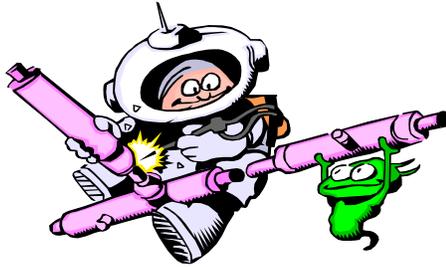




SITHFACTS 2014

WARMER THAN USUAL DECEMBER ISSUE



GOODREADS NAMES BEST OF 2014

In early December, Goodreads.com announced their 2014 Goodreads Choice Awards, the only major book awards decided by readers online. Congratulations to the best books of the year, with several winners of genre interest:

Science Fiction: *The Martian* by Andy Weir, Fantasy: *The Book of Life* by Deborah Harkness,

Horror: *Prince Lestat* by Anne Rice, Mystery & Thriller: *Mr. Mercedes* by Stephen King,

Graphic Novel/Comic: *Serenity: Leaves on the Wind* written by Zack Whedon, Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction: *City of Heavenly Fire* by Cassandra Clare, and Debut Author: Pierce Brown for *Red Rising*.

WORLD FANTASY NAMES WINNERS

The World Fantasy Awards winners for works published in 2013 were announced at a ceremony held on November 9, 2014, and they include a New Mexico author. The awards were presented in Washington, DC, during the World Fantasy Convention. The World Fantasy Award winners are:

Life Achievement: Ellen Datlow and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, Novel: *A Stranger in Olondria* by Sofia Samatar, Novella: "Wakulla Springs" by Andy Duncan & Ellen Klages, Short Fiction: "The Prayer of Ninety Cats" by Caitlin R. Kiernan, Anthology: *Dangerous Women* edited by GEORGE R.R. MARTIN & Gardner Dozois, Collection: *The Ape's Wife and Other Stories* by Caitlin R. Kiernan, Artist: Charles Vess,

Special Award – Professional (tie): Irene Gallo, for art direction of Tor.com, and William K. Schafer, for Subterranean Press, and Special Award – Nonprofessional: Kate Baker, Neil Clarke, & Sean Wallace, for *Clarkesworld*.

REMAKE OF KING'S *IT* SHOOTING NEXT SUMMER

by Kyle Buchanan, NYMag, 12/5/2014

Good news, horror fans: After a very long development process, it looks like a big-screen adaptation of Stephen King's seminal horror novel *It* is finally going to happen. Vulture spoke with the project's producer Dan Lin December 4 at an awards-season party celebrating *The Lego Movie* (which Lin also produced), and he confirmed that *It* will be his next live-action movie, with *True Detective* helmer Cary Fukunaga confirmed to direct.

"The idea is to start official prep in March for a summer shoot," said Lin. "Cary likes to develop things for a while, and we've been with this for about three or four years, so we're super excited that he stayed with it. You guys are gonna be really excited."

Aside from a 1990 ABC TV miniseries boasting a memorable performance from Tim Curry as the evil clown Pennywise (a human guise for the book's titular evil being), *It* has never quite gotten the cinematic treatment the story deserves, and Lin says his big plan is to split King's sprawling novel into two movies.

"The book is so epic that we couldn't tell it all in one movie and service the characters with enough depth," explained Lin. The first film, then, will be a coming-of-age story about the children tormented by *It*, while the second will skip ahead in time as those same characters band together to continue the fight as adults. Though Fukunaga is only committed to directing the first film, Lin says the in-

UPCOMING ASFS MEETINGS

- **Tonight:** Comedic holiday film shorts, plus the 10th ASFS Dessert Cook-Off. Prizes! Mirth! B Movies!
- **January 9, 2015:** Group Book Discussion! What did you read in 2014 & would recommend?
- **February 13:** A visit from Portales paranormal author Darynda Jones. Plus *ASFacts* (Deadline Sun, Feb 8).
- **March 13:** The Annual Club Auction with Bob Vardeman as your auctioneer. Start looking for stuff to donate to the cause. And save up your pennies...
- **April 17:** Unknown program - meeting is a week late. It's *ASFacts* for spring (deadline Sun, April 12).
- **May 8:** Again, unknown. Possibly film previews.
- **June 12:** Once again, unknown! Info to come...

Darth Vader, guest editor. Craig Chrissinger, normal editor. Send Correspondence to — PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176-7257. Darth Vader's Phone: c/o (505) 266-8905. E-mail: cwrcraig@nmia.com. *SITHFACTS* printed each December. *ASFACTS* published February, April, July & October for the Albuquerque SF Society. NEXT DEADLINE: Sun, Feb. 8. **Club Officers:** Kevin Hewett & Craig Chrissinger, co-Zec Secs (505) 266-8905. Randi Hewett, Moderator. Harriet Engle, alternator. Kris Kringle & Rudolph the Red, Holiday Hosts. **Bubonicon Co-Chairs:** Caci Cooper & Craig Chrissinger.

demand helmer is currently closing a deal to co-write the second.

And no one is more excited about the project's renewed movement than *It's* author. "The most important thing is that Stephen King gave us his blessing," said Lin. "We didn't want to make this unless he felt it was the right way to go, and when we sent him the script, the response that Cary got back was, 'Go with God, please! This is the version the studio should make.' So that was really gratifying."

NOLAN MAY DIRECT READY PLAYER ONE

by Trent Moore, *Blastr.com*, 12/8/2014

The last that was heard, Warner Brothers has an offer out for Christopher Nolan to direct the ambitious sci-fi flick *Ready Player One*. But in case he says no, they have some interesting backup options.

According to Ain't it Cool News, the studio is eyeing four additional directors to potentially direct Ernest Cline's *New York Times* bestseller. If Nolan declines, the studio is apparently courting Matthew Vaughn (*Kick-Ass*), Edgar Wright (*Shaun of the Dead*), Peter Jackson (*Lord of the Rings*) and Robert Zemeckis (*Back to the Future*).

The studio seems very high on getting the film off the ground, and if Nolan isn't interested, you'd have to think they'll start working down the list fairly quickly. Many would love to see Nolan's adaptation, but you have to admire the ambition of the short list. Each of them, from Vaughn to Wright to Jackson or Zemeckis, could be an excellent option.

For some background, check out the book's synopsis: "In the year 2044, reality is an ugly place. The only time teenage Wade Watts really feels alive is when he's jacked into the virtual utopia known as the OASIS. Wade's devoted his life to studying the puzzles hidden within this world's digital confines – puzzles that are based on their creator's obsession with the pop culture of decades past and that promise massive power and fortune to whoever can unlock them.

"But when Wade stumbles upon the first clue, he finds himself beset by players willing to kill to take this ultimate prize. The race is on, and if Wade's going to survive, he'll have to win – and confront the real world he's always been so desperate to escape."

SF BOOK GROUP READS ON

The Droids & Dragons SF Book Group meets 7:30 pm Monday, December 15, at Pacific Paradise (northeast corner of San Pedro & Candelaria NE) to discuss *Have Spacesuit, Will Travel* by Robert A. Heinlein. The group then meets January 19, 2015, to talk about *Maplecroft* by Cherie Priest (probably at Pacific Paradise again).

Meetings of D&D are open to all interested readers on the 3rd Monday each month. Books for discussion are chosen two months in advance, and group members receive a 20% discount on them. For more info: Leah at skycaptain1883@yahoo.com or Craig at 266-8905.



TREK BEGAN FILMING 50 YEARS AGO

December 3 marked the 50th anniversary of a seminal moment in science fiction history, reports *Blastr.com*. Do you know what it was?

It was five decades ago, on December 3, 1964, that one of the longest-running, most influential and most important sci-fi franchises of all time began its journey to "boldly go where no man has gone before."

That's right: It was 50 years ago Wednesday the 3rd that shooting commenced on "The Cage," the pilot episode for Gene Roddenberry's proposed new series, *Star Trek*. Roddenberry wrote the pilot, Robert Butler directed it, and the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise included Jeffrey Hunter as Capt. Christopher Pike, Majel Barrett as his "Number One" and Leonard Nimoy as the vaguely alien (his origins as a Vulcan were not yet nailed down) Mr. Spock.

What happened after the pilot was shot is the stuff of TV history. NBC rejected it, saying it was too slow-moving and cerebral, but they broke all network television precedent by being interested enough to request a second pilot. So Roddenberry got back to work: He let go of almost all the cast except for Nimoy – who the network was not that comfortable with, thinking he looked "Satanic" – and hired William Shatner as Capt. James T. Kirk. That second pilot, "Where No Man Has Gone Before," was still smart science fiction but had enough action and faster pacing to convince NBC to give the series the green light.

We all know what happened after that. And "The Cage" didn't sit around collecting dust either; much of the footage was folded into a two-part episode called "The Menagerie" that explored events in the Enterprise's past and ended up becoming one of its most popular episodes in its own right.

But it all started 50 years ago on a soundstage in Hollywood at Desilu Studios, and thanks to the legendary Nimoy for reminding us all of it in a Twitter posting. Next up: the 50th anniversary of the show's NBC premiere, on Sept. 8, 2016.

NM Gets Scorch Trials Filming

by Adrian Gomez, *Albuq Journal*, 10/23/2014

New Mexico is scorching hot. The state landed *The Maze Runner Chapter II: The Scorch Trials*. Production takes place in and around Albuquerque October through late January. It is being housed at Albuquerque Studios.

“It’s great to welcome such an experienced production team to the state,” said Nick Maniatis, director of the New Mexico State Film Office. “We’re happy to play a small part on the making of this popular franchise.”

The Scorch Trials is the follow-up to *The Maze Runner*, which is the latest young-adult novel series to make the leap to the silver screen. It’s directed by Wes Ball.

The Maze Runner had an estimated budget of \$34 million and has made \$91 million domestically and \$252 million worldwide.

The Scorch Trial’s screenplay is by T.S. Nowlin and based on the second book in the epic young-adult novel series by James Dashner. *The Scorch Trials* continues the saga begun in the recent box-office hit *The Maze Runner*. The film will follow the “Gladers” from the first movie, who must survive in The Scorch – a futuristic wasteland ravaged by solar flares.

According to the New Mexico State Film Office, the production will employ at least 250 New Mexico crew members, 18 New Mexico actors, and approximately 1,800 local background talent.

“We are excited to have *The Scorch Trials* film in our city,” said Mayor Richard J. Berry. “This sequel to the very popular *The Maze Runner* will have a tremendous economic impact to Albuquerque.” The film stars Dylan O’Brien, Ki Hong Lee, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster, Dexter Darden, Giancarlo Esposito, Patricia Clarkson and Nathalie Emmanuel. Esposito is no stranger to New Mexico as he spent a few seasons as Gus Fring on the Emmy Award-winning show *Breaking Bad*.

TWIN PEAKS RETURNS IN 2016

by Michael Ausiello, tvline.com, 10/06/2014

Where there’s smoke there’s... cherry pie! Turns out all of that *Twin Peaks* revival buzz was much ado about something. Showtime confirmed October 6 that it has given the green light to a nine-episode revival of David Lynch and Mark Frost’s seminal ’90s drama series.

This would not be a reboot but a present-day continuation – in the same vein as TNT’s *Dallas*. Lynch and Frost will pen all nine episodes, with Lynch directing every installment. Production will begin in 2015 and air in 2016, marking the 25th anniversary of the series finale.

What’s more, Showtime will re-air the first two seasons of *Twin Peaks*, in advance of the new episodes airing in 2016.

Rumors of a new *Twin Peaks* project spread like wild-fire October 3 after Lynch and Frost published the following identical tweets:

@DAVID_LYNCH – Dear Twitter Friends: That gum you like is going to come back in style! #damngoodcoffee 3 Oct 2014

@mfrost11 – Dear Twitter Friends: That gum you like is going to come back in style. #damngoodcoffee 3 Oct 2014

The seminal ABC series recently celebrated its 25th

anniversary with a special Blu-ray release *Twin Peaks: The Entire Mystery*, featuring more than 90 minutes of deleted scenes.

Details are still rolling in like two-by-fours at the Packard Mill, but they’re trying to bring back as much of the original cast as possible with Kyle MacLachlan definitely on board reprising his role as Special Agent Dale Cooper. Composer Angelo Badalamenti and Emmy Award-winning editor Duwayne Dunham will likely be involved as well.

TWIN PEAKS SEQUEL NOVEL EXPLORES SHOW’S FOLKS AHEAD OF TV REVIVAL

Ahead of Showtime’s *Twin Peaks* revival, slated to hit screens in 2016, series co-creator Mark Frost will write a tie-in novel that will span the period between the original ABC series and the new season.

Titled *The Secret Lives of Twin Peaks*, the novel reveals “what has happened to the people of that iconic fictional town since we last saw them 25 years ago and offers a deeper glimpse into the central mystery that was only touched on by the original series,” according to publisher Flatiron Books.

Of the book deal, Mark Frost said, “[Flatiron president] Bob Miller and I have enjoyed a fantastic fifteen year relationship in publishing. This has long been a dream project of mine that will bring a whole other aspect of the world of *Twin Peaks* to life, for old fans and new. I couldn’t be more thrilled.”

The novel will hit shelves in late 2015, before the series arrives on Showtime. Show creators Frost and David Lynch are writing the scripts for all nine new episodes, with Lynch planning to direct the entire run.

BUBONICON 47 PLANS BEGIN

Co-chairs Caci Cooper and Craig Chrissinger can confirm that Bubonicon 47 sees a new contract at the Albuquerque Marriott Uptown - with rooms at \$99.00 per night, single-quad. And WiFi access is complimentary in these private sleeping rooms!

Bubonicon 47 is August 28-30, 2015 – the normal weekend – the weekend after the Spokane Worldcon. Hotel room reservations are needed by Monday, August 17.

Tamora Pierce (*Beka Cooper*, *The Immortals*, *Protector of the Small*, etc) and Catherynne M. Valente (Award-nominated *Six-Gun Snow White*, *Deathless*, *Myths of Origin*, etc) are our co-Guests of Honor. Guest Artist is Ruth Sanderson, fantasy & book cover artist and children’s illustrator. And Mary Robinette Kowal (*The Lady Astronaut of Mars*, *Valour and Vanity*, etc) serves as Toastmistress.

Weekend Passes for Bubonicon 47 are \$35 through February 14.



They go to \$38 Feb. 15-May 16, and then to \$40. They may be purchased from “Bubonicon Inc” at club meetings or at PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176 (a registration form is available on the Bubonicon website – plus a shopping cart for credit card payments).

Again, a “youth” is defined as ages 14-17, and youth tickets are \$23 for the weekend. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult, and should not be running around the hotel without a parent/guardian nearby.

The con committee especially would like to hear your panel discussion ideas, fan program proposals and convention suggestions BY SATURDAY, APRIL 18. This early in the game, not much is confirmed yet...

We also are looking for volunteers to help out with programming events, running the convention, and checking attendees’ badges. Our volunteer “gofers” receive swag before the con, and are in a drawing for prizes during the Bubonicon weekend.

Updates on the con will appear in *ASFacts* issues, on fliers, or at the official website: www.bubonicon.com. Suggestions, questions and volunteers: 559-0931 or 266-8905, email bubonicon@gmail.com, or write the PO Box.

REVIEW ROUND-UP

***Harry Harrison! Harry Harrison! A Memoir* by Harry Harrison, Tor Books 2014, hc \$26.99, 352 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

For many, Harry Harrison is known as the creator of the Stainless Steel Rat and Bill the Galactic Hero, and for writing *Make Room! Make Room!* – the basis for the film *Soylent Green*. But what they may not know about are Harrison’s experiences as a comic book illustrator, SF magazine editor and his time in the Army during World War II. Or that he had a wandering soul, traveling and living around the world.

Harry Harrison! Harry Harrison! is an autobiography that reveals a very human, often witty, writer who found SF fandom early and did his best to support his family while giving them unique experiences while living in Mexico, England, Italy, Denmark, Ireland, California and New York. Since Harrison passed away in 2012 at the age of 87, his daughter, Moira, was left the task of editing his essays and notes to put this memoir into shape for publication. Because Harrison died before he was able to incorporate several essays into the main text, they are presented separately and in full – even though some of them repeat information and stories in the main body of the book.

This book is a definite autobiography as Harrison writes about what he wants to present to the world, and leaves out some parts of his life – such as his first wife. It also is told in a leisurely manner as if presented by a storyteller around a campfire or such. Along the way, Harrison does touch on Worldcons – including the first one in 1939 in New York – as well as authors such as Brian Aldiss and Fred Pohl.

For myself, the most interesting and appealing chapters were about Harrison’s life during WWII and his time in New York immediately afterward as an illustrator, true-

confessions author, and pulp editor. It’s a window into a past world that is thoroughly enjoyable.

Overall, *Harry Harrison! Harry Harrison!* is worth reading, even for those who may not have read many of his novels or short stories. It’s a glimpse at the life of science fiction in the 20th century.

***The Secret History of Wonder Woman* by Jill Lepore, Knopf 2014, hc \$29.95, 432 pages.**

Review by Jessica Coyle

New Yorker staff writer and Harvard Professor Jill Lepore’s new book discusses the history behind Wonder Woman, the first major female super hero in Comics. Lepore’s book is really the story of William Moulton Marston, the creator of Wonder Woman, who was also a Harvard-trained psychologist and the inventor of the lie detector test. Marston lived a double life as a not-very-successful professor and psychologist, while working very hard to keep his home life a secret.

Marston was an early feminist living in a polyamorous relationship with his wife, Elizabeth Holloway, and a former student, Olive Byrne (the niece of famous birth control activist Margaret Sanger). In a time before such things were acceptable, Holloway supported the whole family as a magazine writer and editor, while Byrne stayed home to raise the four children the two women had with Marston.

Marston discovered comic books through his children, and became intrigued with the idea of combining his feminist ideals, his interest in bondage, and his psychology background to create a female super hero. Wonder Woman quickly became hugely popular, and catapulted Marston to a level of fame he greatly relished.

The Secret History of Wonder Woman is a fascinating character study. She delves not only into Marston, but into the lives of the women who seriously influenced his creation of Wonder Woman. The book also delves into the history of early feminism and the burgeoning field of psychology in a way that is truly interesting. If any of these topics interest you, I highly recommend this book.

***Lock In* by John Scalzi, Tor Books 2014, hc \$24.99, 337 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

John Scalzi’s latest science fiction effort is a near-future police procedural set in a world where a flu-like epidemic known as “Haden’s syndrome” has killed millions and also created 4.35 million people in the United States who are “locked in” – suffering complete paralysis of the voluntary nervous system. A much smaller percentage of people who suffer through the disease have their brain structures altered, becoming “Integrators,” capable of carrying the consciousness of a “Lock In.” Research programs have created embedded neural nets which allow Lock Ins to control personal transports (basic robots) and to use avatars in the Haden-only online space known as “the Agora.”

As funding to support Haden’s syndrome victims and research is being withdrawn a quarter century later, someone is using Haden protests for a cover-up. It begins with what looks like a Haden-related murder at the Watergate Hotel, with a suspect who is an Integrator. But if the Integrator was caring a Haden client, then naming the actual suspect could be very complicated.

Investigating an ever-expanding criminal case that soon involves sabotage and terrorism are rookie FBI Agent Chris Shane, a lock-in victim, and jaded veteran FBI agent Leslie Vann. As they investigate whether several unique events are related to their original murder case, the question becomes who might benefit from this violence and destruction. Is there a conspiracy? And for what purpose?

Agent Shane is interesting because she can transfer to different personal transports around the country rather quickly, has to deal with her physical body being fed and cared for, and has a unique perspective on this future world. But otherwise, it's a fairly standard – though well-written – action/mystery story of a newbie cop and the seemingly ground-down detective who drinks and smokes hard. Scalzi uses his *Lock In* landscape well, and it's a fun, fast story. It may not appeal to readers of his humor and *Old Man War* novels, but it's worth reading and recommended.

***The Hangman's Revolution: WARP #2* by Eoin Colfer, Disney-Hyperion Books 2014, hc \$17.99, 376 pages.**

Review by Geneva Schult

This time travel young adult series is written by the author of the *Artemis Fowl* series. If you enjoyed *Artemis Fowl*, you'll like the *W.A.R.P.* (Witness Anonymous Relocation Program) science fiction series. *The Hangman's Revolution*, is the second book, with the third due in 2015.

"The old maxim that every action has a reaction is true, but when you start messing with time travel, that reaction could take place in a whole different universe." — Professor Charles Smart

A soldier introduced in the first book takes a military team back in time with some technology, and decides to take over Victorian England and then... the world. Sounds like every villain's dream, right? Only in this timeline, the villain succeeds, which completely changes the timeline from the first book. Or does he? The paradoxes of time travel continue to confound.

There are multiple futures, and multiple pasts. The villains are dastardly, and some are even complex enough to have good sides and bad sides. The (present day timeline) female Native American teenaged FBI agent Chevron is reunited with her (Victorian timeline) young male friend Riley, who has legerdemain skills as an illusionist which helps the plot succeed at certain points. Chevron has residual memories from the alternate timeline which she thinks is her mind going crazy. The struggle between the two "Chevies" is a major plot point.

There is plenty of action, danger, peril, and chaotic destruction. The scene where the modern tank rolls through Victorian London on the way to take out Buckingham Palace is a riot. A fun read that isn't too deeply philosophical or serious.

***Empire of Dust: Psi-Tech Book 1* by Jacey Bedford, DAW Books 2014, mmpb \$7.99, 532 pages.**

Review by Julie Heffernan

Empire of Dust is an interesting adventure with clashes of cultures, technology, morality and a few mind readers thrown in. The main story follows telepathic Cara – who is trying to escape her past. She falls into a group mission lead by other telepathic psi-techs to resettle a group of

Amish like people on another planet so they can live free of technology. The colonists hate the psi-techs even though they are vital to help them. Then in ecos of the movie *Avatar*, the big bad corporation finds the most valuable substance in the galaxy on the planet - and now the colonists and psi-techs are fighting for their lives.

The love story is very nicely integrated and all the relationships develop believably. However, there were a lot of side plots and characters that did not get a lot of attention. Lorient, the leader of the colonists, turned into one of the most fascinating characters in the book even though he did not get a lot of story time. I am also interested more in Caras past and her ex-boyfriend villain Ari.

For a first novel, I thought the author did great. I would read more in this series, and I hope they are written as prequels.

***Lowball: Wild Cards 22* edited by Melinda M. Snodgrass & George RR Martin, Tor Books 2014, hc \$25.99, 368 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

The super-powered Aces and physically mutated Jokers of *Wild Cards* are back in the middle book in a trilogy centered on Jokertown and the Fort Freak police precinct in New York City. Several stories swirl around the disappearance of Jokertown residents, and the efforts of young, newly appointed Lieutenant Francis "Franny" Black and Father Squid to find out what has happened to these missing people. Marcus, also known as the Infamous Black Tongue because of his snake body and poisonous spit, also is in the spotlight focus as he crosses paths with suspects and eventually is kidnapped himself.

But to what end? Someone is transporting Aces and strong Jokers to an illegal gladiator pit where the rich and famous watch them battle – sometimes to the death. While that's a nasty piece of work in itself, it's just the tip of the iceberg revealed in the final pages. *Lowball* ends on one heck of a creepy cliffhanger!

Michael Cassutt was drafted to write the connecting story bits for this volume, and he does a good job. Melinda Snodgrass gets to focus on Detective Franny as he tracks down clues and witnesses. And Carrie Vaughn and Ian Tregillis are able to provide stand-alone tales with Rustbelt, Curveball, Earth Witch and Drummer Boy (from *Inside Straight* and *Suicide Kings*) that also advance the plotline and Franny's case.

Lowball is an enjoyable entry in the *Wild Cards* series. It's a definite must-read for old fans, but not a good place for newbies to enter this shared world. There are a few small places where it starts to stumble, but overall *Lowball* is a fun read that delves deeper into the jokers and hard-boiled men and women of Fort Freak/Jokertown.

***The Girl with All the Gifts* by M.R. Carey, Orbit 2014, hc \$25.00, 403 pages.**

Review by Geneva Schult

On M.R. Carey's book cover, Joss Whedon says, "As fresh as it is terrifying ... it left me sighing with envious joy..." When JOSS likes something, I check it out. And am I glad I did! SO HARD to review without spoilers: It's a thriller. Decent scientific underpinnings. Post-apocalyptic setting. With hungries and Mad-Max-ish Junkers covered

in tar. And a whole lot of satisfying “what the heck.”

Melanie is a 10-yr-old girl who lives in a cell. Every day the soldiers come and strap her into her chair. She jokes she won't bite, but nobody's laughing. They wheel her into the classroom where the other students sit in their chairs. Melanie loves school – loves learning about spelling and sums and the outside world. She tells her teachers what she'll do when she grows up and doesn't know why that makes them sad. Melanie's favorite teacher is Miss Justineau, who teaches them about Greek myths (the title refers to Pandora) and the time before the Breakdown. Melanie doesn't like Dr. Caldwell, who sneers at Melanie, calling her “our little genius,” while gazing hungrily at the students as she decides which one is the next to be taken away...

The Girl with All the Gifts is written from several points of view, in the third person. It starts out with a tiny part of the world and gradually expands to answer all the questions you will have as you eagerly consume this story. I couldn't put it down. I was enthralled. The ending was NOT AT ALL like I imagined, which was both a good thing (I was surprised! Yay!) and a bad thing (not where I wanted it to go). This story concentrates on the interaction between the people and does not dwell on horrific things, even though this is basic horror. Do yourself a favor and READ THIS BOOK!

***Seventh Grave and No Body* by Darynda Jones, St. Martin's Press 2014, hc \$25.99, 336 pages.**

Review by Jessica Coyle

Seventh Grave and No Body is Darynda Jones' latest novel in her Charley Davidson series. Charley's life continues to get more complicated. Not only is she the Grim Reaper, she's engaged to the son of Satan, searching for her missing father, and helping the police look into a rash of local suicides that look as if they may be homicides instead. If that weren't enough, she is also attempting to stay one step ahead of the Twelve, who are demon monsters sent from Hell to kill her. She's also coping with the discovery that she is pregnant, and trying to figure out how to live her life in a way that will also protect her child.

Jones packs a lot into *Seventh Grave*. Longtime fans of the series will have several key questions finally answered, only to discover that even more questions arise. The book still bears Jones' trademark humor, but, as with the previous two books in the series, Charley's story has definitely taken a darker turn as the series has progressed. If you haven't read the rest of this series, *Seventh Grave and No Body* is not the place to start – but I highly recommend returning to *First Grave on the Right* and starting this worthwhile series.

***As You Wish: Inconceivable Tales from the Making of The Princess Bride* by Cary Elwes with Joe Layden, Touchstone 2014, hc \$26.00, 260 pages.**

Review by Craig W. Chrissinger

It's hard to believe that it's been 27 years now since *The Princess Bride* came to the big screen. Some might even say it's inconceivable! Happily actor Cary Elwes, who played Westley, has put his memories on paper in *As You Wish*. And the book is a joy – just as entertaining as the movie many of us have come to love.

Elwes was just as happy to be a part of the film as moviegoers are to watch it. He has listened to fans over the years and how *The Princess Bride* affected them. In the book, he talks about his fondness for William Goldman's script, and his nervousness about being part of a cast that included Wallace Shawn, Mandy Patinkin, Billy Crystal, Christopher Guest and Chris Sarandon. He was convinced several times that he wouldn't live up to expectations and that director Rob Reiner would fire him (even though Reiner thought he was perfect for the part). He even reveals that he broke a big toe while trying to drive Andre the Giant's ATV one day, and had to limp as little as possible for weeks of filming afterward.

Chapters focus on various aspects of filming and the actors around him, not in a totally linear way. And it works. Elwes easily fills a chapter talking about Robin Wright, their shared appreciation of *Monty Python*, and how their developing friendship added to their onscreen chemistry. Another chapter is devoted to Andre the Giant, who came to trust Elwes enough to openly talk about his family, growing up, and the reactions the seven-foot-plus man received from kids meeting him.

Another welcome part of the book are side comments and memories from Reiner, producer Andy Scheinman, the cast, and screenwriter Goldman (who panicked the first time he saw Wright's dress catch fire in the Fire Swamp).

For everyone who loves the movie, its comedy and action, and the performances of each actor, this book is as close to being there for filming as we will get. Want a delightful new way to look at Reiner's film and Goldman's original novel that's a fast read? *As You Wish*...

EDITOR NOTES TO FILL THIS SPACE

I always feel a little odd & sad on December 8. For it was that day 34 years ago that John Lennon was killed in NYC. A very senseless killing, and one that still affects me.

The first album I really bought with my own money was "Magical Mystery Tour." I was in my first semester as a freshman at the Univ of NM when we heard in our dorm that John was dead. I remember our floor went pretty quiet. Not all of the residents were fans, but we all had grown up with the Beatles pretty much constantly in our lives. It was a shock.

Here was a man who didn't always agree with Paul, who sometimes said controversial things, who finally seemed to be at peace as an adult/father, and who seemed to be singing a lot about peace and love. Well, at least in songs like "Give Peace a Chance," "All You Need Is Love," "Merry X-Mas," "Imagine," "Starting Over," "Instant Karma" and even "Hey Jude."

If Lennon were alive today, he would be 74 years old. Paul's still recording and singing live, so we have to wonder what John might have produced in the years he was robbed of. Harrison's music continued to grow emotionally, so I like to think John might have done the same.

Anyway, that's the stuff I think of on December 8...

Meanwhile, Happy Holidays! We've had a pretty warm December so far. It was good to see Connie Willis & Melinda Snodgrass around Thanksgiving. I've enjoyed films *Big Hero 6*, *Penguins of Madagascar*, *The Theory of Everything*, *Into the Woods*, *Dead Snow 2*, and *Christmas with the Dead*.

That's a wrap. Thanks for the contributions! See you all for February 2015's issue. Stay warm & take care - Craig C