



A Door Into Ocean (Elysium Cycle)

By Joan Slonczewski

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A Door into Ocean is the novel upon which the author's reputation as an important SF writer principally rests. A ground-breaking work both of feminist SF and of world-building hard SF, it concerns the Sharers of Shora, a nation of women on a distant moon in the far future who are pacifists, highly advanced in biological sciences, and who reproduce by parthenogenesis--there are no males--and tells of the conflicts that erupt when a neighboring civilization decides to develop their ocean world, and send in an army.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"In her ambitious second SF novel (after *Still Forms on Foxfield*) biology professor Slonczewski has created an intriguing ocean world with its own culture and biological adaptations. Particularly ingenious are the clickflies, insects that collectively serve as both a living computer and a communications network. But the book has problems with its rigid ideological structure. On one side is the planet Valedon, a patriarchal, capitalist, mechanistic and militaristic society. On the other is Valedon's watery moon Shora, an all-female society based on life sciences and the principle of sharing. It gets by without any government, shuns the mechanical and, knowing its limits, lives in harmony with nature. In the inevitable confrontation, Shora uses Gandhian techniques of passive resistance to thwart Valedon's troops. Fortunately, this schematic political framework is enlivened by the full-blooded characters who negotiate between the two cultures."

Review

"By the time the conflict . . . has moved to center stage, you not only know the antagonists intimately, you care passionately about the outcome . . . The story deals with the efforts of decent people on both sides to see beyond their culture-bound definitions of humanity." --*New York Times Book Review*

"[A] dreamy, poetic book . . . very much in the spirit of *Dune* or Le Guin's works. It's tough to build a world, particularly if you try to get the science correct. Author Slonczewski accomplishes that difficult feat and manages a gripping plot into the bargain. Maybe Le Guin has competition." --*San Francisco Examiner*

An intriguing ocean world...[The] schematic political framework is enlivened by the full-blooded characters who negotiate between the two cultures. Science Fiction Book Club selection. --*Publishers Weekly*

"One of the best new science fiction novels of the last several years." --VOYA

"Slonczewski creates an all-female, nonviolent culture that reaches beyond feminism to a new definition of human nature. This novel is highly recommended." --*Library Journal*

About the Author

Joan Slonczewski lives in Gambier, Ohio and teaches biology at Kenyon College.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anita Pfeifer:

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