

# THE GEIS LETTER -----57

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

JANUARY 1999

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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

**Economy:** 11-29-98 The Federal Reserve did not lower its interest rates to save the stock and bond markets, as widely reported in the mass media, but to save the credit/debt markets.

The Fed has been pumping huge deposits into the banking system to further encourage banks to make loans and to send money into the world economy, to 'reliquify' it, to save as best it can the debt structure.. But new commercial bank loans in this country remain flat to down. The Fed may be trying to push on a string.

The revived "Internet bubble" on the stock markets continues (as in July before that sudden collapse), as do the other stock markets, and a joke on the trading floors is "Is it tulips yet?" referring to the classic Tulip Mania boom and bust in 17th Century Holland.

Once again predictions of "Dow 11,000" and "Dow 12,000" by the end of 1999 are heard. The Dow-Jones Industrial Average is now at 9335, within a few points of the July all-time high.

■ 12-2-98 The biggest, most powerful corporation---the equal or master of most countries on Earth---was created by the \$77B buyout-merger of Exxon with Mobil Oil.

This "merger" virtually recreates John D. Rockefeller's giant Standard Oil of the 20's before it was broken up by the government using antitrust laws.

We'll see if this megacombo is allowed to exist today. (As well as the gigantic financial structure created by the merger of CitiGroup with Travelers.)

■ 12-3-98 Bad news from Japan (continued economic decline) and Brazil (legislature refusal to curb the huge deficit government pension plan, which endangers the huge IMF loans needed by Brazil to pay its international creditors, mostly big American banks) caused our stock market to fall 185 points today.

Continued declines in commodity prices and oil prices tell of continued declines in demand from Asia and south of the border, which means continued, deepening worldwide recession.

■ 1-4-99 The launching today of the

Euro---the 11-nation European currency ---seems to have gone well and augers for it becoming an increasingly strong rival to the \$\$ in international commerce and as an international reserve currency.

This means more and more upward pressure on \$\$ interest rates, and eventual downward pressure on the stock markets and on the economy, as borrowing becomes more expensive.

■ 1-5-99 Something dangerous going on: the yen is steadily increasing in value in exchange with the dollar, prompting some Japanese and their banks to sell US \$bonds and take their money back to Japan, thereby also putting pressure on US interest rates.

Clearly a new era is opening up: the US\$ is no longer king of the reserve currency hill and must 'compete' as an equal, meaning we cannot as in past decades 'spend and sell' excess dollars overseas and not suffer the inflationary consequences here at home.

In fact, we may now be seeing some of those chickens finally coming home to roost as countries no longer hold as many dollars as their treasury reserves.

#### ■ TWA-800 Cover-Up

11-29-98 A full-page ad in the 10-18-98 *New York Times* by Admiral Thomas H. Moorer and the Association of Retired Aviation Professionals asks the government to end its cover-up and reveals these new (to me) items:

■ Most of the 115 witnesses saw an object going up from close to shore heading south. One highly credible witness who was at sea saw an object streaking up from south to north.

■ Major Fred Meyer, a Vietnam Veteran, from his helicopter saw two high-energy (white) explosions, followed by a fuel explosion (orange-red).

■ TWA 800's flight data recorder tape's last line clearly reflects the impact of a high-energy explosion near the plane, on the left side below the nose.

■ The nose wheel doors were blown IN by the explosion and one of the nose wheel tires was shredded.

Thanks to John Boardman for sending me the ad.

**Geis Comment:** The more you know, the more you doubt the official scenario. And sad that the only way this info can reach the public is via paid ads by reputable persons of knowledge. Moorer and the others ask for donations so that more ads can be published across the nation. God forbid that the major media cover the contrarian view and the inconvenient-to-the-govt. facts coming to brief light.

#### ■ Y2K Update

"Embedded Systems and the Year 2000 Problem" appeared on the Internet in July, 1998, and was written by Mark A. Frautschi, Ph.D., of Shakespeare and Tao Consulting.

<http://www.tmn.com/~frautsch/y2k2.html>

His serious warning is that because there are nearly **50 billion** embedded silicon chips such as timers, micro-processors, sequencers and controllers in a vast variety of infrastructures (medical pacemakers, building systems such as phones, security, heating, plumbing and lighting, and transportation systems, financial networks, and just-in-time delivery systems), perhaps **one billion** of them will begin to fail on and after 1-1-2000.

His expert opinion and estimate is that it will be impossible to find and correct and/or replace these embedded date sensitive chips...and it is best now to admit this and concentrate on triage: saving the most important systems involving power, food, shelter, transport.

One interesting feature to some of these chips is that their 'clock' is set to run for a (say) 20-year 'lifetime' of use of the machine or device they control, and the 'clock' runs only when the machine is 'on'. And because of the vagaries of manufacturing and assembly and no-records-kept, multitudes of these chips cannot be traced...so that their 'clocks' may run out of 'lifetime' at any time and stop the machine cold.

Got a furnace a few years old? You may be the victim someday of planned and ill-timed obsolescence.

The message of Mark A. Frautschi is serious and suggests a more widespread Y2K "Death by a billion cuts" fate than we may expect.

The major computer programs with Y2K problems may be fixed, but the tiny embedded 'date sensitive' chips in perhaps 2 billion places (some very critical) may do a number on us we will not expect and be unable to 'fix' short of a difficult major mobilization of society and a mass junking of billions of major and minor machines, devices, and appliances, which might take years to replace, if ever, because of the costs.

Just that you'd like to know this

Thanks to correspondent Seattle Slew for the copy of the report.

#### Update

**WE ARE CURSED TO LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES—CLINTON & HIS IRAQ ATTACK**

■ 12-22-98 Incredible stuff. Clinton is impeached by the House on two of

four counts, supposedly shamed, stained and maimed, and then comes out onto the White House lawn accompanied by v.p. Gore, Gephardt, Hilary, and dozens of House Democrats, and he is all smiles, nods, casual, arrogant confidence, and says without a worry or tremor that everything will work out and he will willingly accept a Senate censure for his 'misleading' and bad behavior, and he will go ahead with his noble task of doing 'the people's business' until the final day of his term...

What an actor! Either that, or what a psychopathic solipsist!

What will happen to him now?

Bear in mind that all through this scandal and Starr investigation and House impeachment process, Clinton and his allies and employees have done a series of attacks on his critics, a series of fancy dodges, shifts, twirls, sidesteps, leaps, and denials...and it is a great show...but the process went on and on and on and like the mills of the gods ground exceedingly fine and was not stopped. He was Impeached on two counts.

Now he faces the U.S. Senate and he and his cohorts are now in a dance and spin to get the senate to censure him, not put him on trial. But I suspect the stones will grind on and he will face trial, and Clinton's tactics and behavior will be critical.

If Clinton or his operatives attack and threaten senators, if they try to pressure the senate with endless polls and outside opinion, and especially if he/they try a presidential surprise---a military operation a la *Wag the Dog*, or a created crisis which proves he is too important to remove from office---and if he continues his arrogant, unpenitent denials of perjury and obstruction of justice...

He'll piss off and insult and outrage enough Democrat senators to insure his ouster.

U.S. senators are not small potatoes; they are all more than party hacks. They are VIPs and they know it and prize their position and their responsibilities and power as Senators!

And they'll be there long after this smooth talking self-centered Arkansas charm boy liar is gone.

So if Clinton offends these people because he cannot yield to their demand he admit and really apologize for perjury and obstruction, then he could be gone by June.

Odd that his character---so cynical and shallow and selfish---should contain this one fatal bedrock ego flaw: an inability to admit a crime and an inability to sincerely ask for mercy.

■ The vaunted four-day missile and air attack on Iraq by the U.S. and British armed forces seems, as the days pass, to have been less and less successful than advertised and to argue against another such expensive effort even as our high officials huff and puff and threaten more attacks in order to assure the 'degradation' of Saddam's ability to make and deliver 'weapons of mass destruction.'

Behind all this furor is Iraq's oil and who profits from it.

When were Iraq's huge oil reserves nationalized (socialized) and those immensely valuable oil concessions taken away from the British? Was it in 1958 when General Abdul Karim Kassem was in power? Yes. But you'll never read about the history of Western oil exploitation in that country in the major Western/American media! Perfect example of the Memory Hole.

[These oil concessions involve the right to find, pump, and export millions of barrels of oil per year, upon payment of royalties to the government. These concessions are worth \$trillions!]

I believe all this anti-Iran and anti-Iraq activity and propaganda traces to the loss of control and profit from nationalized Iranian and Iraqi oil in the 1950's, and British-American foreign policy ever since has been centered on attempts to regain control...and prevent further losses.

Thus you may note that the only nations involved in this most recent attack on Iraq were Britain and America.

We are the prime actor in this geopolitical struggle because "our" oil corporations are primary in Middle East oil exploitation now, with British Petroleum in a subsidiary role (though still able to dictate national policy to Tony Blair, the current Prime Minister of England).

The greatest fear in the combined boardrooms of Exxon and Mobil Oil now must be that a revolution or coup in Saudi Arabia will result in the nationalization of those massive reserves.

That event would provoke an instant war. The U.S. & England would go all-out to 'protect our national interests' and to 'right the wrong' of 'communist' or 'radical Moslem' control of Saudi Arabia; we would be forced by high moral imperatives (and fuck what the U.N. has to say!) to restore to power the 'rightful rulers', the Saudi Kings and Princes and Sheiks (a la Kuwait), and the Sultans of the Emirates...and the giant oil corporations who unobtrusively own the 'concessions' which profit them so much.

But consider the parlous state of health of these rulers we rely on so

much:

✓ HAFEZ EL ASSAD, President of Syria, 69, is dying of leukemia, a brain tumor and heart complications.

✓ King FAHD BIN ABDULAZIZ of Saudi Arabia, 77, has had a series of heart attacks and strokes.

✓ Sheik JABER AL AHMAD AL SABAH of Kuwait, 70, has AIDS. His heir apparent, Sheik SAAD AL ABDAL-LAH AL SABAH, 69, has colon cancer.

✓ King HUSSEIN of Jordan, 63, is dying of renal and lymphatic cancer. His heir apparent, Prince HASSAN, is in very poor health and does not command the loyalty of the population.

✓ Sheik ZAYED BIN SULTAN NAHAYAN, 86, president of the United Arab Emirates, has prostate cancer. The Emirates' pro-American-British policies are expected to die with him.

✓ President HOSNI MUBARAK of Egypt suffers from Hepatitis B and severe neurological disorders.

✓ Palestinian leader YASSER ARAFAT, 69, has advanced Parkinson's disease and severe neurological problems and is likely to die 'anytime'. His death will open the way for Hamas, the 'terrorist' organization.

To return to the recent Iraq Attack (and anti-Moslem slant in our foreign policy), bear in mind that in wars of aggression [as ours is] we use our weapons of choice, and those we attack use what weapons they can. We use 'antiseptic' missiles and bombs. Our lower-tech victims, to fight back if they dare, use "terrorism" in various ways. Of course only our methods of breaking things and killing people are considered 'legitimate' and 'moral.'

My fear is that our government---perhaps our president under Big Corporate pressure---***if there is a further large loss of control of Middle East oil***---may use a contrived "terrorist" bio-attack or series of attacks to justify a declaration of National Emergency [under the War Powers Act] and rule by decree and executive orders. [Remember the "Anthrax" scares. Were those fake 'domestic terrorist' scenarios premeditated planting of fear seeds?]

Such a series of "terrorist" attacks would justify a 'constitutional coup' and an all-out attack on "outlaw nations" Iraq, Iran, Libya and perhaps North Korea.

And, I fear, the declaration of National Emergency (perhaps aided by Y2K and an economic depression) would somehow never be rescinded.

But surely all that could never happen! A paranoidal conspiracy buff pipe dream! Never happen... Never...

## ■ IT'S A MIRACLE!

Story in the December 25th, 1998 *The Oregonian* about a poll [random sample telephone poll of 1033 people] about belief in miracles.

☑ **61% absolutely believe Jesus was born to a virgin mother.**

☑ **60.8% absolutely believe a star in the sky appeared over Bethlehem as a sign of the birth.**

☑ **60.8% absolutely believe angels from heaven announced the birth to nearby shepherds.**

☑ **62.3% absolutely believe Three Wise Men traveled from Eastern lands to bring gifts to the child.**

☑ **75% absolutely believe Jesus was born in the small town of Bethlehem.**

☑ **73.6% absolutely believe Jesus was a real person who lived about 2000 years ago.**

And these beliefs are from Christians. May I guess that 30% of the U.S. population isn't even nominally Christian? What miracles do the Moslems, Buddhists, Hebrews, the various imported Asian religions, the native Indian religions, the "Voodoo" followers, the spiritualists, the UFOlogists believe in?

How many real atheists are there in the population? One percent? [And how many of them believe it's possible that Science will rescue them by coming forth with an unending series of life-extension devices and/or treatments?]

The point of this commentary is that what psychologists call 'magical thinking'---the ability (yea, the need) to deny reality and think irrationally (as emotions dictate)---has actually deepened and become more pervasive in America than a few years ago.

Science and technology to most people in our country are simply magic, incomprehensible and 'beyond' them. Math, for instance, beyond simple arithmetic, makes their head hurt.

As a matter of fact, Science & Technology have suffered a very bad press for as long as they have been prominent in 'progress'. S&T mean Change...and the overwhelming majority of people don't like change! ("You just barely learn the rules and some big-domed idiot changes the rules! And all because some Big Bucks pig wants to make more money!")

We see and hear of the Law of Unintended Consequences ruining lives, social groups, towns, regions...even harming Sacred Mother Earth, because Science and Technology forced us to make changes and that in turn caused Big Problems, environmental disasters, deaths, etc.

Hey, you want a prime mistake? Look what flowed from mankind's adoption of fire! Listen to the tribe's grumpy old man:

"We'll live to regret this! Fire is a gift from the Devil! What's the matter with the old ways? We know how to stay warm with furs and hot water springs, and we eat well on raw meat, berries and roots and bugs! We see well enough at night without fire! All fire does, with its smoke, is tell our enemies where we are! Mark my grunts..."

A argument can be made that from the adoption of fire, mankind shifted evolutionary focus from survival of the physically fittest to the survival as well of the mentally, most inventive fittest.

A pivotal point, unrealized, in the destiny of mankind and in the destruction of the planet Earth.

Hear me, Great Disappointed God! I am Geis, the ultimate Luddite, the prime reactionary! Strike down my foes! Raise me to command of the survivors of your Creator wrath!

[I know I'm megalomaniacal...but am I megalomaniacal enough?]

But, back to my commentary on the pretensions of civilization and our secret-to-ourselves inner life of illusion and delusion:

We know from other polls and surveys that about the same percentages of people also believe in other aspects of the supernatural---Hell, Satan, Demons, Fairies... As well as ghosts, evil spirits of a variety of names and powers...

People generally also believe in mind over matter, telepathy, psi powers... And, that sine qua non of magical thinking and mind over matter---Life After Death.

Combine all them percentages (which undoubtedly overlap every which way) and I expect we'd get 90+% of everybody believing in "miracles" in one form or another.

I believe that if mankind had it in him to instinctually accept death---final extinction of the Self---we wouldn't need the huge baggage of the supernatural and psi and aliens and God which clutters and fogs our minds.

But of course the Ego/Self [ME!], with both feet stuck from birth in the raging, lusty, solipsist, psychopathic Id (which most of us are forced by society and parents to reluctantly submerge as we grow up from Idpure-infancy) cannot do without that last resort solace---the Immortal Soul (or Essence, or Spirit) in the often sudden, always inevitable, ruthless face of obliteration.

Hey, I wouldn't be surprised to find myself hedging my 'bets' in my final

moments by praying to God. Or Satan: "Hey, Big Bad Guy, you got a library in Hell? Maybe I could be a librarian? You must have quite a collection of porno novels... Any of mine down there?"

I jest. But come crunch time--who knows? I might cave. But I'm saying now a retreat from Atheism and rationality under dire pressure from the worst fear possible, fear of extinction of ME! isn't proof of the truth of mind over matter. Only proof of weak character.

Weak character is an insufficient mastery of one's Id. But of course that in turn may be due to a degree to a lack of intelligence (which permits/creates insights), though I've come to suspect that high intelligence also allows one to find and use more elaborate rationalizations and defenses in defense of the Ego and Self and Id. I'm firmly of the belief that the Self & Id are 99.99% of crunch time masters of intelligence and the so-called rational mind.

It sometimes astonishes me that mankind has and must devise such elaborate and all-pervasive 'escapes' from death: all the world's religions, all the supernatural lies implying life-after-death in all the stories and novels and plays and movies and TV series about angels and vampires and ghosts and immortality...

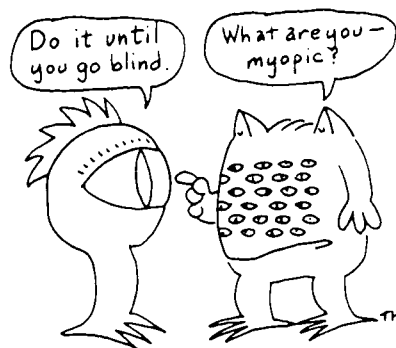
What a picture of mankind this must present to an alien (if such exists) as it surveys the pervasive, fear-drenched imaginary life we exhibit (and inhabit). Our conscious and subconscious minds are consumed with fantasies of killing each other, and with fantasies of evaded death...when not employed in robbing and looting and using each other.

What a thin tissue of 'civilization' and 'love' we manage to pretend [on pain of death!]. What is love but a measure of how much another person or activity pleases us & our masked Ids.

What a marvelous, "miraculous" species we are! If there is a God, how proud He must be of His creation.

Or: God's master observes and rants: "You call that a viable species? Where did you learn Creationism? Clear the table and try again! And this time..."

■■■■



## Reviews



# AND THEN I SAW....

## MOUSE HUNT [1997] PG

A supernaturally intelligent mouse defends his turf---an ancient, run-down mansion---against two greedy, stupid brothers who inherited it and want to refurbish it and sell.

Nathan Lane is the smartest of the two idiots who declare war on the mouse, and Lee Evans plays a moron very well.

There are sub-plots, but the mouse is the prime target.

Funny, enjoyable film as you root for the underdog mouse. The underlying plotline may remind you of *Home Alone*.

## NOT LIKE US [1995 - Horror R]

Two humanoid aliens performing experiments on humans in a small town manage to pass as human by 'deboning' humans and wearing the soft sheath remaining.

One of the aliens likes beautiful woman bodies and likes to use sex and nakedness to entrap male humans...

All incredible and absurd, but carried off with humor and wotthehell low budget *joie de vivre*.

## UNLIKELY ANGEL [1996 - PG-13]

Dolly Parton as a self-absorbed just-dead would-be angel must earn her way into Heaven by reuniting a dysfunctional family down here on Earth.

But Dolly, who is mistakenly hired as a nanny by the selfish husband-father, cannot do a scene without showing six inches of magnificent cleavage (even at the end in a choir in Heaven!) and without dressing on Earth like a \$50 street girl. No way in Hell this sexy creature would be thought a nanny!

But it must be because Roddy McDowall (As Peter, the Guardian of the Gate into Heaven) wishes it so, since he Intervenes all through the movie to keep the plot from self-destructing.

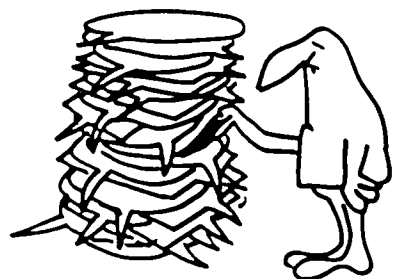
Best parts are Dolly's two songs.

## DEEP IMPACT [1998 - PG-13]

You wade through a lot of ho-hum character and relationship shit (so you'll care about these stereotypes when the comet hits). Finally the approaching huge Extinction Event comet is discovered and a spaceship is sent to blow it up. But the crew fail according to the plotline (but actually succeed if physics were allowed into the story), and finally the impact fx come in to dazzle and wow.

Watch only the last half hour.

# BOOKS RECEIVED



LEXICON

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



## ILLEGAL ALIEN

By Robert J. Sawyer

ACE BOOKS science fiction novel, \$5.99, Jan. 1999, 301 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00592-6.

'When a disabled spaceship enters Earth's atmosphere, fear is quickly replaced with awe. Seven members of the incredibly advanced Tosok race are welcomed by the world with open arms, and the people of Earth put their best face forward. Then a popular scientist is found murdered. All evidence points to one of the Tosoks. For the first time an alien is tried before humans in a court of law. And in the unprecedented trial, where two cultures clash, there may be far more at stake than accounting for one human life...'

So goeth the blurb. I read two chapters and found the plot an unconvincing setup, and the writing one small step up from pulp.

In my reality the U.S. aircraft carrier sent to investigate would have had a normal flotilla of protecting destroyers and other ships and would have taken over the area around the alien spaceship in international waters. There would have been a gaggle of VIP political, science and military aboard, and the Russian submarine and the Brazilian cruise ship would have been chased away.

The main plot idea---that an alien with advanced technology would have been put on trial for murder---is absurd; 'Diplomatic Immunity' would have been given and the murder covered up or excused as a terrible mistake.

The novel fails a primary test of credibility.

## THE BORDER

By Marina Fitch

ACE BOOKS fantasy, Jan. 1999, \$5.99, 307 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00594-2.

This is about Rosa, a poor Mexican young woman, pregnant, seeking to cross the border into the U.S. She has one advantage---a spirit in her mind who since childhood has been a companion and is now her protector and guide.

Fitch writes a well-paced, spare narrative which held me nicely and made me care about Rosa...and intrigued me about Luz, the spirit.

## THE FIRST CASUALTY

By Mike Moscoe

ACE BOOKS science fiction novel, Jan. 1999, \$5.99, 325 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00593-4.

Asteroid miner Mary Rodrigo and freighter owner Mattim Abeeb are green draftees of the Society of Humanity, forced to fight for Earth---a planet they've never even seen.

'Major Ray Longknife and his lover, Senior Pilot Rita Nun, are career soldiers, invested with the cause of the Unity Party---and its ambitious new president.

'These four soldiers on opposing sides of the battle are about to discover the true nature of this terrible war---a quest for profit---from the high command of *both* sides.'

The writing, what I read of it, seems overdone. Some of the words and phrases seem inappropriate and (in this future) archaic.

## THOUGHTS OF GOD

By Michael Kanaly

ACE BOOKS, novel, 1997, Jan. 1999, \$5.99, 311 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-441-00595-0.

'A metaphysical novel of murder'  
'It is a thriller---the tale of two modern-day hunters, one a killer of innocent children, the other the vigilante who vows to take him down. Yet it is so much more. It sees into the future and dwells on the past. It reaches into the galaxies of the universe to recount otherworldly struggles for life and death. And it takes you into the notebook of God, where questions --- answerable and unanswerable---build to a violent, dizzying climax of earthly justice and cosmic vengeance.'

God, an idealist, seeds planets and experiments with life. Oh, and in the main plot on Earth a near-future legal vigilante team finds a serial child killer.

The killer hunt is tense and riveting, and the killer's viewpoint is horribly real as he hunts more children.

The God thoughts & alien stuff is boring after a while and is based on the concept of immortal souls 'inserted' into 'mechanicals' bodies --- a variation of reincarnation. I found it overdone and distracting from the prime reading experience of tracking and experiencing the Earth-now monster called Arnie Watts.

## The Lost Regiment #7:

### A BAND OF BROTHERS

By William R. Forstchen

ROC Science Fiction, 1999, \$5.99, 317 p., Mass market paperback novel, ISBN:0-451-45705-6.

'In the ten years since his regiment was transported to an alien world, Commander Andrew Keane has bravely fought time and time again for humanity's freedom. But after he is injured in battle, his confidence is shaken, and his ability to lead is damaged. ... Now, with the Human Republic weakened, their sinister enemies --- the Bantags --- offer a truce to the two halves of the Republic --- one that would guarantee safety for one nation, and seal the doom of the other!'

Forstchen writes good, vivid action and with appropriate detail makes his improbable storyline come alive.

## DAUGHTER OF DARKNESS

By Ed Gorman

DAW BOOKS, [1106], 1998, 333 p., Mass market paperback novel, ISBN:0-88677-808-5.

'The story of a rich but mentally and emotionally troubled young woman, who, in an evening she can't remember, may have stabbed a man to death. It is also the tale of a former cop---now a part-time cabdriver and would-be horror writer---who is determined to prove her innocence.'

But his investigation reveals truths so shocking and impossible to prove...

This psycho-thriller is well-constructed and well-written, especially the suspense of the final scenes.

## Twilight of the Clans VII PRINCE OF HAVOC

By Michael A. Stackpole

ROC Science Fiction, 1998, \$6.99, 287 p., Mass market paperback novel, ISBN: 0-451-45706-4.

'Trained to be the Inner Sphere's finest warrior, Prince Victor-Steiner Davion has only known one enemy in battle---the Clans. A year earlier he led a massive counter-strike against the Smoke Jaguar Clan, pursuing them all the way to their homeworld. He then faced all of the Clans in one last battle for supremacy. But, for a man of war like Prince Victor, can there ever be peace? When he returns home he finds the Inner Sphere in tatters, with a new order in power...leaving him a hero without a home.'

Ah, pure space opera with one foot in the ancient Roman Empire, one foot in *Star Wars*, and one arm in *Mortal Combat*.

## THE TOUGH GUIDE TO FANTASYLAND

By Diana Wynne Jones

DAW Fantasy [1107], 1998, \$6.99, 302 p., Mass market paperback 'nonfiction' fictional travel guide, ISBN:0-88677-832-8.

Pick a town on the map, consult alphabetically arranged Toughpick (which leads you to create your trip, your companions, your environs and your disasters, I suspect, and go on from there, experiencing this myriadal fantasy/spirit/magic world to your heart and soul's content. But keep in mind---this is

humorous...isn't it?

A clever, gimmicky kind of book. A novelist could use it to create a fantasy plot, complete with characters and locales.

### ALIEN PETS

**Edited By Denise Little**

DAW Science Fiction, [1108], 1998, \$5.99, 317 p., Mass market paperback anthology, ISBN:0-88677-822-0.

15 original stories of pets from outer and inner space---from genetically altered Earth creatures to alien invaders disguised as pets. Authors included: Kristine Kathryn Rusch, Jack Haldeman, Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, David Bischoff, and Diane Duane.

### Black Oak #2

#### THE HUSH OF DARK WINGS

**By Charles Grant**

ROC Novel, 1999, \$5.99, 256 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-451-45733-1.

When a letter arrives from an old female acquaintance begging him to investigate the strange goings-on in her town, Ethan Proctor, head of Black Oak Investigations, travels to the heart of Kansas and a dusty old town where a seemingly friendly cult has recently arrived---all women, concerned, and cooperative.

But why are the townspeople so afraid? And why are so many people missing? And what are those strange winged creatures circling the sky above town?

### THE NATIONS OF THE NIGHT

**By Oliver Johnson**

ROC fantasy novel, 1998, \$16.95, 404 p., Trade paperback, ISBN:0-451-45566-5.

A sequel to *The Forging of the Shadows*, this is the second novel of a trilogy.

The forces of light and dark wage the ultimate battle, and the key to mankind's salvation lies in a city hidden by magic.

The once-glorious city of Thrull has become a place of death and despair. Seven years before, Lord Faran Gatton, High Priest of the God of Darkness, overthrew Thrull and set loose his army of vampires to plague the city, waiting for the day the sun would cease to rise...but the God of Light has his champions as well. A motley trio of survivors searches for the three ancient artifacts that can defeat the darkness. Traveling far beyond their own lands, they will encounter nightmares and disasters before facing their most dangerous enemies---the Dark-born Nations of the Night!

### SPIRIT FOX

**By Mickey Zucker Reichert and Jennifer Wingert**

DAW Fantasy, [1105], 1998, \$23.95, 386 p., Hardcover, ISBN:0-88677-806-9.

A new fantasy universe by veteran DAW fantasy author Mickey Zucker Reichert and talented newcomer Jennifer Wingert tells the story of a magic-filled land where a war between the god and goddess has led to a war among mortals, and the reconciliation of the immortals brings peace to mortals as well.

However, even in peace there is peril, especially for Kiarda, a young woman of noble lineage destined from birth to be spirit-linked to a fox. When the fox is killed before they bond, its

spirit has nowhere to go but into Kiarda's body. This unfortunate event will in time lead her to seeming madness and her people to the brink of a new and far more devastating war.

Medieval fantasy, romantic, and due for sequels.

### WIZARD OF THE GROVE

**By Tanya Huff**

DAW Fantasy, 1999, \$6.99, 576 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-88677-819-0.

Now available in this volume, the novels which began Tanya Huff's career, *Child of the Grove* (1988) and *The Last Wizard* (1989), form a powerful fantasy duology about the last wizard ever to be born into the world. It is the saga of Crystal, a daughter of Power whose destiny is to put an end to the war between wizards and the mortal world. Now this magical tale is collected in one volume as *Wizard of the Grove*, featuring new cover art by Yvonne Gilbert.

Romantic medieval/magic fantasy for the female readers. I get the distinct impression that fantasy and even much of sf has been 'feminized' because women, young and older, are increasingly the only readers buying novels. Boys and young men do games and watch sf on TV/cable. And even on TV we see shows like *Charmed*, *Xena*, *Buffy*, etc. aimed at women/girls.

*Brimstone* seems the only new TV fantasy aimed at men.

### THE SHADOW MATRIX

**By Maron Zimmer Bradley**

DAW Science Fiction [1065], 1999, \$6.99, 608p, Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-88677-812-3. (Hardback in 1997.)

After spending her youth in the Terran Empire, Margaret Alton returns to Darkover, the planet of her birth. There she discovers she has the Alton Gift---forced rapport and compulsion---one of the strongest and most dangerous of the inherited *Laran* gifts of the telepathic Comyn---the ruling families of Darkover. And even as she struggles to control her newfound powers, Margaret finds herself falling in love with the Regent to the royal Elhalyon Domain, a man she has been forbidden to marry, for their alliance would irrevocably alter the power of their planet!

The Darkover universe is like a lifelong labor and thin goldmine.

Hopefully one of these years it will be taken for a major motion picture and then a TV series.

### LEGENDS — Tales From the Eternal Archives

**Edited by Margaret Weis**

DAW Fantasy Anthology, 1999, \$6.99, 320 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN: 0-88677-823-9.

19-story wide-ranging anthology: all of Earth's history, and possible history, from beginning to end...

Stories by 'Archivists' Margaret Weis, Kristine Kathryn Rusch, Jane L. Lindskold, Dennis L. McKiernan, Jesepha Sherman, Mickey Zucker Reichert, Janet Pack, Don Perrin, Ed Gorman, and others.

### WITNESS FOR THE DEFENSE

**By Michael C. Eberhardt**

ONYX Fiction, 1998, \$6.99, 412 p., Mass market paperback, ISBN:0-451-19222-2.

Eberhardt's third courtroom/crime novel. His writing is a bit too first-person-clever and affected for my taste.

### RAGNAR'S GUIDE TO THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY

**By Ragnar Benson**

Paladin Press, PO Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, [1-800-392-2400 for price, ordering info], 1999, 147 p., Trade paperback, ISBN:1-58160-011-9.

Ragnar, who has written at least 25 books for Paladin Press, here provides everything you'd want to know about living in and prospering in the underground (no taxes) economy.

There is inside info here from the mouths of those who have done it! And there is a rundown of likely jobs and professions which have proved friendly to the self-employed underground economy.

Altogether, the best book so far on the subject.

### SKID ROW BEAT - A Street Cop's Walk on the Wild Side

**By Loren W. Christensen**

Paladin Press, PO Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306, [1-800-392-2400 for price, ordering info.], 1999, 189 p., Trade paperback, ISBN: 1-58160-012-7.

This book is of special interest to me since it is written by a Portland cop who worked our skid road area at a time (1973-75) when I happened to spend time every week in that arena as an Interested Observer.

This is a collection of 73 short, detailed, true-life cop-encounters in skid row, grouped according to main subject: Sex, Violence, Bodily Excretions, and Characters.

And these are graphically told, some to the point of up-chuck city. (Ever heard of the 'wine shits'?) Some are funny, some eye-popping, many grotesque...almost all sad...as Portland police dealt with the dregs of humanity in its squalor, filth, crime, personal and social ruin.

Yuk. But what a great read!

### NOTED

For Fantasy writers: Paladin Press [1-800-392-2400] catalog Vol.29, No.1, shows a slew of valuable knife-sword fighting reference books, notable this issue the new *Medieval Swordsmanship* and *Renaissance Swordsmanship*.