

purpose" allows them to trudge along "the road of life" with "firmness" are "invariably stupid" (*An Outcast of the Islands*, p. 197). As Prof. La Bossière summarizes the issue, "Conrad, like Cusa and baroque and romantic writers variously echoing the fifteenth-century voice of the *coincidentia oppositorum*, found traditional formal logic a blind guide in the exploration of the truth underlying existence" (p. 23).

Because this book fairly blisters with confirmatory evidence gleaned from Conrad's letters and fiction, and because its breadth of reference encompasses post-Renaissance philosophy and literature both in English and a variety of European languages, it is quite difficult to do justice in general terms to the book's thesis. Perhaps the summary quoted just above could be taken as a specification of the direction taken by Prof. La Bossière's inquiry, an inquiry that reveals convincingly the dominant extent to which metaphors of dreaming, stage acting, and disorienting inverse reflections form the imagistic and rhetorical basis of Conrad's irrational, amoral, fictional world, an extension necessarily of Conrad's perceptions of the world of his own experience that caused him to exclaim "I feel more than ever that *la vida es sueno*" (Aubry, *Life and Letters*, II, 286). Prof. La Bossière's book is clearly written and a pleasure to read in spite of its rather complex subject matter. It should take its place as a useful and important articulation of the phenomenology of Conrad's world-view that should serve to refute the insipid sentimentalities published by so many Conrad critics in the past, and that should be required reading for all students of Conrad's fiction.

William W. Bonney

**MARSHALL B. TYMN and
ROGER C. SCHLOBIN, EDS.**
*The Year's Scholarship in Science
Fiction and Fantasy: 1972-1975*
Kent, Ohio: Kent State University
Press, 1979. Pp. xvi + 222, fore-
word, preface, author and title
indexes. \$12.00.

Science fiction bibliography, like science fiction criticism, is just emerging from a protracted infancy. Researchers seeking

primary materials were for many years limited to such works as Eric Bleiler's *The Checklist of Fantastic Literature* (1948), which is eccentric in its choices and confusing in its failure to categorize. Scholars who wished to know what their colleagues were doing were required to conduct their own surveys, a job that was not so demanding when the body of criticism was small but that has grown yearly more formidable. Selected bibliographies of individual authors have appeared from time to time in *Extrapolation*, *Science-Fiction Studies*, or *Riverside Quarterly*, the primary journals in the field, but these were generally no more than checklists of the author's work. The annual *MLA International Bibliography* lists articles from the above journals but buries them among pages of entries on "Prose Fiction" or sends one hunting out particular authors by century and nationality. Browsing is, of course, impossible. Fantasy criticism has fared somewhat worse: the *MLA Bibliography* considers fantasy as "Other Form," and even science fiction critics frequently give it their reluctant attention as a sort of aberrant science fiction.

This neglect is beginning to be remedied. Annotated bibliographies like Roger Schlobin's *The Literature of Fantasy* (1979) and Marshall Tymn's *American Fantasy and Science Fiction* (1979) provide information on primary sources, and The Kent State University Press has launched a series of useful guides to secondary materials. The volume at hand, Tymn and Schlobin's *The Year's Scholarship in Science Fiction and Fantasy*, is a cumulation of a series of articles that appeared in *Extrapolation* under the titles "A Checklist of American Critical Works on SF: 1972-73" and "The Year's Scholarship in Science Fiction and Fantasy: 1974-." The entries take up where Thomas Clareson's *Science Fiction Criticism: An Annotated Checklist* (The Kent State University Press, 1972) left off. Tymn and Schlobin are continuing with their yearly listings, and additional cumulative volumes are planned at four-year intervals.

The book is arranged in four sections: general studies, bibliography and reference, author studies and bibliographies, and teaching and visual aids. Each section includes articles, theses, dissertations, and books; the fourth section also lists published cassettes, filmstrips, and films. The largest category is the "author studies" portion of section three: eighty pages arranged alphabetically by subject, from Rosny Aine to

Roger Zelazny. The format for entries in all sections is the same: bibliographic information followed by a descriptive paragraph or summary of the item. This arrangement is so very clear and obvious that the lengthy indexes (sixty-one pages) are scarcely needed.

The authors have done a good job in keeping the number of entries to manageable size by omitting book reviews (covered in H. W. Hall's annual *Science Fiction Book Review Index*), catalogs, columns, and introductions to fictional works. Most entries are American; a few are British. Much that is written about science fiction appears in "fanzines" like *Algol*; the authors have included from such sources only those pieces which seem to have scholarly value. There are some inconsistencies in their choices. Among single-figure periodicals, for instance, the one devoted to James Branch Cabell, *Kalki*, is included, while *The Baum Bugle* is not.

The most conspicuous flaw in the book is the great variation in the nature of the annotative paragraphs. These range from brief descriptions to detailed abstracts, from less than a dozen words to well over a hundred. Under the heading "Stanley Kubrick," for example, a book by Daniel De Vries is summed up tersely as "Contain[ing] analyses of *Dr. Strangelove, 2001*, and *A Clockwork Orange*," while an article from the *Georgia Review* is revealed as stating that "Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* demonstrates the limitations of words as a tool for metaphysical inquiry. The critics of the movie are baffled by his treatment of words and are therefore unable to follow what is happening in the narrative. To follow it one must see, first, that his story can only be told in moving images, and second, that its action divides into three stages: the bestial, rational, and imaginative periods in man's growth."

This inequity of treatment does not invalidate the book, but it does mean that some entries are considerably more helpful than others, with no discernible selection factor governing the differences. A related weakness is the frequent use of quoted material within the descriptive paragraph: in some cases the words seem to be taken directly from the source and in others from some unknown third party's comments upon it. Some entries are made up entirely of quotation, which precludes the evaluation given to other works, the ones that are described as "cogent" or

"invaluable" or "amusing" or even "brief." The authors should strive, within the limitations imposed by time and access, to coordinate their efforts and thus turn a useful tool into an indispensable one.

The book is, nevertheless, the best thing of its kind. Libraries should acquire it; scholars, critics, and teachers should have access to it; students should learn of its existence. Along with Clareson's initial volume, forthcoming volumes of the same series, Schlobin's and Tymn's other works, and the many specialized listings of science fiction anthologies, science fiction magazines, and the like that have appeared in the last decade, it should prevent a great deal of unnecessary searching on the part of researchers in and newcomers to the field.

Brian Attebery

GÜNTER GRASS

Das Treffen in Telgte

Darmstadt: Luchterhand Verlag, 1979. Pp. 182.

Das Treffen in Telgte is an ingenious and convincing representation of German baroque poets and dramatists taking part in a fictitious meeting in 1647. Grass evokes these sacred cows of German literature with the same mixture of irreverence and intuitive understanding of style and epoch as Anthony Burgess uses in *A Clockwork Testament* to conjure up minor Elizabethan dramatists and to satirize the dryadust pedantry with which academics treat them. Through a combination of vivid character sketches and tantalizing snippets of quotation, through his evocation of the catastrophic Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and most importantly through the suggestion of parallels with post W.W. II Germany, Grass has achieved a brilliant historical novel of contemporary relevance.

Grass suggests political and literary parallels between this fictitious meeting in 1647 and the real meetings of the "Gruppe 47" of which he himself was a prominent member. With the secular authorities so