

ups for grown-up tastes." "New Wave" writers such as Norman Spinrad and Disch himself tried to create such fiction.

But at the same time, powerful editors such as Ballantine's Judy Lynne del Rey had a very different agenda, according to Disch. They saw "an enormous untapped market. Del Rey and those who followed in her footsteps discovered and groomed writers like Stephan Donaldson, Terry Brooks, and Piers Anthony, who could scale down [J. R. R.] Tolkien or [Isaac] Asimov from the seventh- or eighth-grade reading levels of the overeducated [1950s] and create tetralogies suitable to the diminished reading skills of today's children." Other publishers started issuing series of low-grade novels, such as the continuing *Star Trek* series, which could be produced by "hack" writers rather than "name" authors.

The popularity of sci-fi movies and TV

shows has been of little help to writers of original science fiction, Disch says. Most hit sci-fi movies of recent years have been written by "director-writer-producer teams who have dealt with [science fiction] as a pool of imagery, tropes, and plots in the public domain, which can be cobbled together as well by one creative team as by another."

Many veteran science-fiction writers have failed, or refused, to adapt to the changed market situation. A "goodly number" of them have left the field, Disch reports. Samuel Delaney, for example, now teaches at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and writes mostly nonfiction. John Sladek, who wrote novels about robots, now is an executive in a firm that designs real ones. Disch himself does not plan to stop writing science fiction. But he insists that most sci-fi these days is strictly kids' stuff.

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## OTHER NATIONS

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### *A Different Sort Of Welcome*

"Immigration and Group Relations in France and America" by Donald L. Horowitz, in *The Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Jan. 1992), Norton's Woods, 136 Irving St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

In France, as elsewhere in Europe today, immigrants have become a major "problem." Yet, despite frequent xenophobic outbursts, France, like the United States, has a long history of welcoming newcomers. The difference, according to Duke University's Horowitz, is that the French have no truck with the usual metaphors about a melting pot or mosaic.

Mass immigration to France began in the mid-19th century. From Belgium, Italy, and later Poland, foreigners came to work in the mines and factories that French peasants shunned. Belgians congregated in French factory towns, and, after World War I, Poles worked in the mines of Lorraine and Languedoc. After World War II, a new wave of immigrants came—from North Africa, the Iberian

peninsula, and Asia. North Africans have been heavily concentrated in and around the major cities of Paris, Lyon, and Marseilles. By 1975, one year after its border was closed to most immigration, more than four-fifths of the [3.7 million] foreigners in France had come from North Africa or Iberia, with Algeria and Portugal each contributing more than one-fifth. France also had, by some estimates, nearly one million illegal immigrants.

The French census and other official statistics divide the population into just two categories: "French" and "foreigners." There are no hyphenated Frenchmen. "It is possible to be an Italian in France, but it is not possible to be an Italian-Frenchman in the same easy way as it is possible to be an Italian-American," Horowitz notes. For-

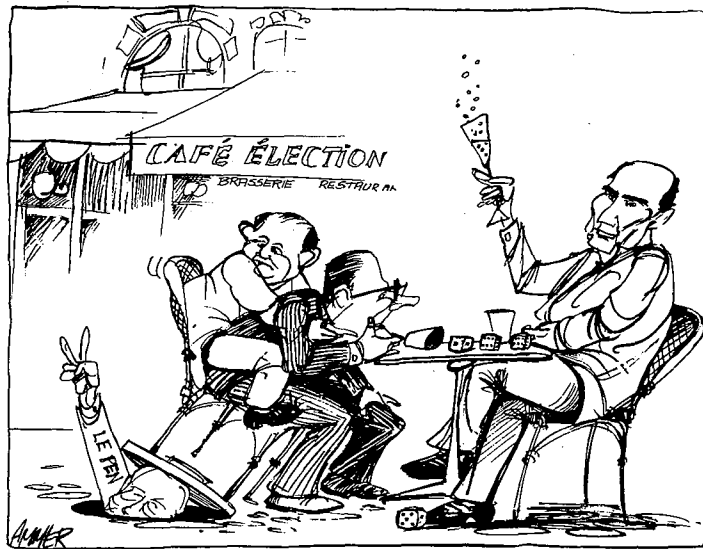
eigners who cease being such are presumed to have exchanged that identity for a French one. Unlike in the United States, there has never been a sense that immigrants are in any way creating the nation. "Immigrants could cleave to a France already established, but they could neither make nor remake it."

Whereas in the United States "the recollection of immigration and the exalta-

tion of ethnicity [have become] something of a cottage industry," in France, ethnic interest groups, like other interest groups, are seen as a contradiction of Rousseauian notions of the general will. Until 1981, in fact, a statute prohibited foreigners from forming organizations.

Yet because the central government is so important in France, and because there is no American-style federalism, local con-

licts quickly become *national* problems. The fragmented party system is very vulnerable to single-issue movements. Jean-Marie Le Pen's anti-immigrant *Front National*—which has won elections by overwhelming margins in some areas with heavy concentrations of immigrants—has achieved a national importance that a similar extremist party in the United States would find hard to win. Ethnic and racial concerns play no small role in American politics, of course, but "the politics of integration or exclusion" in France, Horowitz says, has "a bluntness and a resonance" that it does not have here.



Jean-Marie Le Pen, of the anti-immigrant Front National, was himself a key issue in 1988 elections in which François Mitterrand (right) won a second seven-year term as president of France.

### Africa's New Democracies

"Africa: The Rebirth of Political Freedom" by Richard Joseph, in *Journal of Democracy* (Fall 1991), 1101 15th St. N.W., Ste. 200, Washington, D.C. 20005; "Democracy in Africa" by Carol Lancaster, in *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1991-92), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2400 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037-1153.

Twenty-five African countries—about half of all those on the continent—are now either democracies or else strongly or moderately committed to democratic change, according to the African Governance Program at Emory University's Carter Center. Joseph, the center's director, warns that this is only the beginning of the African quest for freedom. "Unless the new democracies can restore economic growth," he writes, "they will face direct challenges

from the very social forces that are currently undermining authoritarianism."

The democratic movement in Africa first hit the headlines in 1990 in the wake of the democratic upheaval in Eastern Europe, but it is not just an echo of events elsewhere. "Many groups and individuals that are now fearlessly confronting their governments have defied them surreptitiously for years," Joseph notes. The extended anti-apartheid struggle in South Af-