2018: The Annual Summary



Figure 1: Word Cloud

I finished reading (or re-reading) the following books in 2018:

- 1. I Shall Wear Midnight by Terry Pratchett
- 2. The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien
- 3. Existence by David Brin
- 4. The Compleat Enchanter: The Magical Misadventures of Harold Shea by L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt
- 5. The Queen of Air and Darkness (book 2 of The Once and Future King) by T. H. White
- 6. The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump: 27 Psychiatrists and Mental Health Experts Assess a President by Bandy X. Lee et al.
- 7. We Have Always Lived in the Castle by Shirley Jackson
- 8. Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick by Lawrence Sutin
- 9. The Benedict Option by Rod Dreher
- 10. The Wonderful O by James Thurber
- 11. The 13 Clocks by James Thurber
- 12. City of Glass by Paul Auster
- 13. Unspeakable by Chris Hedges with David Talbot
- 14. Elysium Fire by Alastair Reynolds
- 15. Down and Out in Paris and London by George Orwell
- 16. Icehenge by Kim Stanley Robinson
- 17. Daughter of Dreams by Michael Moorcock
- 18. Elric of Melniboné and Other Stories by Michael Moorcock

- 19. Elric: The Fortress of the Pearl by Michael Moorcock
- 20. Elric: The Sleeping Sorceress by Michael Moorcock
- 21. Elric: The Revenge of the Rose by Michael Moorcock
- 22. Elric: The Sailor on the Seas of Fate by Michael Moorcock
- 23. Elric: Stormbringer!
- 24. Jhereg by Stephen Brust
- 25. Yendi by Stephen Brust
- 26. Butcher Bird by Richard Kadrey
- 27. *Moderan* by David R. Bunch (New York Review Books Classics 2018 edition)
- 28. The Freeze-Frame Revolution by Peter Watts
- 29. Daughter of Dreams by Michael Moorcock
- 30. The Wrecks of Time by Michael Moorcock
- 31. The Ice Schooner by Michael Moorcock
- 32. Oryx and Crake by Margaret Atwood
- 33. George's Marvelous Medicine by Roald Dahl
- 34. The Bloody Chamber by Angela Carter

That's 34 books. I actually did a little better, in terms of the number of books completed, than I did in 2017. In 2017 I only finished 26 books, although I also read every issue of The New Yorker magazine.

A few of the books in the list above jump out at me for being particularly memorable. These are:

- The Hobbit by J. R. R. Tolkien
- We Have Always Lived in the Castle by Shirley Jackson
- Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick by Lawrence Sutin
- The Wonderful O by James Thurber
- Unspeakable by Chris Hedges with David Talbot
- Down and Out in Paris and London by George Orwell
- Icehenge by Kim Stanley Robinson
- *Moderan* by David R. Bunch (New York Review Books Classics 2018 edition)
- The Freeze-Frame Revolution by Peter Watts
- Oryx and Crake by Margaret Atwood
- The Bloody Chamber by Angela Carter
- The Ice Schooner by Michael Moorcock

I'm not going to re-hash my detailed criticism of Moorcock's Elric stories here, except to say that I wouldn't recommend reading all those Elric volumes; see my numerous long comments on the Elric stories in blog posts from 2018.

Another thing that jumps out is that I didn't **finish** a whole lot of non-fiction books this year, although I started reading many more, or dipped into certain chapters, often to discuss them on the podcast. That's some information for me, although I'm honestly not sure if it tells me more about myself, or about the books I chose to read. The best movie I saw in 2018 were:

- Sylvio (2017 film)
- Paddington 2 (2017 film)
- Iron Man (2008 film)

And... that's about it, unfortunately. I didn't see a lot of movies in 2018, so there wasn't a large field to choose from. Of these, I have to give the nod to *Sylvio*, for its wonderful surreal silliness presented on a shoestring budget.

As for television shows, well — I'm not going to try to rate a big pile of both old and new *Doctor Who* shows, especially when I have a number of fan edits mixed in there. I'll just mention my frustrating with *Doctor Who* Series 11, and point out that the best episode of Series 11 was actually the not broadcast in 2018, and strictly speaking wasn't part of the regular series. It was the New Year's Day special, "Resolution."

Speaking of resolutions, I have a few. I want to get into an exercise regimen on the treadmill. I want to finish more non-fiction. I want to get engaged in a new writing project, and get the podcast rebooted, at least in some form, for a new season.

Ypsilanti, Michigan January 20th, 2019

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