



OhioAuthors

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**Roger Zelazny
and Andre Norton
Proponents of Individualism**

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One of twelve monographs on Ohio authors published for the public libraries of Ohio under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. General Editor of the series, John B. Mason, and Assistant Editor, Jon Katz, both of Youngstown State University.

Among its abundant resources, Ohio can claim a rich array of science fiction and fantasy authors. Harlan Ellison, Edmond Hamilton, John Jakes, and Leigh Brackett, for example, have long been prominent figures in the field, and a new, young writer named Stephen Donaldson has already shown great promise with his novel, *Lord Foul's Bane*. It was nominated for a major fantasy award in 1978, and is the first of three books chronicling the adventures of Thomas Covenant, a leper. The series has drawn high critical acclaim.

Also among this group of Ohio authors are two of science fiction's acknowledged masters, Roger Zelazny and Andre Norton. However, despite the fact that both are well respected by their peers, their fans, and a small group of critics who have praised them for their excellent craftsmanship, vivid imaginations, and versatility, neither has received the critical attention that he or she deserves. With the possible exception of Ray Bradbury and Isaac Asimov, this has been true of science fiction writers in general, and the reputation that many of them have achieved has been outside the field—Ellison as a screen and teleplay writer, Brackett as a screen writer, and Jakes as an historical novelist, for example. Recent interest in the writers, however, seems to indicate not only a heightened awareness of but a growing appreciation for the genre itself.

Though this new-found attention promises to be very beneficial to the writers, it is the result of a change in attitude by the literary establishment which is tending to confuse the already difficult problem of defining science fiction. Whereas it was relatively easy at one time to label anything that dealt with time travel, distant stars and planets, the future, space travel, strange creatures, or magic as science fiction, the recent intrusion of events long-regarded as fantastic or impossible into the everyday consciousness of the average man has tended to blur what used to be categorical distinctions. Atomic energy, bionic transplants, satellites, and computers are about as shocking to us now as high mortgage payments and energy shortages. The concerns they generate now are moral, ethical, practical, and financial rather than ontological. Even the most recent technological advances—like test tube babies, genetic manipulation, the attempted

cloning of frogs, and the capture of anti-matter in a magnetic bottle by Swiss scientists—are accepted with relative calm. The result of all this has been to enlarge our perceptions of reality, and that, in turn, has narrowed the gap between science fiction and “mainstream” literature. Themes like overpopulation, drug-induced mind control, and destruction of masses of people by mutated viruses or bacteria are no longer in the realm of science fiction; they are, rather, part of the real world. Novels like Michael Crichton’s *The Andromeda Strain*, Robert C. O’Brien’s *A Report from Group 17*, and Henry Sutton’s *Vector*, in fact, achieve their horror because they are so believable. Because of that believability, the literary establishment now takes seriously many works that it previously regarded as either silly or childish.

Though defining “science fiction” has not become any easier, some concrete observations can be made about the term. It is definitely used in two different senses. First, it is a collective term under which stories of horror, fantasy, and fictional science are grouped. Second, it is used more specifically to label fiction which is extrapolated from the scientific knowledge available at the time that a story is written. Many of those involved in the field have proposed what they believe to be a comprehensive definition. Some of the most popular are: a literature which creates a sense of awe, one which explores alternative or possible futures, and one which utilizes apocalyptic imagination. But each of these definitions, in turn, has created its own problems, and none has achieved universal acceptance. Despite the disagreement in the field, interest in science fiction is growing, and two of its very best practitioners are Ohioans.

One of these is Roger Zelazny. Born in Euclid, Ohio, on May 13, 1937, to Joseph Frank Zelazny and Josephine Sweet Zelazny, he never really wanted to be anything other than a writer. This is perhaps due to the early influence of his parents. Zelazny’s mother was interested in literature and had once written a mystery novel. Though it was never published, she encouraged her son’s writing. Zelazny’s father was practical, resourceful, and inventive. He was head of the Pattern Department at Addressograph-Multigraph Company in Euclid. He not only had a marvelous sense of humor, but often talked to his son in his own made-up dialect. It served as a model for Roger’s own made-up dialect and led directly to an interest in language.

From 1943 to 1949, Zelazny attended Noble Elementary School in Euclid. Extremely intelligent and very independent, he learned to read early and immediately plowed through every book of fairy tales and mythology that he could find in the school library. Perhaps as compensation for his shyness and awkwardness, he soon began to write his own stories. By the time he reached the sixth grade, he had already begun to develop a mythology of his own. Curiously, his stories were always sympathetic to the monsters and other fabulous creatures he created. Even at this early age, he displayed an incisive mind, excellent verbal skills and a highly developed sense of humor.

From 1949 to 1952, he attended Shore Junior High School.

During this period, he began reading science fiction, became interested in chess, and pursued all sorts of odd phenomena. Flying saucers, the occult, astral projection, and yoga occupied his attention. He absorbed book after book on these subjects with amazing objectivity. He continued to write, and many of his mature writing skills began to develop. In particular, he wrote a series of stories, collectively called *The Record*, which trace the hilarious adventures of two monsters who live in the catacombs under Paris. Reluctant heroes, they drink too much *zyphoam*, an alcoholic beverage, sleep inordinately long, and are always in trouble with their boss, who bears an amazing resemblance to the Devil. They were sent on impossible missions only as a last resort because they inevitably fouled up their assignments. Inept, misdirected, and incredibly naive, they always managed to succeed because of their colossal luck. The stories' plots revolved around some completely implausible explanations of how things got to be the way they are—why the Leaning Tower of Pisa leans, for example.

From 1952 to 1955, Zelazny attended Euclid Senior High School. There, he continued to write and to pursue the odd and unusual, but he also developed interests in serious literature and psychology. After graduating in 1955, he enrolled at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and for a while, he followed his interest in psychology. But discouraged by inconsistencies he saw in the field and encouraged by several successes, he switched his major to English. Though he still dabbled at science fiction, most of his free time was given to writing poetry. Though most of the poems of this period were never published, the self-discipline he learned while writing them was to prove invaluable later.

After receiving his bachelor's degree, he enrolled at Columbia University, and from the fall of 1959 to the summer of 1960, he made a concerted effort to absorb the cultural opportunities of New York. His passion for folk music led him in particular to Greenwich Village's clubs and coffee houses. After completing the course work for his master's degree, he returned to Euclid to write his thesis, but a personality conflict with his advisor discouraged him, so he turned to writing science fiction. Later that year, he joined the Ohio National Guard to fulfill his military obligation.

When he returned home six months later from active duty, his perspective had changed. He finished his master's thesis, received his degree, and took a "Government Service Entrance Examination." In 1962, he accepted a position as claims representative with the Social Security Administration office in Cleveland. Late that same year he published his first science fiction stories in *Amazing* and *Fantastic*. Under the guidance of Cele Goldsmith, who edited both magazines, his professional skills developed rapidly, and in 1963, "A Rose for Ecclesiastes" appeared. This powerful story of human emotion was nominated for a "Hugo", and though it did not win this most prestigious of science fiction awards, it brought him both the attention and respect of his peers.

During the next two years, Zelazny's reputation as a writer continued to grow, but his personal life was plagued by tragedy.

He and his fiancée, Sharon Steberl, were involved in a head-on collision with another car just outside Mansfield, Ohio, in October of 1964, which put her in the hospital for six weeks with a broken pelvis and facial cuts. This experience became the inspiration for several accident scenes which appear in his early works. Then, in November, his father died unexpectedly. He married Sharon on December 5, but by late summer of the following year, they had separated. Neither of the newlyweds had been ready for marriage. Wanting to put a number of bad experiences behind him, he accepted a promotion within the Social Security Administration, and a few months later moved to Baltimore.

In August of 1966, he married Judith Alene Callahan, and his life stabilized. That year, his first novels, re-workings of earlier, shorter pieces, began to appear. From 1966 to 1969, several stories and a few novels were published. Then he decided that he could make a living writing full-time, so he quit his job at Social Security.

Since that time, Zelazny's skills and reputation have continued to grow. He has been nominated for the "Hugo" and "Nebula" awards more than twenty times, winning each three times. One of his novels, *Damnation Alley*, has been made into a movie and several others are under option. He has finished a five-book series of fantasy novels, collectively called *The Chronicles of Amber*, and every indication is that his high level of productivity will continue.

The second acknowledged Ohio master of science fiction is Andre Norton. Born Alice Mary Norton on February 17, 1912, in Cleveland, she shares much more than the nearness of birthplace with Zelazny, for in the writings of each there is a great similarity in psychology.

Norton's childhood was very much family-centered. Though she had a sister, Alice was raised much as if she were an only child because her sister was seventeen years older than she. Her mother, Bertha Stemm Norton, had a particularly strong influence on the young girl and spent a great deal of time reading or reciting poetry to her small daughter as she went about her household tasks. This interest was reinforced when Alice received Howard Gates' *Uncle Wiggly* books as gifts, and later in school when she received Ruth Plumly Thompson's *Oz* books for earning good grades. Further stimulation for her rich imagination came from the collection of miniature animals which were all about the house and with which she played continually. This early love for animals clearly foreshadows her sympathetic treatment of them later in her novels.

Another dominant influence in the young girl's life was the family's strong sense of history. Since the family's history was a very rich one, it is easy to understand why she was so intrigued with it. The Stemms had been bounty land settlers in Ohio, and Alice's maternal great-grandfather had married a Wyandot Indian maiden named Elk Eyes to ratify his land claim—the first such union in the territory. Adalbert Freely Norton, Alice's father, was born in the Indian territory that is now Nebraska. Fascinated with the West, he regaled her with accounts of trail drives, eyewitness reports of the 1866 Indian uprising, and stories of Wyatt Earp's Kansas. To this

already-rich history were added stories about one of her father's relatives who had been a witness at the Salem witch trials and stories about her mother's uncles who had served in the Civil War. Not only did these stories stimulate the young girl's imagination, but they also provided the basis for her first novels.

Norton's high school career at Collingwood was inauspicious, though she did some writing for the school's paper and managed to write a novel, which was later re-worked and published as her second book, *Ralestone Luck*, in 1938. In the fall of 1930, she entered Flora Stone Mather College, now a part of Case Western Reserve University, to study to be a history teacher, but the Depression forced her to drop out of college in the spring of 1931. She did continue to take courses on a part-time basis through Cleveland College, the university's adult, evening division. She took every writing course that was offered.

In 1932 she took a job with the Cleveland Library system and immediately began to concentrate on children's literature. Her participation in the system's children's story hour introduced her to beast fables, medieval romances, and Arthurian lore, all of which would later be integrated into her work. She continued to work for the library until 1950, primarily at the Nottingham Road branch in East Cleveland where she was assistant librarian, even though the job was unpleasant to her in many ways, and she continued to write. Her first novel was published in 1934, and before she left the system, she published seven other novels and two short stories. With the publication of her first book, she assumed the name of Andre because she felt that it would be more acceptable for someone who was writing historical fiction for young boys.

When Norton finally left the library system, it was to become a reader for Martin Greenberg at Gnome Press. The freedom that she enjoyed during her eight years there permitted her to concentrate on her writing, and during that time she published an average of two books a year and began to write science fiction seriously. Though she was not unfamiliar with science fiction (she had published a short fantasy in 1947 called "People of the Crater") her experiences at Gnome Press brought her into closer contact with it. According to Roger Schlobin, one of her most striking memories from those years was reading Murray Leinster's novel, *The Forgotten Planet* (1954).¹ Her first published science fiction novel, *Star Man's Son* (1952), also initiated a relationship with Ace Books which proved to be mutually profitable. According to Donald A. Wollheim, former editor of Ace, the novel has become a phenomenon. It has been in print for more than fifteen years and has sold more than a million copies.² When she finally left Gnome Press in 1958, it was to write full-time. The sales of her novels and her relationship with Ace Books convinced her that she could survive financially as a writer. By the time she left Gnome Press, she had published twenty-three novels, and by 1977 she had added sixty-three more novels, three short-story collections, and five edited anthologies.

In November of 1966, Norton moved to Florida because of her health. She resides there now with a very large library, her

collection of figurines, and her cats. She spends most of her time reading and writing, and lists Roger Zelazny among her twenty or so favorite authors. This is not surprising, for in their works are many similarities.

By any standard, the artistic and intellectual accomplishments of both Norton and Zelazny are substantial. Though awards are by no means the only way to measure significant achievement, they do nonetheless provide some evidence of quality. In the field of science fiction, there are two prestigious awards: the "Hugo" and the "Nebula." The "Hugo" was named after Hugo Gernsback, the acknowledged father of modern science fiction, who founded *Amazing Stories* in 1926. It was the first magazine devoted exclusively to publishing science fiction. The "Nebula" is given by the Science Fiction Writers of America to recognize outstanding achievement in the field. Zelazny has won each of these awards three times. His "Hugos" were for . . . *And Call Me Conrad* (1966), entitled *This Immortal* when it was printed in paperback by Ace Books; *Lord of Light* (1968); and "Home is the Hangman" (1976). His "Nebulas" were for "He Who Shapes" (1966), entitled *The Dream Master* when it was expanded to book length; "The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth" (1966); and "Home is the Hangman" (1976). He also won the "Prix Apollo," a French science fiction prize, in 1972 for *Isle of the Dead*. Most recently, he was nominated for the "Gandalf Award," a special "Hugo" to recognize outstanding lifetime achievement in fantasy writing.

Zelazny's importance is further illustrated by the fact that his books have been translated into Spanish, German, French, Japanese, and several other languages, parts of his novels have been dramatized, and one book has been made into a movie. Moreover, two books of serious poetry are to be published in Australia in 1979. He has published eighteen novels (one of them co-authored with Philip K. Dick), three collections of shorter fiction, and more than seventy short stories.

Norton, on the other hand, has received surprisingly little attention. Despite the fact that she has published ninety-two novels and twenty-eight short stories, gained immense popularity, and earned the respect of her peers, she has received few awards. Moreover, she has been virtually ignored by the critics.

Donald A. Wollheim, now publisher of DAW Books and former editor of Ace, has recognized this curiosity and offers the following explanation for it:

. . . Andre Norton has but rarely graced the pages of the standard science fiction magazines. Her novels are not serialized in the newsstand pulps. And she has written but a handful of short stories and novelettes as compared with the others' output.

For one thing, she has never made herself the object of self-promotion. She does not attend conventions; she rarely, if ever, speaks at gatherings of any sort; and her novels do not push themselves to promote any sort of special pleading of the kind likely to attract controversy and debate.³

Yet her presence has been felt, and her work has brought her some awards. The most important of these is the "Gandalf," which she

won in 1977. It named her "Grand Master" of the fantasy genre. She has also received two "Hugo" nominations, for *Witch World* (1964) and for "Wizard's World" (1968). Her novel, *Sword is Drawn*, was a Literary Guild selection in 1944 and received a special plaque from the Dutch government in 1946 for its portrayal of the valiant efforts of the Dutch underground during World War II. She also won several minor awards, many of them from fan-oriented groups. Significantly, she was the first woman to be inducted into Lin Carter's "Swordsmen and Sorcerers Guild of America" (SAGA), a group which regularly contributes to Carter's *Flashing Swords* anthologies. Like Zelazny, Norton's work is known worldwide. Her novels have been translated into French, German, Spanish, Japanese, and many other languages. Perhaps Wollheim best states the scope of her success, however, when he writes that "any bookseller could tell you that wherever her science fiction books are sold, however they may be labeled, they sell well, they sell steadily, they remain in print for years and years."⁴

Though a comparison between the works of Norton and Zelazny might appear difficult at first glance, it is actually fairly easy because they both write from a similar psychological perspective. Both are extremely individualistic, both value self-reliance and personal integrity, and both believe that an individual can master himself and thereby advance to a higher state of consciousness. Zelazny's adherence to these values is reflected in many of his recurring themes: immortality, greed, vanity, love, fertility, guilt, sacrifice, revenge, and power. Taken together, these themes paint a psychological picture of man. As Zelazny sees him, he is subject to weaknesses of all kinds; he is buffeted by society, alienated, often unwise, and frequently disappointed by those around him. But he has one great capacity—a capacity to grow, to advance to a higher state of consciousness—and this is his one great hope. Joe Sanders has called this potential for psychological growth "Zelazny's great theme,"⁵ and indeed Sanders is right, for all of the themes in Zelazny's fiction are ultimately subordinate to his concern over man's ability to grow under the impact of his experience. Vanity, guilt, greed, and power, for example, form complexes which prevent man's growth of personality. Immortality gives him the time necessary to grow. Sacrifice is the stimulus to personality growth, and love and fertility are the products of a personality which has achieved higher consciousness.

Zelazny feels that a person's personality growth through his experience is absolutely necessary if he is to be psychologically healthy. Dr. Charles Render, protagonist of *The Dream Master*, provides an excellent illustration of this point. His complex, a mixture of excessive pride and a desire for power, prevents his growth and leads eventually to his failure. He is a neuroparticipation therapist—that is, a psychiatrist who cures his patients' neuroses by participating in their dreams and re-shaping them from inside. But Render's pride is his tragic flaw. So great is his arrogance that he believes himself beyond the rules practiced by other therapists in the field. He tries to play God, but, as was Satan, he is sent reeling

from Heaven.

When Render encounters a very strong-willed, but mentally unstable, blind woman named Eileen Shallot, he attempts to teach her to see. In theory, she should be able to see through his eyes if she can enter his brain, but the process is so dangerous that not even Bartelmez, the greatest of the therapists and Render's own teacher, will attempt it, as such efforts have in the past brought disaster to both therapist and patient because of the sight-anxiety neurosis built up by the patient. Render knows this, of course, and he is even warned by Bartelmez; but he believes that he can handle the problem and therefore ignores the danger signals that occur as he builds Eileen's fantasies towards the critical moment. When the moment does arrive, however, all the energy stored in Eileen's neurosis breaks loose and swallows up Render's own sanity. Clearly his pride has prevented him from learning from his previous experience, and, as a result, he goes mad.

Characters with psychological motivations in contrast to Render's are found in many of Zelazny's stories, but one of the best examples occurs in Carlton Davits, a character in a brilliant novelette, "The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth." When the story begins, Davits is a down-and-out baitman returning to Venus to try and catch an "Ikky," the greatest fish in the solar system. A baitman is a diver who places bait on the hooks so that wealthy fishing enthusiasts can make a catch. No one aspires to be a baitman; it is a position to which one falls, not rises. Like Render, Davits suffers from the fault of excessive pride, but, unlike Render, he grows from his experiences, conquers his complex, and becomes a psychologically healthy individual.

Davits had been a man to whom everything had come easy. He had met every challenge and beaten it, and he had become one of the richest men in the solar system. His money presented him with the opportunity to go fishing on Venus for an Ikky, the greatest challenge of all. Ikkies are not just fish; they are enormous beasts, reminiscent of the pleiosaur. None had ever been caught. None had even been hooked until the day that Davits had brought one aboard the gigantic fishing raft "Tensquare." But when Davits finally met one face to face, he froze with fear and was unable to press the "inject," a device that would have killed the beast. His paralysis allowed the Ikky enough time to get free and scabble across the deck, killing six men before flopping back into the sea.

The deaths of the men haunted Davits. He became an alcoholic, went bankrupt, and disappeared into the world of the waterfront. From the accident he had been left with partial hemiplegia and a neurotic guilt. Eventually he determines that he must conquer his complex and restore his self-image. The story records how he does this. He faces an Ikky once more, and he does so in a situation identical to the one in which he had frozen before, but he ironically chooses not to kill the creature himself. Rather, he lets his ex-wife deliver the fatal blow, knowing full well that if she fails, she will suffer the same psychological agonies that he has. That he feels no compulsion to kill the Ikky himself indicates that he has no need for

revenge, that he has matured, that he has achieved a state of internal harmony. He has faced his fear and beaten it. More importantly, he has conquered that great beast within—his own pride.

Davits grows from his experiences, and he becomes a psychologically healthy human being who can maintain a positive love relationship. From Zelazny's point of view, love that permits mutual growth and fecundity is often the outgrowth of the process of conquering ego. They are characteristic of a healthy personality, and they result when a complex is destroyed. Two of Zelazny's other stories, "A Rose for Ecclesiastes" and *This Immortal*, illustrate this process quite clearly.

In "A Rose for Ecclesiastes," Gallinger, a conceited poet, arrives on Mars to translate the sacred books of the dying Martian race. There he falls in love with a beautiful native dancer named Braxa, who becomes pregnant by him. Since Martian males are sterile, Braxa's conception proves that the race does not have to die—it can continue if Earthmen father the children. Gallinger discovers, however, that the High Council has consigned both Braxa and the unborn child to death because the Martian "Sacred Books" declared long ago that there is no reason to continue, that the Martians have learned all things, have experienced all things. Gallinger refuses to accept this mandate, however, and he forces new life upon Mars and the Martians by fulfilling the only remaining prophecy of one of their long-dead, religious leaders named Locar—that a holy man would come from the heavens to save them in their last hours if all the dances of Locar were completed and that he would defeat Malann, their principal god, and bring them new life. Gallinger fulfills the prophecy by showing them a life form new to them, a rose.

He learns later, though, that Braxa did not really love him and that she had let him make love to her only because she thought it was her duty. Since he desperately needed to find love, he is shattered by her declaration, and suddenly finds himself humbled. His conceit has been destroyed. But from his experiences will arise a new Gallinger, and his efforts will bring new life to the dying red planet. Because of the rose, the Council reverses its earlier edict and permits both Braxa and the baby to live, and promises to try to grow flowers. The story ends with Gallinger looking out of the viewport of his ship, just after it has lifted off for a return trip to Earth. In the window, he sees Mars hanging in the sky "like a swollen belly above him." Clearly, this image suggests the new life that Gallinger has brought to a dying planet. The planet will foster that life only because its inhabitants have chosen to profit from their experiences.

This Immortal makes a similar point, though not as obviously. Conrad Nomikos, its protagonist, literally inherits an Earth which has been irradiated by a devastating atomic war at some time in the distant past. Since the war, most surviving Earthmen have left their home to colonize other planets in other systems. They have met an older and superior race, the Vegans, who have helped them in their effort to survive. The Vegans, however, are resented by those remaining on Earth because they believe that the Vegans have exploited them. Not only do they maintain pleasure houses and resorts

on Earth, they also conduct sightseeing excursions of the devastated planet because, the Earthlings believe, it reminds the Vegans of their own vulnerability and of the need for peace.

Earth is administered by a caretaker government on the planet Taler, and Conrad has been appointed the Commissioner of Arts, Monuments, and Archives. It is his responsibility to protect the surviving treasures of the planet. Unknown to all but a few, however, Conrad, under another identity—the legendary Karaghiosis—a century earlier had founded the Radpol, a revolutionary group dedicated to overthrowing Vegan control and bringing the colonists home. The story begins with the arrival on Earth of Cort Myshtigo, a prominent Vegan whom Radpol believes is there to survey the choicest pieces of the planet so that they may be sold off to Vegans. Because of this, Radpol has decided that Cort must die. Conrad is, however, much wiser now than he was a hundred years earlier, and his instincts tell him that the Vegan must not be assassinated yet. Through various intricacies of plot, he manages to forestall all assassination attempts, discover that Cort is actually dying of an incurable disease, and literally to inherit the Earth from the Vegans. As a condition of the inheritance, his task is to restore Earth to a state of fertility.

The task is appropriate, for Zelazny carefully identifies Conrad with a recurrent motif that Sir James G. Frazer in *The Golden Bough* has named the "dying and reviving god." He does this by associating Conrad with specific mythological "dying and reviving gods." He also patterns Conrad's personal history after those of the mythological models. Conrad undergoes a violent, ritual death when he destroys the identity of Karaghiosis and a resurrection when he appears as Conrad. This transformation, which we learn has occurred prior to the action of the story, has enabled Conrad to conquer his hatred of the Vegans and his desire for revenge. Like Gallinger, once purged of his self-destructive motives, he becomes the catalyst for new growth.

Conrad's supposed immortality brings into play yet another recurrent Zelazny theme, and the story provides an excellent example of how Zelazny uses immortality to express his belief in the need for personality growth. It is Conrad's probable immortality which makes him acceptable to the Vegans as an heir. They value the continuity which he can bring to the process of restoring Earth, but they also value the change which has occurred in his personality throughout his long years. From a radical, bent upon revenge, he has metamorphosed under the impact of his experience into a wise and sane administrator. Conrad thus illustrates Zelazny's belief that a very long life provides a man the opportunity to fully develop his psychological possibilities. Accumulating experiences and learning from them is the absolute reality of a man's life. Only by being willing to profit from new experience can a man completely fulfill his purpose—to rise to a higher state of consciousness. Of course Zelazny does recognize individual differences: he knows that not all people can achieve that state of consciousness in the same amount of time.

As Zelazny's characters must continue to grow as a result of their experiences so must Andre Norton's find themselves as a result of theirs. Like Zelazny's characters, Norton's undergo metamorphic changes during their adventures. In the "Introduction" to his *Bibliography*, Roger Schlobin recognizes this characteristic of her work. He indicates that frequently Norton's "protagonists must undergo a rite of passage to find self-realization."⁶ Typically, her leading characters not only learn a great deal about their worlds but about themselves as well. Several examples will illustrate.

In *Star Man's Son*, Fors of the Puma Clan is passed over for initiation into Star Hall, a training center for the revered star men. Fors has anticipated that he will follow in his father's footsteps and that his selection will be a matter of course, but, now disappointed at being consigned to a life of a much lower stature, he decides that he is being discriminated against because of the silver hair, night sight, and super-keen hearing that mark him as a mutant.

The star men find their purpose for living in seeking after knowledge and in guarding it. In particular, they are interested in finding cities safe from radiation because they have promised to provide their clan with a treasury of salvageable goods. Fors, however, has been relegated to working in the "cave-sheltered Hydro farms," and his vision of finding the "City on the Shores of a Great Lake" that his father had sought has been threatened. So, he enters the Star Hall and steals his father's bag because it contains notes about the city's location. He then sets out towards the North with his great cat, Lura. He does so without the clan's sanction—an unprecedented move.

In the course of his adventures, Fors does discover the city; befriends a black named Arskane, who is from a different clan; and has several encounters with the "Beast Things," mutants descended from those who had lived in the cities after the atomic war and who now more closely resemble rats than men. Fors learns many things during his experiences. He learns that there is no reason to fear or fight other humans just because they look or act differently from his own clansmen. He also learns that, if they are to survive, men must join together to fight the threat posed by the "Beast Things," who now appear to be evolving in intelligence and who are therefore infinitely more dangerous than they were. The most important lesson of all, however, is what he learns about himself. In a typical rite-of-passage ending, he discovers strengths in himself that he had not known he possessed and proves himself to his clan so well that a new rank of Star Man is created just for him.

In *Forerunner Foray*, Norton's protagonist, Ziantha, undergoes a similar process, though her particular experiences differ greatly from Fors'. She is a child from the "Dipple," an extensive slum where the outcast, the poor, the "sweepings of the civilizations of half a hundred planets had been dropped."⁷ She was rescued from the "Dipple" by Yasa, a catlike alien and high-ranking member of Thieves' Guild, because she showed signs of being a latent sensitive—that is, a person who has some extra-sensory ability. Ziantha's

particular ability is that of "psychometrizing," or reading the history of an object by touching it.

Sent to burglarize the office of a merchant, Ziantha is "called" by a strange stone-like lump of dusty clay. Finding herself unable to resist its influence, she later teleports it from the office with the help of an alien creature named Harath, who is a highly evolved, telepathic pet. Ziantha resolves to keep her acquisition a secret, but later she is found out by Yasa and by Ogan, a renegade parapsychologist, who develops the extra-sensory talent of Yasa's employees. The stone is identified as an artifact from one of the lost forerunner civilizations, about which little is known even though evidence of their existence is strewn throughout the galaxy. The thought that the stone may lead to an as-yet-undiscovered forerunner tomb, laden with treasure, sets Ziantha's adventures in motion.

Planning to keep the knowledge of the potential discovery from the Guild, Yasa and the others make a trip to the legendary planet, "Waystar," to find help in tracking down the treasure. That is followed by yet another trip to an unknown planet in an unknown system. Its existence is made known to them when Ziantha passes her hand over a star chart and the stone suddenly glows green. Once on the planet, Ziantha begins to have visions of a long-destroyed city named Singakok. Then, in an attempt to find the tomb, her party is betrayed by the ship's captain and crew. Forced by the captain to examine the stone more closely, Ziantha is suddenly pulled into the distant past where her personality merges with that of Vintra, a war-captive who has been entombed with Turan, the leader of her enemies. His body, however, is simultaneously occupied by another "sensitive," or presence, and Turan is suddenly animated. Ziantha/Vintra and Turan escape the tomb and embark upon a series of adventures to locate an identical second stone, which they believe will enable them to return to their own time. Finding themselves in a seething bed of political intrigue and confronted by forces too powerful for either to overcome, they leave Singakok in a flier to track down a legend which they believe will lead them to the second stone. All the while, Ziantha/Vintra is exhausting her own energy to keep the sensitive who occupies Turan's body from slipping into nothingness. His own energy is being depleted by his keeping the dead body animated.

They successfully escape to the South to find yet another ruin where Ziantha/Vintra slips into the even more distant past. There, in the city of Nurnoch, she merges with the personality of D'Eyree of the Eyes, the "Eyes" being in reality the twin stones. D'Eyree is a fishlike human who uses the stones to focus her will upon a colony of sea slugs in order to make them secrete a substance which protects their city walls against the great storms which rage in the ocean. The slugs, called Lurla, have been unresponsive of late, and their lethargy is blamed upon a loss of power in D'Eyree and three other beings who perform the same function. It is believed that the Lurla will become more responsive if they are given blood sacrifices, as they used to be in the old days. D'Eyree and the others are to be the first. Ziantha/Vintra manages to escape Nurnoch, however, just as

D'Eyree is about to be sealed in a cave by one of the slugs. The other sensitive has managed to pull her, along with both stones, from the cave just in time. Ziantha/Vintra and Turan return to Singakok and then use the stones to return to their own time.

Once back Ziantha realizes that her experiences have changed her considerably. She knows that she has been exploited by Yasa, and she offers Ogan stiff resistance when he tries to take the stone from her. After an encounter with Ogan, whom she discovers has betrayed Yasa and is striking out on his own, she finds Harath and manages to save the sensitive who has been occupying Turan's body from being forced outside the body and thus dissipated to nothingness. He turns out to be a man named Ris Lantee, who is connected with a Zacathan archeological expedition. After finally outwitting Ogan and escaping from Yasa's followers and a space patrol unit, Ziantha, Ris, and Harath lift off to join the Zacathans. By this time, however, Ziantha has become a new woman. She has freed herself from her dependence upon others and her exploitation by them. She has found herself, felt her inner strength, and realized her integrity.

This metamorphosis of personality is common among Norton's protagonists. In addition to Ziantha and Fors, Gillan in *Year of the Unicorn*, Murdoc Jern in *The Zero Stone*, and Kincar s'Rud in *Star Gate* undergo similar rites of passage to discover their true selves. As Schlobin explains, "The passage of [her] characters through this process constitutes her themes, and their concerns, needs, and successes are the major ideas that her fiction presents."⁸ As does Zelazny, Norton seems to subordinate everything in her fiction to the change which occurs in the individual under the impact of his accumulated experience.

Since there is such a similarity at the center of each writer's psychological perspective, it is natural to expect that there is also great similarity in their leading characters. That is, indeed, the case. Norton's characters are, like Zelazny's, outsiders in the quest for self-realization. Schlobin characterizes Norton's protagonists as being "at odds with the social order," "outcasts," "disenfranchised," and "hunted or hounded by authorities." They are always alienated in some way from those around them. Frequently, this alienation is the result of prejudice or exploitation. Moreover, the leading character is often geographically removed from his normal surroundings. It is this disruption of normal patterns which triggers some kind of quest, usually after a specific object. The physical quest is frequently paralleled by an internal one.

This pattern of character development is evident in *Star Gate*, in which the protagonist, Kincar s'Rud, is a half-breed son of a Hold Daughter and one of the Star Lords, alien humanoids who have chosen to share their superior culture and technology with the natives. Because his mother, dead by the time the novel begins, was the daughter of the reigning Head of the Hold, Kincar is heir to his grandfather's title. But because he is not pure-bred, the inhabitants of the Hold have split into two camps: those who feel that he ought to claim his inheritance and those, prejudiced against him,

who feel that his uncle, Jord, ought to succeed as Head.

Two events are occurring which make Kincar's situation critical. The Star Lords are leaving the planet, after having decided that their influence has unduly affected its natural development, and the current "Styr" (Head of the Hold) is dying. Moreover, all signals indicate that when he does die, Jord will attempt to seize power by force. A bloody civil war will result. Faced by this prospect, the dying "Styr" calls Kincar to him and strongly suggests that he seek his place with the retreating Star Lords. Thus, with prejudice working against him, half-breed Kincar leaves the Hold in order to find some of his father's people before they have all left the planet. He suddenly finds himself outcast, alienated, and alone.

In *Year of the Unicorn*, Gillan is a witch of Estcarp who finds herself marooned in the backwaters of Norstead Abbey in the dale of High Hallack. Though she has been in the dales since she was a child, it is obvious to everyone that she is not a native. Her hair is black; that of the dale wenches is either blonde or brown. Her skin is dark and tans easily; the dale wenches are fair and rosy-cheeked. She does not know that she is a witch. In fact, she knows very little about her origins. She does remember that as a child she was on an Alizon ship and that during a storm that sank the ship the man who was with her was crushed by a falling beam. She was rescued and taken to a port, only to be carried off when the city was attacked by the Lords of Hallack. Captured by Lord Furlo, she was immediately sent inland to the Abbey.

She remains safely there while the war rages. When the war finally ends, however, one of Hallack's allies, the were-riders (who are shape-changers) come to the Abbey to claim payment for their support during the war. They are to be paid thirteen dale wenches as brides. Gillan is not one of those chosen to go, but, impelled by boredom, curiosity about her origins, and the knowledge that she does not belong where she is, she substitutes for one of the women who does not want to go with them. Thus begins an adventure which forces Gillan to the limits of her endurance. Along the way, she is split by a magical process into two separate identities by Hyron, chief of the were-riders. Hyron seeks to eliminate from her personality that part which makes her challenge their authority and customs. The specific act that he found objectionable was her choice of Herrel to mate with, rather than one of the other riders. Herrel is regarded as inferior to the others because he has only sporadic control over his powers. Despite the fact that he is Hyron's son, he has been rejected by the chief. Gillan's choice marks her as different, unmanageable, and therefore less desirable than one of the native dale wenches. Herrel's situation is like Gillan's—he is only a marginal member of his society. Gillan's task becomes the forging back together of her two identities before the one which is truly her own fades into nothingness. She eventually succeeds, and, as does Kincar in *Star Gate*, she finds that she is a much different person from the one she was before her adventure began.

In *The Zero Stone*, Murdoc Jern, an apprentice gemologist, inherits a mysterious stone from his father, which triggers his quest

to discover its origin. Shortly after Hywel Jern is murdered in his pawnshop, Murdoc is told by his mother that he was only a "duty child." That was the term used for an embryo which was shipped from some populous planet to a frontier world to be raised so that the genetic stock of the frontier people would remain varied. Such a child was raised by the foster family as if it were its own. The discovery hurts Murdoc deeply, not because he has been denied the inheritance of his stepfather's business but because he had developed a real affection for Hywel and because a very special relationship had existed between them. Hywel had chosen to share his own interest in the stone with Murdoc rather than with his wife and natural children because they showed no talent for appraising gems or other valuables. Aware that Murdoc was different and that Angkor, the planet on which they lived, was too primitive and therefore too restrictive for the boy, he had apprenticed him to Master Gemologist Vondar Ustle so that his foster son would learn to be more sophisticated and so that he could track down the stone's origin.

Shortly after Hywel's death, Vondar is killed on the planet Koonga by natives in a sacrificial ritual which is highly suspicious since they had never before involved an off-worlder in one of their religious ceremonies. They are determined to sacrifice Murdoc too, but he manages to escape them. Now, however, he is alone in the universe except for a catlike alien named Eet. When he finally lands on a planet that seems to hold the key to the stone's origin, he is thrust into a series of adventures which find him hunted by the Patrol, the Thieves' Guild, and some predatory creatures called "sniffers." So, like Kincar and Gillan, Murdoc finds himself alienated, disinherited, and on the run.

Similarly, as Joseph Sanders has noted, many Zelazny stories begin with a character who is seriously disoriented, out of his natural time or place, or searching for his identity.⁹ Corwin, the protagonist of the "Amber" novels, is an excellent example. In *Nine Princes in Amber*, the first in the five-book series, Corwin awakes from what seems to have been a long sleep to find himself in a private hospital in upstate New York. He vaguely remembers having been in an accident. He knows that he has been over-narcotized, but he cannot remember who he is. He is alone on Earth, one of the shadow worlds that exist between the kingdoms of Amber and Chaos, the only true realities. Though he does not know it, everything has been arranged to keep him from seeking Amber's throne, which has been vacant since his father, Oberon, disappeared many years earlier. He also does not know that those who conspired against him, ironically, are subverting a secret plan developed by Oberon to prepare Corwin to succeed him. Unwittingly, the actions of the conspirators and of Oberon have reinforced one another so that Corwin is doubly alienated from the throne of Amber. Not only is he geographically removed from it, he is not even aware that it exists.

Another example is found in *Lord of Light*. The protagonist, Mahasamatman, who prefers to be called Sam, awakes on Urath after his molecules have been re-assembled by Yama, the Death God. After having lost the Battle of Keenset, Sam's essence had been

dispersed into the magnetic cloud that rings his planet. After his rescue from the cloud, he is alienated from those around him and shows no interest at all in worldly matters. His rescuers are disappointed because they have brought him back to help the reigning but corrupt gods. They find their first task to be, however, the stimulation of Sam's interest in living.

More often than not, Zelazny's focus is on the psychological alienation of his characters rather than on their physical divorce from familiar surroundings, though the two usually go hand in hand. The alienation is generally a result of the fact that the characters are different from their peers. It may be a character's neurosis that marks the difference, it may be one or more physical characteristics, or it may be both. Conrad from *This Immortal*, Borkman from "The Engine at Heartspring's Center," and John Auden from "The Man Who Loved the Faioli" are excellent examples. Conrad has a short right leg that causes him to walk with a limp, is infected by a mutant fungus on his left cheek which has left it purple, and displays an extrasensory ability which permits him to see and hear people without being in their presence. Moreover, he shows no signs of normal aging. Borkman is at least half-bionic and virtually immortal, and John Auden is dying of one of the universe's last remaining incurable diseases. He has also been left alone as the custodian of a planet which has become the universe's graveyard.

Because of their differences, Zelazny's protagonists are usually opposed to their societies. Hell Tanner of *Damnation Alley* is the most obvious rebel. The last surviving member of Hell's Angels motorcycle gang, he is openly rebellious and violent. And, like many of Zelazny's protagonists, he is a reluctant hero. He does not want to drive a serum from Los Angeles to Boston, to save the nation from bubonic plague, but since his alternative is life-imprisonment, he does.

Another rebel is "Nemo," Zelazny's no-name detective and protagonist of three short novels: "The Eve of RUMOKO," "Kjwall-l'kje'k'koothailll'k'kje'k," and "Home is the Hangman." "Nemo" chooses to give up his identity in a society which he insists is too heavily computerized. He feels that the system is too rigid, that it pries too deeply into individual privacy, but he does not try to destroy it. Rather, he seeks to co-exist with it. Only when it threatens him personally does he rebel. Such is the case in "The Eve of RUMOKO." RUMOKO is an island-making project which involves piercing the Earth's crust and releasing its magma. The effect is much like making a volcano. When the first experiment destroys an underwater city in which a girl lived that "Nemo" was once going to marry, he sabotages the second project. By increasing the violence of the reaction and thereby causing even more destruction, he frightens the authorities into giving up on the experiment.

Zelazny characters are not just rebellious; they are usually psychologically troubled. Sometimes their problems are simple ones—such as the difficulty of just growing up; but, on other occasions, their problems are full blown complexes. The pride-syndrome of Gallinger in "A Rose for Ecclesiastes" and the fear-syndrome

of Davits in "The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth" fall into this category. The most striking example in Zelazny's writing, however, is Charles Render of *The Dream Master*. He is clearly psychotic. Preoccupied with death, he has repressed his very strong emotions and become hardened to the world around him. He is morbidly compelled to remember the deaths of his wife and daughter, though it has been nine years since their automobile accident. His relationships with the two women in his life, Jill and Eileen, are psychologically unhealthy. But, worst of all, he recognizes none of the symptoms of psychological vulnerability in himself, even though he is a trained therapist. Render represents one pole of a psychological continuum whose antithesis is the metamorphosed personality demonstrated by such characters as Davits and Gallinger (who successfully integrate their personalities). This is the ultimate goal of Zelazny's characters. If they are to achieve complete satisfaction with themselves, then they must learn to deal with reality. If they do, certain qualities of self will be produced. Ultimately they must achieve what Carl Jung calls "individuation," that is, the state in which a person becomes a separate, individual unity, a whole. It is the reconciliation of the opposing systems which make up a personality. With it comes complete knowledge of self.¹⁰

Not only do both Zelazny and Norton create characters who set off on various quests, but similar results are also produced from those quests. Schlobin indicates that Norton's fiction dwells on "the success and elevation of the innocent" and that in this process "bondages and wastelands are overthrown, new and generative orders are established, and the protagonists are ennobled."¹¹ In other words, her characters successfully bring about positive and creative change. For example, Simon Tregarth, hero of *Witch World* and *Web of the Witch World*, finally defeats the evil Kolder, an alien race from another world that uses its superior technology to enslave and conquer the Witch World races. Tregarth and his allies break the Kolder hold in *Web of the Witch World* and create the conditions for a new order. Fors, of *Star Man's Son*, united the diverse human clans in his immediate region to prepare for a battle against the ratlike mutants called "Beast Things." Though a safe and secure society has not yet been established, Fors has made the clans aware of the necessity for cooperation, and their re-dedication of themselves to peace and understanding promises a new order which will be both generative and creative.

Zelazny's protagonists accomplish much the same thing. Conrad, in *This Immortal*, having literally inherited the Earth from the Vegans, will oversee its repopulation and restoration. Sam, in *Lord of Light*, destroys the corrupted Deicrat system and leaves the world in the hands of a new order which promises to distribute the benefits of technology to the masses. The right to body transfer will bring them virtual immortality. Jack, in *Jack of Shadows*, destroys the Great Machine at the center of the Earth which prevents it from rotating and thus divides it into the two distinct kingdoms of dayside and nightside. His actions alter the basic order of his world and integrate it. And Gallinger brings the renewal of life to a dying Mars. He has

saved not only the planet but its people as well.

Another point of comparison between the two authors is that their protagonists often possess powers which raise them above their peers. In Norton, these powers are usually connected to ESP. Ziantha is a sensitive who can read the history of objects simply by handling them. Later she develops the ability to teleport. Fors is a mutant with supersensitive hearing and nightsight. Gillan is a witch who can see through illusion to the truth of things. And, if Norton's leading characters have no inherent powers, they come into possession of some object which gives them super powers. Murdoc Jern inherits the "zero stone" from his father. Kethan, of *The Jargoone Pard*, receives a jeweled belt which permits him to become a shape-changer. Kincar becomes guardian of the Tie, a stone with strange powers. On the other hand, it is very often the quality of immortality or near immortality which raises Zelazny's protagonists above their peers. Conrad, Borkman, and Sam, for example, are virtually immortal—Conrad because of a mutation which stopped his aging, Borkman because of his bionic nature, and Sam because of his access to a technology which permits body transfer. "Whitey" Summers is an example of a character who has a superior physical ability. He is the world's greatest mountain climber. Sometimes, the powers of Zelazny's characters derive from their occupying a special place in the scope of things. Sam is one of the First, the group who originally colonized his planet and developed its technology. Corwin is a prince of Amber, and a real god in his universe. Sandow, in *Isle of the Dead*, is one of the few in the universe with the ability to "worldscape," a talent which he accidentally learned from an ancient race called Pe'ans.

There is one other fundamental similarity between Zelazny and Norton. Both create protagonists who become more fully realized when they recognize the basic law of their universes and align themselves with it. Schlobin writes:

They [Norton's leading characters] recognize their own places within the patterns and rhythms of elemental law and carry that recognition forward into a hopeful future. These patterns and rhythms are in nature, but nature is only one of their manifestations, only a part of the necessary interrelationships that are the foundations of a complete and proper realization of self.¹²

A recognition of "elemental law" is one of the basic things that Norton's leading characters learn on their physical quests. Kincar, for example, actually participates in the mystical and religious experience produced by the Tie. Likewise, Murdoc Jern experiences the mysterious motivational power of the zero stone. On psychological quests which parallel their physical quests, Norton's characters become aware of their relationships to these universal forces. By placing her characters in foreign and totally untenable situations, Norton forces them to search inside themselves for solutions. When they do, they instinctively do the things that will save themselves. As a result, they become aware of universal law and their relationship to it. In *The Beast Master*, Holsteen Storm "feels the full power of this link between himself and the elemental order when he stands

alone against a group of hostile aliens."²³ Though he is no singer, someone who talks to the gods, the proper words somehow come to Storm's tongue, somehow fit themselves together into patterns of power, so that he comes to feel that he is as protected as if he were wearing battle armor.

The Zero Stone provides another excellent example of how Norton forces her characters to rely on their instincts. Jern overhears a conversation through the intercom system of the "Trader" spaceship he had boarded to leave Koonga. He learns that the Captain wants to kill him because he believes that Jern has some kind of infectious disease. The Captain does not want his schedule disrupted by the red tape that quarantine will bring when he puts down at a star port. Knowing that he will never get close enough to the captain to be able to explain that he is not contagious, since his body had been covered with purplish blotches, Jern finds a spacesuit, puts it on and leaves the ship. Somehow, a short time later, he is spinning free in space. What happens after that is purely a matter of his instinct to survive and of the mysterious powers of the zero stone. It is Jern's reliance on his instincts, however, that brings him an awareness of the elemental power of the stone.

The degree of success achieved by Zelazny's characters is a direct measure of their relationship to the elemental law of the universe. He is perhaps more specific in its delineation than Norton since his work reflects a highly-evolved, personal philosophy that he calls "form and chaos." In brief, his philosophy posits that two equal but opposite forces are at work in the universe, forever interacting dynamically, and that the two forces are mirrored in all life forms. Form is best described as the creative urge, the compulsion to synthesize. Chaos is best described as the analytic urge, the compulsion to tear down, to break into the simplest components. The interaction of the forces creates change, and change is fundamental to the universe. The pulse of their interaction is its rhythm. Humans fix upon earthly things and pleasures and become so desirous of them that they build up psychological complexes. The complexes block out their awareness of the rhythm as it flows through them. Zelazny believes, however, that if the complexes can be broken down under the impact of experience, humans will advance to higher and healthier states of consciousness. Awareness of the rhythm flowing through himself is what man recognizes as instinct or intuition. This process essentially describes what happens psychologically to such characters as Carlton Davits, Gallinger, and Charles Render. Davits and Gallinger succeed in breaking down their complexes and in advancing to higher and healthier states of consciousness. Render, on the other hand, is overwhelmed by his complex and is therefore consigned to madness.

One of the best examples of this process is found in Corwin, of the "Amber" novels. Suffering from amnesia, he begins his quest in a state of complete disorientation. He is thus forced to rely completely on his instincts as he begins to learn about himself and the greater plan of things. As the events of the story unfold, he comes into contact with the most fundamental forces in the universe—form and

chaos. Through the Jewel of Judgment, he learns not only about the laws that govern his universe but about the way to create an alternate universe. He also learns about the nature of reality and a great deal about the dual nature of man himself. These truths are revealed to Corwin when he finds Dara, the eventual mother of his son, Merlin, tracing the Pattern, a device which sensitizes the Amber heirs to the reality of their universe and thereby develops their powers. He describes the experience:

It seemed to tower hugely in that always unsubstantial-seeming chamber. Then shrink, die down, almost to nothing. It seemed a slim woman for a moment—possibly Dara, her hair lighted by the glow, streaming, crackling with static electricity. Then it was not hair, but great curved horns from some wide, uncertain brow, whose crook-legged owner struggled to shuffle hoofs along the blazing way. Then something else . . . An enormous cat . . . A faceless woman . . . A bright-winged thing of indescribable beauty . . . A tower of ashes . . .¹⁴

Shocked to learn that Dara reflects elements of both form and chaos, he learns later that he himself does, too. In fact, he learns that the family itself descended from the mad dwarf, Dworkin, and originated in Chaos. Finally, he learns that Amber's own existence, its reality, depends on the continued existence of Chaos. The perceptions are basic to the maturational process which turns Corwin from a self-serving, egotistic brat into a truly noble individual, and which not only teaches him about himself but brings him into closer harmony with universal law.

These, then, are some of the similarities between the works of Andre Norton and Roger Zelazny. Each writer, however, is a superb craftsman who has developed his own distinctive techniques, themes, and ideas. Some of the more notable features of Norton's writing are her love for animals, her fondness for jewelry, and her attitude towards science and technology. Each of these qualities appears in many of her novels. Norton's love for animals, especially cats, probably derives from the lonely hours she spent as a child playing with her mother's collection of figurines. The animals which appear so frequently in her stories are sometimes identifiable earth animals who have mutated, and sometimes they are totally alien. Often they are superior to man, having telepathic or other powers. Frequently, they serve as confederates of the protagonist. For example, Fors in *Star Man's Son* is accompanied by Lura, a mutated, domestic cat who is responsive to him. Kincar in *Star Gate* is accompanied by Vorken, a smaller version of the feared, giant *sa-mords*, which are much like vultures. Vorken is semi-sentient and craves the presence of those for whom she was trained. She is sensitive to Kincar's needs. Murdoc Jern in *The Zero Stone* is accompanied by Eet, an alien life-form occupying a body not its own but which has feline characteristics and ESP powers. And Ziantha in *Forerunner Foray* receives a great deal of help from Harath, a down-covered, four-tentacled animal that is psychokinetic. Scattered throughout Norton's stories are such intelligent animals as kinkajous, foxes, coyotes, dolphins, and wolverines. Always she stresses the bond between man and animal.¹⁵

This love of animals, however, is only a specific reflection of a general tolerance of other races—a theme which runs through all of Norton's writing. From the reptilian Zacathans, who are universally honored and respected, to the shape-changing were-riders of *Year of the Unicorn*, her treatment of alien life forms is sympathetic. Evil is not bred from what beings are but from what they do. It is individual, not racial.¹⁶ This attitude is consistent with the premium that Norton places on self-integrity.

Norton's fondness for jewelry, especially stones, is another quality which occurs frequently in her stories. Quite often, the gems and other pieces of jewelry which appear are invested with special powers which help to make her protagonists superior to their peers. The "eyes" sought by Ziantha, the zero stone of Murdoc Jern, the mysterious Tie guarded by Kincar, the belt of Kethan, and the jewels worn by the witches of Estcarp in the "Witch World" novels, all permit their custodians to tap into the elemental power of their universes. Frequently, the power of the stones and other artifacts is "psychometric." Psychometry is the parapsychological power of reading an object. In theory, all the emotions, events, and experiences of people who have handled the object are somehow recorded in it. This residue is then sensed by someone whose mind is sensitive to it. Ziantha of *Forerunner Foray* and Tallahassee Mitford of *Wraiths of Time* are such persons. According to Roger Schlobin, psychometry provides Norton with a means of bridging "two of her dominant interests and two of the dominant characteristics of her work: history and speculative archaeology."¹⁷ The psychometric objects also provide a means of projecting Norton's protagonists into the past or into some other world. These artifacts, whether from some alien civilization or whether scattered throughout the universe by the pre-human "Forerunner" civilizations, give to her work an epic scope and brooding mystery.¹⁸ They also provide her with a means to emphasize the values of the past, which she feels have been lost in the impact of advancing technology.

Another feature of Norton's work—and a rather strange one for a science fiction writer—is her negative attitude towards science and technology. Both Schlobin and Rick Brooks deal with this curiosity in detail. They point out that in her work evil is frequently the product of technology misused. Her villains are often computers, or they are characters who misuse science to gain their ends. For example, the Kolder (a race whose name suggests their insensitivity) use their science against the "Witch World" inhabitants. In *Web of the Witch World*, they use submarines and airplanes, both of which are as foreign to that world as the Kolder are themselves. If the villains do not use science directly, as do the Kolder, and if they are not machines themselves, then they are the product of misused science. For example, the ratlike "Beast Things" are mutations created by an atomic war.

Norton does not try to understand science and technology, for they are not the concerns of her novels. They are simply the evils necessary to make her stories work. For her, they have become the symbol of man's alienation. People, she feels, no longer possess

self-pride, and because of this, many of her leading characters make reference to their newly-found pride after they have matured. Besides the destruction of self-pride, Norton finds in advancing technology an even more insidious danger—the destruction of civilization itself. As Brooks has noted, Norton sees atomic war not just as a possible but as a probable future. And he cautions the reader that her view of the post-bomb world is far too optimistic.

As an alternative to an era plagued by the problems of technology, Norton offers the medieval period. At least ten of her novels and two of her shorter works feature medieval-like societies. Brooks points out that she sees important values in that period which are eroding in contemporary culture. Most important of these is the stress which the medieval period placed on the development of the individual. In Norton's novels, the subjugation of individuality by a future society frequently generates the conditions which produce the quests of her protagonists.

Zelazny is also concerned with the models that can be found in another world—the world of myth. Joseph Sanders has noted the attention that critics have given to Zelazny's use of myth and how often they misunderstand his use of it. There is no question about its presence in his work, especially his early writing. *Lord of Light* relies heavily on Hindu and Buddhist myth and *Creatures of Light and Darkness* on Egyptian myth, while *The Dream Master* merges Arthurian and Scandinavian myth.

Myth serves many purposes in Zelazny's stories. It gives his characters larger-than-life size, it provides background against which his characters can play out their roles, and it also creates an ironic point of view for the reader. If the reader can recognize the mythic allusions, he can track the fate of the protagonist. In *The Dream Master*, for example, the fate of Tristram (he dies) is reinforced by the fate of Odin (he is swallowed up by the great wolf, Fenrir) to foreshadow the fate of Render—unless he successfully undergoes a metamorphosis of personality which will save him.

Zelazny never borrows a god or a myth verbatim, nor does he mean for the reader to parallel a mythic god with his protagonists, for often his protagonists are identified with several different mythic gods, each of which adds to or reinforces some quality of the protagonist's characterization. Neither does he mean for the reader to parallel some particular myth with his story, for he often alters the myth to fit the story. For example, Snorri Sturluson's version of the *ragnarok* myth, which Zelazny borrows for *The Dream Master*, tells of two wolves who will appear to signal the end of the creation. One of them, Fenrir, will swallow the sun. The other, Moon-Hound, will swallow the moon. But Zelazny only uses Fenrir in his story and assigns the task of swallowing the moon to him. This is a logical adaptation, for he has already identified the moon with Eileen Shallot because it is a symbol for the feminine principle. To have used two wolves would have unnecessarily complicated the symbolism of the novel. The result of this kind of manipulation, however, is to change the myth as it is recognized and to uncover an attitude that permeates Zelazny's work—iconoclasm. This iconoclasm reflects Zelaz-

ny's belief that man must turn inside rather than outside himself to find the solutions to his problems. He believes that man cannot change if he constantly deludes himself, and delusion comes when one waits passively for some outside agency to act on one's behalf. Passivity dilutes the impact of experience. In Zelazny's writing, neither the gods nor their myths are sacred. They exist to be challenged.

Though there are many differences between the writings of Zelazny and Norton, there is an overriding similarity that each shares—the high value that he places upon personal integrity, self-realization, and individuality. It lies at the core of each writer's psychological perspective and subsequently affects both the conceptualization and construction of his novels and short stories. It is perhaps best seen in the similarities found between each writer's protagonists.

The leading characters of each author frequently begin their stories alienated, outcast, and alone. Sometimes they are being hunted. For Norton, the creation of this initial circumstance is often the result of prejudice, exploitation, or being different in some way. For Zelazny, it is often the result of psychological trauma. Regardless of the specific motivation, however, the state of alienation triggers a quest during which the character's experiences make him aware of the elemental law of his world, tests his resourcefulness, and stimulates his mastery of self. Often, too, a positive change is produced in the character's society. During the process of self-discovery, each protagonist learns to deal with the reality of his world, learns the value of the individual, and comes to value himself highly. It is because of their sensitive and knowledgeable treatment of character that Zelazny and Norton have achieved the high status they enjoy as science fiction masters.

NOTES

- ¹Roger Schlobin, "Introduction" to *Andre Norton* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1979 forthcoming), p. xiv (manuscript page number).
- ²Schlobin, p. xiv.
- ³Donald A. Wollheim, "Introduction" to *The Book of Andre Norton*, ed. Roger Elwood (New York: DAW Books, 1974), p. 7. (Originally entitled *The Many Worlds of Andre Norton*).
- ⁴Wollheim, p. 7.
- ⁵Joseph Sanders, "Zelazny: Unfinished Business," in *Voices for The Future*, II, ed. Thomas D. Clareson (Bowling Green, Ohio: Popular Culture Press, 1979 forthcoming), p. 20 (manuscript page number).
- ⁶Schlobin, p. xxxi.
- ⁷Andre Norton, *Forerunner Foray* (New York: Viking, 1973), p. 41.
- ⁸Schlobin, p. xxxii.
- ⁹Sanders, p. 5.
- ¹⁰Calvin S. Hall and Vernon J. Nordby, *A Primer of Jungian Psychology* (New York: Mentor Books, 1973), pp. 81-83.
- ¹¹Schlobin, p. xxxii.
- ¹²Schlobin, p. xl.
- ¹³Schlobin, p. xl.
- ¹⁴Roger Zelazny, *The Guns of Avalon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972), p. 179.
- ¹⁵Rick Brooks, "Andre Norton: Loss of Faith," in *The Book of Andre Norton*, ed. Roger Elwood (New York: DAW Books, 1974), p. 193.
- ¹⁶Brooks, p. 189.
- ¹⁷Schlobin, p. xxv.
- ¹⁸Schlobin, p. xxv.

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