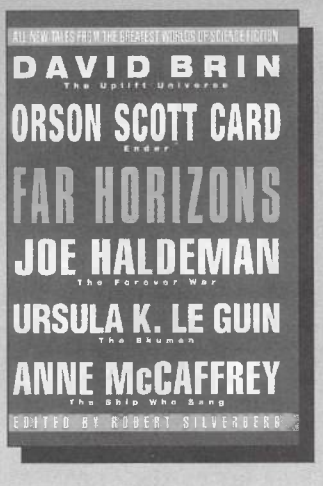
RETURN TO MARS
Ben Bova



The world of Confluence **orbits an obscure star** beyond the edge of the galaxy. It is torn by civil war. And soon to be transformed by one whom many call a messiah.

ANCIENTS OF DAYS:
THE SECOND BOOK OF CONFLUENCE
Paul J. McAuley

E O S

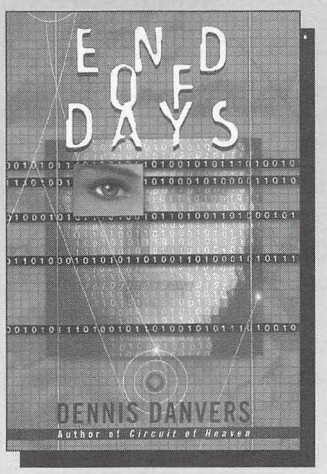


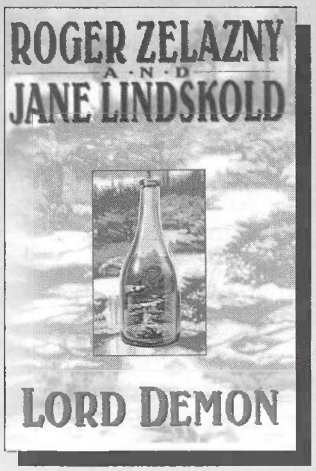
All-new tales set in the best-known worlds of **an all-star sf roster**. By Bear. Benford. Brin. Card. Haldeman. Kress. Le Guin. McCaffrey. Pohl. Silverberg. And Simmons.

FAR HORIZONS:
ALL NEW TALES FROM THE GREATEST WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION
Edited by Robert Silverberg

They thought the Bin was destroyed. But the collective of **virtual souls** still exists. Yet how can one find meaning to life if death does not exist?

END OF DAYS
Dennis Danvers



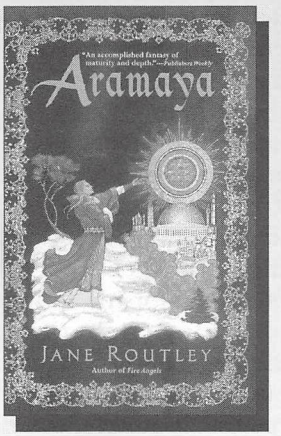


He is a **demon warrior** who hides entire worlds inside glass bottles. But soon he will be drawn into cosmic battle for the highest stakes of all.

LORD DEMON
Roger Zelazny and Jane Lindskold

To a dazzling winter court comes **a powerful mage**. Her battle will be first fought within her own heart—for only then can she pit herself against an arch-demon.

ARAMAYA
Jane Routley



All this and more.

AVON EOS TITLES ON SALE IN MAY: **FAR HORIZONS: ALL NEW TALES FROM THE GREATEST WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION** (hardcover), edited by Robert Silverberg, $27.50 / $39.50 (Can.). ON SALE IN JUNE: **RETURN TO MARS** (hc) by Ben Bova, $25.00 / $37.00; **END OF DAYS** (hc) by Dennis Danvers, $16.00 / $24.00; **ARAMAYA** (trade paperback) by Jane Routley, $13.50 / $19.50; **SIGNAL TO NOISE** by Eric S. Nylund, $6.99 / $8.99; **CHILD OF THE RIVER: THE FIRST BOOK OF CONFLUENCE** by Paul J. McAuley, $6.99 / $8.99; **LUNA MARINE: BOOK TWO OF THE HERITAGE TRILOGY** by Ian Douglas, $5.99 / $7.99; and **THE STONES OF STIGA: A NOVEL OF SHUNLAR** by Carol Heller, $5.99 / $7.99. ON SALE IN JULY: **ANCIENTS OF DAYS: THE SECOND BOOK OF CONFLUENCE** (hc) by Paul J. McAuley, $16.00 / $24.00; **THE DEATH OF THE NECROMANCER** by Martha Wells, $6.99 / $8.99; **FULL TIDE OF NIGHT** by J.R. Dunn, $5.99 / $7.99; and **PROPHECY: BOOK FIVE OF THE BLENDING** by Sharon Green, $6.50 / $8.50. ON SALE IN AUGUST: **THE STONE AND THE MAIDEN: THE HOUSE OF THE PANDRAGORE** (hc) by Dennis Jones, $23.00 / NCR; **LORD DEMON** (hc) by Roger Zelazny and Jane Lindskold, $23.00 / $34.00; **SCENT OF MAGIC** by Andre Norton, $6.50 / $8.50; **WHITE LIGHT** by William Barton and Michael Capobianco, $6.99 / $8.99; and **WE** by Yevgeny Zamyatin, $5.99 / $7.99.

AVON EOS

AVON BOOKS, INC.

www.avonbooks.com/eos

James Tiptree, Jr. • Eighth Annual Award

compiled by Jeanne Gomoll with contributions from the Tiptree Jury

The 1998 James Tiptree Jr. Award
ICFA 20, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Judges
Kate Schaefer (chair) [KS]
Ray Davis [RD]
Lisa Tuttle [LT]
Sylvia Kelso [SK]
Candas Dorsey [CJD]

Jurors' introductory comments

Candas Jane Dorsey (CJD)

Reflecting on the meaning of "expressing gender issues" in the award guidelines has been an interesting challenge. As others on this jury and in the wide world have said—in many ways, gender seems to be what people are pointing to when they use the term. In general, I think it is a social construct, but I still have a lot to learn about why, then, some people so strongly feel they have an innate gender instead of simply a set of equipment issued without palimpsests of gender pre-written on them. Because I seem to have such personal trouble foregrounding gender as an interpersonal datum, I like to think I can transcend gender, but at the same time I am the product of a very specific and powerful social process that has shaped me, not just in intellectual ways, but in mandating such intimate matters as what clothes I find sexy on what kinds of bodies. Still, it has always been such a struggle for me to learn the "rules" of gender discourse, from the status-quo rules about the presence or absence of men and women in social, sexual and intellectual discourse to the nouvelle proprieties of the hardcore theorists in the revolution against mono/hetero/sexism. The best I can manage as I go about my life is to confront my contradictions willingly, and be honest. In the jury process—schooling myself to read for content that I often do not foreground, a change in reading habits that was remarked upon by more than one jury member—I read for honesty, both intellectual and emotional, and for a willingness to step beyond the boundaries of what we think we know to a new and revolutionary image or landscape.

The most powerful statement that I made during the judging process was when I articulated that it's not enough to posit alien biology, nor to imagine a different culture based on that biology—nor, I'd add, is it enough to tell a dystopian tale about how bad things are, nor use a cute premise to add interesting background, nor to posit future gender wars, biological mutations, genetic tampering, utopias—if that's as far as the story or novel goes. The first condition of a Tiptreeable text for me is to show beings at the edge of change, transformation, challenge—on the boundary of questions. The second condition, equally as important, is that their story be told with surpassing excellence.

As I was reading, I also assumed that whether or not gender was the main theme of a book, if the book made a significant step in how it handled gender or if it did something gender-bending in narrative or character, I considered it eligible. But I came to realise also that alternative orientations are very much in the public awareness now (if I were cynical, I'd say "Trendy!" but we read many good and even some brilliant stories which deserve better than a flippant dismissal)—and that makes, and none too soon I think, the presence of diverse characters and relationships part of the normal range of possibilities when constructing fiction in the present day. Therefore I came to believe that they are—and should be, I think—background, not foreground, and therefore the presence of a gender-bending element was not the only thing which would move a story into eligibility for the final list.

It also struck me as I read so many stories from *Asimov's* that Tiptree juries could give commendations to venues which consistently published Tiptreeable work (or, more formally, "work which includes sex, gender orientation, and social structures of family and relationship as important subjects of speculation"). And that certainly, on the evidence, *Asimov's* would deserve such a commendation.

As I developed my reading criteria, I realised that each year, as more and more

works are eligible, we see a growth in the way that gender is considered one of the core issues a speculative writer must consider: whether that be to take issues of sex and gender into consideration in creating a culture, foreground social processes around sex and gender, or simply include them as part of the texture and fabric of a story about something else altogether. It strikes me that as gender itself begins to disappear or to be transparent, this award could gradually phase out—and that this is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

The Tiptree Award is about the cutting edge treatment of gender issues. If there were no issues because gender had ceased to be such a consuming preoccupation among people, then the Tiptree Award would vanish too. These musings make an obvious connexion with the story I place at the top of my short list, "Congenital Agenesis of Gender Ideation," by Raphael Carter (in *Starlight 2*).

Among many lyrically written and powerful stories and books considered this year, this was one of the few that moved me into new territory. For a moment, I could glimpse the end of gender—and glimpse at the same moment the impossibility of living in that country ("...then I awoke and found me here on the cold hillside...") [CJD]

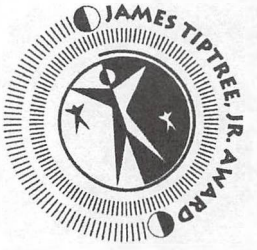
Kate Schaefer (KS)

In our comments on individual works jurors often remark that a work is about something other than gender. As I've re-read these comments, it strikes me that the tone may come across as a complaint that writers are not addressing gender directly. We do have this complaint, but it's a complaint peculiar to being a juror for this particular prize, rather than a substantive complaint which will carry over into our general reading. Many writers address gender indirectly, use it as a metaphor for some other concern, or treat it as something resolved. As a reader, I am interested in how well they use it for whatever purpose their art requires; as a juror, I am instructed to look for gender expansion or exploration, and when those don't occur in a piece of fiction about which I'm really excited, I'm disappointed (another good work which I can't suggest as a prize-winner, I think, and turn to the next work on the pile). I look forward to returning to my normal reading mode, in which concern with my own enjoyment will be greater than my concern with the fiction's focus.

There is certainly still plenty of science fiction and fantasy which ignores gender concerns altogether. Because of the nature of the Tiptree award, very little fiction of this sort was sent to the jurors. There is also plenty of science fiction and fantasy which does not ignore gender concerns; but, which incorporate them as extremely minor elements, as a matter of course, while concentrating on other stuff. Two stories of this sort which I'd like to mention were Michael Swanwick's "The Very Pulse of the Machine," a great piece of first-contact science fiction with no gender exploration and no leftover 50's assumptions, and Bruce Sterling's "Taklamakan," a story in which a person of neuter gender is a major character. Sterling only explores the implications of a neuter person for about two sentences, long enough to establish that the idea is there, and then goes on to the rest of the story.

Candas mentions the number of stories we considered which were published in *Asimov's;* I'd also like to point out that we received more novels from Avon than from any other publisher, and that all of the novels we received from Avon were pertinent to the award's concerns. We greatly appreciate the generosity of all the publishers, without which we'd be hard-pressed to get through all this reading. I also appreciate the resources of my local public library, which buys a lot more new and obscure fiction than I had ever suspected.

This whole process has lead me to conclude that I don't know what the hell gender is; the more I look at it, the more it doesn't seem to be there. It has something to do with sex, something to do with genitals and what people do with them and with whom they do those things, something to do with reproduction, and something to do with what people do to earn a living and how they dress while they do it, and something to do with how people look at themselves and how others look at them, but it's something else, too. Damned if I know what it is, but I do know when a story is about it. [KS]



TOR BOOKS

CONGRATULATES THE

1998 JAMES TIPTREE, JR. MEMORIAL AWARD WINNER

RAPHAEL CARTER

FOR THE SHORT STORY

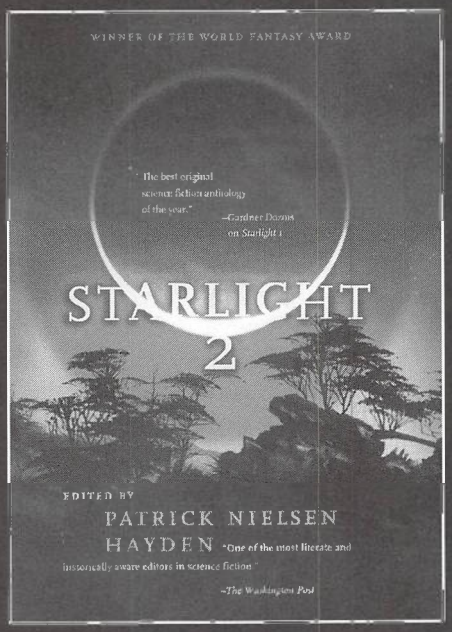
"CONGENITAL AGENESIS OF GENDER IDEATION"

A landmark event, Raphael Carter's winning is the first time the James Tiptree Jr. Award has ever gone wholly to a short story!

The judges' highest praises go to Carter's writing:

"Funny, well-researched, as focused on gender as anything could be, and very likely even the truth. Hard sf at its best."
—Ray Davis

"Excellent. Really does twist and exercise the mind and emotions — oddly for such a form, emotions are fully engaged — and the reader emerges with a new way of seeing gender."
—Candas Jane Dorsey



0-312-86184-2 • $24.95
Available in hardcover

"Congenital Agenesis of Gender Ideation" is found in

Starlight 2
edited by
Patrick Nielsen Hayden

The World Fantasy Award-winning Starlight anthology series returns with a second collection featuring the strongest, most entertaining and provocative science fiction writers and stories you'll find anywhere this year!

"Starlight 2 is excellent! More than that Starlight 2 is the sort of anthology that science fiction desperately needs, driven by straightforward notions of good writing and good storytelling."
—The New York Review of Science Fiction

"It is becoming clear that the Starlight series is probably the best original anthology series published today."—True Review

www.tor.com TOR®

1998 Tiptree Winner • Raphael Carter

"Congenital Agenesis of Gender Ideation"
Raphael Carter, *Starlight 2*, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Tor Books, 1998

Funny, well-researched, as focused on gender as anything could be, and very likely even the truth. Hard SF at its best. [RD]

Excellent. Really does twist and exercise the mind and emotions—oddly for such a form, emotions are fully engaged—and the reader emerges with a new way of seeing gender. [CJD]

This story does the science/social sciences discourse Real Well—walks the walk and talks the talk down to the referencing. There is NO doubt it is more definitely about gender as opposed to biological sex than anything else so far. There is no doubt I love that last line. It's the detonator that blows the entire very prettily constructed deconstruction of "gender constructs" clear into the air. "He's a twelve. I know he's a twelve. How do I know he's a man?"

At the same time, the story has a couple of problems, and one of them is right in there. If "he" is NOT a man, how come you can, with such confidence, say "he?" Gender is what gives you the undisputed pronoun, "he" or "she"—so if "he" is a twelve—how come there's doubt that he's a man?

Again, the twins' differentiation of types within the overall gender binary—"woman not yet to menopause," "man with atrophied sex organs"—are all based on biological variations which are subtle, fascinating, eye-opening so long as you regard gender as biologically based. And, certainly the story does things with the idea of the bare binary pair, and this schema does allow for hermaphrodites, yes. But what does it do with performed gender identities? How would the twins categorize a drag queen or a butch lesbian in full regalia? It seems to me that although this story comes closest to overt deconstruction, even it has not completely mastered the intersection in "gender" between culture, performance, and biology.

That said, this is the closest to an overt and outright exploration of gender that I've seen so far, and for that it deserves the winner's vote. [SK]

On the political journey to understand gender, I had reached the point of thinking that gender is all external to the person; but external and manifested by the person whose gender it is. I read this story as saying that it's external and manifested by the person who is reading the gender, and what's more, either there are actually no genders, or there are many, many genders. The idea that there are as many as two, or only two, is completely dismissible. By the end of the story, the idea that gender can be known by the person reading the gender has grown questionable, and along with it the means of knowing gender.

Gender perception or lack of it is not related to sexual desire in "Congenital Agenesis," which makes me like the story all the better.

A complaint I've often had this year is that fiction ostensibly about gender turns out to be about freedom/slavery, or children, or race. The idea of The Other is so slippery, and so useful, allowing any Other to stand in for any other Other. In "Congenital Agenesis" Carter looks gender straight in the face, and gender is the thing that blinks. [KS]

1998 Shortlist

The following list consists of works the jurors felt were in some way exceptional, taking into account both writing and content. The list does not reflect complete jury consensus on any work except the winner.

"The Gauze Banner"
Eleanor Arnason, in *More Amazing Stories*, edited by Kim Mohan, Tor Books, 1998

This Goddess-as-horny-trickster story was genuinely funny, and instead of seeming simply referential, the slightly distorted echoes of familiar myths and fairy tales simulate the holographic quality ("all stories can be deduced from this story") that many humorous folk tales have. Arnason's "lying myth" frame story builds in forgiveness for any tone-wavering between anthropologist-reported folk tale and art fairy tale, and makes explicit the tension between the supposed center of the story (the gauze banner) and the storywriter's emphasis on hermaphroditism and moral relativism. [RD]

A strong story. I am not sure that it had something NEW to say about gender, or just did more ringing the changes...but I liked very much the Goddess who was whatever s/he pleased. I liked the mythology, it had the right ring to it. Arnason is a wonderful writer with a rigorous expectation that the reader will journey far, even during a short piece like this. This particular journey was both improving and a lot of fun. [CJD]

Parable of the Talents
Octavia Butler, Seven Stories Press, 1998

A middle-of-a-trilogy which I suspect I like all the more for its pruned ambitions. Three pivotal years in the early career of the young African-American female founder of a new religion are presented, including persecution, betrayal, and loss of family, with little in the way of SF gee-whizzery or supernatural imagery; even the religion's bible is bare-bones and abstract. As with McHugh's *Mission Child,* the restraint pays off in credibility and emotional power, even though the on-again off-again (but mostly off) use of genre possibilities can be frustrating. Gender exploration angle: the conflict between the role (and rewards) of a prophet and the roles (and rewards) of wife and mother. [RD]

A powerful book, immensely passionate and well-realised, but like other brilliant works that we read, in the end gender issues took second place to other discussions. Other awards, yes; the Tiptree, unfortunately not. The portrait of the miscommunication between family members is enough to break your heart, even without the external oppression by the fundamentalist thugs. [CJD]

"Story of Your Life"
Ted Chiang, in *Starlight 2,* edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Tor Books, 1998

A great science fiction story about free will—but free will is what it explores, not gender. Instead, traditional gender assumptions are taken for granted to make the author's job easier: The protagonist must not take action. That's easier for the reader to accept if she's female. But there must be no doubt that the protagonist wants to take action. Thus, the legendarily powerful love of mother for child is brought into play. The story deserves an award, but not the Tiptree. [RD]

This is the best SF story I have read this year. On the one side, brilliant handling of speech analysis discourse, grasp of physics, and exploration of ideas of non-linear time and its consequences. On the other, an equally striking ease with what might be called The Mother Tongue—the voice of a mother talking to or of her child was never out of tune, from its most loving to its most exasperated. Add to this some of the most determinedly unorthodox aliens I've met in a long time, and a firm grasp of what a "performative" in language really means; add to that, a restrainedly elegiac tone that underlines the final tragedy/irony of the story, the fact that, given its premises, free will is a matter of choice—but not as we understand it in linear concepts of time—and I can't think of much else I'd want in a piece of SF. Not a Tiptree winner, because it is not concerned to explore the concepts of gender—but the head spins when you wonder what might have happened if it did. [SK]

Explores motherhood in an interesting way, though its focus is on the nature of time (or perhaps a nature of time) as expressed through grammar. May be the best single story I've read this year; my choice for the novella Hugo, but not the Tiptree. [KS]

Singling out the Couples
Stella Duffy, Sceptre, 1998

Couple resentment is often felt but seldom so delighted in; and, after some suspenseful flirtations with warmth, Duffy stands loyally by the forces of nastiness. The most harmless fantasy-life stereotypes become real-life monsters, efficiently raising some interesting points about escape and control fantasies in general. The Aphrodite-as-Kali theme is handled here with unusual lack of misogyny, and the book convincingly associates couple-envy and the desire for coupling with other non-gendered emotions, rather than tying it to gender-based character cliches. [RD]

Excellently wicked, very nihilistic—I was depressed all evening after I read it—but I liked its relentless social critique. Nobody got to be the good guy. Do you ever wonder how a writer can live inside a distasteful book long enough to write it? I don't mean a BAD book, but one like this that is brilliantly distasteful—or like Delany's *Triton.* I wondered, after I read the ending, how hard it would be to live in Duffy's head...or for Duffy to live in the head of this

book from start to finish. (Which came first, the chicken or the egg?) I think the Bouncing Baby Both was one of the spots where it perhaps broke new ground on gender, but in the end, the gender issues took second place to other effects. [CJD]

It's bitter, witty, cruel, and thorough in exploring certain fantasy aspects of gender. [KS]

Wonderfully written, stinging, zingy modern fairy tale combining recognizably real life in contemporary London with a dark, archetypal fantasy world. The main character is a heartless princess who sets out to break up three happy couples, wooing away from their beloved in turn a heterosexual man, a gay man, and a married woman. I thought this looked at gender in a different way—not as roles within society, not as an attempt to redefine those roles or break them down or get rid of them, but rather it considered "Male" and "Female" as markers of incompleteness, needing to be made whole by finding a partner (not necessarily of the "opposite" sex, either, since the gay couple was just as socially rewarded as the married and engaged heterosexuals) and being validated only within a partnership. I also liked the way the princess was represented—she's not breaking up couples for the usual "female" reasons of a loneliness or revenge on a rival—and I liked the fantasy of the ungendered, perfect "Bouncing Baby Both." [LT]

Black Glass
Karen Joy Fowler, Henry Holt and Company, 1998

It's too bad that "The Travails," which found first publication in *Black Glass*, is ineligible for the Tiptree. Sardonic, funny, and heart-lacerating enough to give Jonathan Swift a run for his money, this is the best lives-of-wives story I've ever read. [RD]

Karen Joy Fowler's book is ineligible but really wonderful—beautifully written, allusive, provocative stories. If it hadn't been written by a Founding Mother of this award, I would want to give the award to this beautiful book, or split the award with Raphael Carter. [CJD]

The Ice People
Maggie Gee, Richard Cohen Books, 1998

A fascinating portrait of a person and a future. The notably nasty and effective evocation of the Good-Overseer man in a broken Europe reminded me of *Triton* in a peculiar way... I found it chilling (pun intended). Rather than taking him as expressing some opinion of the author, I thought the white middle-class het Ice People narrator was a rhetorical device (like in *Triton*) and thus meant to be detestable, and it was one of the things I admired the author for. I personally have never been able to stay inside the head of a character that annoying long enough to write a short story let alone a whole book. Gives me the creeps all over and I have to change points of view. The rhetorical effect of such a character is powerful and nasty. [CJD]

The ideas are interesting, but it seemed to me that she was positing a future for the sake of rhetoric, without having compelling enough rhetoric or entertaining enough fiction or high-quality enough prose to make me excuse her for it. [KS]

Halfway Human
Carolyn Ives Gilman, Avon Eos, 1998

I was pleased to see an SF writer working with something like the Greek form of slavery, in which slaves were spoken about as if they had biologically-determined traits even though many of them began life as unenslaved Greeks. I also liked the "you're in or out" decision based on arbitrary test results, and the very believable way the novel conflates slave labor and child labor. Since both of those overlap to a confusing (and, I think, stabilizing) extent with sexism and sexual exploitation, it also raises interesting thoughts about gendered society. But (as far as I could see, anyway) it didn't investigate those thoughts so much as report them. [RD]

I enjoyed this book, and upon first reading placed it on the short list without reservation, but I did wonder about the happy ending: it seemed a bit slick, after all that complexity earlier. There were times when the book seemed a bit of a tract, but the story carried me along enough that I didn't mind. Not so much about gender, however, as about child abuse, slavery and prostitution. [CJD]

The conflicts seemed to me to be about child abuse and slavery rather than about gender—to make the book actually be about gender, I'd need to see more response to the sexless gender from the population of "normal" humans. It read more like a traditional positing of the Other as alien and then using the Other to work out displaced emotions concerning sexual child abuse and enslaving "primitive" races. This is a traditional use of science fiction, a way safely to examine things that are too scary to look at directly, but what it does to the thing looked at directly—in this case, gender—is render it invisible, since it's being used as a stand-in for something else.
With all that, it's a thoughtful book. Gilman does try to confront what it would be like if there were another gender, an asexual gender, to take away the burden of child-rearing; and what if all familial relations were abolished, and what if there were a Platonic Republic? Her answer is yet another unfair society, as it must be; Plato's Republic is an unpleasant place, and all journeys toward it are dehumanizing (vide Cambodia). [KS]

I found this a good, old-fashioned read which reminded me of why I like SF in the first place. I loved the passion and intelligence here brought to bear on a serious subject—that of the creation and perpetuation of an hereditary underclass. In this book, the class is a neuter sex, supposed to be childlike and unintelligent, which is abused and exploited in the name of "protection" and whose existence allows adults to avoid both sexual discrimination and undesirable tasks. Although this is how women have been "made" and treated in the past (and still are—consider forced prostitution, coerced marriage and breeding), for most readers this will probably seem to be more about issues of slavery and the abuse of children than cutting-edge gender issues. [LT]

Flesh And Gold
Phyllis Gotlieb, Tor Books, 1998

A good book for another award. I loved it for itself, and enjoyed the last pages particularly, but didn't feel it made as much comment on gender as many on this short list, so had to agree it had limited eligibility. [CJD]

Another well-written book addressing concerns of slavery, freedom, and sentience rather than gender. [KS]

Brown Girl In The Ring
Nalo Hopkinson, Warner Aspect, 1998

An excellent book and I hope it wins other awards, but it doesn't say as much about gender as about other areas of human emotion: parenthood, community, power, creating the divine, etc. [CJD]

"La Cenerentola"
Gwyneth Jones, *Interzone*, October 1998

Immediately climbed onto my shortlist, just below "Lovestory" and for some of the same reasons of skill, emotion and subtlety. Evoked many questions and explorations of gender/ parenthood/ ownership. A strange and somewhat haunting mixture of genres. Hard to comment without breaking the fragile, intense mood it generates. [CJD]

Lovely, powerful, absolutely brilliant story set in the near future. In part a reworking of "Cinderella" (that's the title), in part a warning about possible spiritual consequences of being able to reform the world (and the people in it) closer to the heart's desire. At first glance it might not seem to be about gender; there are no men in the story, all the important characters are women, and even little Cinders' chief object of desire, her "prince," is her mother; the narrator is partner in a lesbian marriage (presented matter-of-factly), and no one's sexuality or gender is presented as an "issue." The focus of the story is parenting and reproduction, the fantasies children have about their parents and which adults have about their children (real and potential). I say "parenting" rather than "mothering" because despite all the characters being women, the issues apply to both men and women.

In the world of the story the creation of children has been divorced from nature and chance alike and become (for the wealthy) a matter of completely personal free choice, thanks to cloning, gene-splicing and other techniques enabling them to create "perfect" children whether as lifestyle accessories or out of love for their partners or whatever.

Reproduction and the consequent need for mothers and fathers clearly demarked has been the most consistent reason for forcing people into one of only two genders. Removing the link between sex and reproduction will inevitably change perceptions of gender—and this story begins to explore that area, way out on the frontier in Tiptree territory. [LT]

"Lovestory"
James Patrick Kelly, *Asimov's*, June 1998

Le Guin's "Unchosen Love" is like a folktale; this is like a Douglas Sirk movie. Splitting Mother's role from Wife's role is a natural way to run a three-sex story, and the story is sharply constructed to bring out the edges of the ensuing family structure in the shortest possible space. A wonderfully moving piece: my favorite work by Kelly. [RD]

I wrote "a contenda!" when I read it. It was the first thing I read that went Beyond in a way I found significant and moving. I wrote: "Yes! Brilliant moment of change and its effects!" I read it as a tragedy demonstrating—without preaching—that people are prevented by rigid gender roles from 1) pursuit of individual goals and self-expression 2) even being able to communicate about differences from rigid role norms 3) being able to avoid hurting others in relationship when rigid roles collide with individual desires 4) respecting others.

The Mam is respected more by the mother who leaves than by the father who "protects" her from discussions and then is unable to see her response for what it is. I was moved very strongly by the depth of the mis-communication and pain between them as a result of rigid social norms. I had the same hit off it as I got from Henry Kreisel's "The Broken Globe," a classic story about the conflict between the flat-earth view of an old-world religious fundamentalist and his young son being educated in scientific things (son eventually becomes cosmologist). In that story, the end, when the old man gestures to the prairie horizon and says "See? She is flat, and she does not move!" is one of my favourite moments in literature.

The heart of the story is not the triad combo (indeed, everything we've seen has been done before, in a way) nor the individual roles, but the tragedy that comes of applying those roles like cookie-cutters to people's lives. The fact that the story never gets didactic, stays right in the realm of feeling, makes it all the more powerful.

You can see that all these likeable people are trapped, and are teaching their children to trap themselves in turn—and there are, as always, sanctions for those who dare step out. It is not that she was the mother that was the problem—the story could have been told from the mother's POV with the father going, though that would have had a different loading of reader preconceptions—it is that anyone went, and learned that there was a different way—and even more, dared then to come back and say so.

In discussion with other judges, who might have seen the mother as the butt of the societal disapproval, I realised that I thought that all the characters in "Lovestory" were in a predicament. It wasn't just uppity mother, obdurate nanny, well-meaning father with ideological loading for our time. I thought the ideological loading was "everybody who subscribes to gender roles suffers one way or another."

As for the "Kit Reed housewife" Mam, that was one of the things I found very neat—that content was there without rubbing it in. It gave me the creeps without the author ever saying "look how awful this is," like Reed does, and so I thought Kelly did a better job of warning about the dangers of these rigid social practices than Reed did (which is saying quite a bit!)

Look at the way the father condescends to the Mam because the Mam is only a Mam, can't think, etc., and how surprising to the father when the Mam has a rebellion, and how little he understands anything the Mam does or says, and how relieved he is at the end when order is restored. And remember, "all these happy smells made Valun a little ill." Valun respects the Mam more than Silmien does.

What I liked was that they were all blind, misguided, tyrannical (each in their way), understandable (each in their way), stubborn, struggling and so on. All of them were acting from the pressures that their contact with a different system, and the knowledge that comes with it, was putting on their own social system.

What systems theory in therapy tells us is that there is often an "identified patient" who acts out the stress, dysfunction or pain of the whole family. The mother acted for them all, and they were all equally responsible and suffered equal consequences.

That's why I liked the story so much, because it didn't set up the Good Female Rebel Crushed by The System as represented by the Hidebound Father and the Earthmother Nanny. Instead, it just presented a bunch of people in the throes of love, change and pain. That to me is what makes for a powerful piece of art which conveys a complex message, rather than just stands as an artful polemic: "Lovestory" is definitely the former rather than the latter. [CJD]

A wonderful example of how depicting an alien way of being "normal" can make our own "normal" society look weird. The three-way marriage comes across as cosy, inevitable and tragic; when you learn that it is not inevitable, the scariness of the modern human condition, with technology releasing us from all the inevitables which confronted our ancestors, comes sweeping through like a cold wind, lonely, terrifying and exhilarating. With "La Cenerentola" and "Congenital Agenesis of Gender Ideation" , "Lovestory" makes up a triptych that everyone interested in the human condition in what may be a genderless or multigendered future really must read, and among the very best the SF field had to offer in 1998. [LT]

"Unchosen Love"
Ursula K. Le Guin, in *More Amazing Stories*, edited by Kim Mohan, Tor Books, 1998

Le Guin takes a gothic romantic plot and uses some gender-relation-shifting to replace the more tragic or less believable endings we'd expect with what would seem to be a fairly conventional happy ending in the story's culture. Fun as a romance, and very believable as an implied defense of the "rightness" of the culture the romance was purportedly written for. [RD]

Very moving, and of course with her usual openness and creativity in what is a relationship—and her beautiful writing. But this is one year I don't think she's gonna get the chocolate... Another award, by all means, and the sooner the better, but not this one, this year. [CJD]

Dragon's Winter
Elizabeth A. Lynn, Ace/Berkley, 1998

I enjoyed reading the book but felt that in the years since Lynn was out on the frontier with the phenomenal authorial courage represented by her trilogy and *The Sardonyx Net,* others have followed her into that territory and built settlements around her, so that now she sits firmly in the centre of a certain kind of intelligent, emotional, beautifully-written fantasy. This book has some of her familiar tropes, and I am immensely glad she is writing again, but I wish the Tiptree had existed at the time of her earlier books, because this one has been crowded down the list by a couple of others. [CJD]

Mission Child
Maureen F. McHugh, Avon Eos, 1998

At first, I was disappointed by the familiarity of the characters and set-up, but as McHugh stuck to her initial concept, I gained real affection for the book, and the cross-gender cosmopolitan "citizen of the world" that's finally delivered seemed an honestly earned reward for the author's restraint. My only stumbling block was the overkill of the book's genre. Why was this science fiction instead of a mainstream novel about a refugee from a Third World country? [RD]

A beautiful book but there's an odd condensation at the end which moves gender and family to the side and saving the world in. I fully support saving the world, and I consider this an amazing piece of work with the courage to be harsh and uncompromising, but others made more direct comments on gender, and so in the end I moved it down in the ranking order. I hope it wins some other award though. [CJD]

Mission Child went right onto my short list, despite or perhaps because of being about work rather than about gender, and I always find work (as opposed to adventure) as the subject of science fiction fascinating. McHugh's subject is always work, just as Cecelia Holland's subject is always power.

Work: what work men do, what work women do, what clothes they may wear while they do that work, what clothes they must wear while they do that work, and what difference dropping those requirements can make to an individual. Hmm. As I think about it, her subject wasn't work, at least as she probably saw it: her subject was the disruption experienced by a society as a technologically different society entered it; but, since she portrayed that subject through the medium of a the life of a member of the more primitive society and since life consists of getting food, shelter, and clothing, it was about work. [KS]

"The Hetairai Turncoat"
Karl-Rene Moore, in *Wired Hard 2,* edited by Cecelia Tan, Circlet Press, 1997

The notion that a run-of-the-mill gay porn hero (buffed, blond, and bondaged & disciplined) would so quickly and joyfully turn into a soft blob who loves soft blobs really did hold some shock value for me. It may not be the cleverest, widest-ranging, or most moving fiction that I read this year, but it's genuinely speculative sex writing which manages to distinguish "man" from "manly" and "woman" from "squishy." [RD]

I must say that the ongoing fondness for "The Hetairai Turncoat" baffles me. I find it an undistinguished piece of gay porn with a strong streak of the misogyny that sometimes accompanies such porn, and with repetition of common themes. I don't believe it has anything new to say about male gender whether queer or not. I would have strenuously opposed putting it anywhere near the short list, but some of the elegant readings of it, which I find far more creative than the piece itself, do seem to deserve the light of day. [CJD]

One of the few contenders to deal specifically with masculinity rather than feminine or general gender constructions. A sometimes delicately ironic look at constructions of masculinity through the overlaid conventions of gay erotica and science fiction—first contacts, sex with aliens, transformation by aliens—but not heterosexual sex, and not orthodox transformations. But it was the further intersection between images of hegemonic masculinity—hard, impervious, muscular—with general Western attitudes to weight and obesity, that interrogated and even deconstructed the party lines in straight OR gay masculine gender constructions. If this did not open new visions on gender, it offered a striking critique of at least one gender orthodoxy. [SK]

"Accelerated Grimace"
Rebecca Ore, Fantasy and Science Fiction, February 1998

Creepy, deliciously nasty, reminded me of Kit Reed. Good work but not Tiptreeable. [CJD]

Why I like "Accelerated Grimace" so much: a great deal of it is Ore's tone, which is flat and as affectless as it can be while expressing despair. The narrator suffers from the deadly sin of anomie, not one of your more popular deadly sins.

This story explores the extreme of traditional gender roles in which the woman gives up everything to support the man emotionally, everything, even in her core, so that the man sees himself as the center of the

universe. The woman believes that she sees herself as the center of her universe, as any healthy person should, and is worried by a new technology which will allow her husband-the-artist to see what she really thinks, so he can use it as material for his art.

He is not disappointed to discover that she sees herself as his future widow, because as a widow she is defined in relation to him, not in relation to herself; she is devastated to realize that this is true.

No, this is not at all a new idea. It's the same old ugly idea we've seen over and over again, baldly displayed and labeled as ugly, with the unpleasant thrill of recognition that says, no matter how ugly this is, no matter how many times it has been exposed and named, it's still here. It's still a truth about men and women, and as long as it is a truth, it needs to be said. It is the story which reminds me most of Tiptree—of her own bleak stories, often devoid of hope—of any we've read this year. It is an uncomfortable story.

I like the way it explores art (the work of making stuff that one has to make, because one has to make it even though it isn't useful) and Art (the cult of personality around people who have to make stuff and who, for some reason, have found other people who want to look at the stuff). [KS]

Ghost Country
Sara Paretsky, Delacorte Press, 1998

The novel's Ishtar figure is a portrait of a deity that could have been influenced by *Sarah Canary's* portrait of the alien: allowing for the gap in writerly skill, there's a similar feeling of inevitable rightness about the unknowability of the character. It's a conception worthy of (dare I say it?) Emshwiller. Sexuality and the Big Woman Figure (the nourishment/threat/sensuality of mama's breasts are Starr's most obsessible/accessible aspect) are at the heart of Paretsky's goddess F/X, and if only for managing that without ruffling my bristles in any of the usual ways, I'd have to say that Paretsky has expanded my understanding of gender. [RD]

A beautifully angry book, the Goddess manifest out of female rage, and worthy of the shortlist for its passion, but doesn't push the envelope far enough. [CJD]

I was expecting this to be dismissible, and I was astonished to find it the most compelling read of the year except for *Singling out the Couples.* Despite thinking that none of the characters were likable and that some of them were cliches, I had to keep turning the pages. Paretsky portrays Ishtar as a flawed, silent, healing deity, who reflects the inner natures of the book's characters back at them, making them more wholly what they already are, sometimes to their benefit, sometimes to their peril. [KS]

Hand of Prophecy
Severna Park, Avon Eos, 1998

For sheer pleasure this was my favorite of the many slave novels we considered. Unlike Mary Doria Russell, Severna Park remembers that the gladiator scenes of "Spartacus" were more interesting than the speeches. Writers often seem to think that every battle is between the "good" and the "bad".

Hand of Prophecy efficiently pushes the need for the oppressed to operate together while different oppressors fight over them. *Hand of Prophecy* is pulpish in some ways, and one of them is the attraction built biologically into the protagonist. But, oh, did I appreciate Park's pointing out that biology is not necessarily destiny; that just as the Heinlein hero refuses to obey his fear, it's possible for a human being (even a female!) to refuse to obey powerful romantic cravings without that refusal being construed as some sort of craven defeat. [RD]

Notable for its energy and strong statements but in the end it is more about slavery and power than gender, so others crowded it out. [CJD]

Weird Women, Wired Women
Kit Reed, Wesleyan University Press, 1998

The scary aspects of protofeminism can't be brought out much more directly than in 1974's "Songs of War," a "womanist" SF story energetically dedicated to the proposition that things cannot change. Gutsy, funny, nasty, timid, prescient, and insulting, "Songs of War" is a knockout piece with a knockout-drop hangover. Insofar as "exploration" includes notes like "here there be monsters," it's a gender-exploring story powerful enough to gather the collection around it, even though the collection is actually weighted towards middle class American mother-daughter conflicts. [RD]

I found this book almost unbearable to read, not because it was bad but quite the opposite; rather, because it was such a relentless indictment of a certain era of social prejudices that reading one story after another in chronological order was like watching a torture session, hearing scream after scream. If we are to reward works which comment on gender in any fashion, then a work which makes so obvious the horror and waste of the "traditional" (that is to say nineteen-fifties-and-sixties middle-class American) role of women (and children) is a strong contender. I realise it is an interpretation of the guidelines that has not so far been considered, but few other works I've seen this year were as disturbing nor as (coldly, I admit) passionate. [CJD]

A significant body of work, including stories from 1958 through 1997, relentlessly focussed on women, mainly on women as mothers and daughters. It's difficult to read straight through; a good short story packs a wallop, and few of us stand up well to wallop after wallop. [KS]

"Bride of Bigfoot"
Kit Reed, in *Weird Women, Wired Women*, Wesleyan University Press, 1998

One of the few playful stories from a collection more notable for its sustained foregrounding of women's struggles and suffering under the cultural demands of gender: especially, it feels, in the '40s and '50s. "Bigfoot" begins with an interesting but not unusual reverse on the "woman-kidnapped-by-alien" theme, a longtime source of nightmare to such women's owners, and hence, like the you'll-be-raped-outside scenario, used to make them stay where it is "safe." In this case home turns out unsafe.

The second, now fairly common twist, is that the kidnap victim turns out not to be a victim. The final but not so common twist turns the submerged terror behind the cautionary tale back on its instigator. "What if she **liked** being kidnapped"—which of course implies, Because I wasn't as good sex as the kidnapper—becomes an ironic and ultimately thoroughly erosive query about the instigator's own sexuality, and with it established and orthodox gender roles: What if I, the bereft husband, should like being kidnapped too? A glimpse too brief to merit the award itself, but in its momentary vision quite as unsettling. [SK]

"Whiptail"
Robert Reed, *Asimov's*, October 1998

Interesting but not quite "Lovestory"—a hard shove at it though. [CJD]

"The Eye of God"
Mary Rosenblum, *Asimov's*, March 1998

Yes, gender is central, and there is one shift of perception, and the irony that goes with it, but I don't think it is going to beat out some of my favourites, though I found it memorable. [CJD]

The Children Star
Joan Slonczewski, Tor Books, 1998

Does a beautiful job of "disappearing" gender, and is a strong and moving book, but it does not speak directly to Tiptree concerns and others which do crowded ahead of it on the short list. [CJD]

Gender really doesn't seem to be an issue for any of the sentient races in this book, and Slonczewski pulls this off as background. Deep enough background that I didn't notice it until I realized that she had portrayed two of the most powerful beings in her universe as lesbian lovers, and no one comments on this, not at their introduction, not later, not ever. The word "lesbian" doesn't appear in the book.

This is what I want to see in society, and don't ever expect to see in any of our lifetimes. I like seeing it in fiction, and I honor Slonczewski for doing it so successfully. Because it's done in deep background, gender is not explored nor expanded: it's resolved. The issues in the book are not gender issues, but issues of freedom, slavery, and sentience: extremely interesting issues, but not Tiptree-award concerns. [KS]

"The House of Expectations"
Martha Soukup, in *Starlight 2*, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Tor Books, 1998

A rare, possibly unique, critical and sympathetic look at The Liberal Heterosexual State of Things in which feminist tenets, "guy stuff," sex workers, and the emotional needs of romance all supposedly coexist without conflict or confusion. A brilliantly observed story with a long overdue twist on the male-becomes-female surprise ending. [RD]

An excellent story qua story, which I liked while reading it. It does the satire of romantic expectations from lovers and from joy-houses very prettily, but the ending just did not carry enough impact. It was *House of Sleep* over in small so far as I was concerned, and with less interest in the ambiguity, because in *Sleep* at least the reaction to the change of sex is left open to the imagination.

Elegant but not quite there for me. [SK]

Mockingbird
Sean Stewart, Ace, 1998

Another reader-vs-juror conflict, since I immediately began pressing this book on friends while remaining reluctant to push it for the award. The well-observed down-to-earth humor of the narrator's problems is a wonderful relief from the usual wild-assed ideas of conflict: her seduction-cum-firing scene alone makes the novel worth reading. The "exotic" elements seem like parts of life rather than easy marks of "coolness" or "authenticity"; for example, how many genre writers would not end up demonizing Carlos and his Muertomobile? And the embedded Little Lost Girl tales were creepy enough to be excerpted into horror anthologies. But the finishing flourish of the last two pages knocked this Tiptree juror out of the book and onto the author photo: this is a nice guy generalizing in a sentimental way about women. [RD]

I loved the book. I don't think it significantly speaks to gender but it is a wonderful piece of work. The protagonist certainly has to deal with some gender roles—but what I like in Sean's work is the human approach to relationships in general, the idea of the centrality of everyday life as the battleground of all important human events, and his willingness to speak the language of emotion. [CJD]

Playing God
Sarah Zettel, Warner Aspect, 1998

The pleasures of this novel are in its expositional structure and its big SF ideas. Zettel's aliens aren't evil barbarians set on a conquest of humanity; they're more realistically set on elimination of each other. The various intrigues and betrayals among peoples ring much truer (cloudier, more vicious) than the politics of the other SF I've read this year. As for gender exploration—let's try to ignore the human side of the story, since that boiled down to "Men and women can be friends as long as they're well-educated and usually separated" and "Gender parity is achievable in a childless heterosexual professional setting." But I loved the alien family structures: that menopause variation, the believability of the unconventional ties Zettel draws between warring, motherhood, and kinship, and the SF-ization of sitcoms' comic bumbling father figure. [RD]

While it was good reading, it didn't really go anywhere new for me. It wasn't about human gender but about getting used to aliens who had different genders, and putting them in the forefront narratively at times, which did not seem to be all that new a concept. Some of the micromanagement of the story was pleasing and interesting, but I also had some difficulties with it. [CJD]

Some rather wooden and rather politically correct human characters only highlight the fascination of Zettel's aliens, a female-centred species whose internecine conflicts and the culture consequent on their inhuman biology were both believable and intriguing. The most interesting questions raised by this book were biological at base, and came from a parallel with humanity, and a recollection of Elaine Morgan's hypothesis, that menopause was evolved to keep old females' wisdom as a human resource, rather than have them expend their biological resources in dangerous births.

The obvious twist in the Dedelphi story is the gender switch at menopause and the charmingly ironic reversal, both of all those patriarchal SF stories where aliens mutate into deadly female forms, and of all those old quips about brainless women. Because Dedelphi men are the post-menopausal form of Dedelphi women, and they have literally lost their minds.

But the less obvious twist is the question that arises in parallel with Morgan's hypothesis: is the violence that plagues this society due to the absence of "old" women? Could this book function as a parable or investigation of women's post-menopausal possibilities, a fictional version of Germaine Greer's *The Change*? There is no clear indication of such a purpose. Nevertheless, the potential it invokes make a shortlisting no more than its due. [SK]

The aliens in this book were among the most fascinating, and fully-realized, I've encountered for some time, and I loved the very different take on gender the alien society offered. [LT]

1998 Longlist

"Datableed"
Pat Cadigan, Asimov's, March 1998

Good story, but didn't go far enough. A promising premise underutilised. [CJD]

House of Sleep
Jonathan Coe, Alfred A. Knopf, 1998

A fun novel of variations on sleep, positioned in a pleasant overlap of melodrama, cleverness, satire, and farce. As for gender exploration, I don't see it. The book is much more interested in exploring dreams, film, obsession, memory, and the spotty history of the mental health profession. Loved that eyelid fetish! [RD]

A nastily well-written book, and with some excellent commentary on the difference between how our sexuality perceives gender and how we think it does—but did not take us anywhere we hadn't been. Greg-Hollingshead-meets-*Crying-Game.* [CJD]

Quintessence: Realizing the Archaic Future
Mary Daly, Beacon Press, 1998

"It's different," as my mother often says when hard-pressed. Daly's style's gotten even loopier, the book's "future" may be the least clearly visualized utopia I've encountered since Sunday school's heaven, and it's no more (or less) fiction than a Scientology tract. But a vision that insists that kitties, bunnies, and snakes would all frolic peacefully together if only the patriarchy was gone is at least a ridiculousness at drastic variance from all the other ridiculousnesses I've had to deal with this year. [RD]

Difficult in ways which did not engender product loyalty. (Completely unreadable and coy to boot.) [CJD]

Pig Tales: A Novel of Lust and Transformation
Marie Darrieusecq, New Press, 1997

Effective, blackly-funny—but oddly anachronistic. I felt like I had gone back twenty years and was reading one of the texts that inflamed the feminist anger of the late sixties and early seventies. Stating the problem might have been enough then, but much literature which expands the boundaries of gender issues has gone under the bridge since then. [CJD]

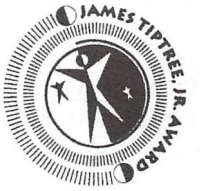
Pig Tales strikes me as a guilty romp. I enjoyed it and occasionally thought it was saying something about the relations of men and women or about the powerful and the powerless, but in the end its beastliness left me without new insights, or even old ones revisited. [KS]

Sirens and Other Daemon Lovers
edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, Harper Prism, 1998

While many of the stories were effective, I didn't feel that overall, individually or collectively, they contributed new insight on gender issues. [CJD]

"Transit"
Stephen Dedman, *Asimov's*, March 1998

An example of a type of narrative we have seen several times this year, proving that what was radical in 1969, when Genly Ai sledded across the ice with a monosexual in *The Left Hand of Darkness,* is mainstream in our field now. While I saw with appreciation that "mother" and "father" were function words now (mother who carried the child and thus historically was granted a particular relationship while the sperm donor was the father and had less authority, cf. the last page) and that was consistent, I wondered also what this very traditional teenaged romance structure was going to lead to. Well told, though not my cup of tea as far as romance, but no for the award. [CJD]



The Plague Saint
Rita Donovan, Tesseract Books, 1998

A good book—I should think so, as I published it—but I have to concur with the other judges that it doesn't push the gender envelope. [CJD]

Didn't seem to me to explore gender, but a beautifully-written book about involuntary sainthood and some of the odd uses religion can be put to. [KS]

"Oceanic"
Greg Egan, *Asimov's*, August 1998

There's one gender twist: penises that are exchanged during sex—but I did not find the society consistent with such a biology. I was curious about why, in a society where bioengineered people could exchange genitals and anyone presumably could bear a child due to the physically-clumsy mechanism of the exchangeable penis, there are still words for "brother" and "sister" and other gender specifics when from time untold they have had this ability; and does Martin turn into Daniel's sister when he trades off his penis or are they still brothers; and why are there still gender specific names, and... A 1960s coming of age story with a religious challenge instead of a physical one, and with a powerfully Freudian metaphor for sex—but it doesn't hold together socially or biologically once the well-told tale is analysed. [CJD]

"The Eye of the Storm"
Kelley Eskridge, in *Sirens and Other Daemon Lovers*, edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, Harper Prism, 1998

Enjoyable story, notable for the treatment of gender, gender balance, and sexual orientation as resolved issues in an otherwise nearly-standard high fantasy world. [KS]

"In the Realm of Dragons"
Esther M. Friesner, *Asimov's*, February 1998

Another story which does effective work in the new mainstream of gender-conscious speculative fiction. It's nice that queers get more ink, and it's a nicely told story, with an excellent intention to help convince readers to oppose bashing—and to remind people that we hate in others what we fear in ourselves—but didn't cross frontiers of the kind I was looking for for the award. [CJD]

Commitment Hour
James Alan Gardner, Avon Eos, 1998

Another example of a type of narrative which considers questions which seem to me to have become mainstream in our field now. I find all these "discovery texts" anachronistic. Stating the problem is no longer enough to win a Tiptree. That said, I must say that I welcome the efforts of a wide spectrum of writers to consider these issues. What seems cutting-edge for me after twenty-seven years of reading the landmark texts in this area is one thing: the young conservative het males who read Jim Gardner and other writers working in this part of the forest will consider this work cutting-edge and apply that Occam's Razor to their own developing lives. Someone has to take them into this landscape which is new to them if not to us. I think that it is interesting to see what happens in the swirls and eddies behind the icebreakers and the exploration vessels. This is what the midlist, the "mainstream" of F&SF, thinks is out-on-the-edge. [CJD]

"Time Gypsy"
Ellen Klages, in *Bending the Landscape: Original Gay and Lesbian Science Fiction*, edited by Nicola Griffith and Stephen Pagel, The Overlook Press, 1998

Nice time travel story about cut-throat academic physicists; compares and contrasts modern acceptance of lesbians with the closeted world of 1956. [KS]

"Snow"
Geoffrey A. Landis, in *Starlight 2*, edited by Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Tor Books, 1998

A lovely lovely little piece, heartbreaking—but not for this award. [CJD]

Dark Water's Embrace
Stephen Leigh, Avon Eos, 1998

I liked reading *Dark Waters Embrace* but again I found it was following not leading, same as does Jim Gardner's book, and I agreed with another judge who said it was biology not gender. I do think it is a lapse of the

imagination to assume that the alien humanoid culture would have bi-phobia just like ours, especially if the Ke were not only part of the species but a necessary part of reproduction. It would be like hating your sexuality, and while I realise Augustine managed that, still...there, it would be fundamentalists who defended the trio family, wouldn't it? I fear that at the last it fails because the author can't imagine past male-female fences. [CJD]

Killing Darcy
Melissa Lucashenko, University of Queensland Press, 1998

I liked it, and I thought it was a real winner of its type—but didn't cross any boundaries in Tiptree terms: we know there must be non-het aboriginals—so? If I were judging a YA book award, it'd be a short list item or even a winner (as long as there wasn't a Jill-Paton-Walsh ringer in the field) but for our purposes, no. [CJD]

Children of God
Mary Doria Russell, Villard Books, 1998

It is not gender but issues of parents and children which drive this book, and Russell's themes seem somehow more conservative in this one than in *The Sparrow*. [CJD]

Children of God is concerned, as *The Sparrow* was, with Tiptree-type issues (the celibate's role in society, women's role in society) and explores them, both in the human context and in the context of the alien world, Rakhat. However, the primary concern of the novel is the transformation of a precariously balanced society into a possibly more just but certainly different society once the balance is disturbed by an outside force. It's an interesting concern, but not the one we're focused on here. [KS]

The Drag Queen of Elfland
Lawrence Schimel, Ultra Violet, 1997

Thought "The Drag Queen of Elfland," despite the realisation that he was Le Belle Dame etc., was not about gender, but was a one-note gender-substitution story with no real surprises that couldn't have happened to opposite-sex couples. [CJD]

Six Moon Dance
Sheri S. Tepper, Avon Eos, 1998

I'm not much for biological determinism, and I'd feared the worst. But the novel's exaggerations along those lines were satirical and tidily taken care of by plot twists. And I welcomed the mellowness of the humor and the classically comedic conclusion, though the dialects should've been dropped fast and hard. Highly recommended. [RD]

I admire Tepper's ideology and passion, but for some reason did not find this as winsome as did some other judges. I was sorry not to, for I think that Tepper is doing important work. [CJD]

Nameless Magery
Delia Marshall Turner, Del Rey, 1998

This book has a female mage in a male college of mages, in some ways a typical genre fantasy set-up, but she's on another world where the gender roles are wonky (to her) while on her own world, magic is considered sentient and has its own pronoun (lle, ller). Not a winner for this award, but worthy of being on the list of nominees. [CJD]

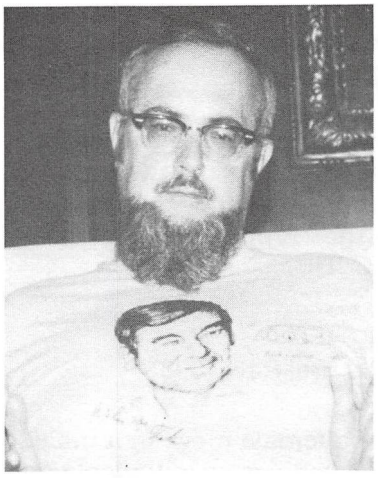
"The Body Politic"
Tess Williams, in *Dreaming Down-Under*, edited by Jack Dann and Janeen Webb, Voyager HarperCollins, 1998

It's about a woman working, and a man ignoring or misinterpreting all her signals, spoken and unspoken, leading to his death at her hands. Her work is a particular kind of prostitution; he hires her for a different kind, thinking he can set the terms of the contract at will. I'm a sucker for stories that look like they're about sex but turn out to be about work. [KS]

The 1999 James Tiptree, Jr. Award
Diversicon 7, Minneapolis, MN

Judges
Bill Clemente
L. Timmel DuChamp
Kelly Link
Diane Martin (chair)
Martha Soukup

Buck Coulson Remembered
by Hank Luttrell



I became involved with science fiction fandom in the mid-60s, when I was a teenager. I had discovered there were such things as science fiction fanzines because a few of them had been reviewed or plugged in one of the newsstand science fiction magazines, so I decided I wanted to publish one. As I began to learn more about my new hobby, one of the first fanzines I discovered was, of course, one of the best and most popular of the time, *Yandro*, published by Buck and Juanita Coulson. I remember my earliest fanzines with more than a trace of embarrassment, but the Coulsons were always kind and encouraging.

Science fiction conventions didn't really exist at that time the way we know them now. The only one in the whole Midwest took place annually in the Cincinnati area. I decided that I had to go. I was able to hitch a ride with some St. Louis area fans. I felt out of place at the Cincinnati Midwestcon. It was mostly attended by a bunch of old men who had known each other for years. I must have been the youngest person there, and I didn't feel like I had much in common with these guys who had apparently been reading pulp magazines since the 30s, and now mostly drank beer and smoked cigarettes.

Again, Buck and Juanita were some of the first people who greeted me and helped make me feel at home. They were somewhat younger than my parents, definitely adults, but they treated me like a person, not a kid.

Over the years trading ideas and opinions with Buck has been one of the reliable pleasures of being involved with the community of science fiction fandom. Not that I always agreed with him. Buck was a person with many opinions, strongly felt and easily expressed, and I'm sure he didn't expect any of us to agree with all of them. In fact, I'm sure he relished the chance to disagree.

All the years I've know Buck, we shared an interest in science fiction, of course, but also in recreational reading in general. Not everyone in today's world is interested in this topic. Buck and I both review books. I've read and relied on Buck's reviews for a long time. Again, I didn't expect to always agree with his assessments of books, but knowing how he felt about a book was always useful, and on countless occasions pointed me toward books I might have otherwise missed.

At WindyCon last year in Chicago, I had a particularly enjoyable visit with Buck. When we bumped into each other in the hospitality suite, we started sharing trade secrets about book reviewing. We were both warming to the subject. I was gratified to see that Buck looked a lot hardier than the last time I had seen him, at last year's WisCon when he was still using a wheel chair much of the time. So there we were, swapping stories about editors and publicity directors, when a friend of mine gave me a little nudge to indicate it was time to go to the internet room, or something like that. Just then Juanita signaled Buck that it was time for him to go to bed, or maybe he had to eat. Buck and I looked at each other, and we rolled our eyes, and we were both sure that we could finish our conversation later. After all, we had been catching up with each other for more than 30 years. "Talk to you later" we both must have said, if not in so many words.

It haunts me, of course, that I won't be able to talk to him later. But I value even more all the memories I have of Buck, all the conversations we shared, and I feel like I will be able to continue to benefit from the wisdom he offered me during all those years of friendship.

Laura ("first, wash your hands") Spiess

Dianne Martin

Laura Margaret Spiess was born and raised in the Milwaukee area. She attended Lawrence University in Appleton, graduating in 1977 with a BA in Biology. She later earned an Associate Degree in Water and Wastewater Management from MATC, and took graduate-level courses in Immunology at Marquette University. After college she worked as a histocompatability technologist at The Blood Center of Southeastern Wisconsin until 1985. In 1986 she worked briefly as a technician at Geiser's Potato Chip Company in Milwaukee, and then as a wastewater utility plant operator at Ethan Allen School in Wales, Wisconsin. In 1987 Laura moved to Madison and was employed by the City of Madison Public Health Department as a public health sanitarian. Laura was a constant reader and lover of books of all kinds. She belonged to three different book discussion groups, and volunteered at the Milwaukee and Madison public libraries. Since the late 70s she was a regular at WisCons, X-Cons, & many world cons. Besides the book discussions, she was a member of several APAs, helped run conventions, worked on publications, and made many many friends.

At last year's WisCon, Laura was hospitalized for what turned out to be severe liver disease. She died at UW-Hospital of a related infection on August 1, 1998. She was 42 years old. The funeral was held in Milwaukee on August 8th. It was a typical Milwaukee Lutheran service, the kind Laura rails about in the excerpt below. This piece was originally published in her TurboApazine, havoc will travel, written in 1988 shortly after her mother's funeral. The capitalization (or lack thereof) is Classic Laura:

lutheran church services drive me up a wall even under the best of circumstances. they are grim. the pastor is the one thats been there since i was 3. i know what he's going to say and i know how he's going to say it. we wing a sad hymn. one of my sisters is crying steadily. i'm trying not to cry--my nose is too loud when i blow it and i don't need everybody commenting on that later. the pastor begins the sermon. i am only half-way listening --yes, i've heard this one before—trying not to cry, trying to blow my nose quietly, utterly miserable, when i suddenly hear what he is saying: "and the lord has taken his sheep Vi into his arms..."

Jesus Christ! that man just called my mother a sheep!

i straightened up in the pew and glared at him—he looked rather startled. then i sat back fuming until it started to dawn on me how stupid this all was. my god, a sheep. this was carrying "the lord is my shepherd" theme too far! i should have known, however, that there was no way that he could have gotten thru a sermon without infuriating me—and that saved the day. after that i didn't feel like crying. i could listen for more stupid stuff, sing the final hymn with loudness, and survive the rest of the nonsense.

...and that's the sheep story.

A fannish memorial event was held in October (around her birthday), in Madison. Per her request: "throw one hell of a party with food and beer and tell funny stories about me. divvy up the books . . . that's my idea of a good funeral."

Laura, we did our best.

Fanny John LeMoine • 1940–1998

Jeanne Gomoll

Fanny LeMoine died this summer at the age of 58, from complications of chronic lymphocytic leukemia. Her mourners include her husband, sons, friends, fellow scholars, and University of Wisconsin students and faculty. LeMoine taught over 40 separately listed courses in Classics, Comparative Literature, and Medieval Studies, ranging from seminars in Quintilian and Latin Rhetoric to Fantasy and Science Fiction, directed 21 Ph.D. dissertations, and served the UW in a wide range of capacities, including her chairship of Classics for many years.

In 1971, Fanny LeMoine taught the first science fiction course at the University of Wisconsin. She had to struggle with University bureaucracies to justify an SF course as an academic offering in the Comparative Literature Department. She was told there was simply not enough interest in the subject and so the course was limited to 12 students and scheduled as a graduate seminar, open only to graduate students or honors undergraduates whose major was Comp Lit.

When I heard about Fanny's course, I was determined to enroll, one way or the other, even though I was only a Junior and a Geography major. I made an appointment with Fanny and pled my case. If necessary I'd be willing to change my major, but I *had* to get into her course. We talked about science fiction for a while; her infectious laugh endeared her to me immediately, and we quickly built a rapport based on our mutual love of SF.

We didn't come to science fiction with the same sensibility, but I loved the passion with which she drew comparisons between Plato, Aristophanes, and Kepler with the authors that embodied my idea of "sense of wonder." She let me register for the class.

It was at the initial meeting of the seminar that I met Jan Bogstad for the first time. Jan and I later edited *Janus* together and developed our ideas of feminist SF. Jan was an authentic comp lit major, but she and I had in common (with about 8 other students in the class) a rabid affection for science fiction. Another Madison fan who attended that historical course was Kim Nash. Fanny arrived with a list of 50 novels and short stories, from which she hoped to design the syllabus for the course. She assumed that we would cull from the list, a central core of 20 or so works, but was astounded that most of us were more interested in *adding* to the list! By the time the hour was over, we'd actually enlarged the list to more than 100 novels and stories. ("We can't leave out my favorite SF novel! It's a classic!") There were two students enrolled in the class who had little or no previous experience in SF or fantasy. Their expressions of stunned, disbelief were amusing. Every once in a while, after we'd added a couple more novels to the "must read" list, I'd glance in their direction and chuckle. They both decided to drop the course eventually and those of us who remained enjoyed a truly remarkable semester with Fanny LeMoine. She taught us to look for the classical roots of SF and Fantasy. I hope we gave her an enjoyable classroom experience, in which every student was wildly enthusiastic about the subject and eager to do extra reading and research.

The University relented the next year and allowed Fanny to open the course to a larger number of students, including undergraduates. The enormous number of students on the waitlist for Fanny's course must have tipped them off that the subject wasn't as unpopular as they had assumed. The course quickly grew to become one of the most popular courses offered by the University, with hundreds of students attending Fanny's lectures and filling dozens of discussion sections. Fanny brought in guest lecturers (including, one year, Harlan Ellison), and inspired many students.

We all miss her.

Memorials may be given in her name to the LeMoine Graduate Fellowship Fund for the Humanities (with emphasis on classical studies), UW Foundation, 1848 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53708-8860