

THE GEIS LETTER -----56

The Future Is Never What It's Supposed To Be!

NOVEMBER 1998

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Geis Note: I'm going to skip December as a TGL publishing month unless there is a cataclysmic event I *must* talk about. After 56 issues, all approximately monthly, I deserve Christmas off, right?



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Freedom of the press:
Whoever owns the press
owns the freedom.
---Arthur Lane Terego

Freedom of speech:
Everyone can speak; only the
wealthy can make themselves
heard.
---Arthur Lane Terego



News Diary

11-4-98 The election turned out differently than expected by the media experts. The Republicans actually lost a few seats in the House and broke even in the Senate.

The voters weren't interested in defeating Democrats in order to punish Bill Clinton and signal their wish for Impeachment, and obviously didn't think much of the wimpish Republicans' inability and unwillingness to be the opposition and do their basic job of passing a budget on schedule.

But consider the inherent nature and function of the Democrats (progressive, socialist-oriented) and the Republicans (conservative, an anchor to keep the Demos from running wild).

Essentially, this election, the voters said they liked the balance of the House and Senate controlled by the Repubs, and the presidency controlled by the Demos.

But I suspect there is another, deeper, reality at work: The voters, in polls (and now **at** the polls) showed again that the public morality trumpeted by the Religious Right is a lesser and lesser force in this country. And the voters are showing that the secular private morality is emerging as a controlling force in their decisions.

Thus Clinton's private sex antics are separated from his job performance rating as President.

And medical use of marijuana is increasingly viewed as okay.

Leading me to surmise that the old-time public morality is fading away, a victim of the on-going pressure of science, technology and secular values.

There is another invisible force I see at work: our inescapable dependency on each other and on the mechanisms of our modern society. We are no longer mostly self-sufficient farm families and clans with little crucial need for others.

As I suggested a few issues ago, we all subconsciously feel the icy reality of being unable by our own efforts to grow our food, make our clothes, and shelter ourselves and our loved ones. And subconsciously we're all half scared to death all the time.

In this high-tech civilization with its specialization and social fracturing, we are dependent on the system, **on govern-**

ment, to make sure we have food, money, housing, transportation, etc. to keep us alive!

And the poorer you are and the less buffer against destitution you have, the more vulnerable you feel...and, bottom line, the more you will vote for a self-styled benevolent government or Authority (they who have the guns) to keep the soup kitchens going in a crisis.

The Republican creed of individual enterprise and self reward [and to hell with those who can't make it] is inherently elitist. This elite is doomed to be resented (and outvoted) by the majority who for a multitude of reasons cannot be the creative, ambitious, ruthless, successful capitalist. [And a good thing, too! Capitalists needs hordes of stupid, credulous customers.]

My key point is that this awful dependency on the system (others) for life itself works increasingly in favor of the Democrats and Liberals who "care" about the lower classes and minorities.

It's obvious the Republicans of today are screaming Liberals compared to the Republicans of the 1920s. The socialism which was unspeakable sin in the '20s is now 90% law.

As our numbers increase in this country, our social problems will increase, our dependency will intensify (with its inner dread) and governing us will become ever more difficult and necessary. The socialistic "safety net" will become ever-more visible and gratefully accepted/demanded in the changing social structure of our civilization.

That means we will have more rules and regulations, more laws, more limits and fewer freedoms. [Because we will have fewer responsibilities - given and accepted.]

Consider those few who cannot endure this dependency and who must be as totally free from society's clutches and power as possible: the Survivalists "emerge" (get press) every few decades when a great social danger rears its probable head---atomic doom, environmental doom, big government doom, economic doom---but they are inherently limited in numbers and inherently recede into obscurity.

In the future Dependency State, I suspect we will have more private freedoms [permissions, rather] in adult, consenting sex and in non-violent associations. Hidden social engineering will channel our conflicts and violences into spectator sports and other activities designed to safely release angers and tensions. And I anticipate mandatory early psy testing, identification and

treatment of children with 'problems'.

The usual cycle of history is for a civilization to trend from individual freedom and minimal government into socialism, and eventual dictatorship, a revolution, a period of enhanced individual freedoms...

But within the supercycle of mankind's rise to domination and overcrowding on this planet, the sub-cycle of civilizations may take some weird shapes, especially in the extremes of the end game.

For instance, the latest guesstimate is that the world's oil will begin giving out in about thirty years. If that is true, unless another massive energy source is found and developed in time, the social changes and troubles forced by oil scarcity will be horrendous.

As I see it, the secular elite in Western Civilization is now attempting a world government, a world financial superstructure, a world corporate oligarchy, and a secular world overculture (beneath which, religious and ethnic and national and perhaps racial identity will be tolerated as long as it doesn't make too much trouble).

We'll see soon, I think, if they can manage it in the face of die hard ancient hatreds and conflicts, as well as the spreading destabilizing world economic depression.

The elite must learn what they can change and what they must let alone and what they must let happen.

Terrible, costly mistakes will be made.

Well, this is a long way from yesterday's election, isn't it? I've succumbed again to my love of forecasting my favorite future. One thought leads to another... Just call me Nostrageis.



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> SFWA ONLINE UPDATE No. 28 <
11/08/98

An electronic publication of Science
Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America

Man the Barricades: Barnes & Noble's
Purchase of Ingram Seen As Danger

Friday's announcement that book-selling giant Barnes & Noble is acquiring book distribution giant Ingram for \$600 million in cash and stock has set off alarm bells across the publishing and bookselling world. The purchase would put Barnes & Noble in control of the primary distributor for its chief online bookselling rival, amazon.com, and for most small chains and independent bookstores throughout the country.

"So it's true," *Publishers Weekly* reported in its online newsletter. "The days of speculation end with the shocking announcement that B&N will buy Ingram for a cool \$600 mil.

"The purchase, which will consist of \$200 million in cash and \$400 million in B&N stock, will make the entire Ingram Book Group, which consists of Ingram Book Company, Retailer Services Inc., Ingram Periodicals, Spring Arbor Distributors, Publishers Resources, Inc., Ingram International, Tennessee Book Company, Lightning Print, and Ingram Library Services, a wholly-owned subsidiary of B&N.

The deal is expected to be completed within 45 days, pending approval by government agencies.

Steve Riggio, vice-chairman of B&N, said he did not expect any anti-trust problems with the transaction."

The American Booksellers Association has issued the following official statement (available on the ABA BookWeb site at

<http://www.bookweb.org>):
"The American Booksellers Association (ABA) considers the purchase of Ingram Book Company by Barnes and Noble, Inc., to be a devastating development that threatens the viability of competition in the book industry, and limits the diversity and availability of books to consumers. The Board of Directors of the ABA call on the Anti-trust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the proposed acquisition and to take prompt and decisive action to stop this blatantly anti-competitive combination.

"This acquisition, should it be allowed to take place, is just one more example of the large scale corporate

consolidation that has infiltrated every corner of our culture. As the desire intensifies to increase bottom line profits no matter what the other consequences, so does the concentration of power in the book industry. Consumers are left with an environment in which fewer and fewer people are deciding which books get published, and ultimately, which books Americans can read and buy.

"Barnes & Noble, a \$3 billion company and the largest US book retailer, recently entered into an alliance with the \$14 billion media giant, German-owned Bertelsmann AG. Ingram Book Company is the largest book wholesaler in the United States, with over a billion dollars in sales to independent bookstores and other competitors of Barnes & Noble. Now, with Barnes & Noble's proposed acquisition of the billion dollar Ingram Book Company, there can be little doubt that the book industry is falling prey to the same anti-competitive ills that currently plague the computer software and other industries.

"This deal would make independent bookstores virtually dependent upon their largest competitor, one which the ABA alleges in pending antitrust discrimination litigation in San Francisco has had a long-standing, systematic strategy of driving independents out of business to stifle competition.

"While there are some smaller, unaffiliated book wholesalers that provide independent booksellers with excellent service, Ingram Book Company is a primary distribution source for the vast majority of ABA member stores, and we consider this development to be deeply troubling. We will use all of our strength and available resources to fight it."

ABA President Richard Howorth has asked member bookstores to write to Attorney General of the United States Janet Reno and Federal Trade Commission Chairman Robert Pitofsky to protest the acquisition, and the ABA is providing a model letter (echoing the positions in the statement above) on its BookWeb site:

<http://www.bookweb.org/news/pressroom/1477.html>

SFWA Vice President Paul Levinson called the purchase of Ingram "bad news, indeed" and announced that SFWA will be supporting the ABA campaign with a letter signed by the Board of Directors and, insofar as possible, the past presidents of SFWA. The Board will also be contacting the Authors Guild as part of its review of other options.

Liaison Committee Chairman Steve Carper will explore the possibility of coordinating our efforts with HWA, MWA, RWA, and other genre writers organizations.

Levinson and SFWA founder Damon Knight are calling on individual SFWA members to add their voices by writing their own letters of protest. Key addresses (formatted for cut-and-paste) are:

Attorney General Janet Reno
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Robert Pitofsky
Chairman
Federal Trade Commission
Pennsylvania Avenue & 6th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20580

The ABA is requesting courtesy copies of all letters to Reno or Pitofsky; their fax number is 1-914-591-2720, and mailing address is:

American Booksellers Association
828 South Broadway
Tarrytown, NY 10591

In addition to BookWeb, a prospective source for ongoing developments is the Publishers Weekly web site at:

<http://www.bookwire.com/pw/pw.html>

"This is the real writer's enemy right now," said former SFWA president Jane Yolen, adding that midlist careers were at risk along with editorial diversity and the health of independent bookstores. "If it goes through, it may be the final nail in a number of coffins."

□-----

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Update THE ASSASSINATION THAT WILL NOT DIE

Here's a section of a Nov. 10, 1998 news story in *The Oregonian* compiled from wire reports about an official report just released which blows another hole in the official Government position on the John F. Kennedy assassination.

"The central contention of the report is that brain photographs in the Ken-

nedy records are not of Kennedy's brain and show much less damage than Kennedy sustained when he was shot in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

"The report came from the Assassinations Records Review Board, which closed down Sept. 30. The board was not set up to make findings about the assassination and did not take a position on the hypothesis set out in the 32-page report by Douglas Home, the board's chief analyst for military records.

"I am 90 to 95 percent certain that the photographs in the Archives are not of President Kennedy's brain," Home, a former naval officer, said in an interview. "If they aren't, that can mean only one thing, that there has been a cover-up."

"Home said the damage to the second brain reflected a shot from behind. He said the first brain was Kennedy's and reflected a shot from the front.

"The report cited the testimonies of former FBI agent Francis X. O'Neill, Jr., who was present at the Nov. 22, 1963 autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital and of former Navy photographer John T. Stringer, who said he took photos at a supplemental brain examination two or three days later.

"O'Neill told the board in a 1997 deposition that at the Nov. 22 autopsy "There was not too much of the brain left" when it was taken out of Kennedy's skull. "More than half of the brain was missing," he said. Shown the brain photographs deeded to the Archives by the Kennedy family, O'Neill said they did not square with what he saw.

"The only section of the brain which was missing is this small section over here," O'Neill said of one photograph. "This looks almost like a complete brain."

Geis Comment: Questions arise: How did the Kennedy family come to possess fake autopsy photos? Why didn't the Warren Commission pick up on this 'front shot' problem? They were lied to. A front shot proves a second gunman... and a conspiracy.

Will this revelation be ignored by the major media...as usual? [Sometimes, to save their consciences, they will print a report such as this, and then shun journalistic follow-ups as long as humanly possible.]



THE IRAQ ATTACK?

■ 11-12-98 I recall that back in the 1980's, Saddam Hussein, the horrible dictator we now love to hate and want dead, was perfectly acceptable to our government. He was a slimeball then, too, but he was *our* slimeball.

Then he was doing our work for us by waging an eight-year war against Iran. We provided him with satellite intelligence and made sure he got the weapons he needed... We didn't even mind that he used poison gas against the Iranians...or that he slaughtered Kurds. [Just as now we don't mind when ally Turkey slaughters Kurds.]

It was okay ~~then~~ for Saddam to make chemical weapons.

NOW he is demonized to be Hitler and Genghis Khan incarnate and we are huffing and puffing and threatening to blow his house down if he doesn't OBEY!

What did he do to us that was so terrible?

Well, he did 'misunderstand' what our ambassador to Iraq said about the United States not taking an interest in local power struggles in that area, and he took that as permission to invade Kuwait.

But we (our elite) did care, since oil is so dear to the hearts of the big banks and the Rockefellers and others (including Texas oilman and then President George Bush). They liked the status quo.

The Gulf War ensued. [You remember Desert Shield? That Operation was to keep Saudi Arabia safe from Saddam, and we were told no further action was planned. Aha. Even as those lies were spoken plans were made and Operation Desert Storm was in the works to take back Kuwait and bomb the shit out of Iraq to destroy their army. It seems that lying to the American people in defense of oil was no crime, for President Bush. Just as, we are now told, lying about sex before us, before a judge and before a grand jury is no crime for President Clinton.]

Now, in my view, we have a mish-mash of conflicting policies and fears in re Iraq and Saddam: we would like him dead, but need him or someone like him to keep Iraq united and strong, to oppose Iran...while not attacking Kuwait or Israel again, and while not developing nuke and bio weapons.

We are on the horns of some pointed dilemmas.

So I don't believe Clinton will actually pull the trigger on a long, massive bombing and missile attack. That would not do anything but make us

appear the international killer-bully without a brain or a policy in our head.

And we don't have the will to invade Iraq or spend the multi-billions necessary to set up a real revolutionary force to get rid of Saddam; too many Americans would get killed and/or the CIA would screw it up again.

■ 11-14-98 So Saddam 'blinked' and said he'll obey...and Clinton was forced to call back the first wave of bombers, thus frustrating the American people who had a hard-on for seeing on TV all them smart bombs and missiles hit targets. WHAM...BLOOIE... KA-BLAM! -- another couple thousand ragheads get blown to shreds of raw meat! Good! That'll teach Saddam a lesson! Right? Damn fucking right!

It's obvious that we care as much about the Iraqi people as Saddam does. Geo-politics and oil billions trump starvation, medicine-lacking kids anytime.

Update

The Economy

■ 11-19-98 Yesterday it was reported that housing sales and starts are up for September.

Recently the big three car makers reported very good new car sales.

Today new unemployment claims are up again to a larger number than expected.

Recently the Philadelphia Federal Reserve bank's report on its region showed a larger than expected drop in industrial production.

A week ago it was reported that consumer spending exceeded income by an unexpected degree. And that consumers had a negative savings rate!

To me these reports show a 2-level consumer economy: lower-income people are running up their debt (credit cards, home loans) in order to maintain their standard of living. While the middle-class and upper-class are still in the chips and spending like crazy... perhaps inspired by the illusory 'recovery' in the stock markets.

Next year I expect unemployment to spread significantly into the middle class and for the stock markets to be fallen or falling, and for the middle-class's pain to make the media big time.

And on the 17th the Fed lowered again its Fed Funds and Discount interest rates, a sign of near-panic in the face of a growing 'credit crunch' psychology---fear of making loans. Since this country lives on credit/debt, any shrinkage of 'liquidity' is death.

■ The fact of economic life ignored by reporters and commentators is that they assume that because the IMF has scraped up a \$40B 'rescue' fund for Brazil, that means the problem of Brazil is solved.

No. It means that now Brazil will be able to pay its international bank creditors for about a year. And it means that Brazil is going into a severe recession, if not depression, because the conditions for the \$40B rescue require Brazil to severely cut deficit spending and to raise taxes.

This means aid to the poor and jobs, will shrink, the generous government pensions will be cut back, and consumption in Brazil will shrink proportionately.

And that means fewer sales of American products in Brazil, the key to South American prosperity...and our remaining prosperity.

Everywhere the IMF goes with its bail out loans it requires severe cuts in deficit spending and often raises in taxes, which causes a recession/depression.

You saw it in Asia, Russia, and now in South America.

Yet, schizophrenically, the United States is begging, bludgeoning, haranguing Japan to do the opposite of the IMF formula: we urge Japan to inflate, spend massive deficit moneys to 'jump start' their economy, to buy more and more from other Asian countries and from us!

America wants the already deficits-ridden Japanese people to assume enormous new debts...for our benefit.

We'll see how far that will fly!

It's startling to note that in Japan interest rates are in some cases negative! That is, so great is their fear of their banks, some savers in Japan are willing to buy government guaranteed certificates which do not pay any interest, and which actually pay less of the principle at the end of the term of the certificate, just to be sure of getting most of their money back!

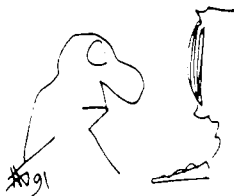
This because the banks are so loaded with bad debts the people fear any and all banks will fail in the foreseeable future.

And our leaders (handmaidens of Citibank, etc.) expect the Japanese people to pay off all those hundreds of billions of \$\$ of bad bank debts, as well as huge public works spending...

■■■

BOOKS RECEIVED

ARTIFICIAL
IMPURGATION:
Press ESC SEX and
Subst [1] Best seller
[2] Blockbuster [3]
Magon movie.



Some reviewed, others listed and described and sometimes unfairly dealt with.



OF MASQUES AND MARTYRS

By Christopher Golden

ACE Dark Fantasy, 1998, \$5.99, 292 p., Mass Market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00584-5.

This is the third novel in Golden's Shadow Saga which chronicles the war between the Shadows---vampires who drink human blood but do not take life---and the savage variety of vampires who kill for pleasure, to slake their thirst and to enslave mankind.

Golden is just a bit sloppy in his writing... enough to put me off.

FARADAY'S ORPHANS

By N. Lee Wood

ACE Science Fiction, 1998, \$5.99, 339 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00588-8.

In a post-holocaust America [circa 2242] where a few domed cities survive, a helicopter pilot is stranded on the Outside and meets a wild young girl...

Detailed and colorful, this ancient plot is slaved to love conquers all. Women readers will love it.

ROSE DAUGHTER

By Robin McKinley

ACE Fantasy, 1998, \$5.99, 292 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00583-7.

McKinley's second reworking of the Beauty and the Beast theme, in a detailed fairy tale style, extended to novel length.

NANOTECH

Edited By Jack Dann & Gardner Dozois

ACE Science Fiction, 1998, \$5.99, 276 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00585-3.

This anthology has ten stories by Greg Bear, Nancy Kress, Greg Egan, Michael F. Flynn, Ian McDonald, Kathleen Ann Goonan, Stephen Baxter, Paul Di Filippo, David Marusek, and Geoffrey A. Landis.

There's a new sub-universe around and in us in which atomic and molecular machines can build---or demolish---any kind of structure, body, or even planet. This is a reality we don't really want to enter---but too late! The door has closed behind us.

These are challenging, disturbing stories.

THE COMPLETE FUZZY

By H. Beam Piper

ACE Science Fiction, 1998, \$15.00, 454 p., Trade paperback, ISBN:0-441-00581-0.

All three classic Fuzzy novels in one volume: *Little Fuzzy* (1962), *Fuzzy Sapiens* (1964), *Fuzzies and Other People* (1984).

Henry Beam Piper committed suicide in 1964. The ms. for *Fuzzies and Other People* was found in a basement trunk in 1983 or '84.

THE Y2K COMPUTER CRASH SCENARIO

By Dr. John Mrozek

PALADIN PRESS, PPO Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, 1998, \$15.00, 64 p., Trade paperback, ISBN:1-58160-006-2.

The message is the vulnerability of computerized records and computer commerce come Y2K. Mrozek fears wily, opportunistic computer hackers who, he feels, will take the Y2K moment to hack into banks, credit card files, financial entities, etc. and rape your credit, your savings, your mortgage, your insurance, your health records...

There's not much to this booklet beyond dire dreads, though I did learn about 'boiler-plate'---borrowed parts of programming used by generations of programmers and which often contain, unnoticed, the dreaded two-digit year bug. And 'networking' of such programs or parts of programs from here to there to everywhere; 'new' programs unknowingly infected with the Y2K bug.

THE SIRIUS MYSTERY • New Scientific Evidence for Alien Contact 5,000 Years Ago

By Robert Temple

Destiny Books, One Park St., Rochester, VT 05767, 1998, \$19.95, 464 pages, 80 b/w illustrations and 56 b/w photos, 6x9 trade paperback, ISBN:0-89281-750-X.

Robert Temple is a highly credentialed astronomer and historian in England, where this book was first published in 1976. This edition is updated by the author to 1997.

Accompanying this review copy is a 29-page pamphlet titled *The Sirius Mystery: Answering the Critics* By Robert Temple.

Temple's belief is that amphibian aliens from the Sirius stars system visited Earth about 5000 years ago and gave ancient near-east mankind (Sumer, Egypt) and incredibly the Dogon peoples of sub-Sahara midwest Africa a boost into civilization, leaving traces of themselves meant to be understood only now when we have advanced astronomy and physics.

But apparently the Dogon effort didn't 'take', because no tribe or people in sub-Saharan Africa ever developed writing on their own.

And the proofs the Dogon legends and tribal rituals provide are interpreted to show they have known for at least thousands of years about a tiny white dwarf star orbiting Sirius every fifty years...

All this depends on one article written by two French anthropologists from field trips in 1946-50. They had to depend on translations

from two Dogon languages. And Temple had to depend on a translation into English from the French.

Odd that apparently no one has revisited the Dogon since Temple's book caused such a tumult in 1976.

Temple makes much of the seeming ubiquity of the number 50 in legends and myths in ancient texts, and the fact that the tiny white dwarf star orbiting Sirius takes fifty Earth years to complete one orbit. He doesn't explain why the aliens would take the trouble to impress so many ancient peoples with that number, since the orbit in their minds would be in a different time frame!

As for Temple's proofs... He has it seems used the von Däniken system of searching all ancient history, legends and myths for any hint of what he believes and then creating links by interpretations, by divining hidden meanings, by seeing associations in 'mysteries' and 'code language' and by frankly reading symbolic tea leaves.

His writing is full of 'possible', 'perhaps', 'may', 'likely'... like that. And he admits in the beginning that this book is speculation and an affirmation of a universality concept of life and intelligence.

His optimistic view: we perhaps have been visited, we may have been jump-started, and now is the time to accept the likelihood of further visits by other star civilizations...

THE GOOD OLD STUFF - Adventure SF in the Grand Tradition

Edited by Gardner Dozois

ST MARTIN'S GRIFFIN, \$17.95, 1998, 434 p., Trade paperback, ISBN:0-312-19275-4.

These 16 stories from the gods of sf are from the Golden Age of sf - '40s - '50s - '60s - and will give to you the term 'pulp fiction' a new respectability.

These stories don't waste time on deep characterization, angst, and social considerations. These stories grab you by the eyes and lead you into instant wondrous adventure.

The gods who wrote these are: Brian W. Aldiss, Poul Anderson, Leigh Brackett, L. Sprague de Camp, Gordon R. Dickson, C. M. Kornbluth, Ursula K. Le Guin, Fritz Leiber, Murray Leinster, H. Beam Piper, James H. Schmitz, Cordwainer Smith, James Tiptree, Jr., Jack Vance, A. E. van Vogt, and Roger Zelazny.

Gardner Dozois' preface to this anthology and his introductions to the stories and the authors are invaluable---and for me time machines to my teen years and young adulthood. His four pages of Recommended Reading are a roadmap to great pleasure if all this is new to you. Dozois is, in my opinion, the best editor of sf in the '90s.

GREEN RIDER

By Kristen Britain

DAW BOOKS, \$23.95, 1998, 504 p., Hardcover, ISBN:0-88677-824-7.

The classic story structure Feminized: In a medieval, magic-infested land an athletic young woman assumes the Green Rider cloak and mission of a dyng man impaled by two black arrows. The message he carries must reach the king!

A first novel by a very talented writer who knows by craft or instinct all the right buttons to push.

Obviously this is the first volume of a saga or a series involving young Kerigan G'ladheon.

Magnificent pursued-woman-on-horseback dust jacket wrap-around painting by Keith Parkinson.

SUNDERLIES SEEKING

Ghettos' Gambit #1

By Gayle Geeno

DAW BOOKS, Fantasy, \$6.99, 1998, 570 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-88677-895-0.

The latest in a series of sword&psyche fantasies involving a family of telepathic humans and their psyche-linked feline who is highly intelligent and telepathic.

They have a terrible enemy who is seeking a terrible revenge...

Seems aimed at a young girl-woman readership.

MOB MAGIC

Edited By Brian Thomsen

and Martin H. Greenberg

DAW BOOKS, Fantasy, \$5.99, 1998, 316 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-88677-821-2.

A 17-original-stories anthology organized under the categories: Gods & Godfathers, Assassins & Hitmen, Gumshoes & Gangs, Dons & the Damned, and Crimes & Corporations.

Crime springs eternal & infernal.

INVASION AMERICA: On The Run

By Christie Golden

ROC, science fiction novel, \$5.99, 1998, 266 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-451-45693-9.

Based on the new animated series by Steven Spielberg and Harve Bennett for DreamWorks, airing on the WB Network.

This novel is a prequel, the story of Tyrusian Prince Cale and how he came to Earth and evaded death from those expeditionary Tyrusians seeking him and how he met and loved the Earth woman who would bear his child---half-human half-alien David Carter.

DEATHSTALKER HONOR

By Simon R. Green

ROC, science fiction, \$6.99, 1998, 526 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-451-45648-3.

This novel is the latest in the Owen Deathstalker series. It's space opera. The cover has a definite *Starship Troopers* (the movie) look (human soldiers surrounded by Bugs). But this novel has some vicious characters and an adult angle.

Green overwrites, however, in my view.

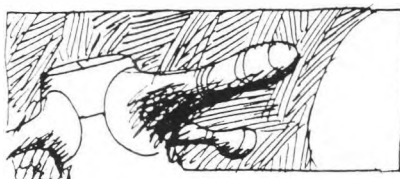
DEEP SPACE AND SACRED TIME - STAR TREK in the American Mythos

By Jon Wagner and Jan Lundeen

PRAEGER PUBLISHERS, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881. \$27.95, 1998, 280 p., Hardcover, ISBN:0-275-96225-3.

The authors make the point that Star Trek's long popularity is bedded in its moral cosmology: humanism, compassion, growth, and the integrity of the self. It is also subversive of the religious establishments, nationalism, and prejudice.

And in spite of an inescapable taint of homophobia, sexism and racism (which I submit had to be endured for the series to get on TV), the social idealism of the concept touched a chord in the young American soul.



Reviews



AND THEN I SAW....

L.A. CONFIDENTIAL [R] [1986]

Good cop, bad cop, all cynical cops and a story of incredible corruption and evil ambition in 1950's Hollywood. Beautifully acted by especially Kevin Spacey and Russell Crowe.

Superb direction and pacing of the most important element---the violence.

I fail to see why Kim Basinger was given the Best Supporting Actress Oscar. But high class hooker roles are a goldmine.

STRIPTEASER 2 [R] [1997]

A cab driver scours the seedy strip clubs of Los Angeles trying to find his missing kid sister.

The movie is full of bad acting, shallow plot and endless shots of the strippers' full, naked breasts.

Not that there's anything wrong with that!

A KNIGHT IN CAMELOT [TV-PG]

[1998] Whoopi Goldberg is incredible as a 1990's top-rated theoretical physicist who repeats Samuel Clemens' *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*...and continues on to fill an extra hour. It's Politically Correct feminist and racist fantasy fit for morons and kids below 6.

THE X-FILES [TV-PG] [1998]

The new season begins and nutshells the surface of the vast alien-human conspiracy: A leftover, "junk" virus from humanity's ancient past can now cause an alien "birth" from a human body after 12 hours of gestation. A shadow power group in the U.S. government is helping the aliens to...take over the planet?

Questions naturally are not answered and the effort to unravel all this continues. Intra-FBI power struggles continue.

Extremely well done in dark and shadows, and with flashes of grue and of alien. Reality shifts beneath our feet. Are humans **really** indigenous to Earth? Or...were we 'augmented' by Others? Could we selectively use this 'junk DNA' in us to turn on telepathy?

This is really good science fiction with a conspiracy-paranoid bent.

TWICE UPON A TIME [1998] [TV-PG]

This fantasy (an irrational, idiot conception of an alternate Earth) features Molly Ringwald as a woman unhappy with her boy friend and her job who

makes a wish after winning a drumstick pull...and next morning wakes to find herself married to a star, a success at her job, her mother still alive... But she soon realizes she dislikes this alternative life even more, and uses another drumstick pull wish to get back to her original life.

The idiocies include reversed writing and 'reversed' slang as funny-clever alternate Earth reminders.

There is never an explanation for the drumstick magic wishes. Fantasy is never having to make sense.

This film is something made for the Lifetime [women's] channel, I believe.

SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET [1997] [PG-13]

Brad Pitt with an Austrian accent in 1939 as a selfish Nazi athlete who leaves his pregnant wife to climb a mountain in the Himalayas. He escapes internment by the British in WW2 and flees into Tibet.

A too-long scenic movie showing a billion rocks, during which he is supposed to have learned Buddhist selflessness, mainly in Lhasa from the young Dalai Lama (who in his charming manner steals the movie).

But the message seems more about being very lucky, reverence for all life, and hating the invading, arrogant, brutal Chinese.

Escaped back to Austria after the war, Brad Pitt is serene, thoughtful and a perfect man.

This is a watchable movie, but a star vehicle dud.

JOHN GRISHAM'S THE RAINMAKER [1997] [PG-13]

Matt Damon remembers when he was an idealistic young Memphis lawyer just out of law school who battled an evil medical insurance corporation, and a wife-beating husband.

Excellent turns by Danny DeVito as a law-wise gopher-doer associate, and Jon Voight as a corporate lawyer.

I loved the caustic Damon/lawyer voice-over commentary regarding this first case in his career.

AMNESIA [1997] [R]

A 'Suspense-comedy', this improbable story of an adulterous minister, his murderous wife, his pissed-off lover, a crazy woman motel owner, a horny insurance investigator ends with three dead and the wife & lover allied in million-dollar complicity.

Only good feature was the nudity of the motel owner.

