



Ann Arbor Independent Booksellers Association

A community rooted in books

October Newsletter

In the News

Look for an article on the Ann Arbor Independent Booksellers Association featured in Inside Ann Arbor in the fall issue of the Ann Arbor Observer. Thank you Eve Silberman, for featuring us!



On the Shelf

Children of the New World: Stories

Alexander Weinstein

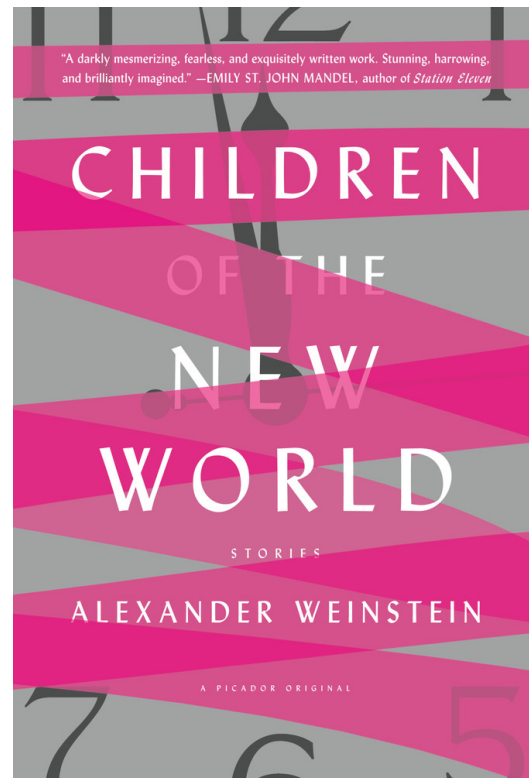
Picador, \$16

Alexander Weinstein's impressive and stunning short story collection *Children of the New World: Stories* is not just sci-fi dystopian stories of the future, but more like scary things that may really happen as our relationship and dependence with technology increases. The uncomfortableness that Weinstein generates in stories like 'Saying Goodbye to Yang' and 'The Cartographers' about how far we will go with technology and what that does to us as human beings, living breathing entities in comparison to the manufactured world of virtual families and memories.

Where do we end and they start...

--Lynn Riehl

Events Manager, Nicola's Books



Snapshot of the Past

Workers pull a bender on gender

SEP 13 1995

Bookstore employees honor friend by cross-dressing for a day

By ANNE VALENTINE MARTINO
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

It was a different kind of dress-up day at the Shaman Drum Bookshop Tuesday.

The store's male employees dressed as women; the women as men; all to honor a flamboyant former colleague who died last year of AIDS.

Tuesday would have been the 42nd birthday of Earl Gebott, who worked at Shaman Drum for about four years before he died Aug. 19, 1994, of complications from AIDS.

Gebott would have enjoyed seeing the outfits, said bookstore employee Bob Currie. "Earl would have loved it," he said. "He was very flamboyant. He had a fabulous collection of costumes" that he wore during the 1970s. He was an advocate of cross-dressing although that was not his style while working at Shaman Drum.

A similar day was staged spontaneously last year on Gebott's birthday, but this year the day was more closely tied to the issues of AIDS. Information was distributed from the local HIV-AIDS Resource Center.

There was another angle to the day's dress theme. It was a week ago that workers at Espresso Royale, just down the street, quit in protest over institution of a dress code.

"Personally, I thought that was appalling," said bookstore employee Bob Currie. "This was a nice time to do this, to show that sometimes these things are okay."

There is no employee dress code at Shaman Drum, he said, although employees are expected to look professional.

On Tuesday, people who came into the shop seemed supportive, Currie said. "Most customers thought it was fun," he said, "and we had a big sign up at the top of the stairs, so they knew what was going on."

Gebott grew up in Chelsea and moved to Los Angeles in the mid-80s, Currie said. After his lover died in 1989, Gebott moved back to this area and worked for the bookstore. Many Shaman Drum employees, including owner Karl Pohrt, were present at his death.

Tuesday, Pohrt, 47, wore a skirt and lipstick for half the day. "We're trying to strike a blow for gender fluidity, let's put it that way," he said. "It felt awkward. Next time, maybe it will be a little easier."



Cross-dressing was the order of the day Tuesday at the Shaman Drum Bookshop on South State Street. The reason: to poke fun at the flap over the dress code at Espresso Royale across the street and to honor former Shaman Drum employee Earl Gebott, who died last year of AIDS.

NEWS PHOTO
LON HORWEDDEL

A Reader's Story

In August of 1988 I was flying home after a summer studying in Italy. I was working through a mild bout of aerophobia when our captain announced that we would be making an emergency landing at the nearest airport. It turns out this is standard procedure when you have to cut power to one of the aircraft's engines. We landed in Reykjavik and were sequestered in a very small area of a tiny airport while mechanics worked on fixing the plane. While I was contemplating my new life in Iceland in order to not have to get back on the airplane, I spotted a fellow passenger removing items from her carry on bag. There it was. *Catcher In The Rye* by JD Salinger. I was so in love with Salinger's writing at that time that it seemed like someone was offering up a coveted gem to me. She kindly agreed to loan me her book.

I began devouring each page as I had done in the past and completely forgot about engine repairs and being stranded so far away from friends and family. By the time the flight crew announced that we would soon be boarding the mended aircraft, instead of being frightened of the prospect of a repaired plane that just might not make it all the way across the Atlantic, I found myself smiling and gleefully queuing up with my fellow passengers. Losing myself in great literature has not only given me tremendous joy, it even played a role in curing my fear of flying.

--Melissa K. Barnes

Co-owner of ModelCave Hobby Shop in Downtown Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor resident

Events

Don't forget to check a2books.org often for book events taking place at the independent bookstores in Ann Arbor!

Events Calendar



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