



Wisconsin 29

May 27th - May 30th



Souvenir Book





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Welcome!

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Editor Beth Plutchak



May 27-30, 2005
The Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club
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The Winners

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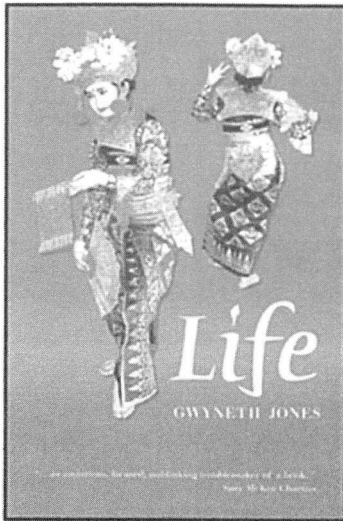
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Gwyneth Jones

Guest of Honor, WisCon 2005

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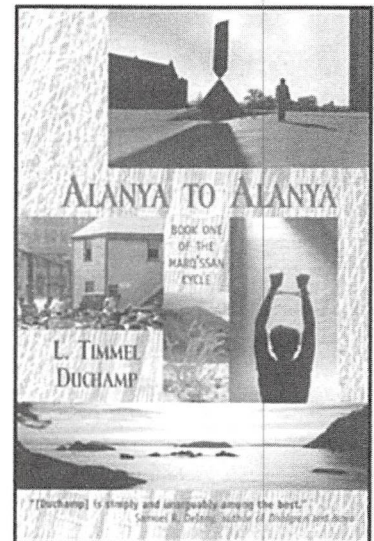
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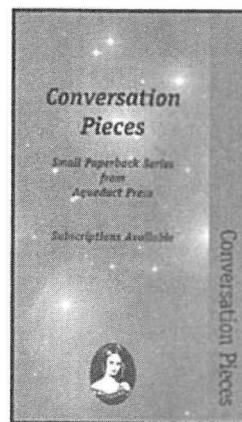
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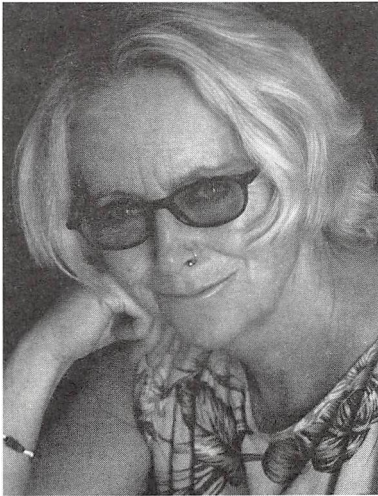
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Gwyneth Jones

An Appreciation

by L. Timmel Duchamp



Who is Gwyneth Jones? What is she? Until I met her, Gwyneth Jones and her work, however open and straightforward she has always aimed to be, seemed a mystery to me.

I first met Gwyneth in the flesh only last October, but I've spent many years coming to know her through her published work, beginning with the strange and wonderful *Divine Endurance* and its sequel, *Flowerdust*. I read *Escape Plans* around the time everyone started hyping the personal liberation to be found in cyborg existence and decided then and there that she was beyond brilliant. I expected her next work to be sharp enough to cut myself on and she didn't disappoint me: that's exactly how I'd characterize the White Queen trilogy.

Next came my acquaintance with Gwyneth Jones, the critic and thinker. This began with her essays in *The New York Review of Science Fiction* and continued with essays in a variety of other venues and her posts to the fem-sf list. Her collection of nonfiction, *Deconstructing the Starships*, only made me want more, as has every essay I've read that she's written since then.

But *then* came my acquaintance with Gwyneth Jones, the professional writer. In September 2003, to my astonishment and joy, she agreed to let me consider an unpublished novel manuscript that proved to be perfect for Aqueduct Press. In preparing the novel for publication, we worked at a pace I now know is unlikely ever to be matched by another Aqueduct project. Gwyneth was meticulous, quick, and competent, turning around queries and edits of the text within days of receiving them. Her every communication was unfailingly calm and considered. Just a couple of months ago her novel won the Philip K. Dick Award and was short-listed for the Tiptree. Without question, Gwyneth Jones is an editor's dream of a writer.

Finally, though, came my meeting with Gwyneth Jones, the flesh-and-blood human being. Last October she, Eileen Gunn, and I made a ten-day West Coast book tour. I can think of many people with whom I could not stand to spend a couple of weeks in close quarters on a road trip; but Gwyneth was a perfect traveling companion: always considerate, always rolling with the punches, always thinking ahead. And when her jet lag began to wear off, her sense of humor came out, shining through like the sun after a long, weary temperature inversion, especially when she was sampling (or in one case refusing to drink, on the grounds that it looked disgusting) the local beers along the way.

As for elucidating the mystery of Gwyneth Jones: her essays attest to the fearless boldness of her sharp mind; and yet I knew from our years together on the fem-sf list that she dislikes making trouble and putting herself at the center of controversy. One finds traces of this ambivalence not only in her fiction, but also in her personality. I think, though, that I finally made sense of the mystery when I encountered it in real life. Gwyneth combines

within herself an extraordinarily large and clear-eyed vision of the world and its workings, a love of that same world, and the humble sense of being one human among many, in which every person really, truly counts. While the quality and integrity of her mind generate constant challenges to the ruling mediocrity, her personal modesty maintains an exemplary sense of perspective. She and her work balance on a knife's edge with a quiet grace that effaces the accomplishment (thus transforming it into a mystery). I honor and admire her profoundly.

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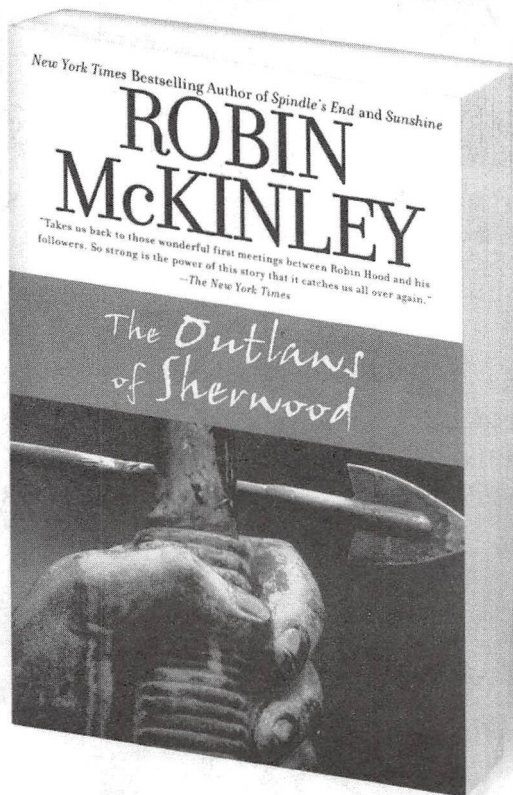
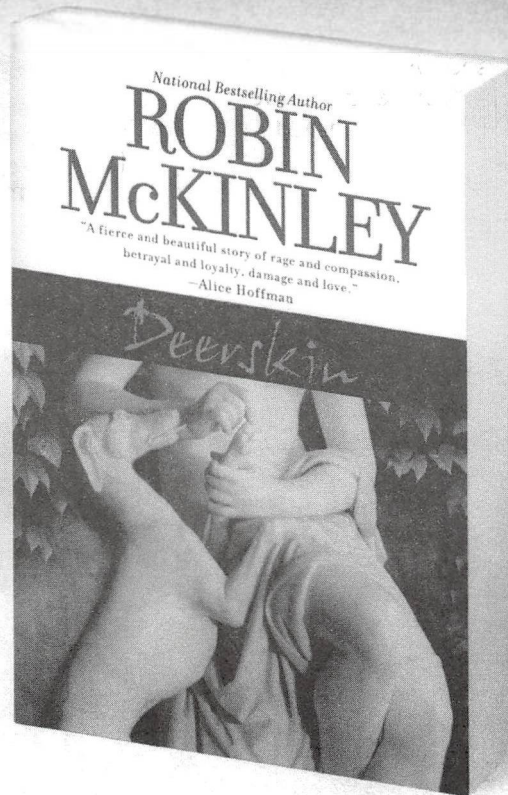
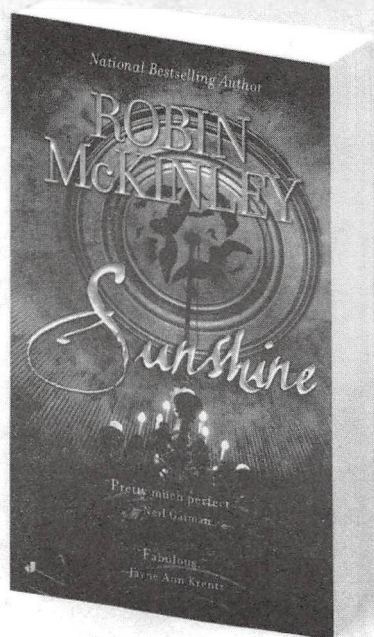


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Robin McKinley

APPRECIATION

By Peter Dickinson

I am doing this *faut de mieux*. Robin didn't want to strain any of her friendships by asking someone else to do the dismal chore (as she saw it). Spouses, of course, are different. So here are some bits and pieces from fourteen years of marriage.

One of Robin's friends says that her "Interest" control has no "Dabble" setting. If it isn't switched off she goes the whole hog. Take gardening. She came to England from Maine, where the frost gets a foot into the ground for several months most winters, many plants we take for granted in England can't be grown at all, and they say roses are annuals. She joined me in a largish Victorian house—you can imagine one of Trollope's archdeacons raising a dozen or so children in it—with a couple of acres of garden. I thought I was doing well to have seventy-odd varieties of rose. For Robin this was mere dabbling. Within a couple of years she'd upped the count to five hundred, with a rose library to match.

This is another facet of her enthusiasms. She needs not only to indulge in them to the hilt and beyond, but to know all, and more than all, that can be known about

them. In a remarkably short time she was able to discuss roses with real experts without making a fool of herself.

Obviously this passion for facts is a plus when it comes to literary research. (Myself, I lack it entirely. I tend to make my facts up as the story demands it and then, once I've got something on paper, find out if they're true.) But it does have its downside. There was a point at which she wanted to know a bit about Scottish crofting methods in the seventeenth century for a book she was thinking of writing, and for a brief while there seemed to be a possibility of her taking sheep-shearing lessons and keeping a couple of sheep in among the roses to practice on. I don't know what the sheep would have made of it. Taken it in their stride, very likely, the way our dogs do with the whole literature business. They get fidgety if we aren't at our desks at the proper time, with them snoring away in their corner to stimulate production.

I don't know what's happened to the book in question. Somewhere in her mind there is a store of as-yet-unrealised book notions. I see it as a mysterious dark

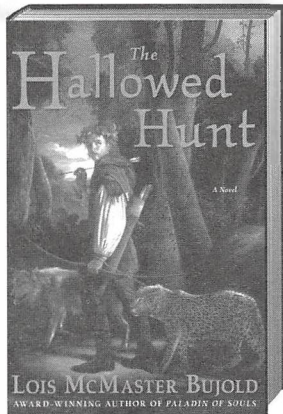
pool in an abandoned fish-farm, where this forgotten brood survive, feeding on heaven-knows-what detritus of her busy imagination, until every now and then one of them bursts out and leaps into her lap.

She doesn't need to go and fish for it. It comes to her. With a vengeance. *Sunshine* began life as a possible short story for the *Fire* volume of our *Elementals* series (vampires burst into flames at the touch of sunlight) but in about the time it would take me to write one draft of a short novel it had transmuted into this amazing, rich, complex, thrilling, fully-imagined, four-hundred page comedy of the macabre.

The fish, of course, are unbidable. There are periods when you could stare at that dark surface (supposing you could get there) and not be aware that even a tadpole lived beneath it. This can be very frustrating. Like her other readers I get itchy with impatience waiting for the next one.

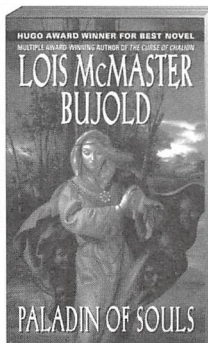
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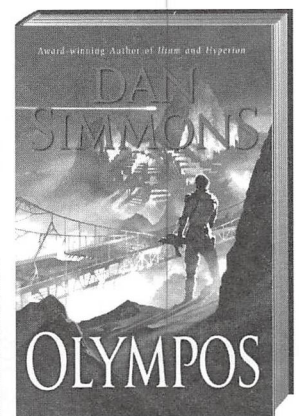
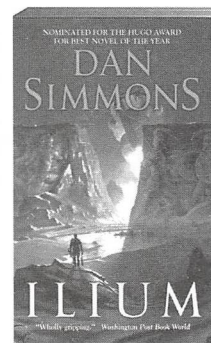
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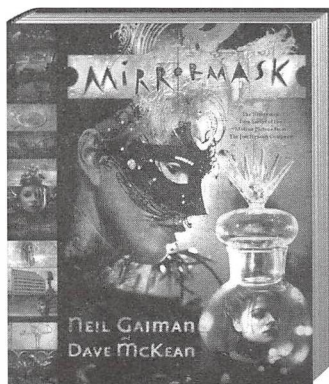
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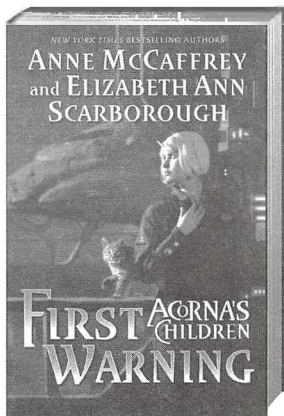
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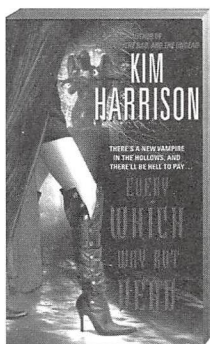
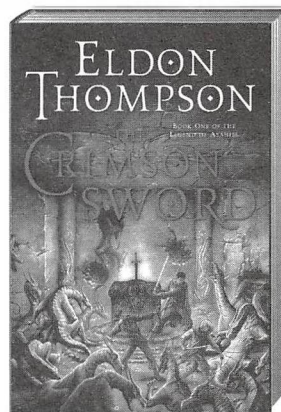
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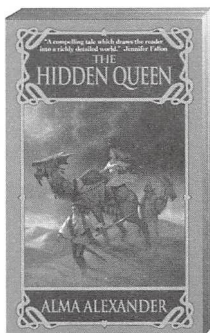
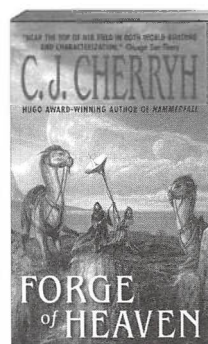
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- "A Knot in the Grain", *A Knot in the Grain And Other Stories*, Greenwillow Books, hc (1995); HarperTrophy, pb (1995)
- "The Healer", *A Knot in the Grain And Other Stories*, Greenwillow Books, hc (1995); HarperTrophy, pb (1995)
- "The Stagman", *A Knot in the Grain And Other Stories*, Greenwillow Books, hc (1995); HarperTrophy, pb (1995)
- "Buttercups", *A Knot in the Grain And Other Stories*, Greenwillow Books, hc (1995); HarperTrophy, pb (1995)
- "Touk's House", *A Knot in the Grain And Other Stories*, Greenwillow Books, hc (1995); HarperTrophy, pb (1995)
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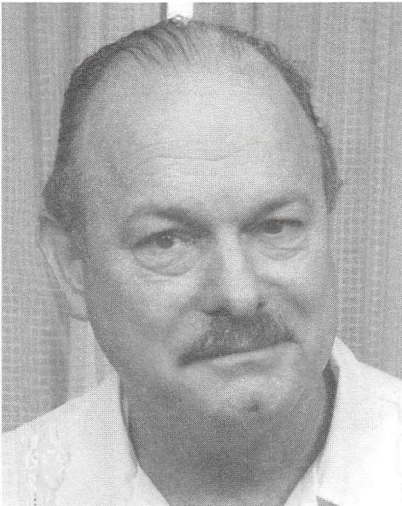
Other Short Fiction

- In *Strange Dreams*, Stephen R. Donaldson ed., Spectra, pb (1993)

The 2004 James Tiptree, Jr. Award

Camouflage

Joe Haldeman, Ace Books, 2004



Haldeman is a Hemingway scholar, and it shows in the elegance of his minimalist prose in this

thought-provoking book. In the best tradition of “hard” sf, Haldeman mixes scientific speculation with purely human “what if?” in wondering what would happen if a shape-shifting alien predator became, essentially, human? This book explores the human condition as thoroughly as any literary work, with understanding of gender at the crux of that understanding. For me it was one of the best science fiction books I have read in years. [CT]

An ageless, sexless entity who can take any form is at first indifferent to

gender; as it grows more human, the choice becomes more important to it; it ends up a woman by preference. If gender isn't the central concern of this novel, it's near the center, and the handling of it is skillful, subtle, and finely unpredictable. [UKL]

I like the problem-solving: how do we figure problems out and how do people relate to others, how do they understand themselves and others and even figure out that some of their instinctive (or learned) sexual responses are not healthy ones. [MM]

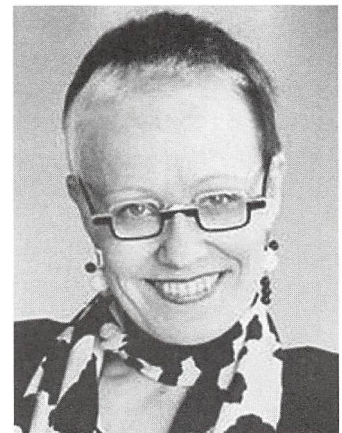
Not Before Sundown, (U.S. title: *Troll: A Love Story*)

Johanna Sinisalo, Grove Press, 2004

A deft novel of how human society is ruled by complex territorial relationships. In particular, Sinisalo reveals the life of the human male as closely as zoologists/biologists do chimpanzee social groups, only she does it through a quick-paced story of gay bars, advertising agencies and veterinarians. Does it matter who the king of the urban jungle is, when a real live troll cub turns up on the doorstep of a lovelorn 30-year-old photographer? Well written and affecting. [CT]

The subject is the dehumanisation of the Other—a great subject. It may be the fault of the translation, but the apparent gendering of the trolls as all male sentimentalises what might have been a more powerful story. Still, very much worth looking at. [UKL]

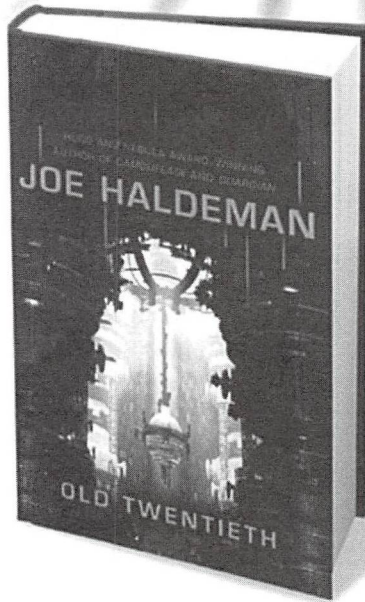
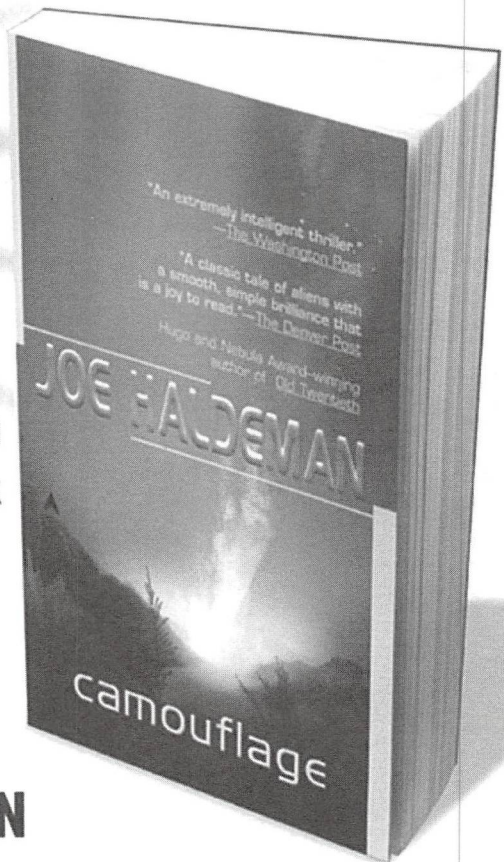
This one has grown on me, perhaps, the most out of any of the books read. The excellent world-building and intriguing use of pheromones really impressed me. The troll's own gender issues were interesting, as a kind of unspeakable Other. [AD]



I always wondered what happened to changelings when they grew up, both the humans in Fairyland and the trolls coping with humans.

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Camouflage

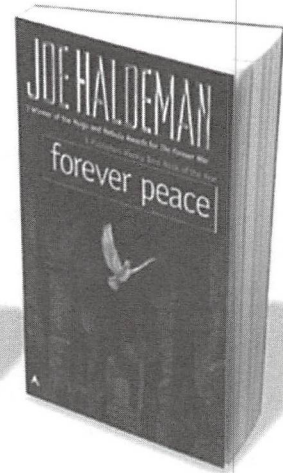
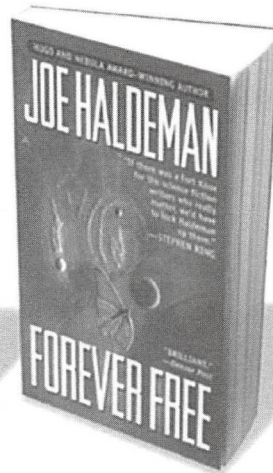
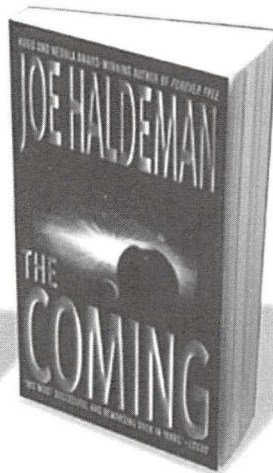
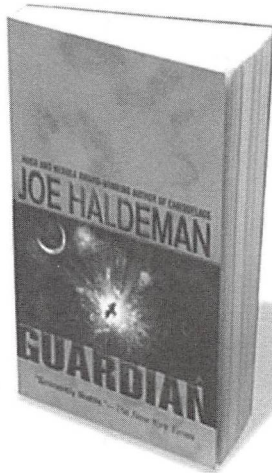
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This book retells troll stories, with some major twists, in the context of the current commercialization of sexuality in jean ads and picture book brides/sex slavery. [MM]

The two books stand completely opposed in so many ways—you could

Short List

Little Black Book of Stories

A. S. Byatt, Chatto and Windus 2003; Knopf 2004

None of the five stories bend gender very far—unless a woman turning bit by jeweled bit into a troll counts, which I think it might, as troll sexuality is either nonexistent or a very open question . . . But Byatt handles relationships in a way that I think is essentially tiptroid. The stories are adventurous, risk-taking (at least once to the point of falling flat on the face), nervy, savvy, genuinely imaginative, and very, very well told. [UKL]

Beautiful, haunting stories that thoroughly have gender issues inhabiting them. I particularly liked “The Pink Ribbon” and “The Thing in the Forest.” [AD]

All of the stories are beautifully written; the use of the fantastic in “The Pink Ribbon” & “Stone Woman” gives an original and interesting exploration of how cultural interactions affect the way we perceive gender in ourselves and others. [MM]

Love’s Body, Dancing in Time

L Timmel Duchamp, Aqueduct Press 2004

I see most gender issues as cultural and the evocative details in “The Gift” remind me that aspects of gender,

almost say they define the opposite edges of what is conceivable for the Tiptree. Haldeman, the well-known, Hemingwayesque, male, very American, hard sf writer at one end, and Sinisalo, the European, not-well-known (in the US and within our genre, I mean), female

sexuality and love that I sometimes take for granted are actually societal assumptions. [MM]

“The Heloise Archive” startled in how effortlessly it shapeshifts in all of its textual patterns—which are embedded in gender exploration. The narrative structure is brilliant, archetypal and clumsy at the same time. But I think it’s intentionally clumsy and archetypal and a brilliant attempt at trying to create a new type of story where gender transgression inhabits. [AD]

“All of Us Can Almost...”

Carol Emshwiller, Scifi.com, 11/17/04

A hilarious riff on the human condition. Power plays and sexual strut. And what about hard wiring? The story could be read as a revenge story on stupid males, but I think that would miss the point of this glorious flight of fantasy. [JC]

Sea of Trolls

Nancy Farmer, Atheneum 2004

Published as Young Adult, a genre we ought to keep an eye on. Tiptroid mainly in one character, a girl whom the protagonist and the reader think is a boy for quite a while, largely because she wants so much to be one and is so angry at not being one—a keen and canny portrait. Not world-

contemporary fantasy writer at the other. Hmm, and we have the male writer creating a female protagonist (well, eventually female) and the female writer creating a male protagonist. That clicks in my head as a balance I would enjoy. [CT]

shaking gender invention, but an unpretentious, slyly edgy presentation of transgendering without surgery or sf elements. [UKL]

The aspects of “gendered jobs” in early history are an interesting addition to this YA novel. I love the little surprise about verse at the end. [MM]

Stable Strategies and Others

Eileen Gunn, Tachyon Press 2004

Gunn doesn’t address gender as a central issue in these stories, but it’s there, in the title story, in “Nirvana High,” and others, and the take on it is marvelously dry and sly. [UKL]

Grunge as a curriculum in “Nirvana High” by Gunn and Leslie What—what makes this story work in a Tiptroid fashion is the hard-to-do depiction of teenagers with gifts, and using the ultra-male grunge music as a lens into this society and into how femininity is constructed. Probably the faintest “pulse” of Tiptroid materials of any of my shortlisters, but it’s there, and seamlessly embedded in the narrative. [AD]

Life

Gwyneth Jones, Aqueduct Press 2004

From a conversation early in the book: “Sex is in everything. I didn’t put it there. The most significant

thing in your entire social and cultural life is your assigned gender. Everything else comes after that fact, including your relationship with technology." In many different ways, this novel examines how gender affects our lives, our relationships with friends and children, our jobs, etc. The scientific discussions work as metaphors for gender and sexual issues. [MM]

The main characters are moved through their paces in order to present the story of genes and chromosomes and the possibility of sexual shift in the growing embryo. Woven through that story is the woman, Ramone, who describes in heated hyperbole the contemporary fault-line of the sexual divide. Anna is obsessive: she often talks about her work to her partner Spence. In another conversation

where she's been drawing triggers of regulatory proteins, he adds his expertise: "Well whadd'ya know. This is Boolean Algebra. These are logic gates!" So when the A1 SURI (who had joked that she should have been named GAIA) was killed, it's an emotional blow. "Yeah," said Anna. "You can clone her. But it won't be the same person." The most interesting character to move through the social politics of this book is Ramone who, at one point, suggests that Anna was right: "Numbers were everything. You can regard what went on in the battle of the sexes as a chemical reaction, a fractional distillation... You could show how feminism in the classical model was doomed..." Ramone "set up camp on the border, on the actual fault-line of the Great

Divide..." and lived her life accordingly. [JC]

"Kissing Frogs"

Jaye Lawrence, *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, May 2004

Short, light, deft, elegant (and the author's first published story); one of the few magazine stories we read that really, truly fit the Tiptree guidelines. [UKL]

A pleasing after-dinner mint of a story (I don't mean that as a slur) that is very funny and does exactly what it sets out to do. [AD]

I almost always like "revisions" of a well-known tale. This whimsical version of the frog who can change into a prince with a kiss—told through the medium of "looking for a partner" ads—made me smile and stop to think about gender issues in our society. [MM]

Long List

"The Other Angelas"

Christopher Barzak,
<http://www.pindelyboz.com/cbangelas.htm>

Only semi-tiptroid, but it's a brilliant and charming story. [UKL]

"This Tragic Glass,"

Elizabeth Bear, *Scifiction*, April 7, 2004

What if we could determine the biological gender of poets based on something measurable in their words? Even if that poet's outwardly expressed gender differed? This story was part Shakespeare In Love part Connie Willis' Fire Watch, and anyone who is a sucker for "writer stories" will like it, too. [CT]

A relatively straightforward but intricate

story with sound scholarship and moving characterizations. Keats is kind of a bore, but on the whole, this story strikes at the heart of how gender informs authorship, and vice versa. [AD]

"Burning Day"

Glenn Grant, *Island Dreams: Montreal Writers of the Fantastic*, ed. by Claude Lalumiere (Vehicule Press)

I love a story that goes right through exploring what it means to be male or female and ends up getting at what it means to be human. This is a stylish, action-laden science fiction story, not a navel-gazer. [CT]

A well-plotted story in Hardboiled Mode—people

smoking cigarettes even though they're androids, and cracking wise, and driving cars in cities, all very TV-cop show. More about species than gender, but has an original twist in the emphasis on the desire/compulsion to reproduce one's kind. [UK]

An interesting examination of sexuality and gender—how do expectations still influence "post-humans"—with film noir detective-story tropes. [MM]

Unspeakable Vitrine

Victoria Garcia, *Clawfoot Bathdog*, 2004

To me, the story that qualifies this uneven, entertaining collection as of interest to Tiptreers is "Wally's Porn," which is funny and touching. [UKL]

“Anthropology” is a fun look at relationships too. [MM]

Hopeful Monsters

Hiromi Goto, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2004

Goto writes with vigor and energy, in a voice very much her own. “Night” and “Tales from the Breast,” are both real Tiptroid fantasies, though you mightn’t think so till right towards the end of both. [UKL]

Mortal Love

Elizabeth Hand, William Morrow, 2004

A gorgeous and rococo (at times) set piece of a novel—could have used more exploration of the vampiric femme fatale for Tiptree purposes. [AD]

Inventing Memory

Anne Harris, TOR, 2004

A message of hope about the possibility of inventing a new world by understanding one’s own history and the history of the larger world. . . Goddesses in a science fiction context. [MM]

Even the Stones, Marie Jakober (2004, revised from the 1993 Gullveig Books edition of High Kamilan) No gender bending, but a serious, realistic, and grown-up novel of male-female power relationships, which is so unusual in “high fantasy” as to be practically invisible to many readers. [UKL]

River of Gods

Ian McDonald, Simon & Shuster, 2004

“Nutes,” a third sex, have had their sex organs removed and a sex-command centre placed in subtle ridges down “yt’s arms. The same Dream Surgeon who

performed these operations also does operations for AIs, called Aeais. The plot works interestingly around the world of Nutes and Aeais and humans plugging into the Aeai’s communication lines by “lighthoeks.” [JC]

In addition to looking at how women might fare in India when the male/female ratio has become skewed with so many more males than females, a whole new gender is possible, surgically brought about. [MM]

Sleep

Kat Meads, Livingston Press,

This is a fierce, unrepentantly experimental, somewhat raw novel about motherhood in a highly gray utopia. The societies depicted are pitch perfect and the entire narrative is filled with edginess and a great sadness as we see how families become molten in a postmodern economy. [AD]

Monstrous Regiment

Terry Pratchett, Harper Collins, 2004

Terry Pratchett is very good at making fun of things, and in this book he makes fun of archaic gender roles through a tried and true method: by dressing up his heroine as a male and marching her off to war. Only it being Pratchett, the farce escalates as quickly as the war, and we soon discover that not only are the other soldiers in the “monstrous regiment” vampires and trolls and the like, most of them are cross-dressing too. It’s vintage Pratchett, which you will either love or hate depending on whether he is funny or tiresome to you. Now if only we could be so sure that those archaic gender roles

are actually a thing of the past. [CT]

Some nice perceptions of maleness and femaleness; genuinely funny when not merely facetious; charming and plausible when not glib and overconfident.

Heterosexuality is assumed as the norm, to the point of sniggers and cute innuendoes about homosexuals. Is this 1944? That, and a certain artificiality or calculation in the central gender concern, are bad flaws in a good read. [UKL]

“Romance for Augmented Trio”

Tom Purdon, *Asimov’s SF*, Feb. 04

—feels almost like a challenge story to lead to this concluding statement: “...the obsolete human and the future human had to start reconstructing the relationship they had been fashioning before the aberrant human interrupted them. [JC]

“Time’s Swell”

Victoria Somegyi & Kathleen Chamberlain, *Strange Horizons*, 11/15/04

An eerie, very disturbing piece about prostitution and mysterious time travelers. Maybe a little bit too elliptical but the characters’ dulled reactions spoke a lot to the objectification of bodies. [AD]

Tonguecat

Peter Verhehst, Translated from Dutch by Shery Marx Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2003

This novel is structured with colliding, disorienting stories which act like a string of chants to keep us from the base-line of the book: the awfulness of war. And there’s an exploration of gender in the stress of this

urban violence: Ulrike, Prometheus's lover and guide through the underworld, is also Tonguecat the prostitute who can tell and retell stories. [JC]

Master of None

N. Lee Wood, Warner, 2004

A gender-exploration tale in the classic mold: lone man on the planet of women.

Special Mention

Changing Ones

Will Roscoe, St Martin's Griffin, 2000

—Nonfiction that would be of interest to anybody interested in the Tiptree. It is about “berdache”—men who took/take women's roles and women who took/take men's roles, or as Roscoe calls it, third and fourth genders, in Native American societies and cultures, from first contact through the present. I have never read anything that gave me so many and such useful different ways to think about sex/gender. (It involves in fact a total, non-European, non-binary

Wood manages to find a few patches of fresh ground here, in a branch of the sf genre that was once a staple but now is rarely explored without irony—that of the self-consciously Utopian world. If you like a dash of up-front politics in your science fiction, this book is for you. [CT]

This novel reminds me how much our beliefs about gender are cultural—a role

redefinition of gender.) It is extremely well written; the scholarship and research is as careful as it is readable. It is generous-hearted (he never sneers at anybody because they didn't know what we know, or were benighted for one reason or another). It is tough-minded. It is a splendid book. [UKL]

Stars in my Pockets like Grains of Sand

Samuel R. Delany, 20th anniversary republication, Wesleyan University Press, 2004

The prologue has images that have stayed in my head since I first read it (my memory was accurate when I

reversal of power from male to female with some subtle side plots and interesting minor characters. [MM]

Epic planetary gender-reversal with good world-building and empathic characters of all stripes. But the main character is straight out of central casting for Male Scientist Who Saves Planet. [AD]

reread it too). The rest of the book will “play with your head”—a culture with the ability to decode your perfect sex partner down to precise details and what an amazing variety of sex and gender partners they have! “When there are so many paths and parameters along which and around which women— young, old, human, evelm, male, female, and neuter— can develop both community and communion to be passed on to others, why should you restrict yourselves to direct egg-and-sperm relations?” [MM]



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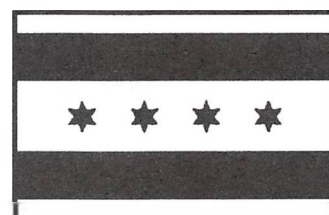
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