

fiction film. With OUTBREAK coming out this time of year, I am sure the Jewishness of the theme of this film will not be lost on many of the audience. First, we have a film with a Jewish action hero. Well, there have been a lot of films with Jewish action heroes like Kirk Douglas or Paul Newman. Or there are films with

THE MT VOID

Page 2

Jewish action heroes as characters, like BEN HUR or SAMSON AND THE SLAVE QUEEN. But leave us face it, these actors or characters may be Jewish, but they are not how Jews picture themselves. Dustin Hoffman, on the other hand, is just a bit nebbishy and that is just how Jews see themselves. He is short, funny-looking, and intellectual--in other words, about perfect as a Jewish action-hero role model. What's more, I am willing to bet it was Hoffman ad-libbing the line about his nose.

But there is something else that makes OUTBREAK a very Jewish film--I mean besides the fact that it was released just before Passover and talks about plagues. This whole concept of contamination is very much a Passover idea. You put together something that is Kosher for Passover with something that isn't, you got two things that aren't. "Wotsa mattah with you? You put the matzohs on the table???? I haven't cleaned the table yet!!!! There are bread crumbs on the table." "I don't see any bread crumbs on the table." "It doesn't matter what you see. We use the table for bread, there are crumbs on the table. You put the matzohs on the table. Now we gotta go get more matzohs." It may not sound so dramatic, but if you have to go get the matzohs it is. [-mrl]

2. In this issue I talk about disease and the very real possibility that at some point, maybe centuries in the future, we will face an epidemic of something we have no chance against. I am now going to blow all my credibility in one single very wild political statement that will sound like it is out of left field. I support the space program because in the **very** long run it will be the most important undertaking of our age. I support the space program because it hastens the day that we become a space-faring civilization. I support becoming a space-faring civilization

because it hastens the day, maybe several centuries in the future, that the human race can survive independently of the planet Earth. I support getting to the day that the human race can survive even without planet Earth because the day may come when a disease, or a celestial disaster, or a war using who knows what weapons, or an environmental disaster, or something we haven't yet conceived of takes that unpleasant choice out of our hands. Long-term survival of mankind may require that we don't tie our future too strongly to the planet Earth. [-mrl]

3. Here is a sort of a riddle, fellow science fictioners. I often look at people carrying books just to see where in the the books their bookmarks are. It is sort of an informal survey of how many people actually finish the books they start. I find that a very

THE MT VOID

Page 3

low proportion of the time do I see the bookmarks in the last third of the book. There is a special case of a book that people bought usually interested in the whole book, but nobody ever is reads the last third. There are books with appendices that you might not read in detail, but you would possibly read an appendix. The book I am thinking about neither the authors nor the publisher ever intended anyone to read the last third. I might see a bookmark sticking out of someplace in earlier part of the book, but would likely never see on placed in the last third. The riddle is to identify the book or any book (there may be more than one) with this property. [-mrl]

4. THE BOHR MAKER by Linda Nagata (Bantam Spectra, ISBN 0-553-56925-2, 1995, 325pp, US\$4.99) (a book review by Evelyn C. Leeper):

Linda Nagata is one of the (surprisingly) small number of Asian-Americans writing science fiction today. (Offhand, I can think of only three others.) THE BOHR MAKER is her first novel (though her short fiction has appeared previously), and this story, which

combines nano-technology and virtual reality concepts should fit right in with the current trends.

Which is, of course, a bit of the problem. Nagata is a good writer, but the ideas all seem recycled from other books. There's a space elevator, and a group that believes in the Gaia concept, and an underclass living in slum cities, a female member of whom gets hold of an advanced technology and becomes a sort of messiah, and politics around the Indian Ocean. (Having just read Neal Stephenson's THE DIAMOND AGE, perhaps I found this even more familiar than it might otherwise have been.)

Nagata's main character is Phousita, a young woman of the slums who lives with her "family" in an abandoned warehouse in a nameless city which the publicity material claims is in India, but by ethnic make-up seems more to be somewhere around what is now Malaysia, or perhaps Singapore. This sense of location is reinforced by the repressive government and strict punishment system. Phousita accidentally becomes "infected" with a "bug" that gives her healing powers even beyond what she realizes. But the bug is proscribed technology, breaking the chain of life by not just modifying an existing genotype, but by creating a new one. So Phousita is the object of pursuit of the government, as well as those who were releasing the bug in the first place.

As I noted, there are many similarities to Stephenson's DIAMOND AGE (as well as to many other "nanotech future" books). But Nagata's writing is not as dense as Stephenson's, making THE BOHR MAKER more accessible to readers. My main complaint would be that Nagata

starts out with a more interesting (to me) character than most in Phousita, then shifts the point of view to some more traditional (and less interesting) characters--the renegade scientist, the manipulative politician, and so on. I know you need these characters, but it seems a pity to me that Nagata spent so much time on them at the expense of her original character. Naturally, your opinion may differ, but in any case I would recommend THE BOHR MAKER for those who like the virtual-reality, nanotech sort of future.

* The other three Asian-American science fiction authors I could think of are Ted Chiang, Somtow Sucharitkul (a.k.a S. P. Somtow), and William F. Wu. [-ecl]

5. OUTBREAK (a film review by Mark R. Leeper):

Capsule: The first 80 minutes of this film are an accurate, frightening, and original look at an all too real threat, the possibility that an Ebola-like virus would get loose in the United States. But, unlike Robert Wise directing ANDROMEDA STRAIN, Wolfgang Petersen did not trust science and character to drive his story. He mires the final third in the cliches of an action film and betrays the power of his material. We have an interesting action thriller instead of a real classic. Rating: high +2 (-4 to +4). Some minor spoilers in the review and a separate article of (non-spoiler) comments on epidemic predictions follow the main body of the article.

The film starts with a quote saying that viruses pose the greatest threat to human existence on this planet. That is probably fairly accurate.

Hey, want to see something really scary? I am not talking scary because things jump out at you or actors wear plastic masks. I am talking scary because it is only too possible. It probably has already come near to happening in recent years. Most of OUTBREAK is a very credible extrapolation of what might well happen if a seriously dangerous virus got loose in this country. If Zaire Ebola had gotten loose close to home the events shown in OUTBREAK are really quite possible. In fact it is difficult to read the non-fiction books THE COMING PLAGUE by Laurie Garrett or THE HOT ZONE by Richard Preston without envisioning scenarios not unlike the one in this film.

As the film opens with an outbreak of a viral disease in Zaire in 1967, the U.S. Army's response to eliminate the disease is quick but effective. Twenty-eight years later an Army team from Fort Dietrich led by Dr. Sam Daniels (Dustin Hoffman) finds a new viral disease has broken out in the Motaba River Valley and dubs the disease Motaba. Even Daniels, who is used to working with the likes of Ebola, Lassa, and Hanta, is frightened by the virulence of Motaba. And even as he is returning home to report the terrible new disease, Motaba virus is traveling to the U.S. by its own route. And a disease with the virulence to infect 260,000,000 people in 48 hours and to kill them in not much more is loosed.

Daniels wants to pursue the new disease but is ordered off. Ironically, his ex-wife, Dr. Roberta Keough (Rene Russo), who works for the Centers for Disease Control, has an opportunity to investigate the same disease Sam has told her about. Daniels finds his strings being pulled by his superior officer, played by Morgan Freeman, and a higher-up general, played by Donald Sutherland, neither of whom want him working on the new virus. Sutherland is quick to call in drastic action to quarantined areas. "Be compassionate," he tells a Presidential commission on the crisis, "but be compassionate globally." What he sees as compassion on the global level is something very different on the local level. The film clearly doesn't agree with this policy, but under the circumstances he may be talking sense.

One problem with the script by Laurence Dworet and Robert Roy Pool is that it is all too obviously trying both to be realistic and at the same time to be an action film. The two just don't go that well together. *OUTBREAK* wastes time on developing the rocky relationship between the two divorced doctors. Then it wastes the last third of the film on an unlikely and gratuitous action story built around a surprisingly tired and over-used premise. It makes a human the villain as if the story did not have enough viral villains. And the human villain's motive is a strikingly overused cliché. More disappointing, the race to understand and control the new virus is diverted into a standard action-film chase. This takes time and emphasis away from more interesting questions such as how is it possible to maintain a strict quarantine on a town of 2600 people? When the chases are over it is all the harder to remember what set this story apart from so many similar action films.

It is a shock to see Dustin Hoffman in a science fiction film and one in which he plays an action hero, albeit a reluctant one. Donald Sutherland plays much the same character he played in *PUPPET MASTERS*, though he plays the character as seen from a different viewpoint. Rene Russo is competent and likable in her role, and it is nice to have a woman over thirty-five in a starring role, but she does not imbue her character with any real power. Curiously, for a German, director Wolfgang Petersen seems to have a need to

put action in a story that might work better as a more cerebral piece. That is a fault here even as it was with his ENEMY MINE.

This is a film I can well recommend for its first two-thirds and if you have come that far, at least you will not be bored when the film turns from extrapolation to action. But the final forty minutes or so has some serious sacrifices of logic for commerciality. Somebody apparently decided that the more interesting and more credible story would not sell. I was at times thinking this would be a strong +3, but it lost a point in the final reel. It remains a high +2 on the -4 to +4 scale. [-mrl]

6. The following are comments I made about OUTBREAK before seeing the film:

"Let me put it this way. In its present form the Satan Bug is an extremely refined powder. I take a saltspoon of this powder, go outside into the grounds of Mordon and turn the saltspoon upside down. What happens? Every person in Mordon would be dead within the hour, the whole of Wiltshire would be an open tomb by dawn. In a week, ten days, all life would have ceased to exist in Britain. I mean all life. The Plague, the Black Death--as nothing compared with this. Long before the last man died in agony, ships or planes or birds or just the waters of the North Sea would have carried the Satan Bug to Europe. We can conceive of no obstacle that can stop its eventual world-wide spread. Two months, I would say two months at the very most.... The Lapp in the far north of Sweden. The Chinese peasant tilling his rice fields in the Yangtze valley. The cattle rancher on his station in the Australian outback, the shopper on Fifth Avenue, the primitive in Tierra del Fuego. All dead. Because I turned a saltspoon upside down.... Who would be the last to go? I cannot say. Perhaps the great albatross forever winging its way round the bottom of the world. Perhaps a handful of Eskimos deep in the Arctic basin. But the seas travel the world over, and so also do the winds; one day, one day soon, they too would die."

That was from the novel THE SATAN BUG by Ian Stuart (a pen name for Alastair MacLean). Almost the identical quote was used in the film version. And it hooked me into a different type of science fiction I had not known about before, epidemiological science fiction which looks at what would happen if some really virulent and contagious disease got loose on modern society.

I like to consider science fiction a field where people are thinking out some of the most serious issues that could be shaping our future. It is the ideal place to work out some of the more frightening epidemic scenarios, much as it was for working out

THE MT VOID

Page 7

scenarios of nuclear war. But on the whole science fiction writers have avoided talking about disease or have limited themselves to separating themselves from the real action by examining isolated groups of scientists as in ANDROMEDA STRAIN or the aftermath as in EARTH ABIDES or the British television series SURVIVORS. Even THE STAND concentrated only on people who were to survive. The time is right for science fiction to consider the most serious societal aspects of epidemics, but I do not know if OUTBREAK is the right film.

Consider some of the issues that particularly dangerous viruses raise. Suppose some new virus that came along was something so bad that the rights of the afflicted were overwhelmed by the danger they pose to those not yet afflicted. That is pretty much what happened with diseases in the Middle Ages, and all our medical research has done has been to raise the threshold a little to make it harder for a disease to reach that level. Science fiction writers, be they in literature or film, have never seemed as excited by that concept as they might be. The attitude of writers has seemed to be, "After all, we have licked polio and smallpox and it is just a matter of time for the rest of the diseases." Well, now people are starting to realize that we are not as secure as we thought. Malaria and tuberculosis are on the rebound; AIDS is not readily amenable to treatment. And we think of AIDS as being a horrible disease, but we still have the luxury (and, yes, the responsibility) to consider the rights of the victim. If AIDS was as contagious as Zaire Ebola the politics of dealing with it would have to be very different. (Incidentally, a very sobering thought:

the best evidence is that Sudan Ebola did not have a common origin with Zaire Ebola. That means that in the course of a few short months nature had invented the Ebola virus twice.) How would we handle a disease for which care-giving was tantamount to suicide? What if the mere proximity of victims constituted a genuine threat? Many of the most bigoted myths and exaggerations about AIDS are theoretically possible in some disease. In fact, even AIDS is probably worse in some regards than the disease in OUTBREAK. It has a much longer interval of contagion before showing symptoms. Combine that with high susceptibility and you have a monster a few microns long that is a lot scarier than anything most writers have considered so far. Hopefully, recent books on the subject of newly emerging diseases may get people thinking about these issues even if science fiction writers continue to shy away from the subject.
[-mrl]

7. Boskone 32 (con report by Evelyn C. Leeper) (part 3 of 4 parts)

THE MT VOID

Page 8

Like Death and Taxes, the Hugos are Coming

Saturday, 5 PM

Evelyn C. Leeper (mod), Claire Anderson, Mark Olson,
Darrell Schweitzer

And like death and taxes, the panel recommending Hugos is also coming.

[Thanks to Mark for taking notes for this panel.]

Olson brought copies of the NESFA recommended list (see Appendix 2).

One reason for this panel, of course, is to let readers know about books that have been "published with great stealth" (as Schweitzer put it). (This applies to the other categories as well, though the

situation there is somewhat different.)

I started by saying that we were not going to do what the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences does during the Oscars: we were not going to start with the "minor" categories, but rather dive right in to the Best Novel.

Since I have included the list as Appendix 2, I will not list the individual works here unless there was elaboration. (Or unless I want to plug them--hey, the other panelists can write their own con reports.) Caroline Stevermer's Ruritanian fantasy, A COLLEGE OF MAGICS, had the most nominations. But while I did keep reading it to find out what happened, I still thought it was not Hugo material.

It is important that a work be recognized as science fiction. E. L. Doctorow's WATERWORKS is certainly as good as just about any book which was marketed as science fiction, yet its chances of being nominated are very small. (Schweitzer seemed to think that Doctorow would be mortified to have it called science fiction, but science fiction it is, combined with magical realism.)

For short fiction, Schweitzer said that if you subscribe to ASIMOV'S and F&SF, you will see most of what has a chance at the Hugo, since exposure is more important than absolute quality. There may be a story or two from ANALOG, and one from OMNI, and lately there have been some from original anthologies, but that about covers it. (With the Worldcon in Glasgow, it is remotely possible that something from INTERZONE may make the ballot.) Olson said that the list of recommended short fiction in LOCUS was as good a predictor as any.

We moved on to non-fiction, which I said tended to be a category determined by the wealthier fans, simply because most of the eligible books are expensive. (Last year's winner, Nichols and

Clute's ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION cost \$75. THE ART OF MICHAEL WHELAN cost \$60.) Olson said we should start with the winner, I, ASIMOV, which he described as 166 very entertaining short essays that were quite true to Asimov himself. (It is also

the only non-fiction book of last year available in mass-market paperback, so it has a vastly larger base than the other possible nominees.) It is **not** a sequel to Asimov's two other autobiographical works, *IN MEMORY YET GREEN* and *IN JOY STILL FELT*. Olson felt that Heinlein's wife did him a great disservice by publishing his *GRUMBLES FROM THE GRAVE*, which left readers with the picture of Heinlein as a bitter old man, while *I, ASIMOV* was very much written to be how Asimov wanted to be remembered.

I enjoyed Teresa Nielsen Hayden's *MAKING BOOK*, published by NESFA Press. (This year's *BOOKMAN'S FANTASY* by Fred Lerner looks to be equally good.) Anderson liked Cathy Burnett and Arnie Fenner's *SPECTRUM: THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY FANTASTIC ART*, which she described as a "sort of year's best of art." Schweitzer thought Michael Andre-Driussi's *LEXICON URTHUS: A DICTIONARY FOR THE URTH CYCLE*, a reference book for Gene Wolfe's "Book of the New Sun" was worth nominating. (This was the book Schweitzer said was "published with great stealth.") But Schweitzer agreed that Asimov would win, because everyone reads Asimov. (I suppose I should be embarrassed to admit it, but I have not read it yet.) Anderson liked Edward James's *SCIENCE FICTION IN THE 20TH CENTURY*. One book I forgot to mention was Christopher Priest's *BOOK ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER*, about the (non)making of *LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS*. It's published by Fantagraphics, which may mean you're more likely to find it in comics stores. Of what is listed in *LOCUS*, I would love to see Robert Crossley's *OLAF STAPLEDON: SPEAKING FOR THE FUTURE*. And I have a certain fondness for Jerry Hewett and Daryl F. Mallett's *THE WORK OF JACK VANCE: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY & GUIDE* since I helped provide some of the information for it.

While the non-fiction books are usually too high-priced to get a broad voting base, the dramatic presentations often garner more votes than the novels. Unfortunately, what appeared on NESFA's list was the same old "Hollywood films with big budgets." I personally would vastly prefer *ED WOOD* to any of them. I also reminded the audience that while television series cannot be nominated, individual episodes can, and that various groups on the Net were deciding which episodes of the series to throw their support behind to avoid scattering them too widely to get any of them on the ballot. (Olson said there was a move afoot to amend the WSFS Constitution to allow series to be nominated.) I noted that what I thought was the best of the big-budget films, *INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE*, was not even on NESFA's list. Schweitzer seemed to think *STARGATE* would win. Again, the problem of perceptions arose, when an audience member cited a *NORTHERN EXPOSURE* episode which was magical realism, but would never make the ballot. Olson noted that there was one time when an episode of a non-science-

fiction series made the ballot: "L.A. 2014," which was part of the series THE NAME OF THE GAME. Again, the Glaswegian location might mean something British would make it to the ballot.

For the Campbell Award, I said I really wished that the people preparing the ballot would provide a bibliography for the nominees. (Since it would cover at most two years, it should not require a lot of space.) I asked what happened to a recent winner, Ted Chiang, and Schweitzer said that the problem with winning the Campbell Award is that you have to live up to your reputation, and that authors who had won thought the best thing that could happen to a new writer was that s/he **not** win.

Olson said that he would like to put in a plug for throwing a monkey wrench into the works: guerilla voting, as he called it. For example, he thinks nominating ED WOOD falls into this category. I noted that Jules Verne was eligible for a Hugo for PARIS AU XXE SIECLE (and would be again next year when the English translation comes out).

There were a couple of suggestions for Best Original Artwork, but I said it seemed as if that category was not very successful, except for maybe last year, when a concentrated effort to remind people of them got the "Space Fantasy" stamps on the ballot. They eventually won. (Interestingly, they placed next to last in a poll of stamp collectors.) I hear there is a proposal to eliminate this category because what people are voting on are covers as seen by the public, which are often different from the artwork submitted by the artist.

This year's special category is "Best Music." (Each year, the Worldcon can designate a special category to be voted on.) Olson said that the filkers wanted a "Best Filksong" category, but the Business Meeting rejected that, and instead made a recommendation to Intersection that they "try out" a Music Hugo. What I, and just about everyone else, is predicting is that what will appear on the ballot will be soundtracks for the Dramatic Presentations. Again, what gets nominated is what is accessible.

On the other, pushing things on the Net does have an effect, if only to remind people they are eligible. The "Space Fantasy" stamps last year is one example; Mike Resnick in the Best Professional Editor category is another. Without various postings reminding people that the best editor did **not** have to be a magazine editor, I believe it would have been the same list of magazine editors it had been for years. So if you have something you think people will overlook, speak up!

Is SF Mainstream? Can We Still Tell the Difference?

Saturday, 6 PM

Gregory Feeley (mod), Ellen Asher, Don D'Amassa,
Peter Johnson, Don Keller

Going in to this panel, I thought about the title and concluded that some of the answer might be in recognizing two distinct definitions of science fiction. On one hand, science fiction could be fiction based in science, with all that includes. On the other hand, it could be fiction that is written with science fiction sensibilities. The latter is unclear, I realize, and boils down to "science fiction is what feels like science fiction." But vague as it is, this is a valid distinction: as was mentioned earlier, E. L. Doctorow's *WATERWORKS* is science fiction in the first sense, but not in the second.

But even science fiction of the second, more narrow, sort is becoming "mainstream," with authors such as Robert Jordan, Terry Brooks, and Anne McCaffrey appearing on the best-seller lists. (STAR TREK novels are a special case that will not be dealt with here.) Asher refers to this as "appeal outside the confines of the science fiction audience."

One reality in asking about whether SF is mainstream is that markets fragment, so from a marketing standpoint, there is not a single category science fiction, and there is not a single category mainstream. The former are science fiction, fantasy, horror, techno-thriller, etc., and the latter are thriller, literary, adventure, etc. About the only way to define contemporary mainstream fiction is to say that it is whatever is not anything else.

Regarding whether SF was becoming more mainstream, Johnson said, "We're not getting closer to them, but they're getting closer to

us." Someone agreed, citing Erica Jong's latest, SERENISSIMA, which was described as an alternate history on Shakespeare. (Other mainstream alternate histories included Len Deighton's SS-GB and Robert Harris's FATHERLAND.) The appearance of such works as THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK by John Updike indicates that there is an acceptance of SF works in the mainstream--as long as they are not labeled as such.

The Tempest

Saturday, 9:30 PM

Bruce Coville, Ellen Kushner, Joe Mayhew, Jane Yolen

Maybe I am in the minority, but I much prefer something like this (a serious retelling of a play by Shakespeare) to the sort of thing that has been common in the past, humorous fannish plays. At the end, after the applause, Kushner announced, "Next year, King Lear!" I for one am looking forward to this. (Someone is bound to tell me

THE MT VOID

Page 12

this was intended as a joke. All I can say is that I hope it isn't.)

Shakespearean Influences in SF&F

Sunday, 10 AM

Gregory Feeley (mod), Bruce Coville, Laurie Marks,
Delia Sherman

Since I have just started a project of reading all of Shakespeare's plays, I could not miss this panel. (And I did recently review Katharine Kerr and Martin Greenberg's WEIRD TALES FROM SHAKESPEARE, which had Feeley's excellent story, "Awearry of the Sun.")

Feeley began by saying that every century has its own Shakespeare. In the seventeenth century he was a hack who violated the classical unities in drama. The eighteenth century saw the pendulum swing the other way, into what Feeley called "Bardolatry." In the nineteenth century Shakespeare was a great story-teller and a "read-out of wisdom." In the twentieth century there is less of an emphasis on his stories and more on the poetry of the words, although later someone else claimed we read the plays for the characters in them (but again, not the plots). Harold Bloom, for

example, focused almost entirely on characters, especially Falstaff. And Russell Nye even wrote a novel titled FALSTAFF, in which Falstaff tells his side of the story. Of course, there was at least some historic basis for Falstaff in Sir John Oldcastle.

Marks said that the primary influences on fantasy (more than on science fiction) were the obvious ones which showed up in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM and THE TEMPEST: the overlap of faery and reality.

Many authors have taken Shakespeare's stories and retold them, especially for younger audiences. (Charles and Mary Lamb did this almost two hundred years ago.) This makes sense if you think the stories are more important (or at least as important) as the language.

But there are some slightly less direct re-uses. Coville said that his first exposure to Shakespearean influences was the film FORBIDDEN PLANET; his second was THE COLLECTOR. You need to know your Shakespeare to understand, or even to recognize, the references.

Someone mentioned that another obvious descendent of Shakespeare's work was Poul Anderson's MIDSUMMER'S TEMPEST, which is written entirely in blank verse.

The panelists never distinguished between what I would think to be the two classes of Shakespearean-influenced works: those that are science fictional retellings of Shakespeare's stories, and those

that are extensions of or contain references to Shakespeare's own works. For an example, FORBIDDEN PLANET theoretically falls into the former category, while Feeley's story or a sequel to THE TAMING OF THE SHREW would be in the latter.

Feeley read some of Terri Windling's introduction to BLACK THORN, WHITE ROSE in which Windling claimed that Shakespeare "mined the ore of old tales." Well, I do not think anyone disputes this in general, though Feeley claims that in particular MACBETH, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, and THE TEMPEST are original with

Shakespeare. Feeley also read a passage in which he claims that Windling is implying that Shakespeare is using "simple language to get to the heart of the matter," but I think what she was saying that Shakespeare drew upon older stories that used "simple language to get to the heart of the matter," and then tried to use more elaborate language while still "getting to the heart of the matter."

One panelist claimed we use Shakespeare to give fantasy respectability, and also to justify stealing and re-using old plots.

People discussed the tendency of putting actors like Mel Gibson and John Travolta in Shakespearean productions. As one person pointed out, this does serve to bring people to Shakespeare who would never see his plays otherwise, and who come to it fresh, without carrying a whole lot of baggage and expectations going into it. Sherman said this was really in keeping with the origins of the plays and that "effectively, Shakespeare was writing television scripts." His early narrative poems may have been an attempt to write serious lasting work, but he soon switched to the more immediately lucrative play-writing, supporting what Sherman said: "You write for the people around you. If you try to write for the ages, you'll write crap."

Also, people generally agreed that Shakespeare was meant to be seen, not read, although the plays were published in their own time as well as performed. (I described my feelings about this in my comments on the panel on rereading books, so I will not repeat them here.)

Someone summed up the hour (which did not touch much on Shakespearean influences in SF&F) by describing Shakespeare as "a hack whose characters are dense and whose language is rich."

[to be continued] [-ecl]

8. NESFA 1994 Hugo Recommendations (Appendix 2 to the Boskone Con report (5 January 1995 -- mlo))

NESFA continues to maintain a list of Good Stuff to read. Any NESFA member who reads something that they would like to recommend to others to be considered for a Hugo nomination can add it to the list. We will publish it from time to time in Instant Message and on the nets. (Feel free to reproduce it provided you reproduce it intact!) It's neither definitive nor complete, but it contains the stories, novels and non-fiction works that a bunch of well-read fans feel may be worthy of a Hugo nomination.

Novels

=
FEERSUM ENDJINN, Iain M. Banks (Orbit (UK)); ca
RING, Stephen Baxter (HarperCollins UK); mlo, daa
BRITTLE INNINGS, Michael Bishop (Bantam); el, gf
MIRROR DANCE, Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen); arl, ec, jr
FINDER, Emma Bull (Tor); mlo, po, ec, cjh
TRIPOINT, C. J. Cherryh (Warner Aspect); pal
FOREIGNER, C. J. Cherryh (DAW); arl, ec, gf
THE WATERWORKS, E. L. Doctorow (Random House); BoMC:el
QUEEN CITY JAZZ, Kathleen Ann Goonan (Tor); ca
RHINEGOLD, Stephan Grundy (Bantam Spectra); el
SEEKER'S MASK, P. C. Hodgell (Hypatia); pal
NIMBUS (1993), Alexander Jablovkov (AvoNova/Morrow); cjh
GUN, WITH OCCASIONAL MUSIC, Jonathan Lethem (Harcourt Brace); gf, daa
STARMIND, Spider & Jeanne Robinson (Analog); Aug-Nov arl
IN THE CUBE (1993!), D. Alexander Smith (Tor); cjh
HEAVY WEATHER, Bruce Sterling (Bantam Spectra); cjh, ca, daa, gf
A COLLEGE OF MAGICS, Caroline Stevermer (Tor); mlo, arl, po, cjh, daa, gf
MANHATTAN TRANSFER (1993!), John E. Stith (Tor); jam
PARIS AU XXE SIECLE, Jules Verne (?); el*
MYSTERIUM, Robert Charles Wilson (Bantam Spectra); ca, po, gf, el, daa
LAKE OF THE LONG SUN, Gene Wolfe (Tor); mlo, ec, gf, rk

=

Novella

=

"Remains of Adam," A. A. Attanasio (Asimov's Jan 94); arl, gf
"Melodies of the Heart," Michael F. Flynn (Analog Jan 94); ca, gf
"Another Story," Ursula K. Le Guin (Tomorrow Aug 94); gf
"Forgiveness Day," Ursula K. Le Guin (Asimov's Nov 94); arl
"Scissors Cut Paper Wrap Stone," Ian McDonald (Bantam Spectra); gf
"Seven Views of Olduvai Gorge," Mike Resnick (F&SF Oct/Nov); arl
"Les Fleurs du Mal," Brian Stableford (Asimov's Oct 94); arl
"Uncharted Territory," Connie Willis (Bantam Spectra); gf

=

Novelette

=

"The God Who Slept with Women," Brian Aldiss (Asimov's May 94); arl, gf
"Shadow of the Falcon," Janet Berliner and Jack Kirby
(Galaxy Jul-Aug 94); arl

"In the Dazzle," Robert R. Chase (Analog Jun 94); gf
 "The Transcendentalists," David Ira Cleary (SF Age Nov 94); arl
 "Things of the Flesh," L. Timmel Duchamp (Asimov's Jan 94); ca
 "The Wild Ships of Fairny," Carolyn Ives Gilman (F&SF Mar 94); gf
 "1894," Charles L. Harness (Analog Aug 94); arl
 "In the Valley of the Humans," Phillip C. Jennings (Asimov's Nov 94); ca
 "The Singular Habits of Wasps," Geoffrey A. Landis (Analog Apr 94); arl, gf
 "The Martian Child," David Gerrold (F&SF Sep 94); arl
 "Out of the Quiet Years," G. David Nordley (ASF Jul 94); arl
 "Waging Good," Robert Reed (Asimov's Jan 95); arl
 "The Remoras," Robert Reed (F&SF May 94); arl, gf
 "Stride," Robert Reed (Asimov's Nov 94); ca
 "Fan," Geoff Ryman (Interzone Mar 94); arl
 "Dark Star," Jack Williamson (F&SF Feb 95); arl

=

Short Story

=

"Inspiration," Ben Bova (F&SF Apr 94); arl
 "Last Rites," Ray Bradbury (F&SF Dec 94); arl
 "Paris in June," Pat Cadigan (Omni Sept 94); ca
 "Death and the Librarian," Esther M. Friesner (Asimov's Dec 94); arl, ca
 "None So Blind," Joe Haldeman (Asimov's Nov 94); ca
 "Fortyday," Damon Knight (Asimov's May 94); gf
 "Killer Byte," Mercedes Lackey (MZB Fantasy Spring 94); arl
 "Wells of Wisdom," Brad Linaweaver (Galaxy May/June 94); arl
 "Sealight," Ian MacLeod (F&SF May 94); gf
 "Assassin," Bruce McAllister (Omni, Jan 94); ca, gf
 "Standard Candles," Jack McDevitt (F&SF, Jan 94); gf
 "Bible Stories for Adults," No. 20, The Tower, James Morrow
 (F&SF Jun 94); el, gf
 "Director's Cut," James Morrow (F&SF Mar 94); el
 "Abridged Edition," Jerry Oltion (F&SF Jul 94); el
 "Treasure Buried," Robert Reed (F&SF Feb 94); arl, gf
 "Barnaby in Exile," Mike Resnick (Asimov's Feb 94); arl
 "The Changeling's Tale," Michael Swanwick (Asimov's Jan 94); gf
 "Household Words," or, the Powers-That-Be, Howard Waldrop
 (Amazing Winter 94); ca
 "Why Did?," Howard Waldrop (Omni Apr 94); ca
 "The Moon Garden Cookbook," Laurel Winters (F&SF Feb 94); el

=

Non Fiction

=
I, ASIMOV, Isaac Asimov (Doubleday); mlo, po, ec
SPECTRUM, THE BEST IN CONTEMPORARY FANTASTIC ART, Cathy Burnett
& Arnie Fenner (Underwood); ca, mlo, ged, gf
MAKING BOOK, Teresa Nielsen Hayden (NESFA Press); mlo, arl, po, ec, ged

=
Dramatic Presentation

=
"All Good Things" (ST: TNG); po, ged
EARTH 2 premiere; po, sls, ged

THE MT VOID

Page 16

ED WOOD; ca, daa, el*
THE MASK; sls, ca, daa
MARY SHELLEY'S FRANKENSTEIN; ca, daa
THE PUPPET MASTERS; ca, daa, rk, gf

=
Original Artwork

Cover of 10/94 IASFM, Kinuko Y. Craft (Asimov's Oct 94); el
Cover of J. Lethem's Gun, with Occasional Music, Michael Koelsch
(Harcourt, Brace); ca
Cover of R. Pollack's Temporary Agency, Ron Walotsky (St. Martin's); ca

=
Campbell Award

=
Daniel Marcus; ca
Felicity Savage; ca
Elizabeth Willey; mlo, po

Key to nominators, arl--Tony Lewis, by--Ben Yalow, ca--Claire
Anderson, cjh--Chip Hitchcock, daa--Dave Anderson, ec--Elisabeth
Carey, el--Evelyn Leeper, ged--Gay Ellen Dennett, gf--George Flynn,
jr--Joe Rico, kp--Kelly Persons, mh--Mark Hertel, mlo--Mark Olson,
pal--Paula Lieberman, pf--Pam Fremon, po--Priscilla Olson, rk--Rick
Katze, sls--Sharon Sbarsky

Mark Leeper
MT 3F-434 908-957-5619
m.r.leeper@att.com

We have an interval only, and then our place knows us
no more, and stuffing that interval with bad writing,
in the name of whatever social justice, does not seem
to be the responsibility of the literary critic.

-- Harold Bloom