



Fafnir – Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and
Fantasy Research
journal.finfar.org

Margaret Weis: A Literary-Biography

Will Slocombe

Biography and contact info: Will Slocombe (w.slocombe@liverpool.ac.uk) is a lecturer in the Department of English, University of Liverpool, and teaches American literature, and science fiction, amongst author things. He is the author of Nihilism and the Sublime Postmodern (Routledge, 2006), and articles on various aspects of c20th and c21st literature and theory. His current work focuses primarily on sf, particularly depictions of Artificial Intelligence.

Margaret Weis (b. 1948) is one of the popular fantasy authors of recent years in the USA. She has produced numerous works, both science fiction and fantasy, with a host of co-writers and by herself, and is also responsible for a role-playing game company. Throughout her career, which spans over thirty years, she has produced a significant proportion of bestsellers. Yet, despite this, she is possibly one of the least critically discussed authors of fantasy, in part because of a perception that her works are too populist, lacking literary merit, but perhaps because – in today’s post-*Game of Thrones* world – they are not actually popular *enough*. That said, the aim of this piece is not to critically analyze her works in any great detail, nor is it to seek to persuade readers of that amorphous quality of “literary merit”; rather, it is intended as an overview of her fiction to identify the scope and dominant themes of her writing. This is a “literary biography” in the sense that it works through her *oeuvre* and shows broad links between her works, in the hopes of prompting further research and explorations of her contribution to, and influence upon, the fantasy genre.

Born in Independence, Missouri, Weis graduated from the University of Missouri in 1970 with majors in Creative Writing and Literature. She spent the years after her graduation in the publishing world, first as a proofreader, then as advertising director for Herald Publishing (from 1972–1983) and division director for one of its trade divisions, Independence Press (from 1981–1983). During this period, she wrote her first book, a biography of Frank and Jesse James, as well as juvenile literature and non-fiction. The majority of her works in this period were published as Margaret Baldwin, although there is one significant exception. *Riddle of the Griffon* (1985), written with Roger E. Moore (editor of the fantasy magazine, *Dragon*) was, according to Weis, written in 48 hours and neither Weis nor Moore wanted their name on it: the book was published under the pseudonym of Susan Lawson.

The true origin of Weis’ success is when she joined TSR – the founders of the *Dungeons and Dragons* game – in 1983, as an editor in its book division. This move, from the traditional sphere of publishing into the role-playing games market, marks the point at which Weis’s writing shifts focus. Aside from editing the *Endless Quest* game books, Weis began writing game books based upon the *Dungeons and Dragons* television series, such as *Tower of Endless Dreams*. However, the major impact of joining TSR was her partnership with Tracy Hickman, the creator of the role-playing game world of *Dragonlance*. This partnership was to become one of the most prolific in the history of the high fantasy genre, with over 50 books either written or edited by the pair and translation rights held across the world.

The first books written by Weis and Hickman were two trilogies, *Dragonlance Chronicles* in the period 1984–1985 (*Dragons of Autumn Twilight*, *Dragons of Winter Night*, and *Dragons of Spring Dawning*) and *Dragonlance Legends* in 1986 (*Time of the Twins*, *War of the Twins*, and *Test of the Twins*). Both the *Chronicles* and the *Legends* were defining moments in the history of the high-fantasy genre, not only bridging the divide between role-playing games and fantasy literature, but also demonstrating that such a genre could be a mainstream literary phenomenon. Although works such as J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–55) had been instrumental in the creation of the role-playing games, gaming itself was still a marginal activity. Weis and Hickman created a franchise in which role-playing game and book markets could support each other, and the first books in the series achieved bestseller status in the *New York Times*, *Locus*, and *Publishers Weekly*, as well as the Walden and B. Dalton lists.

Both trilogies follow a band of adventurers around the imaginary world of Krynn, the world in which *Dragonlance* is set. This return to an almost medieval definition of romance, in which the quest narrative is fore-grounded, is a core aspect of both *The Lord of the Rings* and the *Dragonlance* novels, although Weis and Hickman moved away from the academic world of Tolkien towards something more naturalistic, despite retaining the loose “adventuring band” of protagonists. They did not present the reader with historical data, but inserted such information in the narrative as it progressed. Thus, rather than focus upon a world and its history, Weis and Hickman presented the reader with the characters that were to become the “Heroes of the Lance” and traveled with them through the world; in these novels, the narrative trajectory is not fore-grounded, but seemingly develops as a result of the characters’ actions.

Although both Weis and Hickman agree that “a game isn’t necessarily a good story” (Sawyer 49), there is nevertheless a game-driven orientation within these novels. Firstly, the conclusion of the quest is not the conclusion of the book, and vice versa. There is not a goal to achieve, but a world to explore and a quest around every corner. Secondly, the characters seem to react to, rather than act in, their environment. This is the result of the internalized, rather than externalized, drive in the writing style – rather than force characters down pre-determined routes, there is a feeling that each character acts on their own impulses. Although some readers may find the resulting style too simplistic or episodic for “adult fantasy,” the complexities to which these techniques can lead, especially in terms of the moral of the stories, make such stories a noteworthy addition to the often puerile genre of games and novels of men with implausibly large swords and women with implausibly scanty “armor.”

If the moral element is central to these texts, then it is significant that the central tenet of the book is not that good triumphs over evil, but that a balance is achieved. As Weis herself says: “It is important to note that as the end of the book, good does not triumph over evil. Rather, the balance between the two is restored so that the pendulum of change can swing freely and keep the world in motion” (Weis and Hickman, *Dragonlance Chronicles: Collector’s Edition* Introduction). This reinforces the “adventure” (or perhaps D&D “module”) structure within the *Dragonlance* novels: there is never a “happily ever after” because there is always something else happening. Unlike *The Lord of the Rings*, for example, in which the evil wizard is “defeated” at the end, the evil wizard of the *Legends* and the *Chronicles*, Raistlin Majere, is the lynchpin of narrative completion in both. In the *Chronicles*, he has the power to either save the world or damn it; in the *Legends*, he again has this choice but with even more at stake (at least in Weis’s terms, for she frequently admits that he is her favorite character) – his soul. She writes that “Raistlin does win in the end, though not in the way many readers hoped. He finally wins over himself” (Weis and Hickman, *Dragonlance Legends: Collector’s Edition* Introduction). This narrative is not therefore a traditional quest narrative, but a form of *bildungsroman* involving both Raistlin and his brother. The moralistic message of the books is not that good will win, but that, as Weis and Hickman frequently reiterate in the series, “good redeems its own and evil turns upon itself”.

In 1987, Weis and Hickman edited the first of the hugely successful *Dragonlance Tales* anthologies (*The Magic of Krynn*; *Kender*; *Gully Dwarves and Gnomes*; and *Love and War*). In short stories such as “The Legacy,” “Wanna Bet?,” and “Raistlin’s Daughter,” they focus on the relationships around Raistlin, his twin brother Caramon, and Caramon’s sons. This focus upon the central “family” of the *Dragonlance* saga is perhaps the result of the environment in which the *Dragonlance* books were written. Weis has often commented upon the nature of the *Dragonlance* group as an extended family, evident from the way in which particular authors recur throughout the *Dragonlance* books, particularly Richard A. Knaak and Michael Williams.

With such a large body of work on such a small number of characters, it is unsurprising that the *Dragonlance* stories began to seem repetitious. This had been an implicit problem since the publication of the *Chronicles* and *Legends* trilogies, primarily because TSR wanted readers to be able to enter the narrative at any point. Whilst this approach is partially vindicated within the original trilogies, the decision to capitalize on the popularity of these books led the *Dragonlance* stories into a narrative cul-de-sac: it is rare to find a book that does not make use of familiar themes from the original texts. Although Weis continued to explore the themes of evil and family, the images began to feel tired, and the style and tone were generally pitched at the same level. Whilst Weis and Hickman continued editing the collections, they did not write any further *Dragonlance* novels until 1995, the year in which TSR was bought by Wizards of the Coast. Instead, they moved into other territories, with the *Darksword trilogy* in 1988, and the *Rose of the Prophet* trilogy in 1989.

The Darksword trilogy (*Forging the Darksword*, *Doom of the Darksword*, and *Triumph of the Darksword*, all 1988) continues the exploration of humanity’s darker side, albeit in a manner more reminiscent of Michael Moorcock than Weis’s earlier fiction. This trilogy focuses upon Joram, a young man born without magic in a world where magic is Life. Pronounced Dead, and fleeing from society after murdering a man, Joram creates the Darksword, a mystical artifact that drains magic – and hence Life – from the world. Whilst not evil per se, Joram is forced into actions that often appear evil, not least because they cause destruction. As the trilogy continues, there is also a defined shift in setting, away from the traditional fantasy setting of a magical world towards science fiction, as *Triumph of the Darksword* incorporates an image of a futuristic earth that invades the realm where Joram was born.

In contrast to the *Darksword trilogy*, Weis describes the *Rose of the Prophet trilogy* (*The Will of the Wanderer*, *The Paladin of the Night*, and *The Prophet of Akhran*, all 1989) as an “Arabian fantasy.” These novels follow the adventure of three humans, the warrior nomad Khardan, his wife Zohra, and a foreign wizard Mathew, and their respective immortal guardian spirits, drawn from a variety of religious traditions. *The Will of the Wanderer* describes the universe as a “twenty-faceted jewel that revolves around Sul, Truth, the center” (9). Each point of the jewel represents a different philosophy and each god encompasses, as part of the facet he represents, three of these philosophies. Within the *Rose of the Prophet trilogy*, we are thus presented with gods such as Akhran (Faith, Chaos, and Impatience), the nomadic god; Promenthias (Goodness, Charity and Faith), akin to the Judeo-Christian god; and Benario (Faith, Chaos, and Greed), god of thieves. Set in an alternate Arabian desert, the story concerns the attempt by Quar (Reality, Greed and Law) to eradicate all other gods by declaring jihad. This belief in plural truths and religious openness recurs throughout much of Weis and Hickman’s later works, although the jihad is in many ways problematic given the fact that the potentially destructive missionary work of the quasi-Christian believers of Promenthias is brushed aside.

In 1990–1994, Weis and Hickman again shifted terrain, working on the ambitious seven-novel *Death Gate Cycle* (*Dragon Wing* 1990, *Elven Star* 1990, *Fire Sea* 1991, *Serpent Mage* 1992, *The Hand of Chaos* 1993, *Into the Labyrinth* 1993, and *The Seventh Gate* 1994). This project – perhaps their most acclaimed after *Dragonlance* – focused upon a different world in each novel,

although the narrative ran throughout all seven volumes. These seven realms originate from the “Sundering” of Earth by the Sartan (benevolent but patronizing magicians), who sought to imprison the Patryn (malevolent and tyrannical magicians). The first four novels explore the elemental worlds inhabited by the “mensch” (a derogatory term for elves, humans, and dwarves): the air world of Ariannus, the fire world of Pryan, the earth world of Aberrach, and the water world of Chelestra. The final three novels continue the story from the first four, exploring the Nexus, the Labyrinth (the realm in which the Patryns were imprisoned by the Sartan), and the “Seventh Gate”.

Although each of the first four novels presents a different set of mensch characters, the overarching narrative follows Haplo, a Patryn who seeks to foment discord amongst the mensch and discover if the Sartan still exist. The second major character is Alfred, a Sartan who believes he is the last surviving member of his race. As the *Cycle* progresses, these two form an unlikely alliance as they are both incomplete: Haplo is separated from his soul and Alfred has rejected his Sartan identity, choosing instead to faint when confronted with a decision rather than take responsibility for wielding his power. These two characters must become complete individuals and overcome their xenophobia in order to work together to defeat an ancient enemy. This enemy is a manifestation of fear and hate that can only be defeated if the Sartan and the Patryn abnegate responsibility for the mensch, allowing them to develop on their own, and work together.

If the seven volumes of the *Cycle* can be reduced to a single statement, then it is found in *Dragon Wing*: “Truth wasn’t something you went out and found. It was wide and vast and deep and unending, and all you could hope to see was a tiny part of it. And to see that part and to mistake it for the whole was to make of Truth a lie” (Weis and Hickman, *Dragon Wing* 293). Reminiscent of the themes presented in the *Rose of the Prophet* series (and foreshadowing those of Weis’s later works), the separate realms and the artificial nature of reality in the *Cycle* reinforce the idea that we can only see part of the picture, only some of the probabilities (the mechanism by which Sartan and Patryn magic works) at any given time. At the close of the *Cycle*, the repeated hints concerning a higher power do not mean divinity but natural occurrence, and the narrative development of the *Cycle* is a dramatization of the “Wave” of the Universe correcting itself after the excesses of the Sundering.

One of the more interesting asides worthy of note is the *Cycle*’s intertextual allusions. Aside from Gandalf and Merlin, an allusion to Raistlin is made by Zifnab, a mad old Sartan who is obviously a reworked Fizban from the *Dragonlance Chronicles* trilogy (see, for example, Weis and Hickman, *Elven Star* 114 and an excellent example of bathos on 333). This is significant because the writing of the *Cycle* corresponds to the development and morals of the Age of Mortals in the *Dragonlance* series: powerful beings must not interfere with the development of lesser races, but allow them to progress on their own.

Between 1990 and 1993, Weis once again shifted genres, producing one of her three solo-authored series of novels, a science fiction series called *Star of the Guardians* (*The Lost King* 1990, *King’s Test* 1991, *King’s Sacrifice* 1991, and *Ghost Legion* 1993). These books revolve around a young man called Dion who is heir to the throne of a great galactic empire. Seventeen years prior to the action of the text, all members of the Blood Royal (those genetically engineered to be superior leaders) were exterminated in a *coup d’état* and Dion is still in danger from those who want a republican government. Following the discovery of Dion’s identity in *The Lost King*, the stories focus upon his attempts to become king, dealing with the search for a weapon that can destroy the fabric of reality (*King’s Test*), his first solitary trials against alien invasion (*King’s Sacrifice*), and defending his rule from civil war (*Ghost Legion*).

With Don Perrin (her husband from 1996–2003), Weis continued to work in the *Star of the Guardians* setting with her next novels, the *Mag Force 7* series (*Knights of the Black Earth* 1995, *Robot Blues* 1996, *Hung Out* 1998). These novels concentrate on a mercenary force led by Xris Tampambulos, a cyborg who seeks revenge for the attempt on his life that led to him becoming a

cyborg. Whilst the overarching thread is concerned with bringing the Hung Syndicate, a galactic crime network, each novel is a self-contained episode. *Knights of the Black Earth* deals with an assassination attempt on King Dion that is perpetrated by a radical sect who desires all galactic life to be human. *Robot Blues* charts Mag Force 7's attempt to recover an ancient robot that can lay and destroy Star Lanes, the basis for all intergalactic commerce. Finally, *Hung Out* deals with Xris's need to bring the Hung Syndicate to justice, although he must go to prison for a crime he did not commit in order to do so. Weis' usual themes are present in this series: a distaste of totalitarian control and inhumane actions, along with complex characterization where individuals must learn to accept other's differences.

Whilst working with Perrin on the *Mag Force 7* series, Weis was also working on a number of other projects. With David Baldwin (her son), she co-authored a new series of novels called the *Dragon's Disciple*, beginning with the graphic novel *Testament of the Dragon* (1997), and continuing with *Dark Heart* (1998). With Hickman, she concluded the *Dragonlance Dragons* anthologies and added a fourth volume to the *Dragonlance Chronicles*, *Dragon of Summer Flame*. This text deals with the release of the Highgod and the loss of magic from the world, the beginning of the Age of Mortals. Still reluctant to return wholeheartedly to *Dragonlance*, however, Weis and Hickman's focus at this point was the abortive 1996–1998 *Starshield* trilogy.

Each book in the *Starshield* trilogy was intended to focus upon one of three legendary artifacts in the *Sharshield* science-fiction universe: the Mantle of Kendis-Dai, the Nightsword, and the Starshield itself. The *Starshield* novels explore the universe divided by quantum fronts, which modify reality to such an extent that different zones exhibit different rules. Some allow mechanistic science whereas some allow magic; the trick is to know the properties of the zone. The story follows a group of explorers from Earth lost in the wider universe and their struggle to find their way home, although they are the key to understanding the location of these artifacts. The first volume, *Sentinels* (1996, published in the UK as *The Mantle of Kendis-Dai*), deals with the history behind the artifacts and the discovery of a computer (the Mantle) that can predict the future by calculating probabilities. The second volume, *Nightsword* (1998), follows the quest to discover a weapon that can affect reality itself. However, the quest to discover the Starshield, alluded to at the end of *Nightsword*, never materialized.

Sentinels focuses on a civil war brought about by robots told that they have free will. This faction, led by the mysterious Sentinels, opposes the Omnet, who believe that artificial intelligences have no free will. The Mantle eventually resolves this conflict, as the Mantle itself, whilst being an advanced artificial intelligence, needs a human to be complete. This human-centered truism is presented in a different light in *Nightsword*, when it is revealed that Lokan, the master of the Nightsword, used the reality-bending powers of the sword to stunt the growth of non-human civilizations: "Each civilization he came upon he judged by his own standard – the standard of humanity! As though humans were the perfect form! As though no other form was equal or better!" (238). The recurring themes of tolerance and openness pervade the *Starshield* novels as much as other works by Weis and Hickman. It is also worth noting that, as with the *Death Gate Cycle*, Fizban also makes a brief appearance in this series as Vestis Zanfiban (see Weis and Hickman, *Sentinels* 156 and Weis and Hickman, *Nightsword* 295).

Despite this flirtation with science-fiction, or "Galactic Fantasy" as Hickman describes it in his introduction to *The Lost King*, because it is a "romance of our future" (Weis, *The Lost King* Introduction), Weis obviously found it difficult to completely abandon her earlier works. In 1997, she returned to her *Darksword* trilogy, adding a fourth novel, *Legacy of the Darksword*, co-authored with Hickman. In this novel, many of Joram's earlier actions become justified as it is only the creation of the Darksword that can save mankind from eradication by the alien Hcy'nyv. In 1998, Weis and her husband, Don Perrin, published *Doom Brigade*, a novel again set in the *Dragonlance* world and which deals with "draconians", the enemies from the first set of *Dragonlance* novels.

Finally, she returned to her favorite character, Raistlin, adding two more novels to his life: *The Soul Forge* (1998) and *Brothers in Arms* (1999, with Perrin).

Such a return to her roots indicates the extent to which Weis subscribes to the philosophy that no story is ever finished. With Hickman, she continued to edit collections of *Dragonlance* stories and they also produced another *Dragonlance* trilogy, *War of Souls* (*Dragons of a Fallen Sun* 2000, *Dragons of a Lost Star* 2001, *Dragons of a Vanished Moon* 2002). These novels explore the world that has been left by the gods, and which is now ruled by dragons more powerful than any seen previously. The central character of the trilogy Mina, a priestess of the “One God” (who is really one of the evil older gods). Originally conceived as a “dark” or “anti-” Joan of Arc (see Weis and Hickman, *Dragons in the Archives* 371), Mina is, like Raistlin and Joram before her, a character who, whilst in many ways evil, can also accomplish great good deeds.

In 2000–2003, Weis and Hickman also dealt with the theme of evil in the *Sovereign Stone* trilogy (*Well of Darkness* 2000, *Guardians of the Lost* 2001, and *Journey into the Void* 2003). Unusually for fantasy literature, these texts do not revolve around a band of heroes, but around the social problems raised by an artifact of immense power, the Sovereign Stone. Based on an idea by fantasy artist Larry Elmore (who illustrated Weis and Hickman’s *Dragonlance* and *Darksword* series), the Sovereign Stone is a tetrahedron that has the power to transform people into demi-gods, drawing out their inner power in external form. Each face of the tetrahedron represents a different element and thus different race: earth for humans, air for elves, fire for dwarves and, water for orks (this treatment of orks is itself distinctive in a field usually noted for “ork-bashing”). This indicates, at least partially, the fundamental social differences between the races that are explored throughout the novels.

What is most significant for Weis and Hickman is what is *within* this hollow tetrahedron: the Void. When the Sovereign Stone is opened and the elemental pieces divided amongst the races, the Void is released into the world, initiating a cataclysmic series of events. When the Sovereign Stone is gifted to the world, a warning is issued by the gods: “There is a reason it has been placed out of your reach. It may be too rich for you to digest just now. With work, you could reach it yourself” (Weis and Hickman, *Well of Darkness* 167) – in a bid to solve social problems quickly, the opening of the Stone creates more serious ones. As with their *Dragonlance* novels, Weis and Hickman’s concern here is for balance, and whilst the *Sovereign Stone* novels explore the evil of the Void, they explore the tensions between this divine absence and the elements, and between the elements themselves. The main protagonist, Dagnarus, is unusual inasmuch as he is the Lord of Void who brings destruction to the world (thus harkening back to the character of Joram in the *Darksword* novels) by unleashing the Void. Although evil in this sense, both his and his followers’ actions are explored in psychological terms, and Dagnarus’s desire for power is based upon sibling rivalry and a desire to be accepted by his father.

Again, the moral is not that good will win, but that a balance must be achieved. At the conclusion of *Journey into the Void*, it is Dagnarus himself who reunifies the pieces of the Sovereign Stone, once more curtailing both the power of the gods and the Void: the world is once more in human hands. Weis and Hickman write: “The truth is that most of Loerem’s people were so intent upon living their lives that that they soon forgot the Lord of the Void and those heroes who had sacrificed so much to stop him. Which, as the Captain, in her wisdom, pointed out, is as it should be, for returning life to the living is the goal of the hero” (*Journey into the Void* 566). Life goes on – a victory in itself – and is lived. The purpose of life is not to achieve, but to constantly strive for something better.

Between 2003–2006, Weis wrote her second solo-authored series, *Dragonvarld*. *Mistress of Dragons* (2003) and *The Dragon’s Son* (2004) focus upon a world in which humans and dragons co-exist, although humans go about their daily routines unaware of the influence that dragons exert over their lives. Centering mainly on Draconas (a dragon in disguise as a human), the novels follow

his quest to undo the damage caused by a renegade dragon, Maristara. Maristara has abandoned the law of non-interference laid down by the Parliament of Dragons and exerts her control in the human realm of Seth, teaching humans the secrets of dragon magic to protect herself from reprisals. In *Mistress of Dragons*, the narrative focuses upon Melissande, the eponymous mistress of dragons, and her discovery of the truth behind her role; in *The Dragon's Son*, the action is based on the relationship between Melissande's two sons, the human Marcus and the half-dragon Ven (short for "Vengeance"). This series was brought to a close in 2005 with the publication of *Master of Dragons*, a book that ties together the threads from the previous novels by uniting the two brothers and Draconus against the evil dragons.

In 2004, Weis began the third of her solo-authored series, *Dark Disciple*, set in the *Dragonlance* universe. This began with *Amber and Ashes* (2004), which focuses upon Mina's life after the close of *Dragons of a Vanished Moon*, as she begins to assert her own identity. *Amber and Iron* (2006) and *Amber and Blood* (2008) followed soon after. Echoing Raistlin's journey to divinity in the earlier series, Mina's narrative arc examines not only the world without gods, but also the issues for those without such power, and the need to maintain balance. Around this time, however, Wizards of the Coast did not renew the *Dragonlance* license with Sovereign Press / Margaret Weis Productions. This resulted, effectively, in the death of the game world in terms of campaign settings, and produced what is, to date, the last in the co-authored Weis and Hickman *Dragonlance* novel series, the *Lost Chronicles* (2006-2009; *Dragons of the Dwarven Depths* 2006, *Dragons of the Highlord Skies* 2007, *Dragons of the Hourglass Mage* 2009). In what is perhaps the campaign world coming full circle, this series "fills in the blanks" of the *Chronicles* series with which Weis and Hickman began their *Dragonlance* careers.¹ As such, these novels flesh out the details of the other series, revealing what happened in the intervening period between those initial novels.

Since this point, Weis' career has departed significantly from the *Dragonlance* universe, developing three new worlds, although remaining within the fantasy genre. In 2007, Weis began work on a series of "paranormal romances" with her daughter, Lizz Weis. The first, *Warrior Angel* (2007), is concerned with a reincarnated Knight Templar set in modern-day Chicago, and the second, *Fallen Angel* (2008), is about a reincarnated martyr and a rock musician. Both examine the interplay between angels and devils, but the series failed to appeal to a broad audience, and is now defunct. Following these novels, Weis worked on two other series, the *Dragonships of Vindras* (with Tracy Hickman) and *Dragon Brigade* (with Robert Krammes). The *Dragonships of Vindras* series is set in a world in which the younger gods are at war with the older gods, and the Vindrasi set out on a quest for mythical artefacts. The *Dragon Brigade* series is set in a world with technological advancements and magic (airships and dragons), and involves two rival kingdoms vying for supremacy until a forgotten enemy, the Bottom-Dwellers, unleash "contramagic" attacks on those who they perceive have wronged them.

Both the *Dragonships* series and the *Dragon Brigade* series revel in various tropes that are evident across Weis' *oeuvre*, alongside her dominant theme: the search for power, and the problems it causes for both those who gain it and those who suffer under it. Over the course of numerous novels and settings, Weis – primarily with Tracy Hickman but also a host of other co-writers – has demonstrated this concern. Whilst many writers and critics might disparage Weis' writing as being overly formulaic, Weis has made a significant impact in the field of fantasy literature, both for younger readers and established fans, and is with Hickman responsible for the creation, development, and expansion of the *Dragonlance* universe, whilst series such as the *Rose of the Prophet* and the *Death Gate* cycle stand as excellent examples of standalone worlds.

Overall, there is much thinking still required on Weis' work, such as the significance of the female characterization she has brought to bear in a field often casually misogynistic throughout her

¹ For more on the history of the *Dragonlance* campaign setting, from Wizards of the Coast's perspective, see Appelcline.

oeuvre, and in terms of her non-normative depictions of sexuality (*Rose of the Prophet*, *Mag Force 7*) or drug addiction (*Mag Force 7*). Influence and thematic links are other areas necessitating more research, such as in the relationship between her writing and Tolkien, Moorcock (*Stormbringer* linking to the *Darksword* universe), or Terry Brooks or R. Scott Bakker (the *Word and the Void* or *Prince of Nothing* series, respectively, in relation to *Sovereign Stone* and contemporary depictions of “the void”). Moreover, and perhaps most importantly given the historical significance of the *Dragonlance* series, more is required on Weis’s influence on more recent fantasy writers, alongside the ways in which she moves between SF and fantasy.² Overall, Weis’ contribution to the field of fantasy literature has too often and too easily dismissed, and necessitates far more research to really do it justice.

Bibliography (Chronological)

- Stories, novellas, and novels listed by first publication (no reprints, collector’s editions, or omnibus editions are included)
- Items listed in bold are solo-authored by Weis
- List includes fiction items only, and does not include the numerous game adventures and supplements, articles, or non-fiction works
- Series are included, where relevant, even if the series has not continued
- Note that Weis and Hickman have edited many of the *Dragonlance* anthologies, not all of which are listed, and that not all *Dragonlance* volumes list editors, providing only authors’ names. Lists of cover authors have been provided as “ed.”
- Compiled from various sources, including archives of *Dragon Magazine*, Internet Speculative Fiction Database, Locus Index to Science Fiction, WorldCat, and relevant publication details in anthologies. Any errors are my own, with apologies.

	Independent / Non-<i>Dragonlance</i>	Dragonlance
1984	<i>The Endless Catacombs</i> [Endless Quest 22]	“The Test of the Twins”, <i>Dragon Magazine</i> #83 <i>Dragons of Autumn Twilight</i> , with Tracy Hickman [Chronicles 1]
1985	<i>Riddle of the Griffon</i> , with Roger E. Moore [as Susan Lawson] [Endless Quest] <i>The Tower of Midnight Dreams</i> [D&D Cartoon Show Book 1]	<i>Dragons of Winter Night</i> , with Hickman [Chronicles 2] <i>Dragons of Spring Dawning</i> , with Hickman [Chronicles 3]
1986		<i>Time of the Twins</i> , with Hickman [Legends 1] <i>War of the Twins</i> , with Hickman [Legends 2] <i>Test of the Twins</i> , with Hickman [Legends 3]
1987		“The Legacy”, with Hickman, in <i>Magic of Krynn</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman [Tales I 1] “Wanna Bet?”, with Hickman, in <i>Kender, Gully Dwarves, and Gnomes</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman [Tales I 2] “Raistlin’s Daughter?”, with Hickman [as Dezra Despain], in <i>Love and War</i> , ed. Weis and

² See, for example, authors Richelle Mead (*Vampire Academy* author), Peter Tieryas, and Ben Peek acknowledging the influence of Weis and Hickman in various ways (see Mead; “Patrick”; Tieryas; and Peek).

		Hickman [Tales I 3]
1988	<p>“The Thirty-Nine Buttons,” in <i>The Fleet</i>, ed. David Drake and Bill Fawcett <i>Forging the Darksword</i>, with Hickman [Darksword 1] <i>Doom of the Darksword</i>, with Hickman [Darksword 2] <i>Triumph of the Darksword</i>, with Hickman [Darksword 3]</p>	
1989	<p><i>The Will of the Wanderer</i>, with Hickman [Rose of the Prophet 1] <i>The Paladin of the Night</i>, with Hickman [Rose of the Prophet 2] <i>The Prophet of Akhran</i>, with Hickman [Rose of the Prophet 3]</p>	
1990	<p><i>Dragon Wing</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 1] <i>Elven Star</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 2] <i>The Lost King [Star of the Guardians 1]</i></p>	“Raistlin and the Knight of Solamnia,” with Hickman, <i>Dragon Magazine</i> #154
1991	<p><i>Fire Sea</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 3] <i>King’s Test [Star of the Guardians 2]</i> <i>King’s Sacrifice [Star of the Guardians 3]</i></p>	“The Silken Threads,” with Hickman, in <i>The Reign of Istar</i> , ed. Weis, Hickman, Michael Williams, and Richard A. Knaak [Tales II 1]
1992	<p><i>Serpent Mage</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 4]</p>	<p>“True Knight”, with Hickman, in <i>The Cataclysm</i>, ed. Weis, Hickman, Roger E. Moore, Douglas Niles, et al [Tales II 2] “<i>The Story That Tasslehoff Promised He Would Never, Ever, Ever, Tell</i>”, with Hickman, in <i>The War of the Lance</i>, ed. Weis, Hickman, Michael Williams, and Richard A. Knaak [Tales II 3]</p>
1993	<p><i>The Hand of Chaos</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 5] <i>Into the Labyrinth</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 6] <i>Ghost Legion [Star of the Guardians 4]</i></p>	“The Best”, <i>Dragon Magazine</i> #200
1994	<p><i>The Seventh Gate</i>, with Hickman [Death Gate 7] Ed. <i>A Dragon-Lover’s Treasury of the Fantastic</i></p>	<p>“Kitiara’s Son”, with Hickman, in <i>The Second Generation</i>, ed. Weis and Hickman (1994) “<i>The Sacrifice</i>”, with Hickman, in <i>The Second Generation</i>, ed. Weis and Hickman (1994)</p>
1995	<p><i>The Knights of the Black Earth</i>, with Don Perrin [Mag Force 7 1] Ed. <i>Fantastic Alice</i> (1995)</p>	<i>Dragons of Summer Flame</i> , with Hickman [Chronicles 4]
1996	<p><i>Sentinels</i>, with Hickman [Starshield 1] <i>Robot Blues</i>, with Perrin [Mag Force 7 2] <i>Serra Angel #1: A Fable of Dominaria</i>, with Matt Forbeck [graphic novel for <i>Magic: The Gathering</i>]</p>	<p>“The First Dragonarmy Engineer’s Secret Weapon,” with Perrin, in <i>Dragons at War</i>, ed. Weis and Hickman <i>The Doom Brigade</i>, with Perrin [Kang’s Regiment 1]</p>
1997	<p><i>Legacy of the Darksword</i>, with Hickman [Darksword 4] <i>Testament of the Dragon: The Illustrated</i></p>	“Master Tall and Master Small”, with Perrin, in <i>Dragons of Chaos</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman

	<i>Novel</i> , with David Baldwin [Dragon's Disciple] Ed. <i>Treasures of Fantasy</i> , with Hickman	
1998	<i>Nightsword</i> , with Hickman [Starshield 2] <i>Hung Out</i> , with Perrin [Mag Force 7 3] <i>Dark Heart</i> , with Baldwin [Dragon's Disciple 1] Ed. <i>A Magic Lover's Treasury of the Fantastic</i>	"Honor and Guile" , <i>Dragon Magazine</i> #243 "Demons of the Mind", with Perrin, in <i>Relics and Omens</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman [Tales of the Fifth Age 1] <i>Draconian Measures</i> , with Perrin [Kang's Regiment 2] <i>The Soulforge</i> [Raistlin Chronicles 1]
1999	Ed. <i>Legends</i>, with Janet Pack and Robin Crew [Tales from the Eternal Archives 1], includes "The Ballad of Jesse James" Ed. <i>Earth, Air, Fire, Water</i> , with Janet Pack and Robin Crew [Tales from the Eternal Archives 2]	"To Convince the Righteous of the Right", with Perrin, in <i>Heroes and Fools</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman [Tales of the Fifth Age 2] "Shademehr and the Old Wives Tale", with Perrin, <i>Dragon Magazine</i> #264 <i>Brothers in Arms</i> , with Perrin [Raistlin Chronicles 2]
2000	<i>Well of Darkness</i> , with Hickman [Sovereign Stone 1] Ed. <i>New Amazons</i> (2000)	"The Raid on the Academy of Sorcery", in <i>Rebels and Tyrants</i>, ed. Weis and Hickman [Tales of the Fifth Age 3] "Kang's Command", with Perrin, <i>Dragon Magazine</i> #276 <i>Dragons of a Fallen Sun</i> , with Hickman [War of Souls 1] "The Travelling Players of Gilean", with Aron Eisenberg, <i>The Best of Tales</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman
2001	<i>Guardians of the Lost</i> , with Hickman [Sovereign Stone 2]	<i>Dragons of a Lost Star</i> , with Hickman [War of Souls 2]
2002	Ed. <i>A Quest-Lover's Treasury of the Fantastic</i> (2002)	<i>Dragons of a Vanished Moon</i> , with Hickman [War of Souls 3]
2003	<i>Journey into the Void</i> , with Hickman [Sovereign Stone 3] <i>Mistress of Dragons</i> [Dragonvarld 1]	
2004	<i>The Dragon's Son</i> [Dragonvarld 2]	<i>Amber and Ashes</i> [Dark Disciple 1]
2005	<i>Master of Dragons</i> [Dragonvarld 3]	
2006		<i>Dragons of the Dwarven Depths</i> , with Hickman [Lost Chronicles 1] "Here be Dragons!", with Hickman, in <i>Dragons: Worlds Afire</i> , ed. R. A. Salvatore, Margaret Weis & Tracy Hickman, Keith Baker, Scott McGough <i>Amber and Iron</i> [Dark Disciple 2]
2007	<i>Warrior Angel</i> , with Lizz Weis [Warrior Angel 1]	<i>Dragons of the Highlord Skies</i> , with Hickman [Lost Chronicles 2] "No Strings Attached", with Miranda Horner, in <i>Dragons of Time</i> , ed. Weis and Hickman [Dragon Anthology 5]
2008	<i>Fallen Angel</i> , with Lizz Weis [Warrior Angel 2] "The Day is Ours", with Robert Krammes, in <i>A</i>	<i>Amber and Blood</i> [Dark Disciple 3]

	<i>Book of Wizards</i> , ed. Marvin Kaye	
2009	<i>Bones of the Dragon</i> , with Hickman [Dragonships of Vindras 1]	<i>Dragons of the Hourglass Mage</i> , with Hickman [Lost Chronicles 3]
2010	<i>Secret of the Dragon</i> , with Hickman [Dragonships of Vindras 2]	
2011	<i>Shadow Raiders</i> , with Krammes [Dragon Brigade 1]	
2012	<i>Rage of the Dragon</i> , with Hickman [Dragonships of Vindras 3]	
2013	<i>Storm Riders</i> , with Krammes [Dragon Brigade 2]	
2014	<i>The Seventh Sigil</i> , with Krammes [Dragon Brigade 3]	
2015		
2016	<i>Doom of the Dragon</i> , with Hickman [Dragonships of Vindras 4]	
2017	<i>Spymaster</i> , with Krammes [Dragon Corsairs 1]	

Works Cited

Appelcline, Shannon. “Dragonlance”. *D&D Alumni* article for Wizards of the Coast Dungeons and Dragons site. 21 February 2014. Web. <http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/dragonlance>. 10 September 2016.

Mead, Richelle. “Books That Changed Me”. *Sydney Morning Herald*. 16 March 2014. Web. <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/richelle-mead-books-that-changed-me-20140313-34q6y>. 10 September 2016.

“Patrick”. “Richelle Mead: ‘The Doctor can go pretty much anywhere you can imagine, no matter how crazy it might seem’.” *Guardian*. 1 July 2013. Web. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jul/01/richelle-mead-doctor-who-interview>. 10 September 2016.

Peek, Ben. “Thirty Years On: Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman and the Legacy of Mortality”. 21 August 2014. Web. <http://www.tor.com/2014/08/21/thirty-years-on-margaret-weis-and-tracy-hickman-and-the-legacy-of-mortality/>. 10 September 2016.

Sawyer, Andy. “From Dragonlance to Death Gate”. *GMI* (Sept 1991), 49–50. Print.

Tieryas, Peter. “Loved Seeing Margaret Weis Again At Gen Con!”. Blogpost at *The Whimsy of Creation*. 12 August 2016. Web. <https://tieryas.wordpress.com/2016/08/12/loved-seeing-margaret-weis-again-at-gen-con/>. 10 September 2016.

Weis, Margaret. *The Lost King*. London: Bantam, 1991. Print.

Weis, Margaret, and Tracy Hickman. *Dragonlance Chronicles: Collector’s Edition*. London: Penguin, 1988. Print.

- - -. *Dragonlance Legends: Collector's Edition*. London: Penguin, 1988. Print.
- - -. *Dragons in the Archives: Twenty Years of Weis and Hickman*. Renton: Wizards of the Coast, 2004. Print.
- - -. *Dragon Wing*. London: Bantam, 1990. Print.
- - -. *Elven Star*. London: Bantam, 1990. Print.
- - -. *Journey into the Void*. London: Voyager, 2004. Print.
- - -. *Nightsword*. London: Orbit, 1999. Print.
- - -. *Sentinels*. New York: Del Ray, 1996. Print.
- - -. *The Will of the Wanderer*. London: Bantam, 1990. Print.
- - -. *Well of Darkness*. London: Voyager, 2001. Print.