On January 4th, about 11 Bibliophiles met to discuss **THE WORLD OF KING ARTHUR**, by Christopher Snyder.

This book elicited a mixed reaction, with about one-half of our number really liking it, and the other half interested, but critical in their response. Cindy Sullivan rang my bell when she said it portrays one of the “iconic figures of western civilization.”

Snyder describes the pervasive legend/myth of Arthur’s exploits with examples and illustrations that begin in the Roman period and continue up to the present day. Surprisingly, there is no real evidence that Arthur ever existed… so powerful was the legend and imagery of his feats, that they migrated across language and geographic boundaries, extending well beyond the shores of Britain.

It was the detailed history of Britain that captured my fancy. The incredible migration, conflict and crossbreeding of tribal peoples, following the fall of the Roman empire: Romans, Bretons, Saxons, Picts, Irish, Franks, etc. Fine distinctions had to be made between literary, ethnographic, linguistic and archeological evidence. Sometimes circular and repetitive in the telling, these nuances may elude the casual reader. The artifacts of those conflicts and migrations, however, were vivid in my mind, from repeated visits to London and Scotland, where I hiked an ancient hill fort and trekked Hadrian’s Wall, both formerly used as defensive redoubts by one or another of these ethnic groups.

Our discussion opened up the rich subject of the meaning of myth and story, and their porous boundaries with factual reality. So enthralled have we become with discoveries of new scientific and technological worlds, that we may have lost the sense of self and identity that once invested itself in myth and fantasy. “What we are to our inward vision, and what man appears to be *sub specie aeternitatis* (from the perspective of the eternal), can only be expressed by way of myth” Carl Jung.

**THREE BODIES BURNING** by Brian Bogdanoff will be our next exciting read for discussion on March 14th at the Venice Inn. Frank Hartranft has kindly ar-
ranged for the author, a former Omaha police investigator, to join us for this discussion.

(Report submitted by Bob Runyon, 1/10/11, rrunyon@unomaha.edu)