

contradict each other. You have to pick one. As I say, I know which I'd pick if I had to choose but that is not important here. What I am talking about is that I think the man was quite wrong about not being about not being able to live with self-contradictory ideas. I do it all the time. My little piece of

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cognitive dissonance involves the subject of luck, particularly when it applies to my wife and myself.

I think that is it Napoleon of whom the story is told that when asking whether to advance one of his generals said, "Yes, I know he is a very capable man, but is he lucky?" Ah, that is a key question, isn't it? I am a strict empiricist and as such I know that in most things luck in the past should be independent of luck in the future. Not entirely. The general Napoleon was asking about might be about to get one more piece of luck if he gotten luck until this point. Where we are talking about humans controlling fate, luck tends to attract luck, but as far as things that are pure matter of chance, luck should be merely a question of drawing patterns in past events. It should have little to do with predicting future events. It would be statistically amazing if some people did not have some amazing runs of luck but at this instant in time--at any instant of time--one would expect most of those runs to be coming to an end.

At least that is what I believe as a strict empiricist and in most things I am a strict empiricist. (Note that I am not saying I am a strict empiricist about evolution. No, sirree! I won't say in print what I think on the evolution issue. That way some folks may figure I will burn in the afterlife but what I write won't be burning in this one.)

But getting back to luck, I would like to be a strict empiricist but I have to say as far as luck is concerned, my wife tends to have stretches of luck that are amazing--I mean aside from marrying me. Let me give you a for-instance. This has been a very bad winter most places in the country. We just keep hearing about blizzards. And this was predicted to be a very bad winter.

Now, me, I know snow. I grew up in Massachusetts where waist-deep

snowfalls are common. I am an experienced snow-person. So much more than the local New Jerseyites around me, I feel very strongly that if I never saw another darn snowflake it would be 30 years too soon. Maybe 40. Snow is cold, it's wet, it's dangerous, and in general, it is a real pain.

I would like nothing more than to avoid snow, so what do I do? I immerse myself in it. When it snows I rush outside to clear my driveway, because I know what a mess an unshoveled driveway can become. And every time I go rushing out to shovel, hating every moment, the last words I hear from Evelyn are, "Why don't you just let it go? It will thaw in a day or two." Now, I know that this philosophy is morally bankrupt, irresponsible, and foolish. But to prove that to Evelyn would mean leaving the driveway in a mess that could get a lot messier.

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Well, the first snowfall this year it all happened again. Out into the freezing cold I went, and the last thing I heard was, "Why don't you just let it go? It will thaw in a day or two." Bad enough I had the job of shoveling, but to be told that it was a waste of time was too much! After a minute of shoveling I came back inside and told Evelyn that this year she would take care of the driveway. I knew this was supposed to be a harsh winter, just the sort to prove to Evelyn the fallacy of her reasoning.

So just as predicted we have a miserable winter across most of the country. Horrible blizzards. So is my point proven to Evelyn? No! There are storms just about everywhere else--we have a drought. For almost the whole winter the snow keeps a respectful distance from Evelyn. Heaven forbid it should snow to make my point. And apparently it did. Now it is still March as of this writing and there is already a ban on water usage. The snow we didn't get left the reservoirs dry. Even a strict empiricist is no match for a woman who leads a charmed life. There is a ban on outdoor water usage and only I know that it is all my doing.

2. From Chuq Von Rospach:

Want to be in a book? For a good cause? David

Gerrold is offering people the chance to be part of the action in the fourth book of the Chtorr series [a science fiction series], with proceeds going to the Aids Project Los Angeles. For \$50, David will name a character after you. For \$100, the character will have a speaking part. For \$150, he'll name a worm after you.

To make a donation, make out a check to David in the appropriate amount and mail it to him at 9420 Reseda Blvd. 3804, Northridge, CA 92328. When the check clears, he donates the money to APLA and writes you into the book.

Now's your chance to be famous -- and do some good at the same time.

[Note: This was posted with Gerrold's knowledge and approval to rec.arts.sf-lovers by Chuq Von Rospach (chuq@apple.com). I have verified that this was not a hoax posting, so I don't think there's much chance of Gerrold running off to Buenos Aires with your money.
-ecl]

Mark Leeper
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...mtgzz!leeper

It is a safe rule to apply that, when a mathematical or philosophical author writes with a misty profundity, he is talking nonsense.

--Alfred North Whitehead

THE SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES
A theatre review by Mark R. Leeper
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There was a time when if you said "Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson," people automatically pictured Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. To be honest, I was never fond of Rathbone in the part and Nigel Bruce was an irritatingly bad choice for Watson. Happily we are past the days when

Rathbone is so closely associated with the part. Today more people would picture Holmes as the brilliant and neurotic and quirky sleuth as portrayed by Jeremy Brett. There is no question in my mind that he is the best Holmes I have seen.

Brett and his usual Watson (Edward Hardwicke, the son of Sir Cedric Hardwicke) put on a two-man show in T_h_e_S_e_c_r_e_t_o_f_S_h_e_r_l_o_c_k_H_o_l_m_e_s. The play might almost be called "Holmes 101." Three-quarters of the play consists of Watson's memories of Holmes at his oddest. All are familiar to me from one source or another, even with my minimal reading of the original stories. Watson remembers meeting Holmes, Holmes's ignorance of basic cosmology, Holmes's affection for Irene Adler.

It is not until the second act that the play starts giving us anything unfamiliar and original about Holmes and Watson. The speculation then made about Holmes does vary from Arthur Conan Doyle's intention but is well within the range of speculations that have been made before. Suffice it to say that Holmes's secret is less than totally unexpected.

But where the play fails to give us anything very novel to add to the Sherlock Holmes mythos, it does do a great deal with the relationship between the two men. Holmes's snobbish disdain and condescension toward Watson ironically alloyed to his genuine affection have rarely been shown in so rich or concentrated a dramatic form. Again, no real surprises here, but the relationship is well expressed in the acting, making for a pleasant if not totally enthralling evening.

Hugo Nominees

BEST NOVEL OF 1988:

CYTEEN, by C.J. Cherryh (Warner; Popular Library/Questar)
FALLING FREE, by Lois McMaster Bujold (ANALOG, Dec 87-Feb 88: Baen)
THE GUARDSMAN, by P.J. Beese and Todd Cameron Hamilton (Pageant)
ISLANDS IN THE NET, by Bruce Sterling (Morrow; Ace)
MONA LISA OVERDRIVE, by William Gibson (Gollancz; Bantam Spectra)
RED PROPHET, by Orson Scott Card (Tor)
No Award

BEST NOVELLA OF 1988:

"The Calvin Coolidge Home for Dead Comedians," by Bradely Denton
(F&SF, Jun 88)
"Journals of the Plague Years," by Norman Spinrad (FULL SPECTRUM)
"The Last of the Winnebagos," by Connie Willis (IASFM, Jul 88)
"The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter," by Lucius Shepard (Ziesing;
IASFM, Sep 88)
"Surfacing," by Walter Jon Williams (IASFM, Apr 88)
No Award

BEST NOVELETTE OF 1988:

"Do Ya, Do Ya, Wanna Dance," by Howard Waldrop (IASFM, Aug 88)
"The Function of Dream Sleep," by Harlan Ellison (MIDNIGHT GRAFFITI
1; IASFM, Mid-Dec 88; Angry Candy)
"Ginny Sweetlips' Flying Circus," by Neal Barrett, Jr. (IASFM,
Feb 88)
"Peaches for Mad Molly," by Steven Gould (ANALOG, Feb 88)
"Schrodinger's Kitten," by George Alec Effinger (OMNI, Sep 88)
No Award

BEST SHORT STORY OF 1988:

"The Fort Moxie Branch," by Jack McDevitt (FULL SPECTRUM, where
it was mistitled "The Fourth Moxie Branch")
"The Giving Plague," by David Brin (Interzone 23; FULL SPECTRUM 2)
"Kirinyaga," by Mike Resnick (F&SF, Nov 88)
"Our Neural Chernobyl," by Bruce Sterling (F&SF, Jun 88)
"Ripples in the Dirac Sea," by Geoffrey A. Landis (IASFM, Oct 88)
"Stable Strategies for Middle Management," by Eileen Gunn (IASFM,
Jun 88)
No Award

("Kirinyaga," which has close to 7500 words, received appreciable numbers
of nominations both as a novelette and as a short story. We placed it
in the category where it received the most votes.)

BEST NON-FICTION BOOK OF 1988:

A BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY ARTISTS,
by Robert Weinberg (Greenwood)
FIRST MAITZ, by Don Maitz (Ursus)
THE MOTION OF LIGHT IN WATER, by Samuel R. Delany (Morrow)

THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION, edited by James Gunn
(Viking)

SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, AND HORROR: 1987, by Charles N. Brown
and William G. Contento (Locus)

No Award

(A BRIEF HISTORY OF TIME, by Stephen Hawking, received enough votes to
appear on the ballot, but was ruled ineligible, since it is not a book
"whose subject is the field of science fiction or fantasy or fandom,"
as required by the rules.)

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION OF 1988:

ALIEN NATION

BEETLEJUICE

BIG

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT

WILLOW

No Award

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR OF 1988:

Gardner Dozois

Edward L. Ferman

David G. Hartwell

Charles C. Ryan

Stanley Schmidt

No Award

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST OF 1988:

Thomas Canty

David Cherry

Bob Eggleton

Todd Cameron Hamilton

Don Maitz

Michael Whelan

No Award

BEST SEMIPROZINE OF 1988:

INTERZONE, (ed. David Pringle)

LOCUS (ed. Charles N. Brown)

THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF SCIENCE FICTION (ed. Kathryn Cramer, David
G. Hartwell, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Teresa Nielsen Hayden,

and Susan Palwick)
SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE (ed. Andrew I. Porter)
THRUST (ed. D. Douglas Fratz)

No Award

(While INTERZONE had a print run of over 10,000 by the end of 1988, its average for the entire year was only 9000 and it thus remains eligible as a semiprozine this year.)

BEST FANZINE OF 1988:

FILE 770 (ed. Mike Glycer)
FOSFAX (ed. Timothy Lane)

Hugo Nominees

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LAN'S LANTERN (ed. George "Lan" Laskowski)
NIEKAS (ed. Edmund R. Meskys)
OTHERREALMS (ed. Chuq Von Rospach)
No Award

(The ballot will also include the addresses of all nominated semiprozines and fanzines).

BEST FAN WRITER of 1988:

Avedon Carol
Mike Glycer
Arthur D. Hlavaty
Dave Langford
Guy Lillian, III
Chuq Von Rospach
No Award

BEST FAN ARTIST OF 1988:

Brad W. Foster
Teddy Harvia
Merle Insinga
Stu Shiffman
Taral Wayne
Diana Gallagher Wu
No Award

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER OF 1987-1988:

(not a Hugo: sponsored by Davis Publications)
P.J. Beese and Todd Cameron Hamilton (1)

Christopher Hinz (2)
Melanie Rawn (1)
Michaela Roessner (1)
Kristine Kathryn Rusch (1)
William Sanders (1)
Delia Sherman (2)
No Award

- (1) First year of eligibility
- (2) Second and final year of eligibility

(Elizabeth Moon and Daniel Keyes Moran received enough votes to appear on the ballot, but were ineligible because of prior publication: both were first published in 1982. Kristine Kathryn Rusch appeared in 1987 in *Aboriginal SF*, which at that time was still a semiprozine; 1988 is therefore her first year of professional publication, which governs Campbell Award eligibility.)

The following information was provided by Susan Hammond of NESFA:

In the listings [above], it will be noted that there are more than five nominees in a number of categories. This was in part due to tie votes (a three-way tie in one instance), and partly for a reason that

requires a detailed explanation:

In counting the nominations, we observed a significant pattern of what appeared to us to be bloc voting, amounting to over 50 votes in some categories. The number of these votes was sufficient to place nominees on the final ballot in the following categories: Novel, Professional Artist, Fan Writer, Fan Artist, and Campbell Award. More seriously, about half of these ballots were received with new Supporting Memberships, nearly all of which appeared to have been paid for by the same person or persons (the payments were made with blocks of consecutively-numbered \$20 money orders, purchased at the same post office). We were highly disturbed by this practice. While we did not consider it appropriate to invalidate the ballots in question, we did not wish any potential nominee to be deprived of a place on the ballot because of them. We therefore added a sixth nominee to the ballot in those categories where the presumed bloc voting had been successful

(except where fifth-place ties had already produced the same result). We recognize that there is nothing in the WSFS Constitution authorizing this action; but we felt that this was the course which would do the least damage to the Hugo process. For the same reason, we allowed on the ballot Campbell Award nominees with only 11 of 230 votes, marginally below the 5% required by the Hugo rules. We trust that the voters will render an appropriate judgment.

I'LL CRY WHEN I KILL YOU by Peter Israel
Mysterious Press, 1988, 0-445-40593-7, \$3.95
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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Raul Bashard is a thoroughly obnoxious science fiction author who thinks someone is trying to kill him. He's right. Set in the super-charged world of science fiction publishing and fandom.... Oops, I got carried away there.

Anthony Boucher was the first to set a mystery in the science fiction world (_ R_ o_ c_ k_ e_ t_ t_ o_ t_ h_ e_ M_ o_ r_ g_ u_ e). Others followed, most recently

Sharyn McCrumb with _ B_ i_ m_ b_ o_ s_ o_ f_ t_ h_ e_ D_ e_ a_ t_ h_ S_ u_ n. But where McCrumb

concentrates on the wackier side (fans), Israel looks at the business end--buying, selling, competition. McCrumb's characters are caricatures, which is fine for her book, which is basically a light comedy. _ I'_ l_ l_ C_ r_ y_ W_ h_ e_ n_ I_ K_ i_ l_ l_ Y_ o_ u is much more downbeat and spends much more time examining people's darker sides. McCrumb's book could not have changed setting successfully; Israel's book could and is of wider appeal because of this. Even non-science-fiction people can appreciate it.

In any book like this, people try to match characters to real-life people. It seems inevitable that Bashard will be read as being Isaac Asimov--he resembles him in many ways and, of the major science fiction authors today, Asimov is the only one not mentioned separately in the book. Yet Bashard has several traits so negative that one almost feels Asimov should sue for defamation of character.

In summary, _ I'_ l_ l_ C_ r_ y_ W_ h_ e_ n_ I_ K_ i_ l_ l_ Y_ o_ u is a well-written mystery with a background and characters that make it of particular interest to science fiction readers.

THE COMIC BOOK KILLER by Richard A. Lupoff

Bantam, 1989, ISBN 0-553-27781-2, \$3.95.

A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

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If I'll C_r_y_ W_h_e_n_ I_ K_i_l_l_ Y_o_u is a mystery for science fiction fans, the T_h_e_ C_o_m_i_c_ B_o_o_k_ K_i_l_l_e_r is for comic book fans. I don't mean fans of the "graphic novel," that art form that strives for "respectability" (whatever that is), but comic books, complete with superheroes, letters, and tacky ads. (Who can forget the marvelous X-ray glasses?)

Hobart Lindsey, insurance adjuster, is called in when a quarter of a million dollars worth of comics is stolen--not as difficult as he at first thinks, as only thirty-five items are involved. Soon robbery turns to murder and Lindsey is more involved than he suspects. His involvement is one of the weaknesses of the book--there's some pretty heavy-duty coincidences going on here. Another weakness is Lindsey's somewhat inconsistent social philosophy; one moment he's a raging reactionary, the next a social liberal. It doesn't quite wash.

Since Lupoff is a comic book expert, I'll assume the research was accurate and the book true to reality in that area. As such, it seems a reasonable introduction to the field for outsiders such as myself. And because of this I'll willing to overlook its faults, including the total implausibility of the motivation for the robbery and killings. Given that this is Lupoff's first mystery, one is permitted to make allowances.

(I am curious what knowledgeable comic book fans think if this book. Any comments, anyone?)

CYBORG

Film Review by Dale Skran

C_y_b_o_r_g belongs to a small sub-genre, the Science-Fiction Martial Arts film. This sub-genre is larger than might be supposed, since it includes all those terrible "gladiators in a future arena" movies such as D_e_a_t_h_R_a_c_e_2_0_0_0 and A_f_t_e_r_t_h_e_F_a_l_l_o_f_N_e_w_Y_o_r_k. Another recent example is S_t_e_e_l_D_a_w_n which has a slightly more substantial SF plot than the various "death races." A +1 film that fits into this sub-genre is T_h_e_R_u_n_n_i_n_g_M_a_n which featured Arnold Schwarzenegger duking it out on a game show with hockey-stick wielding psychos. These films as a group are poorly made and exhibit low quality, unrealistic fighting.

Recently, a number of martial artists have attempted to put on the screen a higher level of realism in fighting. The two major examples are Steven Seagal, an Akidoist starring in A_b_o_v_e_t_h_e_L_a_w and Jean Claude Van Damme in B_l_o_o_d_s_p_o_r_t. Neither film has a very strong or believable plot, but both contain excellent fight scenes that are well above the typical Hollywood slam-bang. A digression into the world of stunt-fighting is called for at this point. Hopefully movie audiences are aware that movie fights are carefully planned to maximize the breakage to surrounding walls, tables, lamps, etc. to increase the drama of the moment. Another "Hollywoodism" is that scene where the hero, punched/kicked many times by the villain, draws from deep within

themselves the resources to go on and win. Another "Hollywoodism" is the villain gaining the upper hand, and then squandering it to explain their plans for world domination or just getting the girl (guy). A final "Hollywoodism" is that in spite of all the slam-bang, people just dust themselves off, and escape more or less unharmed.

Jean Claude Van Dammn plans a ninjitsu trained fighter (Frank Dux) in B_l_o_o_d_s_p_o_r_t who enters a secret, illegal, "no rules," all styles contest. The framing plot is about -3, the training scenes about 0 level, but the fights are +2. They are excellently filmed, diverse, and very well thought out. Van Dammn is an extremely flexible martial artist who clearly has mastery of an enviable variety of techniques. He is pleasing on the screen, and seems fairly convincing in his relatively simple roll. Much of the impetus of the story derives from the knowledge that it is supposedly true: a Frank Dux really exists who claims to have won just such an underground tournament. I have read interviews with Dux, and apparently the fights are fairly close to what he claims actually happened. B_l_o_o_d_s_p_o_r_t was a very low budget film that played surprisingly well and propelled Van Dammn into the limelight.

With this background, it was with bated breath that a tiny group of fans of SF Martial Arts awaited C_y_b_o_r_g, a new SF movie starring Van Dammn. It should be noted that there is also a written branch of SF martial arts, notably S_t_r_e_e_t_l_e_t_h_a_l and T_h_e_K_u_n_d_a_l_i_n_i_E_q_u_a_t_i_o_n by real-life Kung-fu stylist Steven Barnes, who co-authored D_r_e_a_m_P_a_r_k with

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Larry Niven. Other examples include M_a_t_a_d_o_r_a and T_h_e_M_a_n_W_h_o_N_e_v_e_r_M_i_s_s_e_d by Steve Perry, and to some extent all cyber-punk, but especially N_e_u_r_o_m_a_n_c_e_r, J_o_h_n_n_y_M_e_n_o_m_i_c, H_a_r_d_w_i_r_e_d, and V_o_i_c_e_o_f_t_h_e_W_h_i_r_l_w_i_n_d.

Variety reviewed C_y_b_o_r_g as just a series of futuristic fights. This would have been a considerable improvement! In fact, there is just enough plot to seriously impede the fights. C_y_b_o_r_g resembles M_a_d_M_a_x in that they are both revenge tales with colorful villains set in a violent post-holocaust world. Both have boring and ill conceived sets of flashbacks to the bucolic days the hero spent with a wife/girlfriend who

eventually gets wasted by the colorful villain. Both have a few good scenes here and there, but overall are very poor films.

There are several things that make C y b o r g much worse than it should have been. One is that Van Dammn's female sidekick is totally miscast. She should have been played by an unknown but technically proficient female martial artist who had some minimal acting skills. Instead, she is played by your basic movie bimbo. Her continued survival in spite of her obvious lack of martial skill and general stupidity greatly decreases the credibility of the film.

Another problem is that a lot of C y b o r g builds up to a big fight between Van Dammn and a colorful villain. There is nothing wrong with this, but unfortunately, all the interesting fighting takes place between Van Dammn and various henchmen about mid-way through the film. Many of these scenes were fairly realistic and well executed. Unfortunately, when Van Dammn confronts the main villain, he forgets all the skills he displayed earlier, and behaves like someone who knows zip about what he is doing. The same pattern is repeated in their final confrontation. Basically both fights are pure Hollywood and a considerable waste of the audience's time.

I also should mention that the dialog is not very good, and many scenes are mis-directed, although production values are higher than in most low-budget films.

It is unfortunate that C y b o r g is not better than it is, since it may sink Van Dammn's career. Overall, C y b o r g comes in as a low (-1) or high (-2). The squeamish are reminded that although C y b o r g is not a "splatter" film, it is "R" rated for a reason, and it is fairly violent.