

Dance for the Ivory Madonna
Don Sakers

FACT SHEET

Political Landscape:

- In the future depicted in the book, Africa has been decimated by AIDS and other diseases. Many African-Americans (either by choice or by forced emigration) have returned to Africa, where they have built a high-tech culture and unified most of the continent under a contract government called Umoja. The cutting edge of scientific and technological advancement has moved to Umoja.
- Constitutional amendments have added a third House to the U.S. Congress. In this Chamber of Ministers, members represent different interest groups (i.e. Labor, Veterans, Senior Citizens, various ethnic groups, etc.)
- A clandestine, self-appointed international organization called The Nexus enforces the will of the United Nations using the Nexus Interdict: a total economic and electronic blockade of offending nations. The Interdicted nation is effectively removed from contact with the world community until it agrees to go along with U.N. resolutions.
- The United States has fragmented into three major nations: Mexamerica (comprising Mexico plus much of the Southwest), The Christian States of America (the South and Midwest), and the United States of America (the Northeast, North Central, and Northwest).

Computer/Cyberspace Landscape:

- Four entirely different and innovative types of cyberspace.
- Decades before the action of the novel, Artificial Intelligences expelled Humans from most of cyberspace, confining them to a few limited virtual preserves.

Body Type Acceptance Interest:

- One of the main characters, the Ivory Madonna, is a fat woman and serves as Minister for Size and Body-type Issues in the Chamber of Ministers.

Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Interest:

- Numerous gay/lesbian/bisexual characters.
- A major sub-plot involves the flight of a young gay man from the Christian States of America, and his escape to the more tolerant outside world through Fort Matthew Shepherd near Laramie, Wyoming.