



It seems to me that if we missed aquatic 3D navigation all that much, then there would be much more interest in scuba diving than in flight. Also, our current physiology limits us rather severely on the range of pressure we can tolerate

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without getting nitrogen narcosis or suffering the bends... if we were aquatic, our third dimension was probably severely limited (or we lost pressure adaptiveness much quicker than the genetic memory).

How 'bout this for an alternate hypothesis: we were tree-dwelling apes, and we like to re-live the aspects of safety from predators and dominance (seeing more than others can see) experienced at the top of a nice, tall tree.

Mark B. Mueller (mtuxj!mbm, HO 2J-122B, (908) 949-8261)

Well, I am guessing on all of this. I would say that 1) scuba is popular and 2) it might be more popular, but going swimming with scuba (where did that word come from anyway?) implies going into another medium. The real feeling of flying is to just to be able to lift off from where you are and float around. A whale knows that feeling. We do not but might have at some time.

As to the narcosis question, that only comes into play if you go fair distance in the third dimension. The aquatic lizards of the Galapagos probably know the feeling of gliding, but do not have to worry about the bends.

The alternate hypothesis is interesting and may account for why we dream of falling, but the dream of flying seems to be one of moving and gliding, not simply one of being high up.

This could explain why some people are born with webbing (of some sort) between there fingers and toes. Who knows?

Rich Pyburn

I guess the question is whether other primates have the same thing

happen.

Also we had a counter-opinion on A\_l\_a\_d\_d\_i\_n:

I just got done reading your review of A\_l\_a\_d\_d\_i\_n in VOID issue 23 and would like to express a counter view. I went to see the movie over Thanksgiving weekend with my wife, three kids (ages 9, 7, & 4), my parents, and my sister and her son. We all thoroughly enjoyed the movie and plan to see it again, maybe around Christmas. There are very few movies that I enjoy enough that I'm sorry I've already seen them and won't be able to experience them for the first time again (S\_t\_a\_r W\_a\_r\_s, R\_a\_i\_d\_e\_r\_s\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_L\_o\_s\_t\_A\_r\_k, M\_o\_o\_n\_s\_t\_r\_u\_c\_k, to name a few), but A\_l\_a\_d\_d\_i\_n is one of them. I admit to never reading the "real" Aladdin story, and that Disney probably does take large liberties when telling its version of the story, but nevertheless, Disney has done an amazing job at producing an

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animated feature that the "whole" family can see and enjoy. If one can get over the fact the the Disney A\_l\_a\_d\_d\_i\_n is not the "real" A\_l\_a\_d\_d\_i\_n, I would rate this movie a +3. (I'm sure you must think my knuckles drag on the ground when I walk, but I had a great time at A\_l\_a\_d\_d\_i\_n.)

Craig McMurray

As for the knuckles thing, it got enough good reviews that I never think that. I gave my reasons for thinking what I did about the film. Your mileage may vary.

2. In response to several recent requests about the book discussions, we are going to try to pick books that are more available (preferably in paperback). Of the next few listed, Drexler's E\_n\_g\_i\_n\_e\_s\_o\_f\_C\_r\_e\_a\_t\_i\_o\_n (a non-fiction book), Hogan's E\_n\_t\_o\_v\_e\_r\_s\_e, Harrison's W\_e\_s\_t\_o\_f\_E\_d\_e\_n, Kushner's T\_h\_o\_m\_a\_s\_t\_h\_e\_R\_h\_y\_m\_e\_r, Banks's U\_s\_e\_o\_f\_W\_e\_a\_p\_o\_n\_s, and Sheffield's S\_i\_g\_h\_t\_o\_f\_P\_r\_o\_t\_e\_u\_s are all available in paperback. (In addition, the Bassett Bookstore in East Brunswick has remaindered the hardcover for about the same price as the paperback would be.) The SF Club library in Middletown also has the Harrison. We will inform you if any of the

others become available in paperback, but in the mean time don't forget your public library. (I will report on library availability in a future issue.) [-ecl]

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A bore is a fellow talking who can change the subject back to his topic of conversation faster than you can change it back to yours.

-- Laurence J. Peter

PEGASUS IN FLIGHT by Anne McCaffrey  
A book review by Frank R. Leisti  
Copyright 1992 Frank R. Leisti

A short time ago, I reviewed the novel R\_o\_w\_a\_n by Anne McCaffrey and, while I thought that it was the first novel in the story, some kind reader pointed out my mistake. And so, when I found the novel P\_e\_g\_a\_s\_u\_s\_i\_n\_F\_l\_i\_g\_h\_t, I jumped at the opportunity to begin reading the early story of these exceptional people who with the power of their minds are able to manipulate matter as well as just read minds.

Given the premise that a mechanical/electrical device was built and it detected something occurring when certain people had episodes of some telepathy or clairvoyance, the foundation for P\_e\_g\_a\_s\_u\_s\_i\_n F\_l\_i\_g\_h\_t is laid. The time frame is just a little bit into the future, where mankind, suffering from the expanding global population is attempting to expand out into space.

The story deals with conflicts of both non-Talented and Talented people. The main focus of the story is with the youngsters--Peter and Tirla, who both come from different backgrounds and experiences. Peter, is a young boy, who was injured severely when a wall collapsed on him. He is totally paralyzed, except for the slightest of movements. The medical science of the future attempts to meet his needs for movement with an electrical device known as a body brace. This device sends electrical impulses into the body to cause muscular contractions, so that Peter can move--only it causes him extreme pain when he tries. Tirla, an orphaned girl, is an unregistered person, because parents are only allowed two children before sterilization. However, the ethnic culture of Tirla's parents shun the government, and so many children are born--some with the only distinction of being money for their parents later on--when they are sold to body brokers for human parts. Tirla, managing on her own, has various clients to whom she sells her services of thievery, information and translation.

Of course, there are the Talented people, who with their abilities are required for timely completion of the space ship--which is getting constructed in space. The non-Talented people require the services of the Talented kinetics--those people who can move objects, and yet they are unable to see or to understand the difficulties of the special needs of these Talented people.

The story expands the limits of Talents by integrating their abilities with that of electrical generators to push beyond their known limits. The personal interactions become tied between major players, as each side sets their own agenda, not wanting the other to gain advantage over them. To most, this story can be viewed as the typical power struggle, and yet, for those who read this story, the fight of human nature over adversity, the aspects of noble humanity shine forth in splendor from the most innocent of children.

If you have children, I would recommend reading this book to them, to show them and you that Talents are present in us all.

With the Leeper scale, I would rate this story as a fine +2 beginning to the saga of Rowan and Dama.

ARTIFICIAL THINGS by Karen Joy Fowler  
Bantam Spectra, ISBN 0-53-26219-X, 1992, \$4.99.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
Copyright 1992 Evelyn C. Leeper

I seem to be on a short fiction binge these days, this being the fourth consecutive collection/anthology I've reviewed. Maybe that's because so many novels seem to be padded-out shorter novels or even short stories. (This was certainly my objection to T\_h\_e\_H\_o\_l\_l\_o\_w\_M\_a\_n, the one science fiction novel I reviewed recently.) But short stories must of necessity be spare and economical. First of all, any padding is more evident. Secondly (and I suppose this may sound crass), short stories are bought by the word, and few editors are willing to shell out extra money for padding. In any case, I suppose I have a special fondness for short fiction and look at the novella as where "lengthy" background and characterization can be done. Yes, novels can be good, even long novels. Yes, L\_e\_s\_M\_I\_s\_e\_r\_a\_b\_l\_e\_s is a classic. But though they may win Hugos, few writers are one.

So I found the foreword to A\_r\_t\_i\_f\_i\_c\_i\_a\_l\_T\_h\_i\_n\_g\_s of particular interest, because Fowler also prefers short fiction and even got a reputation as "the person who wouldn't write a novel for Bantam." (She eventually did write a novel, but it serves to highlight that many publishers want writers to write novels because they sell better than collections.)

The thirteen stories here are a mix of old and new--or at least were when the collection was first published in 1986. Four had appeared in I\_s\_a\_c\_A\_s\_i\_m\_o\_v'\_s\_S\_c\_i\_e\_n\_c\_e\_F\_i\_c\_t\_i\_o\_n\_M\_a\_g\_a\_z\_i\_n\_e, three in T\_h\_e\_M\_a\_g\_a\_z\_i\_n\_e\_o\_f\_F\_a\_n\_t\_a\_s\_y\_&\_S\_c\_i\_e\_n\_c\_e\_F\_i\_c\_t\_i\_o\_n, one in W\_r\_i\_t\_e\_r\_s\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_F\_u\_t\_u\_r\_e, and five were original for the volume. The latter category includes "Contention" and "Other Planes," which are not science fiction at all, and "The Bog People," which is just barely science fiction (by means of a super-weapon which is not necessary to the plot). My suspicion is that these are original to this collection because the market for non-science-fiction short fiction is even worse than the market for short fiction in the science fiction area.

Fowler has been labeled as feminist writer. If that means she uses women as the main characters of her stories, it's true, and she does talk about the treatment of women by society and by men in society in stories such as "The Lake Was Full of Artificial Things," "Face Value," "Contention," and "The View from Venus." But she also looks critically (in both an analytic and a censorious sense) at how women treat women in "Recalling Cinderella," "Other Planes," and "The Bog People." These themes are carried through in her other works as well: her best-known story is probably "The Faithful Companion at Forty," a look at how we marginalize the "other" by

making him or her merely an adjunct to the main character who is of course a perfect representative of the majority. (As they said about Ginger Rogers: "She did everything Fred Astaire did, and she did it backwards and in high heels." Everyone knows Sir Edmund Hilary, but what about Tenzing Norgay, who also climbed Everest--carrying Hilary's gear? What about Cedi Bombay, the first person to cross Africa both north-south and east-west? He gets forgotten while Sir Richard Burton gets the credit for finding the source of the Nile.)

Fowler's stories are not for everyone, and her research sometimes slips ("The Poplar Street Study" has at least one factual error and one extreme unlikelihood, though it's clear the story is intended more as a homage to its source than a serious work), but if you're looking for stories that examine how people relate to each other, I would strongly recommend \_ A \_ r \_ t \_ i \_ f \_ i \_ c \_ i \_ a \_ l \_ T \_ h \_ i \_ n \_ g \_ s .

THE CRYING GAME  
A film review by Mark R. Leeper  
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Capsule review: An IRA kidnapping leads to a chain of events that keeps both the characters and the audience guessing.  M o n a L i s  a director Neil Jordan has equaled or surpassed that film in one of the best movies of the year. Rating +3 (-4 to +4). See it before someone spoils it for you.

[Spoiler comments follow main review.]

At an amusement park in Northern Ireland, English soldier Jody (played by Forest Whitaker) has a good-looking local girl on his arm. They go off to be alone and suddenly Jody finds there are three men holding guns on him. The IRA has kidnapped Jody. They will kill him if the IRA prisoner held by the English is not released. Jody is brought to a hiding place. There he begins the slow task of picking out one of his captors and trying to make him an ally. He chooses Fergus (played by Stephen Rea). Jody shows Fergus a picture of his girlfriend Dil (played by Jaye Davidson). Little do Jody, Fergus, and Dil know how the one action has bound them together.



TheCryingGame is a film for you to go to see ... quickly. Don't read any more reviews. This is a tough film to review without revealing any of the plot twists. Word is going to get around soon about this film. See it first. And don't tell anyone else either.

TheCryingGame was written and directed by Neil Jordan, who previously directed and co-wrote MonaLisa. The similarities will be obvious. Each film has an intelligent script that lulls characters and audience alike into one set of assumptions, then turns those assumptions inside out. The two films have much the same visual style. Jaye Davidson and Cathy Tyson are both sexy and attractive in much the same way. In both cases the main character is a white male in love with the beautiful centerpiece of the film across racial lines. And in fact it seems unimportant that it is across racial lines, though each comes from a fairly racist culture. This film and MonaLisa each has a delightful sense of irony which in TheCryingGame extends to the music over the end credit sequence.

The two black stars both have to be surprisingly versatile in this film and each manages. Forest Whitaker (GoodMorning, Vietnam!; CriminalJustice; and ARageinHarlem) is an odd choice to play an English soldier. His accent rings very true to my admittedly non-British ears. Jaye Davidson's performance will be

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the best remembered of the film probably. The part calls for Dil to go through some major changes and Davidson is always to the mark.

TheCryingGame is certainly one of the best films of the year. I rate it a +3 on the -4 to +4 scale.

[Spoilers]

The film did not quite make sense in that neither of the people would have been sent to prison. In either case it was self-defense against a person who had been involved in a previous IRA killing.

