

Nuclear Texts & Contexts

Fall 1992

No. 8

Farewell to the First Atomic Age

It is now clear that we have gone through a major historical transition, from an era during which nuclear holocaust seemed imminent to many people to an era during which it is a remote prospect indeed. Of course there remain in place enough armed missiles to destroy most of the world; but it now seems extremely unlikely that they will be used. Both the U.S. and the C.I.S. have stepped down their alert levels and are negotiating in apparent good faith to destroy the most dangerous part of their arsenals. Most important, they no longer confront each other as enemies, so the weapons have lost any rational justification they ever had.

Of course nuclear weapons still pose serious problems. Paradoxically the world may be in greater danger of a nuclear conflict than ever before. The recently reported smuggling of some fuel out of the C.I.S. and Germany is probably only a portent of things to come. Nations such as Iraq, Pakistan, India and Israel have shown no inclination to curb their weapons development programs. Proliferation is the world's most important nuclear arms issue at the moment, and is likely to remain so for some time. The breakup of the superpower system seems likely to tempt weaker nations now lacking mighty guarantors to rely on superweapons instead. Yet it would be irrational to maintain that the world as a whole is not a far safer place now than it was a decade ago. The prospect of near-universal annihilation that haunted us since 1945 has diminished to the point of being hardly worth discussing. It is extremely difficult to imagine any conflict which would escalate to a global holocaust. The political motives for such an escalation no longer exist; and with the stepping down of alert levels, an accidental war is very unlikely.

Some years ago, a thesis was developed that in the future the axis of world conflict would switch from East-West to North/South. Although the current situation cannot be so neatly summed up, clearly the C.I.S. is no longer able to aid its former clients, even if it were inclined to do so; and the U.S. is turning increasingly inward. Their common interest is to jointly suppress attempts of other nations to gain nuclear weapons. But these "Southern" nations are preponderantly poor, desperate, and well-armed. The Cold War may have been a period of danger for these countries; but it was also a period of opportunity, as they were able to play one superpower off against the other in the quest for aid. The temptation will be to replace the lost leverage with nuclear weapons.

Nevertheless, there is cause for muted celebration, or at least a collective sigh of relief, at the end of the mutual deterrence system. No longer do the world's two mightiest governments hold their populations hostage in a game of apocalyptic chicken. And everyone knows it—even the writers of fiction.

It was no coincidence that the Reagan years saw the greatest proliferation in history of fiction depicting nuclear war or its aftermath. The graph on the next page, based on my own checklist of short stories, novels, and plays, illustrates strikingly how the eighties not only produced an enormous leap in publishing on nuclear themes; but how that leap far outdistanced the previous high, in the fifties. In fact, the graph severely understates the contrast because much of the fifties material consisted of stories in low-circulation science fiction magazines and obscure novels. Few of these works had a wide readership. By contrast, science fiction and its associated nuclear holocaust theme had

become much more widely popular during the eighties. And whereas a very substantial portion of the fifties material appeared in short story form, the vast majority of it in the eighties consisted of novels. *The classic age of nuclear war in fiction was the eighties.*

In contrast, the nineties have seen a steep decline which is drastically understated by the graph, because the figure I have used extrapolates over the decade the data for the first three years, which is very unrealistic considering that each subsequent year of the nineties has shown a continued steep drop-off. The last bar should be at least half as high to be at all realistic.

For me, this pattern has had some striking consequences. My book, *Nuclear Holocausts: Atomic War in Fiction, 1895-1984*, was intended as a comprehensive bibliography on the subject; yet the cut-off point I established for the bibliography came just as the field was peaking. Had I been able to include the rest of the material published in the eighties, the bibliography would have been a third longer. Of course, I also discovered I had missed some 50 items which should have appeared in the book (though few of them were very significant).

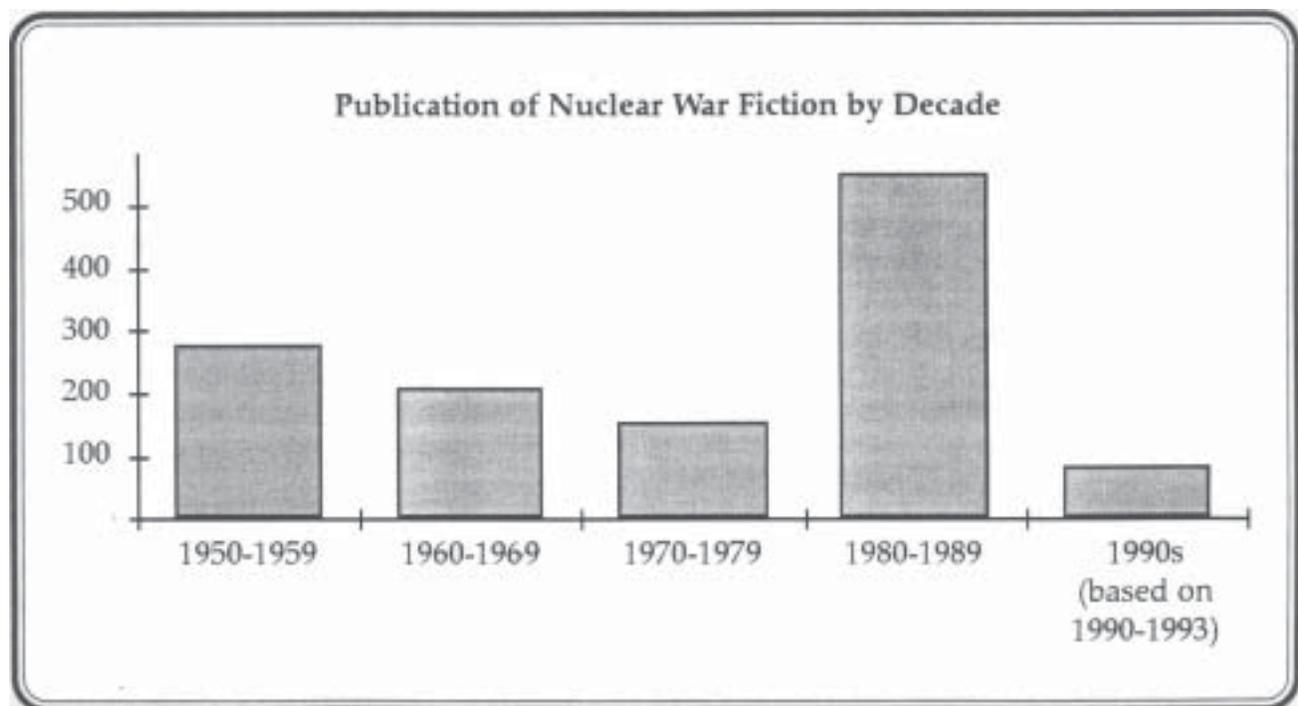
For years I have continued to update my bibliography and prepare a supplement to *Nuclear Holocausts*; but it seems unlikely now that it will ever see the light of day. Most of that material has appeared over the years in this newsletter, and I have shared it with other researchers who have drawn upon it for their own books, so the work was not wasted; but I regret not being able to publish a more authoritative version of *Nuclear Holocausts*. That book has now been remaindered, and public interest in the entire topic has fallen drastically.

This latter point is illustrated not only by the sharply declining membership in ISSNTC (compare last year's membership directory with the previous one), but by the sharp drop in publishing activity documented in the graph. I don't expect to continue working in this field, so it is time to make some departing remarks about my observations of the period since 1984.

The most striking patterns in the last half of the eighties were the proliferation of what I have called "Radioactive Rambo" novels inspired by Jerry Ahern's *Survivalist* (which claimed sales of over 5,000,000 copies, contradicting the statement in my book that there were no nuclear holocaust "fans"), the contrasting contributions by some "mainstream" non-SF writers (Martin Amis, Umberto Eco), and the proliferation of science fiction novels on the subject, many of them serious and thoughtful. After decades of considering nuclear holocaust essentially as an old-fashioned relic of the fifties, SF writers swarmed all over the subject as interest in it revived.

Another pattern was the publication in English of increasing numbers of novels and plays by Japanese authors (some of them written long before), often reexamining the bombing of Hiroshima (Hiroyuki Agawa: *The Citadel in Spring*, Makoto Oda: *The Bomb*, Kenzaburo Oe: *The Crazy Iris and Other Stories of the Atomic Aftermath*), others on broader themes (Kobo Abe: *The Ark Sakura*).

Also striking was the renewal of interest in examining the roots of the atomic age: the Manhattan Project in particular (Robert Cohen: *The Organ Builder*, Sean Flannery: *The Trinity Factory*, Makoto Oda's *The Bomb* again). Sheer momentum continued to produced



nuclear holocaust narratives even as Mikhail Gorbachev was rendering such an apocalypse increasingly unlikely; but after a few years the publishers and authors caught on. The last seriously intended warning of such a war was Meg Files' *Meridian 144* in 1991, when it seemed weirdly out of date.

The collapse of interest in the subject is well exemplified by the past year's output. Out of the 20 titles listed in this issue's "New Fiction" column, seven come from the few remaining long-running series of macho adventure novels. The Radioactive Rambo tale, like the Cold War spy thriller, is undergoing a crisis whose outcome is still uncertain. Two of the others are long-awaited sequels of earlier science fiction novels. None of the rest depicts an old-fashioned nuclear holocaust.

In mainstream adult fiction, in young adult fiction, and in SF alike, environmental disaster has replaced nuclear war as a theme. Sometimes the disaster is nuclear, as concern about nuclear power increases; but more striking is the impact that AIDS has had on the increase of fiction about plague and pestilence. HIV has a more threatening immediacy in the public imagination—despite a substantial degree of denial—than the threat of nuclear war ever achieved. Thrillers dependent on Cold War themes are usually set in the past these days. (The other alternative is the Third World bomb threat thriller; but even that loses its edge without the threat of triggering a world-wide holocaust.)

There are still dangers posed by nuclear weapons; but in a very real sense, the world has changed. The period originally called "The Atomic Age" has passed: no more dreams of unlimited nuclear power, no more threat of nuclear ecocide. The remaining problems don't lend themselves to the kind of simple treatment which has dominated nuclear war fiction in the past. Yet the attempt to eliminate nuclear arms through the depiction of fictional horrors was never very effective anyway, since people who read such works tended to react either by denial or despair. Maybe now that the weapons don't loom so large in our imaginations we can actually get rid of them. If one minor by-product is the death of the nuclear holocaust novel, that's a price I'll gladly pay.

It's time to move on.

PB

Nuclear Music

According to an article in the February 11, 1992 *Los Angeles Times*, political science professors Dina Titus and Jerry Simich of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, made a study of nearly 300 songs about atomic bombs and nuclear power (see pp. F4-5).

A Poet from Chernobyl

One night in April, 1986, Lyubov Makarovna Sirota, in charge of a children's writing program in the town of Pripyat, left her sleeping son to step out on her apartment's balcony to get a breath of fresh air. A brilliant glare lit up the sky directly in front of her. She knew, as a resident of the "secret" town dedicated entirely to servicing the Chernobyl power plant, that disaster had struck. What she did not know, and does not know to this day, is how high a dose of radiation she and her son received on that day and in the days following.

As the central government lied and temporized, accusing the sufferers of "radiophobia," she was fired to write a series of poems portraying her rage. She wrote of the explosion itself, and of the aftermath. A small booklet containing these poems was published in Kiev. I was introduced to them at an international meeting by Dr. Adolph Harash of Moscow State University, and secured permission to try to get them published in English.

After many difficulties and delays, they were translated by Elizavietta Ritchie and Leonid Levin. One appeared in the current issue of *New York Quarterly*, another in the August 5 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The entire set plus an article about Sirota by Dr. Harash is contained in the new book *Life on the Line: Selections on Words and Healing* edited by Sue Brannan Walker & Rosaly Demaios Roffman (Mobile, Alabama: Negative Capability Press) and in the Winter 1992/1993 issue of *Calyx*. The article by Dr. Harash has also appeared in the Canadian magazine *Woman's World*. The National Public Radio program *Terra Infirma* featured her story and poems on April 1 of 1992.

I am now trying to arrange a poetry reading/speaking/medical treatment tour for Lyubov Makarovna. Although she has been in and out of the hospital ever since the disaster, she has continued to be very active as an advocate for Chernobyl victims. She has appeared in two documentary films on the accident (one is entitled *Threshold*), and is currently at work on a book-length poem about it. She is a television film editor in Kiev, and is very eager to inform Westerners in more detail about the plight of the Chernobyl victims. The tentative itinerary is Seattle (for medical treatment and readings), Toronto, and New York. The time frame would be late Spring or early Fall of 1993.

Since her English is minimal, I am trying to arrange speaking engagements jointly with her chief translator, Elizavietta Artamonoff Ritchie. Ritchie is a noted poet herself, who has published seven volumes of verse. Her first volume of short stories, *Flying Time: Stories and Half-Stories*, has just been published by Signal Books. What I hope to do is to find reading/speaking engagements for both Sirota and Ritchie, with Ritchie

to act as translator for Sirota and reading selections from her Russian-oriented writings and her newest volume.

Sirota was in the hospital several months this year and suffers from a number of chronic complaints. In a letter to me, she said that she suffers from fatigue and chronic pain; and Dr. Harash, who first put me in touch with her, says that she has serious thyroid problems.

In her rather broken English, she writes "We have some details of our exposure to the radiation. April 4, 1986, we had control of radiation in the hospital in Kiev. And my son had then: 50 mili x-ray on one record from thyroid gland . . . (I have that certificate—only one official document of that). And I had then much more x-ray—doctor sent me in medical treatment, but then I refused. I don't know all of radiation received by me and my son, since majority victims of explosion don't know that. Even those people who work then in 4th block of nuclear plant . . . Yes, we (I and my son) have very big effects on our health after that. But we have many different symptoms: permanent sharp headaches; giddiness, sometimes fainting; permanent weakness and quick fatigue; joint aches; very bad memory; cramp; heartaches (sometimes very strong); colics and many other aches. In short, we feel especially always bad or more bad, unfortunately. Every year we have a course of treatment in the hospital. Now I am at the hospital and doctors said what they haven't almost nothing from medical aid [can provide almost no medical aid?] because we have very difficult economic situation in our country."

Because the ruble is virtually worthless now and she has no access to dollars, Sirota will need to have all of her expenses covered while she is abroad. I am contacting various organizations to see what support they can give this project. She has written that her television film studio has expressed its willingness to pay for her transportation to and from Kiev, though I have not yet received confirmation of that.

If you are interested in this project and would like to help, please write me at the Department of English, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-5020.

I have no address for Lyubov Makarovna at the hospital, but her home address is Lyubov Sirota, 253121 Ukraine, Kiev, Werbitsky Str. 11/101. However, the mail is very unreliable and slow. I have used couriers (people traveling to Kiev) and the Internet mail service GlasMail. She has no phone, but she has a friend named Viktor Grabovsky who is willing to take messages (220-42-92 in Kiev), and there is a FAX number at her film studio (care of Alma Salbova, 044 446-62-78).

Paul Brians

Book Reviews

Broderick, Mick. *Nuclear Movies: A Critical Analysis and Filmography of International Feature Length Films Dealing with Experimentation, Aliens, Terrorism, Holocaust and Other Disaster Scenarios, 1914-1989*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1991. xix + 219 p. \$35. 0-89950-543-0.

The McFarland edition of *Nuclear Movies* is a revised and expanded version of Broderick's self-published filmography of feature films which fictionally depict nuclear wars or disasters (Northcote, Victoria, Australia: PostModem, 1988). It lists 854 films, made-for-TV movies and mini-series dramas, 36 from countries which produced them between 1914 and 1989, with some mentions of films released as late as mid-1991. Thus it complements lists of documentary films about nuclear weapons and lists far more films than Jack Shaheen's spotty and uneven *Nuclear War Films* (1978). The new edition is considerably enlarged, adds a much-needed index, is graphically more pleasing, and contains a revised introduction and new preface, as well as the original foreword by Dr. Helen Caldicott.

The introduction is an invaluable overview of trends in the depiction of nuclear hazards over the years, with such sub-headings as "The Nazi Threat: Real and Imagined," "Mutation and Monsters," and "Nuclear Bondage." Some of the section titles are more flashy than informative; "Apocalypse, Wow!" covers a mixed batch of films from the eighties including the sensational *Terminator* and the sober *Testament*. Nevertheless, this essay is an important contribution to our thinking about nuclear war depictions because it makes clear the scope and variety of such films.

The filmography itself, arranged in chronological order, is very terse. Each entry contains the following information: title, date of production or release, production company or distributor, black and white or color, running time, names of director, producer, scriptwriter, cinematographer, leading players and support players, "plot synopsis" and somewhat haphazard and incomplete cross references. What Broderick calls a synopsis consists in most cases of a one- or two-sentence summary which often fails adequately to convey the content of the film under consideration. The television adaptation of Judith Merrill's *Shadow on the Hearth*, for instance, is described thus: "Film warns of the need for civil defense in the event of a nuclear attack."

In many cases the nuclear theme is very slight, as in *The 500 Fingers of Doctor T*, in which the protagonist escapes via a nuclear explosion." It could be argued that omitting these peripheral examples would have left room to expand the synopsis; but in fact they are

very useful in illustrating the pervasiveness of the nuclear theme in popular culture. The fact that Broderick is hard at work on a companion volume detailing the history of nuclear films also helps to explain the terseness of the plot summaries. This is a reference tool, not a study.

The range is very impressive. There are films from such unexpected quarters as Bulgaria, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Thailand. Broderick has traced the "Mad Max" theme from his native Australia all over the globe into such dark crannies as the post apocalyptic porn film, *The Load Warrior*. An extensive bibliography, which lacks annotations but which signals studies of special interest, is impressive and unique. The book will prove invaluable to anyone researching nuclear themes in film or television, and should be in every substantial collection of books on the cinema. **PB**

William Chaloupka. *Knowing Nukes: The Politics and Culture of the Atom*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1992. 163 pp.

Despite the many difficulties of this book, its strengths make it worth studying.

Its contexts significantly expand the subject of nuclearism. Chaloupka would "find a way to establish human value without the aid of an external totality (whether religious, scientific, or merely commonsensical)" (3-4). He would discover "better ways to interact with power . . . than those we had developed" (ix). Because traditional liberal humanism, rationalist assumptions and methods have not been successful in opposing nuclear bombs and strategies, new approaches are needed. Foucault, Derrida, Baudrillard, and Sloterdijk offer postmodern-ironical, paradoxical-oppositional alternatives.

Baudrillard particularly, despite his "rhetoric of indirection that tends to confound" (110) offers "a perfectly appropriate place to begin," because of his ironical critique of humanist dogmas and solemnities (109), his recognition of the "depthlessness, reversibility, and acceleration" (113) of contemporary events, and his understanding of the absence of a reliable public [that does not deter reversibility] that is the core insight of postmodernism in political analysis" (112). Chaloupka cites two attacks on Baudrillard's "propensity for exaggeration and wild statement" (152). Chaloupka cites two attacks on Baudrillard's "propensity for exaggeration and wild statement" (152), and a more recent critic, Christopher Norris in *Uncritical Theory*, ridicules Baudrillard's arguments regarding reality, truth, and the media as "all sheer nonsense" (15). But for Chaloupka, Baudrillard opens inquiries appropriate to contemporary realities.

One of Chaloupka's greatest strengths is this penetration of political and nuclear paradoxes. The survival and accident arguments familiar to the antinuclear camp are riddled with contradiction (3-7, 13-16). Opponents argue for controls and then use them against nukes; proponents justify widespread surveillance and disciplinary measures and then proclaim the advancement of freedom. "Repeatedly, the sign of the paradox presents itself as the characteristic sign of an era that strains to ignore those signs and to present a politics of values in response" (16). And so on throughout the book.

It is in this terrain of the paradoxical that Chaloupka affirms postmodernism as a better way to interact with power in a world without absolute values. For both nuclearists and their opponents, he argues, share "more than they dispute" regarding reality and values. (I will return later to this substratum critique of liberal humanistic values and procedures.) The result has been the perpetuation and extension of the "institutions, habits, and contexts" of nuclear arms. The Richland High School (near the Hanford Nuclear Reservation) students who defend their sports name—the Bombers—and their symbol—the mushroom cloud—suggest an alternative attention to "images and problematizations." Chaloupka would engage "the conundrums and incongruities of the nuclear age" exhibited by both proponents and opponents by employing the philosophy and methods of postmodernism, which he links with poststructuralism and deconstructionism (xiii) (à la Michel Foucault) and labels, for the specific context of his book "nuclear criticism." Postmodernism is poststructuralist (deconstructive) literary analysis intended "to problematize institutions and practices [power] that had become so resistant to criticism" (ix); because nuclear power and all of its adjuncts are textual, enwoven in language, especially in paradoxical language, this new approach of literary criticism offers a new way to "interact with power."

But if the book were only this straightforward throughout. James Soderholm recently asked, "Why do progressive intellectuals often write and speak in a language foreign to the very audience in whose interests they claim to campaign?" He complains of Foucault's, Fredric Jameson's, and Gayatri Spivak's "supernaturally difficult jargon" and "willful obscurantism," which he contrasts to Vaclav Havel's direct, non-technical language. Sometimes Chaloupka seems to be trying to out-Baudrillard Baudrillard.

For example, he writes sympathetically of Baudrillard's "notion of contemporary power" as spread "throughout society *without acting*." "Such power implodes and leukemizes.... In this instance

of power (which clarifies and exemplifies Foucault's controversial argument), there is no action, intention, or conspiracy . . . this is precisely poststructuralist power" (17).

He means that the nuclear mangers do not escalate to red alert and nuclear holocaust. But what would Baudrillard and Chaloupka have us do short of the bombs that would end all conversation? Yes, understand "how some of our fables have posed a very strange plot" (137). Nuclear opponents (Noam Chomsky notably) have done that extensively. The U.S. National Security State infects everything with systematic intent and action and even conspiracy, as Richard Curry's and thousands of investigations have shown. So what does Baudrillard/Chaloupka means by non-intentional, non-active poststructuralist power in a world of machination?

The confusion underlying this apparent tangle has two closely related sources: Chaloupka plunges in, dismisses careful initial conceptualization, and defines by accretion. Of course this book's audience is scholarly, but I do not believe anyone can say what Chaloupka means by "modernism," without which "postmodernism" becomes a slippery term. In their anthology, Bradbury and McFarlane define modernism as a literary movement between 1890 and 1930. In the Preface to his anthology, Peter Brook describes postmodern as the capitalist world (television, mass production, and consumption) and its opponents. What is modernism to Chaloupka? We are provided a key summary of features near the end: liberal and Marxist commitment to scientific certainty (134). And he is still defining postmodern/poststructural/deconstructive and liberal humanist discourse in the last chapter.

I do not have space to describe all the reasons why this book makes difficult reading. (Is "nukespeak" criticism "a simple critique of euphemism," when Hilgartner, et al.'s *Nukespeak* is a major analysis of secrecy and censorship in the United States?) But let me end mainly positively. By insisting upon the failure of the traditional Enlightenment liberal humanistic, scientific, opposition to nuclear war preparations (Chap. 4 on Star Wars and the Freeze), and by urging an alternative strategy of postmodern irony, he nudges all of us in the peace movement to rethink our assumptions and methods. Liberal humanist antinuclearist politics has offered (referring to Helen Caldicott) "a sober, anti-ironic terrorism of images" (133-34), but has it generally degenerated into finalities that resolve questions, reify value choices, and avoid realistic politics (137)? He too sweepingly dismisses the flexibility and the achievements of the liberal humanist antinuclearists. But of great value, postmodern politics seeks "to delegitimize the subtle, contemporary forms of authority" in both nuclearists and antinuclearists (128), and discards programs but offers ironic possibilities in the face of the paradoxes of power.

However, the "discourse that would raise those discomforts in a critical manner has hardly begun to be identified" (138).

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- Brooker, Peter, ed. *Modernism/Postmodernism*. London and New York: Longman, 1992.
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James R. Bennett

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Recent Fiction

Note: This issue was struck by two major computer crashes in which some data was irrecoverably lost. The result is that some bibliographic data is missing from the following list.

- Ahern, Jerry. *The Survivalist: #23 Call to Battle*. New York: Zebra, 1992.
- Anderson, Kevin J. & Doug Beason. *The Trinity Paradox*. New York: Zebra, 1991.
- Axler, James. *Deathlands: Dark Carnival*. New York: Zebra, 1992.
- Bear, Greg. *Anvil of Stars*. New York: Warner, 1992. Sequel to *Anvil of Stars*.
- Cameron, J. D. *Omega Sub 5: Death Dive*. New York: Avon, 1992.
- Cameron, J. D. *Omega Sub 6: Raven Rising*. New York: Avon, 1992.
- Card, Orson Scott. *The Memory of Earth*. New York: Tor, 1992. First volume of a series (*Homecoming*) in space after a holocaust has destroyed Earth.
- Compton, D. G. & John Gribbin. *Ragnarok*. 1991.
- Haldeman, Joe. *Worlds Enough and Time*. New York: Morrow, 1992. Sequel to *Worlds* and *Worlds Apart*.
- Johnstone, William W.: *Courage in the Ashes (Ashes #13)*. New York: Zebra, 1991.
- Kandel, Michael. *Captain Jack Zodiac*. New York: Bantam, 1991. Satirical novel.
- Mooney, Ted. *Traffic and Laughter*. New York: Vintage Contemporaries, 1992. Surrealistic comic variation on the world-peace-through-nuclear blackmail theme.

Department diplomat using Cold War metaphors throughout.

Rankin, Robert. *Armageddon III*. 1992. Sequel to the bizarre comic novels *Armageddon: The Musical* and *They Came and Ate Us: Armageddon 2: The B-Movie*.

Scarborough, Elizabeth Ann. *Last Refuge*. New York: Bantam, 1992. Sequel to *Nothing Sacred*.

Scarborough, Elizabeth Ann. *Nothing Sacred*. New York: Bantam, 1991. Surviving nuclear armageddon in a sort of Shangri-La.

Sievert, John. *C.A.D.S. #12: Tech Assassins*. New York: Zebra, 1991.

Swanwick, Michael. "Griffin's Egg." *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*, May 1992.

Vidal, Gore. *Live from Golgotha*. New York: Random House, 1992. A wild, satirical treatment of the life of Christ in which Judas plots to bring about the Second Coming by causing a nuclear holocaust.

Winchester, Simon. *Pacific Nightmare: How Japan Starts World War III: A Future History*. New York: Birch Lane Press/Carol Publishing Group, 1992. The U.S. drops a "clean" nuclear bomb in Tokyo Bay to prevent Japan from launching a world war.

Post-Holocaust Situation Comedy Axed

The Fox cable channel this fall premiered "Woops!"—a comedy about life among the six survivors of an accidentally-caused nuclear holocaust; but its run was mercifully short-lived.

Remember to Renew!

See Page 8

Correspondence

Dear Editor:

I am writing to respond to Dan Zins' thoughtful piece in the Fall 1991 newsletter. While I appreciate the dangers of taking on so many issues that we lose focus and effectiveness, I nevertheless believe that the nuclear and environmental issues are inextricably linked and must therefore be considered as parts of a whole. After years of clinging to the single issue stance, the influential Physicians for Social Responsibility has in recent years expanded its concerns to include environmental issues. As I see it, we would serve our students and colleagues better if we do the same.

The more I deal with social issues in the classroom, the more convinced I am of the importance of placing any issue in the appropriate context. I agree with Dan Zins on the importance and fostering the discovery of connections between what may otherwise seem to them to be separate phenomena. While the Persian Gulf War made the causal relation between massive military activity and environmental degradation all too clear, the less obvious relationship between military expenditures and the environmental crisis require careful study.

I request that our organization seriously consider expanding its agenda to include the growing number of environmental concerns. As Zins explains, some environmental problems are the direct consequence of nuclear weapons production and other military activities. Rectifying some of the damage may begin as we convert some of the energy and financial resources once consumed by the military into resources for restoring environmental health.

Yours sincerely,
Melissa Walker
Emory University

Dear Editor:

I'm sorry you find you must give up the editorship of *Nuclear Texts and Contexts* but glad to know you'll have an able successor in Daniel Zins. The newsletter has been invaluable to me, and I thank you for your superb contribution.

In San Francisco, a number of us met with Dan to discuss the future of ISSNTC. I must say, first, I believe Dan has the enthusiasm and dedication, plus the knowledge of scholarship in the field, to be both a fine president and Newsletter editor. The key question seems to be whether the Society (and the Newsletter) should remain devoted to nuclear texts and contexts or expand to include the obviously closely related ecological concerns.

Since I believe the same mentality that conceived of and stockpiled nuclear arms also is responsible for trashing the environment, I have no problem with the

broadened scope. Perhaps a section of the Newsletter, for a start, could be given over to eco-nuclear concerns (I just coined that word). This could be a trial balloon to see how much interest is generated. What I'm suggesting is perhaps a gradual evolution rather than a sudden change in direction.

As for the diminished membership, I believe many, like me, were just negligent and unintentionally delinquent in dues. I have reinstated myself. Since the Newsletter would appear only once a year, it may be actually easier to remember that each time one receives an issue, one needs to renew. Rebuilding the membership rolls should not be difficult.

On another note, I was pleased with the panel presentations and the reception to the papers. Though the turnout was small (20 at the height), the group was responsive. Considering the lateness of the hour, I feel gratified with the results. I'm working on having the papers published in the *ChLA Quarterly* or *Lion and Unicorn* and will spread the word when arrangements are confirmed.

Sincerely,
Millicent Lenz

Forthcoming Fiction

Walter M. Miller's sequel to *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, titled *Leibowitz and the Wild Horse Woman* was announced for 1992, but has not yet appeared.

Suzy McKee Charnas is at work on a sequel to *Walk to the End of the World* and *Motherlines*.

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Time to Renew!

Unless you have paid more than a year in advance, you must renew your subscription with this issue to continue receiving *Nuclear Texts & Contexts*.

The next issue will be edited by long-time ISSNTC Board member Prof. Daniel Zins of Atlanta College of Arts. The focus of the newsletter will broaden considerably to consider environmental problems and other related issues.

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