

Christian SF/Fantasy Recommended Reading

Appendix to
"Some Thoughts on Ethics and Science Fiction"

Compiled by Ross Pavlac

This publication is presented by Christian Fandom, an interdenominational fellowship of SF fans interested in the courteous and accurate representation of Christian viewpoints within the SF community. Works recommended here are designated Christian in the C.S. Lewis Mere Christianity sense; they portray a variety of viewpoints, both Catholic and Protestant (does anyone know of any Eastern Orthodox SF?). Disclaimer: we make no representation re the personal theology of the authors herein; works are on this list because a positive view of Christianity plays some role in the story. This list is not intended to be complete; emphasis is given to titles currently or recently in print. Compiled with assistance from Deborah Feaster, Marty Helgesen, and Carey Martin.

Revised: February, 1996.

LITERATURE:

Bibee, John. The Magic Bicycle series. (7 volumes, InterVarsity Press).

Blish, James. A Case of Conscience, Black Easter, The Day After Judgment.

Boucher, Anthony. "The Quest for Saint Aquin", "Balaam." In various collections, including Other Worlds, Other Gods (ed. Mayo Mohs, out of print)

Bradbury, Ray. Something Wicked This Way Comes.

_____ The Man (in The Illustrated Man and numerous other collections)

Carver, Jeffrey. Dragon Rigger (Tor Books).

Chambers, Mary, et al. Faith in Orbit: A Spaced Odyssey (InterVarsity Press, 1995). (Humorous cartoons exploring the intersection of SF and religion)

Chase, Carol. Hawk's Flight (Baen, 1991).

Chesterton, G.K. The Ball and the Cross

_____ The Man Who Was Thursday

_____ The Napoleon of Notting Hill.

Elwood, Roger. The Angelwalk trilogy: Angelwalk, Fallen Angel, Stedfast. (Inspirational Press).

Henderson, Zenna. Ingathering: The Complete People Stories. NESFA Press, 1995, 577 pp.

Hughes, Robert Don. The Prophet of Lamath (Del Rey, 1979)

_____ The Wizard in Waiting (Del Rey, 1982).

_____ The Forging of the Dragon (Del Rey).

_____ The Fallen (Broadman & Holman, Nashville, 1995, trade paper).

King, Stephen. The Stand (Complete & Uncut Edition, Doubleday, New York, 1990, 1153 pp.).

Lafferty, R.A. Past Master (Ace, 1968).

Lanier, Sterling. Hiero s Journey

_____ The Unforsaken Hiero.

Lawhead, Steve. Song of Albion trilogy: The Paradise War, The Silver Hand, The Endless Knot (Avon, 1994).

L Engle, Madeleine. A Wrinkle in Time and the various sequels.

Lewis, C.S. Space trilogy: Out of the Silent Planet, Perelandra, That Hideous Strength.

_____ The Chronicles of Narnia (7 vols.)

_____ The Screwtape Letters

Miller, Calvin. Singer trilogy: The Singer, The Song, The Finale (InterVarsity Press, 1975, 1977, 1979).

Miller, Walter R. A Canticle for Liebowitz.

Morressy, John. The Mansions of Space (Ace, 1983).

Percy, Walker. Lost in the Cosmos (esp. "The Last Phil Donahue Show").

Peretti, Frank. This Present Darkness (Crossway Books).

_____ Piercing the Darkness (Crossway Books).

Powers, Tim. The Anubis Gates (Ace Books, New York, 1983).

Rogers, Mark. The Dead (Berkeley, 1989).

_____ Zorachus (Ace).

_____ The Nightmare of God (Ace, 1988).

_____ The Blood of the Lamb: The Expected One (Ace).

_____ The Blood of the Lamb: The Devouring Void (Ace, 1991).

AUDIO:

Alice Cooper. The Last Temptation, Epic Records, 1994. Style: rock. (there is also a companion comic book trilogy from Marvel, available individually or in a single volume). (And yes, Alice Cooper is now a Christian! Miracles do happen!)

Arkangel. Warrior. (Contains The March of the Ents) Style: Celtic. Joyeuse Garde Recordings, PO Box 840501, Houston, TX 77284-0501.

Atlanta Radio Theatre Company. Into the Labyrinth, Volume 4: Special Order. Original radio drama of a Lovecraftian Cthulu Mythos story told from a Christian perspective. \$9.95 plus \$2 postage from Atlanta Radio Theatre Company, PO Box 1675, Duluth, Georgia 30135-1880.

Barnabas. Waiting for the Aliens On The Gospel According to Barnabas. Style: Punk rock. Thorne Records, 100 South Sunrise Way, Suite 409, Palm Springs, CA 92262.

Cockburn, Bruce. Dancing in the Dragon's Jaws and various other albums (Charles Williams references).

Crabb, Kemper. The Vigil. Style: Celtic. Joyeuse Garde Recordings, PO Box 840501, Houston, TX 77284-0501.

Daniel Amos. Alarma Chronicles: Alarma!, Doppelganger, Vox Humana. Stunt Records. Style: Progressive rock.

_____ The Blood of the Lamb: The Riddled Man (Ace, 1992).

Siegel, Robert. Whalesong (Crossway Books)

Smith, Cordwainer. Norstrilia. NESFA Press.

_____ The Rediscovery of Man (collected short fiction) NESFA Press, 1993. Both are available in excellent clothbound reprints from NESFA Press, PO Box 809, Framingham, MA 07101-0203.

Stasheff, Christopher. The Warlock in Spite of Himself and the various sequels.

Wellman, Manly Wade. Who Fears the Devil?

_____ John the Balladeer (Baen, 1988).

White, James. The Genocidal Healer (Ballantine, 1992).

Williams, Charles. War in Heaven, The Place of the Lion, other novels.

Willis, Connie. Doomsday Book.

Edwards, David. Dreams, Tales, and Lullabies. (George MacDonald references) Style: light pop.

Glass Hammer. Journey of the Dunedan. (Based on J.R.R. Tolkien). Lazeria Music. Style: Progressive/Celtic.

_____ Perelandra (due Fall 1995, based on C.S. Lewis). Lazeria Music. Lazeria Music, 1612 Cooling Ave., Melbourne, FL 32935. (800) 997-9137.

Johnson, Jeff and Dunning, Brian. Songs From Albion: Volume I, Volume II (1994), Volume III (1994). (Songs based on Steve Lawhead's Albion series) Style: Celtic. Ark Productions, PO Box 230073, Tigard, OR 97281.

Internet

alt.books.cs-lewis

alt.fandom.tolkien rec.arts.books.tolkien

<http://www.cs.pitt.edu/~planting/books/chesterton/thursday/thursday.html>
The Man who was Thursday by G.K. Chesterton.

<http://www.scar.utoronto.ca/~94mcneim/100.html>
The Monastery's CS Lewis Page

<http://paul.spu.edu:80/~loren/lewis/>
The C.S. Lewis Page

<http://www.mit.edu:8001/people/douglas/lewis.html>
Jack! <http://sleepy.usu.edu/~slq9v/cslewis/index.html>

<http://www.cache.net/~john/cslewis/index.html>
Into the Wardrobe: The C. S. Lewis WWW Page
(NEW ADDRESS)

<http://www.cs.pitt.edu/~planting/books/macdonald/princess/title.html>
The Light Princess by George MacDonald.

<http://www.lights.com/tolkien/rootpage.html>
The J.R.R. Tolkien Information Page

<http://csclub.uwaterloo.ca/u/relipper/tolkien/rootpage.html>
J.R.R. Tolkien Information Page (Lights version)

<http://info.ox.ac.uk:80/~talksoc/TolkiensOxford>
Tolkien's Oxford

<http://www.bgsu.edu/~edwards/lewis.html>
Bruce Edwards' Inklings page

<http://www.tiac.net/users/daved/cwilliams>
The Web of Exchange: the Charles
Williams WWW page

<http://linus.cs.ohiou.edu/~wlhd/alight/cooper.html>
Discussion of Alice Cooper's conversion to
Christianity.

Magazines

WONDER magazine, 2770 Fairlane Dr., Atlanta, GA
30340. \$15/4 issues. Eclectic SF media/pop culture
magazine; has G.K. Chesterton columns.

Films

Captain Kronos, Vampire Hunter. Hammer Films,
circa 1966. (one of the last of the vampire films under
the "traditional" rules that have vampires affected by
crosses; the hero is a Christian mercenary who travels
around in search of vampires to kill). Rating:
probably PG.

Comic Books

Illuminator, The. Marvel/Thomas Nelson, 1993. 2
issues published. This comic was an attempt at a joint
venture between one of the larger Christian
publishers and the largest comic publisher to create a
superhero comic that was authentically Christian and
had standards that would hold up to those held by
comic book fans. It was doomed largely because
Thomas Nelson insisted on no advertising, and the

graphic novel format caused the comic to carry a
\$4.95 pricetag -- quite expensive for a comic,
particularly one that did not contain any "big name"
artists or writers. You can still find this in some
Christian bookstores and some used comic book
stores.

Legends of Larian. Lion publishing, 1993. 2 issues
published. This was an attempt by a former Judge
Dredd artist (Jeff Anderson) and others to do a
Christian fantasy comic that had a complex plot and
top quality artwork -- and it succeeded. The main plot
is the attempts of Sheela, a blind woman, to become
queen of a country in another world, another time.
The more interesting subplot is the tale of the
redemption of Madlin, a half-elf mercenary hired as a
bodyguard for the queen. This is an INCREDIBLE
comic that Lion stopped publishing because of the
tremendous cost versus sales (though a Lion rep
noted to me that the comic generated more letters
than most of the books they have published in the last
several years). It can still be found in some Christian
bookstores in the U.S. and England/Scotland/Ireland
-- definitely worth searching for!

Screwtape Letters, The. Marvel/Thomas Nelson,
1994, \$9.95 (graphic novel format) A very good
adaptation of C.S. Lewis' classic.

The OATH by Frank Peretti (Word books,
Clothbound).

This is an important book. If you like horror novels
(Stephen King, Clive Barker, etc.), then you must,
repeat, **MUST** go out and buy this and read it
immediately!

The basic plot can be summarized as The Bridges of
Madison County as written by Stephen King. It reads
like a typical Stephen King novel, but with a
decidedly Christian slant. Quality-wise, it's not as
good as King's best (e.g., Salem's Lot), but is better
than his more mediocre writings.

The significant thing here is that Frank Peretti's
writing skills have dramatically improved! His earlier
books (e.g., This Present Darkness) I compare to
1930's science fiction -- you read them for the ideas,
not for the writing quality. But becoming a
millionaire (due to the sales of the Darkness books)
and having the time to sit down and work on the craft
of writing has apparently had its effect. The Oath is
the best horror novel that has been published by a
Christian book publisher, and can hold its own with
most horror being written today -- on the terms and
playing field defined by mainstream SF and horror
writing.

No, Tolkien it ain't. And it's not necessarily going to be a classic that will be read a hundred years hence. But it's a darn good read, and can be held up to SF fans as an example of a decent fantasy/horror novel written by a Christian and published by a Christian publishing house.

Also note that Word has arranged for the book to appear in at least some Barnes & Noble and SuperCrown bookstores (and presumably Borders as well, though I have not yet seen it in a Borders). Please -- if you buy it, do it through Borders or

Barnes & Noble or Crown -- this will provide better sales incentive to the mainstream bookstores to carry Christian fiction than if you buy it in a Christian bookstore. A little-known fact is that the reason Christian books don't show up on the best-seller lists is that the best-seller lists completely ignore sales done by Christian bookstores -- they don't "count." So, if you buy it at a "mainstream" bookstore, it will impact the publishing industry statistics in a way that buying the same book at a Christian bookstore will not. -- and Peretti gets his cut no matter where you buy it.

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Ross Pavlac produced the above reading list as an appendix to an article "Some Thoughts on Ethics and Science Fiction" published in *The Ethical Spectacle* in March of 1996. (The article is available on-line at <http://www.spectacle.org/396/scifi/pavlac.html>).

This, however, is only one of many versions of this list Ross prepared. A more complete version existed in his web page collection. However, after his death on November 12, 1997, his web page collection was taken off line. This loss has prevented me from compiling, or reproducing, his 2 page version.

One of the projects planed for Christian Fandom, and the Christian Fandom Web Pages (<http://www.christian-fandom.org/christian-fandom/>) is the continuation and expansion of the recommend reading list. Consult the reading list, or keep in contact with Christian Fandom at cons for updates on this project

(Ronald B. Oakes, January 19, 1998)