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3. You must have a cumulative 2.0 GPR at Texas A&M University.
4. You must be in good standing with the University. (No outstanding parking tickets, blocks, etc.)

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PROCEDURE TO ORDER RING

Undergraduate students may submit their ring audit request online beginning December 11, 2000 at aggienet.tamu.edu/programs/ring/ or visit the Aggie Ring Office in the Clayton Williams Alumni Center in person between December 11 & 19. In the event you will not be in the College Station area between January 18 and February 2 to place your order in person, please request a mail order form and be sized for your ring between December 11 & 19.

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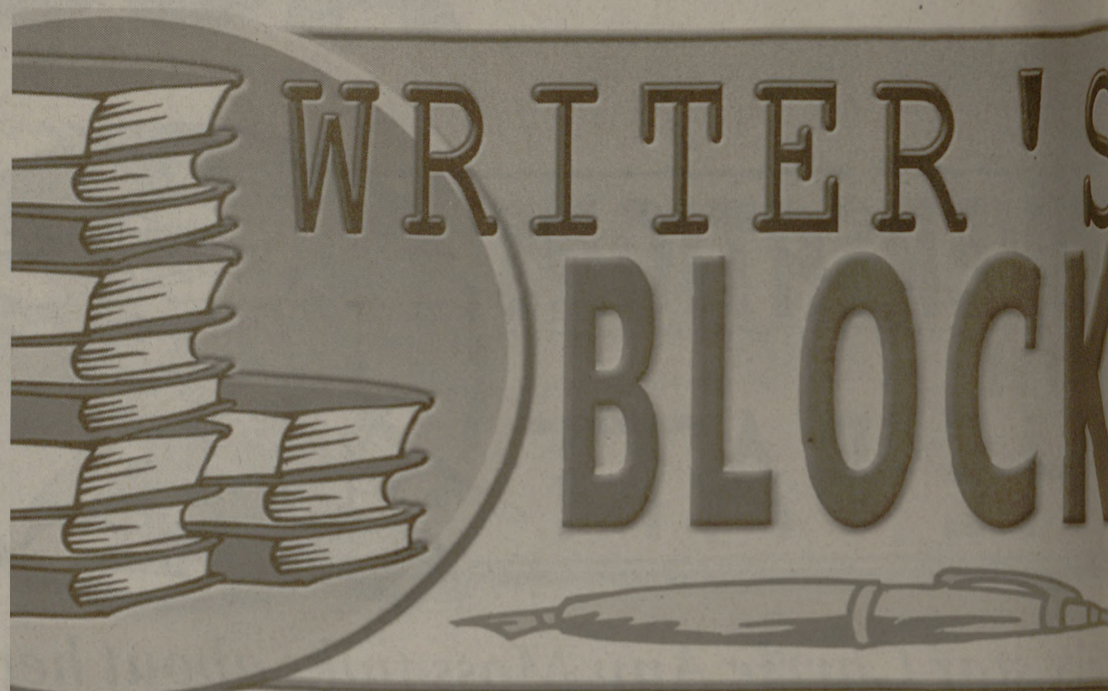
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Without Remorse
Tom Clancy
Published by Putnam Books

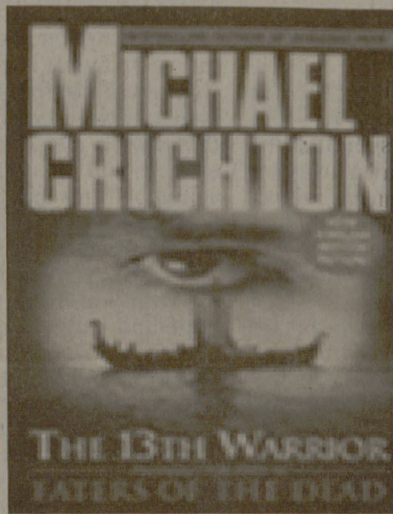
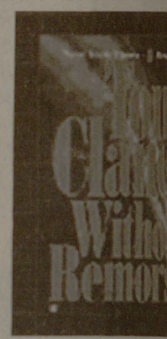
Clancy enters the realm of the prequel with this novel about the first adventure of his hero, Jack Ryan, made famous by the film versions of his books, *Patriot Games* and *The Hunt for Red October*. As in those books, the plot is complex and parallel but excellent. This book concentrates on Ryan's early years as a spy during the height of the Vietnam War. Several characters from later novels make appearances in

this book: Admiral Greer, portrayed by James Earl Jones in *Patriot Games* and *The Hunt for Red October*; John Kelly, Mr. Clark of the later novels; and Ritter, a military adviser. The plot centers on an American attempt to retrieve prisoners of war from North Vietnam, and on Kelly's grudge against a group of Baltimore drug dealers. The first part of the plot is over relatively quick. Kelly's story, on the other hand, takes up a larger part of the novel. Kelly's saga begins when he gets involved with a woman who works for the

Baltimore cartel. After she is murdered by the drug dealers, Kelly goes on a rampage to avenge her death. Fans of Clancy's earlier books may be taken aback by the new "intimate" Clancy. However, the book is better for its emotional side, and fans will adjust quickly. This book's plot is easier to grasp on a personal level than most of Clancy's other works, which concentrate on international plots and political intrigue with accompanying military jargon. This book avoids being too esoteric and is more in-

involved with individual people's lives. Still, the book is a little dramatic and can be too long for those who are not fans of his previous work. (Grade: B)

— Jason Berry



Eaters of the Dead
Michael Crichton
Published by Random House Literature

The film *The 13th Warrior* was a moderate box-office success, but the book it is based on is considerably better.

Eaters of the Dead is the story of Ahmad ibn-Fadlan, an ambassador from the kingdom of Baghdad who is sent on a mission of good will to a northern king. Ahmad is a simple man, extraordinary in no way, a departure from Crichton's prototypical brilliant characters. Fadlan eventually meets a group of Vikings. After a ritual reading of the future by a resident Viking witch, he is chosen, or forced, to accompany them on a mission to battle a mysterious force destroying their homeland. Fadlan finds himself in a state of culture shock and shocking battle as a group of half-men-half-beasts called the Wendols attacks the Vikings' village. Fadlan is eventually respected by the Vikings, and a series of internal struggles and bloody battles follow Fadlan's arrival in the village.

The book holds all of the mysticism that has made Crichton's books popular, while incorporating a bit of history. The reader cannot

help but wonder if the Wendols are fictional representations of such war-like tribes as the Celts or the Vikings, who warred with the Vikings. The book is interesting and intriguing at times, but it drags on and likely will alienate people who are not Crichton fans. Luckily, there is enough action to keep the hard-core fans interested and convert most non-fans. The dark mood and medieval setting, coupled with the semi-historical outline, is a draw for history buffs. This pseudo-history could have been the book, though. To a degree, it makes the book's events more interesting, but in the end, it could annoy history-minded readers. The scary, fictional characters Crichton makes them. Despite their minor historical resemblance to some people, they never turn out to be anything more.

Still, the book is worth a read. (Grade: B-)

— Jason Berry

A = Literary classic	D = Don't buy it
B = A cut above	F = Waste of paper
C = Passable reading	

Inspirations

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