

## Introduction

... America has always been a land set firmly not in the past, but in the future. On a recent visit to England, I found dozens of wonderful bookstores chock full of the past — ancient history, rooms full of it, and great literature in such monumental stacks as to be overwhelming. In the usual American bookstore, history might occupy a few bookcases; great literature has its honoured place, but this year's paperbacks dominate. The past is not disregarded, but neither does it loom so large and run so deep in our blood.

**Greg Bear, introduction to *Tangents* (1989).**