



been dead for under a year. The law was just rescinded because they decided that taxes against the Dead were unenforcible. This sets a really bad precedent. This may well just give rise to new resentments of the Dead. It is already legal to refuse to hire someone just because he or she is dead. However, when people do

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discriminate against the Dead, often it is with better reason than we would like to think. It isn't all racist reasons like "they smell bad" or "they look funny" or "they don't pay their debts," or "they are cliquish and don't mix with the rest of us." I find with dead people that if you give them an inch, they take a mile. They have had good press until now. They are considered to be a well-behaved segment of the population that cause very little trouble. Oh there have been the occasional films by far-sighted political visionaries like George Romero suggesting that there was some threat from them, but by in large their image in the media has been a positive one. And people who you would expect would be dead but have avoided joining their numbers, people like Dracula, the Mummy, and Saddam Hussein, are getting worse press for refusing to become part of the Dead.

However, I would like to point out that the numbers of the Dead increase every day and some of the greatest political activists of all time have joined their numbers. And some of the best military strategists. Did you know, by the way, when people use the phrase "the silent majority" it is usually misused? The phrase was first used by some famous ancient Greek, probably Plato, and it referred to the Dead. But how long can it be before spokesmen for the Dead start lobbying congress? (Hey, didn't Orson Scott Card write a book called S\_p\_e\_a\_k\_e\_r\_f\_o\_r\_t\_h\_e\_D\_e\_a\_d?) There are those who think that the Dead are already hell-raising (so to speak). Certainly in Argentina they thought that the Perons are every bit as powerful dead as alive. Imelda Marcos has said that the reason we have been having all these climate disasters is that it is Ferdinand upset about the fact that he cannot be buried in his own country. In China leaping ghosts were thought to be used by the Communist government. I tell you the Dead are a serious threat to all of us. There are today something like twenty dead people for every man, woman, and child alive. And when one of them comes knocking at

your door demanding his rights, are you going to tell him no?

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2. TESTING by Charles Oberndorf (Bantam Spectra, ISBN 0-553-56181-2, 1993, US\$3.99) (a book review by Evelyn C. Leeper):

This is yet another in Bantam Spectra's excellent series of novellas. In a future after the "Great Fall" (apparently an economic \_ a \_ n \_ d social collapse), students undergo morality training and testing. The training reminded me of the classes in Robert A. Heinlein's \_ S \_ t \_ a \_ r \_ s \_ h \_ i \_ p \_ T \_ r \_ o \_ o \_ p \_ e \_ r \_ s; the testing reminded me of the old

Isaac Asimov story (at least I think it was Asimov) about a driving test. This is not a bad thing--science fiction has a grand tradition of building on and responding to what came before. One thing that doesn't seem to have changed with the Great Fall is that high school classes concentrate more on rote learning than on

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thinking, more on having the "right" answer, even when they pay lip service to independent thought. If Oberndorf has a moral to his story, it's that ethics and morality have to come from within through self-examination; they can't be "taught" like geometry or Latin. (Of course, that's just the moral I concluded through my reasoning that he was proposing; your mileage may vary, and that's probably the point as well.)

One touch I liked which may not have been intentional: The headmaster if the school says, "... our Great Fall had deeper meaning than a simple economic collapse. Although many in this country are not Christian and worship God in their own way, our tradition is Judeo-Christian. When we say \_ f \_ a \_ l \_ l, we think of Adam and Eve and their fall from grace. And the Great Fall was our nation's fall from grace." The seeming afterthought to make "Christian" into "Judeo-Christian," especially since Judaic tradition does not have the concept of the "fall from grace" that Christianity has or the headmaster claims, is precisely typical of using formulae instead of thinking about what is being said. I hear it now, and it seems likely to continue, even after the "Great

Fall."

Oberndorf also postulates an interesting new family structure. I don't think it particularly likely--especially in a society still waving the flag of "Judeo-Christian tradition"--but I'm willing to grant the possibility for the sake of the story. As in his first work, S\_h\_e\_l\_t\_e\_r\_e\_d\_L\_i\_v\_e\_s, Oberndorf is examining society and morality in a more direct way than one usually finds in science fiction, and I recommend T\_e\_s\_t\_i\_n\_g.

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### 3. THE REMAINS OF THE DAY (a film review by Mark R. Leeper):

Capsule review: Anthony Hopkins plays Mr. Stevens, a butler whose carries his integrity and dedication to his profession to such a degree that he has lost himself in his job and his only ideals are serving his master. Hopkins and Emma Thompson turn in good performances, but this sad film is just not up to all the buildup. Rating: low +2 (-4 to +4).

Stevens (Anthony Hopkins) is Lord Darlington's loyal butler. And that is all that Stevens allows himself to be. Very old values tell Stevens that every fiber of his being should be devoted to his vocation. So he has strangled off every emotion and inclination but those of loyalty and integrity as a butler. Lord Darlington (played by James Fox) is, after all, a very important man. As a diplomat he entertains other diplomats from all over Europe. As Germany re-arms under Hitler, Darlington has strong sympathies for

the German people and he holds international conferences in Darlington Manor to convince other countries that Germany under Hitler does not constitute a threat. Stevens does not so much submerge his feelings about his master's politics as actually deny himself the right to even hold any feeling or opinion but loyalty.

Into this house comes a new housekeeper, Miss Kenton, played by Emma Thompson. At first there is friction between Stevens and Miss

Kenton, particularly over Stevens' father, who has come to work in the same house. Eventually they learn to work together and to some degree understand each other. Miss Kenton is even startled one day to discover Stevens actually respects her. She responds by developing affection for Stevens and is frustrated to realize that Stevens does not allow himself the emotion to reciprocate her feelings.

Stevens' loyalty is made all the more tragic by the shallowness of the diplomats and friends of Darlington who feel they are the saviors of Europe while steering it toward inevitable war.

Yet the story is a bit of a tear-jerker and seems to do less with more than this year's similarly themed U\_n\_C\_o\_e\_u\_r\_e\_n\_H\_i\_v\_e\_r. The screenplay is by Ruth Praver Jhabvala based on the novel by Kazuo Ishiguro. And there is something else here that is unexpected from a British-born writer. European films often show Americans as being brash dilettantes. While Christopher Reeve, as an American congressman attending a conference, is an idealist, he also is perhaps the only one of Darlington's guests to understand the issues involved at the conference.

T\_h\_e\_R\_e\_m\_a\_i\_n\_s\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_D\_a\_y is impeccably directed by James Ivory and

Hopkins' acting is a joy to behold as he walks around the Manor giving bulldog looks and overseeing his master's house. Hopkins is always able to find something physical to do with a scene that seems to go beyond the script. In one scene Thompson is trying to pry an object from his hands. Hopkins resists, then relents. Most actors would simply let go of the object cradled in their arms. Hopkins flattens his hand giving an unexpected gesture of surrender. Thompson is engaging also, but with much less of a flair for the unexpected.

This is a solid film that may remind some of the TV series U\_p\_s\_t\_a\_i\_r\_s,\_D\_o\_w\_n\_s\_t\_a\_i\_r\_s. The characters are well portrayed but it is just a bit obvious in theme. I would give it a low +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

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Society produces rogues, and education makes one  
rogue cleverer than another.

-- Oscar Wilde