

# WATT'S OUT

## SF&F Book Releases

**TANEQUIL** by Terry Brooks. Simon & Schuster tpb, dist in Aust by Simon & Schuster. © 2004. 357 pp. A\$29.95. On sale now. Book Two of The High Druid of Shannara. The story of Gianne Ohmsford continues with this second volume. She has lost contact with Penderrin, who had helped her in the past, and finds herself in the alternate world of the Forbidding. She has to wait, however, as Penderrin is on the run from a Druid who is determined to destroy them both. There are other threats to Gianne, and the combination could be enough to kill her. Terry Brooks has legions of fans who are eagerly awaiting the release of each new book. They will not be disappointed with this latest offering. Excellent fantasy.

**BRIDGE OF SOULS** by Fiona McIntosh. Voyager pb, dist in Aust by HarperCollins. © 2004. 623 pp. A\$ . On sale now. Book three of The Quickening. The first two books of this series have built up to a climax that this volume promises to give. The life of Wyl Thirsk is rapidly unwinding as everything he had planned and hoped for is turning out for the worst. He is set to lose his Queen and, it may turn out, his life as the Quickening continues its influence on his destiny. McIntosh's gift for characterisation is well shown in this novel. An engrossing fantasy.

**MISTRESS OF DRAGONS** by Margaret Weis. Penguin pb, dist in Aust by Penguin Books. © 2003. 381 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now. Book one of The Dragonvarld trilogy. This book is a solo one by Margaret Weis, and combines some of the elements that is included in her other novels – dragons being one of the better known. As is a strong female protagonist and strong plot. The plot takes place in a world that contains dragons and men, dragons that are intelligent and who can change shape and wield magic. Weis again weaves her own magic to engross the reader in hours of relaxing reading.

**DREW BARRYMORE: THE BIOGRAPHY** by Lucy Ellis & Bryony Sutherland. Aurum pb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. 281 pp. A\$22.95. On sale now. One of the understated actresses of the past thirty years, Drew Barrymore has had an impact on some well know speculative fiction films. Films such as *Firestarter*, *ET*, and *Every After*, among others. The biography starts off with a short introduction chapter and then delves into the Barrymore ancestors – Lionel, Ethel and John – and continues on with Drew's birth and early

life. It doesn't pull punches with her drug abuse. By the end of the book the reader has built a picture of Drew that show she is a person that will undoubtedly bring more talent to the entertainment industry in the future. An interesting and informative book.

**DOOMSDAY BOOK by Connie Willis. A&U pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 1992. 669 pp. A\$22.95. On sale now.**

DOOMSDAY BOOK is a time travel story – it follows the trials and tribulations of Kivrin as she goes back to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century to do some historical research. The Net is aimed at the year 1320, which was a fairly quiet year. Just as she went through, the technician came down sick, and all he could say was “something's wrong”. Dunworthy, the person in charge of the young woman, tries to find out what is wrong but all of a sudden he finds himself in the middle of a pandemic – a virus that no-one can find a cure for. In the meanwhile Kivrin finds herself near Oxford and all seems to be well until she comes down sick. She has had all her medical enhancements and hopes that she will be able to pull through, since the 14<sup>th</sup> Century is not well known for its medical knowledge.

During the course of the novel she gets to know quite well the manor, church and village she finds herself in, and comes to believe that people haven't changed in ways that matter. There is a race to find and retrieve Kivrin before the Net closes and the pandemic back home takes its toll. And then Dunworthy finds out what was “wrong”. This novel won both the Hugo and Nebula awards. \*Highly Recommended\*.

**More How To Draw Manga: ENHANCING A CHARACTER'S SENSE OF PRESENCE Vol 3. Graphic Sha tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2003. A4. 127 pp. A\$27.5. On sale now.** The series continues with, as always, a really in-depth description of how to carry out the techniques of drawing Manga. There are four chapters in this volume: The Importance of Tone Work, Character Shading and Tone Portrayal, Movement with a Sense of Presence, and More Manga. Each chapter is broken into sub-chapters, for example Chapter 3, Movement with a Sense of Presence, has The Key Points to Portraying Natural Movement Lie in the Shoulders; The Side Centerline Gives the Torso Volume; The Clavicle is Another Vital Point to Giving the Torso Volume; Showing a Figure Extending and Contracting Allows for Dynamic Expression; and Adding the Finishing Touches to a Hot “Backward Glance” Pose with Torsion. In this Chapter, each sub-chapter is split into sections. A very well set out book for the budding artist.

**Manga Techniques: CREATING CHARACTERS FOR GAMES Vol 7. Japan Publications tpb, dist in Aust by Bookwise Intl. © 2004. A4. 80 pp. A\$27.95. On sale now.** Another volume in this “hands on” series that goes right into the basics of how to create Manga

characters. There are four chapters: Basic Knowledge to Remember; Character Parts Catalog; Build and Animate Characters; and Sample Illustrations. The sub chapters in Chapter 1 are Deforming Characters; Basics of Deforming Eyes; Bottom View, Top View, Profile; Body Balance and Center of Gravity; Understanding the Body's Joints and Girth; Understanding Hand Joints; and Understanding Foot Joints. The characters illustrated are basic and simple – rabbits, young girls, etc, but the book goes towards building a knowledge base for the aspiring Manga artist.

**PANDORA'S STAR by Peter F. Hamilton. Pan pb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2004. 1144 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.** Book one of The Commonwealth Saga. Set in the year 2380, Pandora's Star is one puzzle that has set the society of the Commonwealth buzzing. With over six hundred planets settled from Earth, it's society is peaceful and friendly. When a star some one thousand light-years away is enveloped by a force field, the government builds an ftl starship, which sets out to explore the enigma. What it finds would bring to light a threat that could destroy the Commonwealth and all it stood for. I always look forward to Hamilton's latest novels, and can say that this, his latest, is no exception. Excellent Space Opera.

**MACQUARIE AUSTRALIAN DICTIONARY. Macquarie tpb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2004. 223 pp. A\$19.95. On sale now.** A new Australian dictionary, which displays the correct type on the back-cover – "slang" dictionary. The 223 pages are chock full of Australian slang, described, and with its origin/s. It includes sets of slang synonyms, regional slang gathered from contributions from all over the country and has special attention given to phrases – such as "I hope your chooks turn into emus and kick your dunny down", "couldn't train a choko vine to grow up a dunny wall", "silly as a two bob watch", "if it was raining virgins I'd be locked in the dunny with a poofter", and "don't come the raw prawn with me". Among others. For all those interested in Australianisms, and for those coming to Australia, to see if they are really being insulted or not.

**THE IRON TREE by Celilia Dart-Thornton. TOR tpb, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 2004. 421 pp. A\$30. On sale now.** Book One of The Crownthistle Chronicles. A fantasy tale of two young people who are seeking what they think are two different things, but they find that they also have some things in common, and they team up to help each other. When Jarred leaves his desert village to seek adventure, he has companions he can trust. When they are attacked he escapes the ambush and sets out into the Marsh, an area of lush growth, very different to his desert home. While there he meets his future companion – Lilith – and they both set out, together, combining their strengths. Jarred hopes to find his father, and Lilith to find an

antidote to the madness that had set upon her family. Well written and attention absorbing fantasy.

**MACQUARIE INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH DICTIONARY.**

**Macquarie h/c, dist in Aust by Pan Macmillan. © 1999, 2004. 2166 pp. A\$79.95. On sale now.**

The complete and unabridged edition. This dictionary is put forward to be *the* International dictionary for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium. It is the latest edition of the Encarta World English Dictionary. There are several introductions, and a brief history of the English language, but the bulk of the book, 2166 pages, is taken up with the dictionary. It is comprehensive, with over 12,000 new words, over 400,000 words, phrases, and meanings explained, and over 10,000 entries on people and places. Nearly every page has one or two illustrations, and the work that has gone into it is obvious to the reader. It also exists in CD Rom format, from Microsoft. For the person who is serious about their command of the English language.

**THE RUNES OF EARTH by Stephen Donaldson. Victor Gollancz h/c, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2004. 573 pp. A\$49.95. On sale now.**

The first book of four, this new series by Donaldson is set in the Land. The novel is preceded by a "What has gone before" introduction, which is welcomed by the reader who has perhaps read *The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever* some years ago, since the two preceding series were published between 1977 and 1983. Linden Avery finds herself back in the Land, trying to find her kidnapped adopted son. She finds some strange things going on there, and is determined to explore them further, especially to get to the bottom of the messages purporting to come from Covenant, who she knows is dead. Donaldson has gone back to a world he knows well, with this latest volume about the Land, and his readers will welcome its publication.

**COALESCENT by Stephen Baxter. Gollancz pb, dist in Aust by Allen & Unwin. © 2003. 536 pp. A\$18.95. On sale now.**

Destiny's Children Book One. Baxter has written books that are part of a series, but are stand-alone books – the Malefant books, for example. This latest series looks to be just that, as was the mammoth series he has recently finished. There are two focuses to the plot – Rome and the Roman Empire is one strand, with a very intelligent woman, who lived in Rome over 2000 years ago. She was determined that her family live, and survive to the far future. To do so, she set in train a plan that would carry on to the present day. The second strand is centred around George Poole, who has lost track of his sister. He goes to Rome to try to trace her, and comes across evidence of the plan of that long dead woman, a plan that would have frightening consequences for his own time. Well told SF. Another series that the reader will be looking out for the next book.

## OTHER CURRENT + FUTURE RELEASES:

- Pan Macmillan:* THE BEST AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION WRITING ed Rob Gerrand.  
*HarperCollins:* CHAINFIRE by Terry Goodkind  
ROBOTS MOVIE STORYBOOK
- Bookwise Intl:* ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS: PRINCIPIA – Sir Isaac Newton  
DRAWING CUTTING EDGE ANATOMY  
EXTREME ART DRAW MANGA CHIBI!  
  
More How to Draw Manga – MASTERING BISOUJO CHARACTERS VOL 4  
HOW TO DRAW MANGA – GUNS & MILITARY VOL 2.
- Allen & Unwin:* CENTURY RAIN by Alastair Reynolds  
DIAMOND DOGS, TURQUOISE DAYS by Alastair Reynolds

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**WATTS OUT #32**, a supplement to THE MENTOR Magazine. Edited, printed & published by Ron Clarke of 95 Southee Cct, Oakhurst, NSW 2761, Australia (*note address change*). Also on the Internet at <http://www.efanzines.com>. WATTS OUT is now coming out approximately bi-monthly, as I am producing it when I have completed a two page spread, which is approximately every two months. January, 2005

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