I've got a lot of stuff to write about this month, not least because this will be my last “Bookworm.” I have been writing reviews for ;login: since 1989. That's 15 years. I have no idea how many books I've read, commented on, reviewed.

However, fear not. There are other Bookworms.

On 2 May 1898, George Bernard Shaw wrote his farewell article in the Saturday Review: “The younger generation is knocking at the door,” he wrote, “and as I open it there steps sprightly in the incomparable Max.”

I am not GBS, and so no mere Max Beerbohm will follow me. Rather, in the April issue, there steps sprightly in the incomparable Æleen Frisch.

And now to the books . . .

**SECURITY**

Over a year ago, I reviewed Bishop’s massive *Computer Security*. The volume to hand—a mere two-thirds the size—is a revised and cut-down version. As near as I can tell, Bishop has removed much of the mathematics and some of the explanatory material; the two chapters (on assurance) by Elisabeth Sullivan have been retained.

This results in a volume that is much less a university-level textbook, and more the sort of thing that a practitioner might read.

If you have been eager to delve into computer security in a systematic way, this is the book for you. It will not grow out of date, because it deals with principles. It is chockfull of examples. Bishop has done the field a great service.

A very different tack is the one taken by Marcus Ranum. His book is an out-and-out rant concerning *The Myth of Homeland Security*. I can’t say I loved every page: a number of pages actually frightened me. But Ranum does a great job. To quote him: “Researching the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, CIA, INS, the PATRIOT Act, and so forth, one falls into a rabbit’s hole of interdependent lameness and dysfunction.” Yep. Ranum is neither as focused nor as self-confident as Schneier, but his book is well worth reading. I read most of my copy sitting in Dulles, having had to take off my shoes despite the fact that neither the magnetometer nor the wand had been triggered. I felt much safer.

**YET MORE PENGUINS**

The LSB is an innovation that has enabled tens of thousands of programmers to write in confidence, rather than insecurity. In a mere 14 chapters, the Core Team has delivered methodologies for creating, testing, and certifying code that will be LSB 2.0 compliant. I wrote about LSB 1.0 several years ago. I’m thrilled that we now have 2.0, and application programmers will be happy to see this book.

Do you read *LJ*? Do you have a shelf or a stack of old issues? Well, throw ‘em out! Get the *Linux Journal Archive*, a CD-ROM containing all 116 issues from March 1994 through December 2003. I’ve been reading it on Mozilla. I’m told it’s a snap on Lynx or Konqueror. I’m sure Firefox’ll be just fine. There’s even a rumor that you can use IE. And it’s really useful. I reread stuff by Doc Searls and Marcel Gagne. I even reread some stuff of mine.

**LOW-HANGING FRUIT**

I think you can get *The Cult of Mac* even if you don’t use one. Perhaps not, I’m not a member of the cult. But I have used a Mac, and I’ve authorized purchases of cubes for folks working for me. This book is fun even for a guy like me.

It looks like an issue of Wired. Great typefonts. Outstanding pictures. Well printed. Hardbound. On top of that, there’s content. That’s right. Unlike many illustrated books, this one has substance.

Get it for someone you love as a Valentine’s Day present!

_Ave atque vale!_