

aside, I knew even then my game would be humor. Mom should have been able to spot it too, but she didn't always see the humor in my jokes. Like the time when I was six or seven I asked her to butter a roll for me and she responded, "Put the butter on yourself" so I put the butter on myself by spreading it down the front of my

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shirt. She didn't catch the humor there. I caught it--oh boy, did I catch it!)

Anyway, my mother figured I would be a social pariah if I could not toss and catch a ball. So one day my father, who should have known better, took me to a local park and tried to teach me normal ball skills. I don't think my father is used to spectacular failure. I think I had important issues about dinosaurs on my mind that day. Either that or Huckleberry Hound. And not being able to catch a ball I could laugh off with not only grace but with enough humor that I ended with a greater sense of accomplishment when I missed the ball than when I caught it. I think my mutual consent we all decided to wait for the school system to teach me these all-important ball skills.

Nonetheless, my mother gave me a lot of sports-related gifts on gift-giving occasions. They were things like a spring-loaded basketball game, a pair of roller skates, and a catcher's mitt. The mitt was different from the game and the skates because it rotted rather than rusting. It is possible I got some gifts that weren't practical--like clothing--or with some intended point--like sports gifts or educational gifts. But gifts that don't fall into these two categories don't come readily to mind. Is it any wonder I liked the educational gifts best? Maybe that was her intention all long.

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All political parties die at last of swallowing their

own lies.

-- John Arbuthnot

WATCHERS by Dean R. Koontz
Berkley, 1988 (1987c), ISBN 0-425-10746-9, \$4.95
LIGHTNING by Dean R. Koontz
Berkley, 1989 (1988c), ISBN 0-425-11580-1, \$4.95.
TWILIGHT EYES by Dean R. Koontz
Berkley, 1987, ISBN 0-425-10065-0, \$4.95.
A book review by Mark R. Leeper
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One of the responsibilities of a reviewer is to not ruin the possible reading enjoyment of a novel by revealing too much of the plot in the review. This puts the reviewer at a particular disadvantage in reviewing novels by Dean R. Koontz. Most books you buy because you know what they are about and want to know more. Koontz's writing and his publisher's packaging are such as not to let on what the book is about. The cover blurbs are intended to be uninformative and, in fact, the big surprise of most Koontz novels is the explanation of what is going on. Hence to tell the reader anything useful about what the plot is actually about is to spoil the surprise. (For this reason plot discussion will be held to the end of this review and will be flagged with a spoiler

warning.) Koontz writes science fiction novels with horror conventions and they get packaged as horror. Any real horror he writes apparently he does under a pen name.

What are the horror conventions? Well, those are conventions pioneered by Richard Matheson and refined by Stephen King. Like King's and Matheson's, Koontz's stories are not set in a far-flung future but in the present or the recent past. He puts in recognizable details--even brand names--to make the world he writes about one in which the reader feels at home, at least at first. His main characters are ordinary sorts of people who find themselves menaced by something. In the narrow sampling of three of his recent novels I have read and from conversations with other people, the menace is usually something super-scientific that has gotten out of hand. While it is not clear that description precisely fits L_i_g_h_t_n_i_n_g it is close and it certainly is true of W_a_t_c_h_e_r_s and T_w_i_l_i_g_h_t_E_y_e_s. His writing these days is very formulaic, albeit enjoyable. His novels are much thicker than the have to be for the story he is telling, but he has a very lucid writing style that makes his books go very quickly and reading one is not much different from sitting down and watching a horror film.

Koontz seems to be very much the popular successor to Stephen King. Horror is read pretty much by two sorts of readers. There are the inner circle who attend horror conventions (much like science fiction conventions) and look at horror as a real literary form. Then there are the light readers, many of whom find horror novels being sold in grocery and drug stores and who read it as a momentary diversion much as they would watch television. There are far more of the latter. For a while both sorts of reader were fans of Stephen King and there was a feeling

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of unity among horror readers. King is, however, in decline, and the two groups are really separating again. The inner circle are moving on to writers such as Clive Barker and Ramsey Campbell. Most of the light readers do not want anything so intense as Barker writes. Koontz is certainly one of, if not t_h_e, most popular writers among the light readers.

The horror market has made a sort of second career for Koontz who has been writing for longer than Clive Barker, even longer than Stephen King. Koontz, who was born in 1945, had science fiction novels

published back in the 1960s. He was considered sort of a second-rank science fiction novelist, though one of his novel, D_e_m_o_n_S_e_e_d, was adapted into a film with Julie Christie. At least one horror writer, less successful, has said on a panel that Koontz deserves his current popularity and came by it "the right way: busting his tail for years."

At this point I will go into the plot of the three novels.
SPOILERS FOLLOW.

W_a_t_c_h_e_r_s: This is Koontz's most popular novel from the straw poll I have taken. And it is mostly for the introduction of his most likable character, a dog of human intelligence, sort of like Lassie and endearing for just the same reasons. Einstein is not the main character but he certainly is the reason for the book's success. Outwardly Einstein looks like any dog, but he is the result of government experiments to increase the intelligence of animals and use them on the battlefield. Unfortunately, one of their other experiments got free at the same time and it hates all humans but even more hates Einstein--why is never clearly explained. Travis Carnell adopts the apparent stray dog and once he wins Einstein's trust, the dog begins communicating with him about the danger he is in, because by adopting Einstein, Travis has made himself the target both of unscrupulous government agents and of a rampaging monster. Every Koontz seems to have a boy-meets-girl (or vice versa) plot but in this one, one has more affection for the boy and girl than in most. Perhaps the reader still feels sappy over the presence of the dog.

L_i_g_h_t_n_i_n_g: This is really a story about how a woman reacts to having a time-traveling guardian. Laura Shane has been protected from many of life's most unpleasant moments by a sort of guardian who seems to keep showing up in the nick of time to save her. The guardian can see nasty things that are going to happen to her and prevent them before they happen. There are also time travelers with less benevolent plans for her. This would have been a fairly pat story, but is much improved as a result of the nature of the society these time travelers are coming from. I was fully expecting a nice plot twist at the end, much of the groundwork for which had already been set, and was disappointed when it did not arrive. Still, a pleasant novel with more adventure than horror.

T_w_i_l_i_g_h_t_E_y_e_s: We start out in the mind of a killer who is the only one who can see that some of the people around him are not people at all but what he calls "goblins" in human disguise. Nobody else is privileged to have the perception to see goblins but our killer knows them on sight, he claims. Well, as is not a very big surprise, the goblins are real and they are shape-changers. They are not, however, supernatural, but the invention of a pre-human civilization who used them as a sort of weapon. They have their own mission that they are carrying out. Our main character joins a carnival to hide from the police who for some reason think the goblins he has killed are real humans. The story is about his war with the goblins and his attack on a goblin stronghold.

These are all nice light readable entertainment, not bad choices for upcoming beach reading.

THOSE WHO HUNT THE NIGHT by Barbara Hambly
Del Rey, 1989 (1988c), ISBN 0-345-36132-6, \$4.50.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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This was billed as somehow related to Sherlock Holmes, so of course I had to read it. Other than being a mystery set in Victorian (or possibly Edwardian--the blurb bills it as "the period of Sherlock Holmes") London, it has little connection. It is all told from the main detective's point of view; his "assistant" (in this case his wife) is not his biographer. As a vampire novel, it makes a pleasant enough diversion, but Harry Turtledove's "Gentlemen of the Shade," with vampires stalking Jack the Ripper, who is one of their own, makes this look thin-blooded (if you'll permit the pun) by comparison. If you're looking for a book to take to the beach or to read on the plane, this is acceptable, but I can't really recommend it beyond that.

FULL SPECTRUM 2 edited by Lou Aronica,
Shawna McCarthy, Amy Stout, and Patrick LoBrutto
Bantam Spectra, 1990, ISBN 0-553-28530-0, \$4.95.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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F_u_l_l_S_p_e_c_t_r_u_m was the most talked-about anthology of 1988, containing one Nebula winner and three Hugo nominees. Even so, I was not entirely happy with it, and volume 2 seems to be a major step down from that, even though it does contain two Hugo nominees, David Brin's "The Giving Plague" and Michael Swanwick's "The Edge of the World." (One definite improvement is the absence of the overly gushy introductions to the stories that marked the first volume.)

The problem is that most of the stories in F_u_l_l_S_p_e_c_t_r_u_m_2 are not much more than average stories. There is no "Fort Moxie Branch," no "Voices of the Kill," no "Dead Men on TV." Most of the stories are okay, but they are the sort of stories that fill in a magazine, not those which are featured. David Ira Cleary's "All Our Sins Forgotten" and Karen Haber's "A Plague of Strangers," for example, strike me as very typical A_n_a_l_o_g stories. (The placement of Brin's "The Giving Plague" immediately following "A Plague of Strangers" makes me wonder who decided the order of the stories; these are two that I would never have put adjacent to each other.) Robert Sampson's "A Plethora of Angels" is cute, but nothing special. "Shiva" by James Killus starts out promising, but cheats at the end.

There are some above-average stories. I liked Steven Spruill's "Silver" even though I don't believe the underlying mythology, which in this case means a double suspension of disbelief. (Read it and see what I mean.) "As a Still Small Voice" by Marcos Donnelly is an unusual study in psychology, but again poorly juxtaposed with the story preceding it. (Perhaps some convention panel can discuss how editors decide what order to place stories in in an anthology. I think 20-sided dice may be involved....) Greg Bear's "Sleepside Story" falls into the same genre as Mark Helprin's W_i_n_t_e_r'_s_T_a_l_e and Viido Polikarpus and Tappan King's D_o_w_n_T_o_w_n--whatever that is (magical realism, perhaps?). Swanwick's Hugo-nominated "The Edge of the World" has some interesting

images, but not much of a pay-off. The final story, "The Part of Us That Loves" by Kim Stanley Robinson, provides a nice warm ending to the book and a new twist to an old legend.

On the whole, I would rate this anthology above average, but only slightly, and find it difficult to recommend this over a truly innovative anthology such as Joe Lansdale and Pat LoBrutto's R_a_z_o_r_e_d S_a_d_d_l_e_s or any number of other anthologies featuring new writers.

KALEIDOSCOPE by Harry Turtledove
Del Rey, 1990, ISBN 0-345-36477-5, \$3.95.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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Though Turtledove's shorter works have been collected before, those collections were specialized: one collection was A_D_i_f_f_e_r_e_n_t_F_l_e_s_h, his stories of an alternate world in which H_o_m_o_e_r_e_c_t_u_s settled the Americas rather than the ancestors of the Indians, and the other was A_g_e_n_t_o_f B_y_z_a_n_t_i_u_m, a collection of his stories set in an alternate history in which Byzantium never fell. But K_a_l_e_i_d_o_s_c_o_p_e, as the name implies, is not a single-themed collection, but more varied.

There is one "sim" story ("sim" being the name for the descendents of H_o_m_o_e_r_e_c_t_u_s found in the Americas when the Europeans arrived). But though "And So to Bed" starts out promising--set in 1661, it is the earliest of the sim stories I have read--it ends with a blatant ripoff of a later historical occurrence in our world. "A Difficult Undertaking" is another story set in another one of Turtledove's existing mythoi, his Videssos cycle.

"Bluff" was based on an interesting premise, but I found it difficult to suspend my disbelief (though others more trained in psychology have praised it). "The Road Not Taken" suffers the same problem--Turtledove has fascinating ideas, but can't always make the

reader accept them. Suspending one's disbelief in "The Weather's Fine" is even harder: the idea that time is like weather and when you talk about it being "in the upper sixties," you mean everyone is wearing love beads is a bit hard to take. But if you can go with the flow, so to speak, the story is worthwhile. But in this case, the premise is not intended seriously, and I suppose it's no more ridiculous than what happens to Alice after she falls down the rabbit hole and no one berates that for being unbelievable. "Hindsight" is one of the better science fiction stories in which science fiction and science fiction authors play an important part that I have read, and considerably above Larry Niven's much-touted "The Return of William Proxmire."

Turtledove hits every sub-genre. The horror stories include "Crybaby" (which may hit a bit too close to home for some) and "Gentlemen of the Shade," an excellent vampire story which has (for me anyway) a nicely un-final ending. (Yes, I suppose this means there could be a sequel, but it can also stand as is, hinting at what the future may hold.) "The Castle of the Sparrowhawk" and "The Summer Garden" are Turtledove's high fantasy efforts; I found the former had interesting characterizations, but couldn't finish the latter. "The Girl Who Took Lessons" is not science fiction, fantasy, or horror--well, not exactly.

Not all the stories are successful. "The Boring Beast," co-authored with Kevin D. Sandes, was apparently written when they were intoxicated. It shows. If you think that having a main character named Condom the Trojan makes a story funny, you may like this one. I don't, and I didn't. "The Last Article" is another alternate history, this time postulating that Hitler's armies made it to India and were controlling it when Gandhi tried to use his policy of non-violence against them. It is, alas, very predictable.

Still, the hit rate is high: four very good ("The Weather's Fine," "Hindsight," "Gentlemen of the Shade," and "The Girl Who Took Lessons"), five acceptable, and four disappointing. All in all, K _ a _ l _ e _ i _ d _ o _ s _ c _ o _ p _ e is a good introduction to Harry Turtledove's wide range of talents.

"The Wheels of If" by L. Sprague de Camp
"The Pugnacious Peacemaker" by Harry Turtledove
Tor Double #20, 1990 ("The Wheels of If" copyright 1940, 1968),

ISBN 0-812-50202-7, \$3.50.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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Tor has picked up the torch dropped by Ace in issuing "double novels," actually closer to double novellas in most cases. Here each half seems to be slightly over 30,000 words; the Hugo definition for a novel requires 40,000. But this double is the first (to my knowledge) in that the two halves are connected. Oh, Ace did its share of doubles where the same author wrote both halves, but the two pieces were always independent. Here the Turtledove is a sequel to the de Camp. For this reason, Tor has decided n o t to use the back-to-back, double-covered format we have come to know (and as amateur librarians, to hate) and has instead issued this as a normal book, with one story following the other and a standard front and back cover. This at least saves the artist from having the artwork on one cover splattered over by the UPC code, though in order to fit both titles and authors on the front cover, the artwork is reduced to a two-inch square. And the spine, though it has the mirror-imaged Tor logo in the center, has both titles facing the standard (U.S.) way, which is to say the reverse of the standard (British) way. Interestingly, the Turtledove gets top billing, even though it is the second half, probably because it is the new half. (On the first page, by the way, Tor says that they will be doing more of this sort of classic/sequel pairing with a non-"flip-flop" format.) And now that you are totally bored with publishing minutiae, what about the contents?

"The Wheels of If" is a classic, not just in the sub-genre of alternate history, but in science fiction as a whole. And it has aged surprisingly well, being as readable now as (I imagine) it was half a century ago. (Has L. Sprague de Camp really been writing that long?!) New York attorney Allister Park wakes up one day to find himself in another New York, one in which he, his friends, and his old job don't seem to exist. But not to worry, because the next day he's out of that and into a New York in a world in which the Revolutionary War never happened (or we lost it). After another few days of world-hopping, he eventually finds himself permanently in New Belfast, the result of a world in which the Synod of Whitby in 664 A.D. decided in favor of the Celtic Christian Church rather than the Roman. And what's more, he's in the body of a rabble-rousing bishop. Seeing how he manages, and finding out how he got there occupy the rest of the novella.

In "The Pugnacious Peacemaker" Park is now a respected jurist and hence is called in to solve a dispute between the Incas and the Moors in South America. Having been to the area he is writing about, I can say with some confidence that he portrays it for the most part extremely

accurately, though I don't think there are any "steaming tropical ports" on the South American coastline anywhere near where a train for Kuuskoo (Cuzco) would depart from--that part of South America is particularly arid and in fact it n e v e r rains in Lima. But Turtledove captures Kuuskoo perfectly--it was almost like being there again.

What is marvelous about this pairing is that neither story makes the other one look bad by comparison, though the styles are quite different. De Camp writes in a sort of 1940s wise-cracking Humphrey Bogart style (well, I know what I mean even if you don't); Turtledove writes with straightforward modern prose. De Camp and Turtledove also have very different attitudes toward women in their stories. De Camp's Park is a womanizer who definitely sees women as objects; Turtledove has him maturing to someone who can fall in love (and with someone of a different race and culture). (This is not intended as a negative comment on De Camp--he wrote to the conventions of his time, and given that Park ended up as a bishop, his interactions with women were at a minimum anyway.)

If you are a fan of alternate histories, this is a must-buy. Even if you already have "The Wheels of If," this double volume is a treat. So treat yourself!

WIDE AWAKE AT 3:00 AM by Richard M. Coleman
Freeman, 1986, ISBN 0-7167-1796-4, \$11.95.
A book review by Mark R. Leeper
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Dr. Coleman, the author of this book, is a psychologist specializing in sleep therapy. I believe I have seen listings of his book sold commercially, but the copy I read was apparently acquired by a friend free with a subscription to _ S _ c _ i _ e _ n _ t _ i _ f _ i _ c _ A _ m _ e _ r _ i _ c _ a _ n . In fact, that

is probably just the wrong audience for the book. While I probably could not put together 1500 words on the subject of sleep, I found it remarkable how much of the material in the book I already knew. I think just about anybody with an interest in science will have heard enough over the years on the subject of sleep that nothing much in the book will seem like new knowledge. If anything, the book's real value is that it brings together in one place where it can be referenced a lot of diverse information on the subject of sleep that in the past most people have heard only a piece at a time.

The book is divided into eight chapters. The first just sets the stage by establishing that we have biological clocks with a natural cycle synchronized to the 24-hour cycle of light and dark. Deprived of any indication of what time of day it is, our natural cycle expands to about 25 hours. Due to circumstances such as varied sleep times or cross-time-zone travel, we can inadvertently shift our sleep cycle until we no longer can sleep at the right times. The most reliable, if somewhat extreme, form of therapy is to isolate the patient away from any indication of the actual time and let the natural 25-hour cycle take over until the hours of sleeping shift around the clock to coincide with the convenient and desired times. The patient is then removed from the

controlled environment and deemed cured.

Coleman's third and fourth chapters deal with the problems caused by (respectively) shift work and jet lag. I was particularly interested in the latter due to my frequent vacations involving travel. Unfortunately, the strategy I have found most effective is unlike anything Coleman discusses. His suggestions involve going to your destination days early to adapt to the time difference, staying on home time, eating a diet high in protein for alertness, going to a 25-hour schedule until you are synchronized, and using drugs. (What works for me is the night before the plane flight I keep myself up all night. This confuses my internal clock as well as fatiguing me enough so that I sleep on the plane. When I land I try to spend some time outdoors. My confused internal clock then resets itself by the sun. I am a little drowsy the first evening but the next morning I am fully acclimated to the time zone. Caveat: I have not tested this on long westbound flights, but it does work _ f _ o _ r _ m _ e on long eastbound flights. Returning from these flights doesn't count--it is much easier to reset the internal clock back to the original time than to set it to a different time.)

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The fifth chapter summarizes what is known about the biological reasons for the need to sleep. Unfortunately, it adds up to a big question mark. Most people deprived of sleep go to pieces so it really is a need, but different people require different amounts of sleep, and in at least one case cited a man who has not slept in forty years. Traumatized about sleep, this man has found himself incapable of sleep. He does need periodic rest but never drops into sleep. He often feels drained and his memory is failing but he does not suffer the classical symptoms of sleep deprivation.

Chapter six is on the interpretation of dreams and topics such as lucid dreaming. In lucid dreaming, the subject learns to recognize consciously when he is dreaming and to control the dream to purported psychological benefit. Chapter seven is about insomnia, which is split into five categories. And his final chapter continues on to less common sleep disorders such as sleep apnea and narcolepsy.

None of these subjects should be new to most readers of _ S _ c _ i _ e _ n _ t _ i _ f _ i _ c _ A _ m _ e _ r _ i _ c _ a _ n and certainly none of the material is particularly startling, but as an organization of the many things you have probably heard about

sleep over the years, it probably is a reasonable reference.