ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

LITERARY

The Incontrovertibility of Rainbows
anonymous
Eleonora Marangoni, illustrator
Lemage Inc
978-1-938022-33-3
Four Stars (out of Five)

In 2048, anti-aging technology has made it nearly impossible for people to die, despite dementia or physical decrepitude. The enterprising and shrewd elderly who still have their faculties have teamed up with a firm called Ageless, Inc. to achieve longer lives for those in their age cohort. In this society, it's sacrilege for thirty-nine-year-old Dr. Wolfe to wish for death for his suffering grandmother.

The ever-ballooning elderly population keeps close tabs on the young by holding most of society's wealth, enforcing a curfew for youth, and skewing the justice system to favor the aged. A dramatic shift occurs in Anonymous's provocative *The Incontrovertibility of Rainbows* when the Young People's Party (YPP) wins a presidential election.

In the tradition of Ayn Rand's *Anthem* and George Orwell's *1984*, the author creates a vivid dystopia. Anonymous uses satire and over-the-top descriptions to critique America's obsession with preserving life at any cost and to discuss the skyrocketing costs of medicine, the consequences of wealth in the hands of a few, and what happens when corporations hold sway over the government.

Stomach-turning depictions of physical and mental decline, combined with doctors' ludicrous assertions that it's in people's best interest to keep diseased, pained, frail people alive with extraordinary measures, helps readers understand Wolfe's transition from an obedient doctor into a YPP figurehead. The omniscient narration allows readers to understand the viewpoints of many characters. Among them are Don Ilbenit, head of Ageless, Inc.; Sady Reveneiro, the YPP presidential candidate; and Dr. Silverstar, the slick male champion of anti-aging measures. Unfortunately, the female characters are not as well developed as the male characters. All of the women seem to exist as empty-headed sex objects motivated by the pursuit of beauty and the attention of men.

A certain inevitability pervades the book, creating a pensive atmosphere. The author

describes the events leading up to, and following, the YPP's rise to power with such realism that readers will find eerie similarities between the 2048 political contests and those of today.

The author deftly creates a sense of immediacy by referencing 2015 as the year when senior citizens first began to gain power and calling Sady "the second skinny black president."

Although many characters are fleshed out, others remain indistinct. The author's tendency to report what happened rather than throw readers into the action may dilute the intensity of this tale for some. Nonetheless, *The Incontrovertibility of Rainbows* is an incontrovertibly important tale.

Jill Allen