

Lincroft. That is, if anyone bothers to show up. Since no one has bothered to send a blurb, who knows. [-ecl]

3. NESFA has sent us five sign-up sheets for Boskone 25. Since they are trying to limit attendance, they have imposed eligibility

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requirements. One way of meeting these requirements is to be a member of a recognized science fiction club. Since the Mt. Holz Science Fiction Club qualifies, they have sent us these forms. If you are interested in attending Boskone 25 (to be held next January in Springfield, Massachusetts), contact the Middletown SF Librarian, Bruce Szablak, who will have these forms. NOTE: copies of the forms are *not* acceptable. If we run out, we can request more, but please ask for one only if you plan on using it. If sent before September 30, the form will assure you of a membership (and another for a friend, if you wish). After September 30, if Boskone 25 has not reached its membership limit, memberships will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. [-ecl]

4. For those who want to get a head-start reading the works under discussion at the next meeting ("Vampires in Science Fiction"), the recommended works are Richard Matheson's I AM LEGEND (basis of the films LAST MAN ON EARTH and OMEGA MAN), Anne Rice's INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE (thank God it was never made into a film; it was optioned as a vehicle for John Travolta) and THE VAMPIRE LESTAT, Fred Saberhagen's DRACULA TAPES (THE HOLMES-DRACULA FILE and AN OLD FRIEND OF THE FAMILY are good too), the story "Asylum" by A. E. Van Vogt (which may be found in ADVENTURES IN SPACE AND TIME by Healy and McComas), and Colin Wilson's SPACE VAMPIRES (basis of the film LIFEFORCE). The Matheson is available in the Club library in Lincroft, INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE is in the Middletown branch, and for the rest you should try your local library or bookstore.

5. Attached is a report on a talk by Sharon Green and an article by Beth Eades discussing Green and Green's predecessor in what has been described as "bondage SF," John Norman. While the SF Club does not own any Norman or Green books, we do have a copy of a manuscript by Mark Leeper and David Bara which is their contribution to a round-robin project called "Gidget Goes Gorean." The project was never completed, but for those of you who wish to

sample this heretofore unavailable literary masterpiece, copies have been placed in all three branches of the SF Club Library. Warning: some scenes may offend, but no more than the original books. [-ecl]

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Sharon Green Speaks at NJSFS
Comments by Evelyn C. Leeper
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Sharon Green spoke at the August 15 meeting of the New Jersey Science Fiction Society. She is a New Jersey resident and the author of 13 novels, including the Jalav series (T_h_e_C_r_y_s_t_a_l_s_o_f_M_i_d_a, A_n_O_a_t_h_t_o_M_i_d_a, C_h_o_s_e_n_o_f_M_i_d_a, T_h_e_W_i_l_l_o_f_t_h_e_G_o_d_s, and T_o_B_a_t_t_l_e_t_h_e_G_o_d_s), the Terrilian series T_h_e_W_a_r_r_i_o_r_W_i_t_h_i_n, T_h_e_W_a_r_r_i_o_r_E_n_c_h_a_i_n_e_d, T_h_e_W_a_r_r_i_o_r_R_e_a_r_m_e_d, and T_h_e_W_a_r_r_i_o_r_C_h_a_l_l_e_n_g_e_d), the Diana Santee series (M_i_n_d_G_u_e_s_t_a_n_d_G_a_t_e_w_a_y_t_o_X_a_n_a_d_u), T_h_e_R_e_b_e_l_P_r_i_n_c_e, and T_h_e_F_a_r_S_i_d_e_o_f_F_o_r_e_v_e_r. Since her first novels were advertised with the catch phrase "If you like John Norman, you'll like Sharon Green," I was curious to find out what she was r_e_a_l_l_y like.

She wasn't what I expected. Since her books just started appearing a few years ago, I expected someone in her early thirties. But Green

did not start writing fresh out of college--or before--and was older than that. I expected...well, I'm not sure what I expected, but the advertising phrase was foremost in my mind. And, not surprisingly, someone asked her about it.

Green had been a science fiction reader for a long time when one day she saw some John Norman novels in the store. She had heard about them, in a vague sort of way, and since there seemed to be quite a few out, she figured she'd give one a try and picked S_l_a_v_e_G_i_r_l_o_f_G_o_r. After reading it, she decided that she could do better (well, there are those who claim that almost a_n_y_o_n_e could do better, but let it pass...) and so began writing. After she had finished three novels she took M_i_n_d_G_u_e_s_t to Donald Wollheim at DAW Books. He read it and asked if she had any other, so she brought forward C_r_y_s_t_a_l_s_o_f_M_i_d_a and T_h_e_W_a_r_r_i_o_r_W_i_t_h_i_n. He bought those also. Then he called her with a proposition. He told her that since there were 2-1/2 million Gor books in print, and since her books were similar, he would like to advertise them with the phrase "If you like John Norman...." Well, she thought about 2-1/2 million books in print and said yes. But after the first few, when she became established in her own right, the phrase was dropped.

Green was not as accomplished a speaker as many that NJSFS has gotten. She tended to ramble from one idea to another, as though she didn't have a prepared speech. She drifted back to discussing the martial arts a lot, particularly karate, in which she is trained. (I've noticed this about a lot of martial artists--they like to talk about it.) She talked about her characters representing both "strong female" and "helpless female," though none are helpless in the same way as Norman's female characters are. I admit that I have read little of her work--frankly, the advertising phrase worked in reverse for me--but I did read the beginning chapters of C_r_y_s_t_a_l_s_o_f_M_i_d_a in preparation for this talk and was not greatly impressed. It seemed very much a mirror

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image of a John Norman novel of recent vintage, complete with sex and violence. Ho hum. Knowing it was written as a response to Norman helps explain this, but I would not rush right out to read it in spite of this knowledge. Her latest, T_h_e_F_a_r_S_i_d_e_o_f_F_o_r_e_v_e_r, is described as a straight fantasy and presumably has less in common with things Gorean. Though I suspect I would find Green's emphasis on the martial arts not to my tastes, I might suggest that those who favor those sports give her

Diana Santee series a try.

Sharon Green's Terillian Novels and John Norman's Gor Series
Comments by Elizabeth M. Eades
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Spoiler Warning: Some plot is revealed but if you read the books for the sex I haven't spoiled the book for you.

When Evelyn asked me to write about the books by Sharon Green that I've read, my first response was "What can I tear apart first?", but on further thought I realize most of my dislike stemmed from two things: 1) disappointed expectations, and 2) a hero and heroine that frustrate the hell out of me. I'll cover both these issues first, provide a comparison to the Gor books (oh, no, that means I have to admit to reading them!)

I've read two of Green's books, T_h_e _ W_a_r_r_i_o_r _ W_i_t_h_i_n and T_h_e _ W_a_r_r_i_o_r _ E_n_c_h_a_i_n_e_d. When I read the back blurbs, I was expecting a bodice-ripper* set in a fantasy world with a little more explicit sex. I think of bodice-rippers as female fantasy, and books like the Gor series male fantasy. The main difference (and the reason I think of them that way) is that in a bodice-ripper men are scum and a woman finds one who is less scummy than the rest to reform; in a Gor-type book women are at best incompetent, at worst malicious, and are generally good for one thing (a man may try to find/appreciate an intelligent woman, but that's because intelligence enhances her entertainment capabilities). Green's books were a cross between the two. There was a strong "capable" woman who is Earth's best secret agent and a barbarian prince with a "woman are slaves" attitude and she has to help him gain the crown. In true bodice-ripper fashion they start out with a love/hate relationship, and she (a normally competent woman) does some stupid things because he aggravates her so much (he aggravated me that much too). We're going

* A bodice-ripper is a name I've heard used for a particular variety of romance novel. It is usually 400+ pages long and poorer versions see how many continents the heroine can get "raped" on. Keep in mind that by "rape" we are talking forced seduction not rape like happens on the streets. The main themes of a bodice-ripper are that the heroine really wants to have sex but is constrained not to due to societal pressures (i.e., stay a virgin till married or married to a different man). So when the hero forces her, he is really only giving her what she wants but society won't let her have. The second main idea in a bodice-ripper is that the love of a good woman will reform any man, and lover conquers all. Another common theme is that a man who doesn't respect women, has met the wrong women. They always end happily ever after with the couple full of love and

respect (and usually children :-)).

along and suddenly we're at the climax of the novel and nothing's resolved. He's still a chauvinistic bastard. He admits (sort of) that he loves her, but he still doesn't respect her. She is still acting in a relatively incompetent fashion (if she's the best Earth can muster, Earth's in trouble). All the compromises in the relationship are on her side. (To be fair here, a large part of the problems are set up as cultural differences. It would be expected that she as Earth's prime operative would more readily assimilate a different culture than he would. However, in the second book, he copes amazingly well in her society for someone who has no grasp at all of the cultural aspects). We end the book with our heroine broken-heartedly leaving the planet and everyone is miserable. The second book is more of the same. The first half is set in our heroine's society. Our hero is shown to be an intelligent man who quickly understands the use of technology (he takes over a space ship) but can't grasp what accepted social behavior should be. He continues to beat his chest over our heroine and say how put upon he is, without showing respect, consideration, or understanding for the woman he loves. (After all, he came across the galaxy to grab her, throw her on the floor, and rape her, how more devoted can he be?) She continues to flail uselessly. Either she is a capable, intelligent woman or she isn't. The actions of the other characters indicate that she is a successful, capable, woman. By her own actions she is incompetent and inarticulate. Oh, yes, the books are full of the expected sex, most of which involves bondage and dominance.

Now a comparison to John Norman's Gor series. The first book in the Gor series is very different in tone from the rest. It is an action book with a romantic subplot. I enjoyed it for a light read. The rest of the books are male domination fantasies. Green's books are similar but told from the woman's point of view, where Norman's are generally from the man's. Of the two, I liked Green's writing style slightly better, and in Green's books the sex scenes were a little less common. In Norman's books sex seem to be 90% the point of the book. In Green's book's the focus on sex seems more reasonable since the major sub-plot is the love/hate relationship of the main characters and sex is a major aspect in that relationship. Both authors inspire me with a desire to take the hero tie him down and have him be violently raped multiple

times and ask him how he likes it. I'd like to take the heroine, shake some sense into her, and ask why she puts up with that garbage.