

Burgess's _ A _ C _ l _ o _ c _ k _ w _ o _ r _ k _ O _ r _ a _ n _ g _ e. Due to my vacation, I forgot to ask

the person who volunteered to write the blurb for it until about an hour before I needed it, so as punishment, I get to write it.

While most people know _ A _ C _ l _ o _ c _ k _ w _ o _ r _ k _ O _ r _ a _ n _ g _ e from the Kurbick film

version, the book's contents may lead to some totally different

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discussions. For example, Burgess is an accomplished linguist who invented a whole "futurespeak" for the book _ A _ C _ l _ o _ c _ k _ w _ o _ r _ k _ O _ r _ a _ n _ g _ e,

a futurespeak based on a conglomeration of English and Russian.

(Okay, so he didn't predict the fall of the Soviet Union.) He was

also called in to create the prehistoric language in _ Q _ u _ e _ s _ t _ f _ o _ r

_ F _ i _ r _ e, and most recently wrote the English subtitles for the French

film _ C _ y _ r _ a _ n _ o _ d _ e _ B _ e _ r _ g _ e _ r _ a _ c. His translation, in addition to being perfectly understandable, maintains the same meter and rhyme scheme as the original Rostand, a great accomplishment.

(Of course, the topic is dystopias rather than linguistics, but you write about what you know.) [-ecl]

2. Our local news reported that Mattel Toys did a poll on whether Barbie should continue with Ken or get a new boyfriend. 64% of the respondents said Barbie should stick with Ken, "the boyfriend she has been going with for thirty years." It leads you to wonder how much of modern behavior kids pick up from their toys. Here the two have been "a thing" for three decades and Ken is still not ready "to commit." And why should he? After all, he still looks youthful and healthy. This guy is the archetypal playboy. Have you ever seen him with a briefcase accessory? No. How about a PC? This guy has nothing to do but have a good time. Life is one long party for him. He was engineered as a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, rich teenager who little girls across the country can dress and undress. This guy lacks for nothing. Well, maybe one thing. I guess what made Barbie so popular was that she was the first doll that had, well, features. She was developed to be developed, so to speak. I have it on good authority, however, that Ken was not given equal accuracy. Which may be why after thirty

years he still is not ready to commit.

3. Once again, the Holmdel Science Fiction Library is looking for a home. If you have space for the large file cabinet that is its home (or have extra shelf space--a _ l_ o_ t of extra shelf space), please contact Rebecca Schoenfeld (HO 2K-430, 949-6122, homxb!btfsd). [-ecl]

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Man has reached his present state through the process of evolution. The last great step in evolution was the mutational process that doubled the size of the brain, about one million years ago; this led to the origin of man. It is this change in the brain that permits the inheritance of acquired characteristics of a certain sort--the inheritance of knowledge, of learning, through communication from one hum being to another.... Man's great power of thinking, remembering, and communicating are responsible for the evolution of civilization.

-- Linus Pauling

EARTHGRIP by Harry Turtledove
Del Rey, 1991, ISBN 0-345-37239-5, \$4.99.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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If Tony Lewis ever updates his _ A_ n_ n_ o_ t_ a_ t_ e_ d
_ B_ i_ b_ l_ i_ o_ g_ r_ a_ p_ h_ y_ o_ f
_ R_ e_ c_ u_ r_ s_ i_ v_ e_ S_ c_ i_ e_ n_ c_ e_ F_ i_ c_ t_ i_ o_ n, here is
another addition, for this is a
novel in which science fiction itself plays a role. Well, more
accurately, this is a novelette, a short story, and a novel, with
science fiction playing a major role in two of them (and Sherlock
Holmes filling that category in the third).

In "The G'Bur" (originally titled "6+" and appearing in the
September 1987 _ A_ n_ a_ l_ o_ g), we meet Jennifer Logan, a student of Middle

English science fiction--like the works of Robert Heinlein. (The story is set in the future, year unspecified, but everyone speaks Spanglish.) She decides to travel with the Traders into space to see firsthand the current reality in order to compare it with the fictional predictions of the old stories. And in the process she gets to use some tricks she learned from reading these old books, sort of like someone today using a Trojan horse to get into an army base. Well, that's not quite fair, because we expect most people to be familiar with the story of the Trojan horse, but there's no reason to expect aliens to be familiar with Heinlein.

The second story, "The Atheters" (originally "Nothing in the Night-time" in the March 1989 A n a l o g) uses a Sherlock Holmes story as the key to the solution, but the whole thing is a bit too obvious. Still, as an interlude between the two longer pieces it provides a brief diversion.

The main part of the book is "The Foitani" (originally serialized as "The Great Unknown" in A n a l o g from April 1991 to June 1991). Here we finally have a chance to see Jennifer use her talents in more than just a cursory fashion. It all works fine, until once again she starts using her knowledge of science fiction. And then it falls apart, because it's all too pat and neat and easy. The result is that the whole story ends up sounding very self-congratulatory: "We always knew that science fiction was better than all that other stuff, and here's proof." (It doesn't surprise me at all that these stories appeared in A n a l o g; they're just the sort of thing Schmidt prints.)

On the positive side, Jennifer Logan is a female protagonist who gets by on her brains, not her beauty. Turtledove describes her as "blond and beautiful" (making the eye-catching cover at least reasonable accurate), but also points out that all humans probably look equally ugly to aliens anyway, and it is with aliens that Jennifer is dealing. And Turtledove is a competent author, so the

stories are readable and for the most part enjoyable. But the stress ultimately placed on the value of science fiction undermines them. (If the novels Jennifer uses in "The Foitani" were that convincing, we'd have a lot fewer problems now on this planet than we do.) If

this were the summer, I'd say this would be an okay "beach book"-- acceptable for passing the time, but nothing more.

(It's a refreshing note of honesty that Turtledove, or Del Rey, or somebody, listed the previous appearances of the stories on the copyright page. All too often this information is hidden from the reader, and given the title changes here, without this information the reader would have _ n_ o way of knowing this was not the first appearance of this work.)

