

# ALEXIAD

(ΑΛΞΙΑΣ)

\$2.00

## This issue is dedicated to all D-Day Veterans.

This is going to be a rant, because I don't have anything thoughtful to say this issue. The rant concerns the people at the library who come up to me and engage me in conversation about the pile of books I am working through. I managed some bits of politeness for the three who did it on Saturday, chiefly because none of them made the inane comment that they wished they had time to read, as though reading were a waste of time. They would not have thought of saying such a thing to someone playing solitaire or another computer game, any more than they would have done so to people waiting in line for baseball tickets. But because I am spending my time reading, I am fair game to be approached. Most of the time I don't really mind it but this Saturday I was in a territorial mood. It had been more than a month since I'd been able to sit at a library table and read. Had anyone come forth with the reading is a waste of time philosophy I'd have had some words for them. Fortunately none of the three made that comment so their behavior got filed under unconsciously irritating. One did ask if the books were all mine to which I replied truthfully that no, they belonged to the library. I did not volunteer the information that there were around twelve thousand books at home. I had not come to the library for conversation. I was there to read and learn, also to finish books I couldn't renew.

— Lisa

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The 137th Running of the Kentucky Derby was **May 7, 2011**. Animal Kingdom won in 2¾ lengths with John Velasquez up — the jockey's first Derby victory.

The 136th Running of the Preakness Stakes was **May 21, 2011**. Shackleford won by three-quarters of a length over Animal Kingdom. No Triple Crown this year.

The 142nd Running of the Belmont Stakes was **June 11, 2011**. Ruler on Ice won in the slop.

The 57th Running of the Yonkers Trot (1st leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) is **July 9, 2011** at Yonkers Raceway in Yonkers, New York.

The 86th Running of the Hambletonian (2nd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) is **August 6, 2011** at Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

The 119th Running of the Kentucky Futurity (3rd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown) is **October 2, 2011** at the Red Mile in Lexington, Kentucky.

The **World Party** is at 9:00 p.m. local time on **June 21, 2011**.

Printed on June 15, 2011

Deadline is **August 1, 2011**

## Reviewer's Notes

In a stop-press moment, there is some concern that the studios are passing over ComicCon this year. The fans' response was not a very good production of ticket sales. But if the big professional cons slump, the entire concept of going to cons may also go. Just as the podcasters are scorning the idea of print, and when they become passé . . .

— Joe

## RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



The SETI Institute's radio telescope facility at Hat Creek, in California near Mount Shasta, has been forced to suspend its search due to a failure to get an extension from the National Science Foundation on its operating grants.

So we don't have to worry about getting those weapons that could utterly destroy the planet from *The Hercules Text* broadcasts from the stars. Can you sleep easier now?

**I am SOOO totally disappointed!** I got an email for "Big Time Travel Deals"! But it was for mundane travel deals. Nothing about going back to the Crucifixion, the Battle of Waterloo, the conception of Woodrow Wilson Smith will never mind that last one.

The Walking With the Wounded team, Martin Hewitt, Guy Disney, Stephen Young, and Jaco Van Gass, reached the North Pole on **April 17, 2011**, having man-hauled 190 miles in thirteen days. Their next goal is Everest.

<http://www.walkingwiththe wounded.org.uk>

We regret to report the death of **Nawang Gombu** on **May 1, 2011** at home in Darjeeling, India. Nawang was on the 1953 Mount Everest expedition, at the age of 21 the youngest sherpa in the party. He reached the summit in 1963 and again in 1965, being the first person to reach the top of Mount Everest twice.

Meanwhile, **Apa Sherpa** has broken his own record, summiting Everest for the 21st time on **May 11** for the Eco Everest team. He has announced his retirement as a climber.

Two simultaneous waterspouts were sighted off the coast of Oahu on **May 3, 2011**. There were no reports of ball lightning snatching people off golf courses or bodies found in the ocean with "CREATION TOOK EIGHT DAYS" written in scars on their chests, however.

We note the death of **Edward Hardwicke** from cancer on **May 16, 2011**. Hardwicke took over the role of Dr. Watson in the later Granada productions of the Sherlock Holmes stories, and also played Warnie Lewis in "Shadowlands".

Incidentally, a very useful piece of work is

available with such lists as summaries and cast lists of the complete Granada series and other adaptations, BSI investitures, and the like:

<http://www.sherlockpeoria.net/StamleyHopkinsMain.html>

Just after midnight on **May 25**, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory made its final attempt to send a command signal to the Mars Exploration Rover-A "Spirit", which had sent its last signal on **March 22, 2010** after having become immobilized on **May 1, 2009**. The rover landed in Gusev Crater on Mars on **January 4, 2004** with an intended usable period of 90 sols (the Earthly name for the Martian day). The warranty on the drive train had long since expired, so they were out of luck.

The mission patch shows Marvin the Martian, while the patch for the other rover, Opportunity, shows Duck Dodgers. The Earth Creature has won . . .

This November, the Mars Science Laboratory with the rover Curiosity will be launched, planning to arrive in August of 2012. November is also the centennial of the sale of "Under the Moons of Mars" to *All-Story Magazine*. Don't you think Dejah Thoris would make a nice mission patch illustration?

And John Carter as the Mars Science Laboratory mission patch. I've seen pictures of him holding her; it's so totally right, dude!

**Looking Forward, Looking Back:** The **Seventieth** Doolittle Tokyo Raiders Reunion will be back in Dayton. We're already thinking about going. I mean, it's not as if we don't know the area.

**Q Branch Does Confectionery:** Would-be shaheads wanting to learn how to blow themselves up through downloading an al-Qaeda DIY manual found instead that they had recipes from Ellen DeGeneres's "Best Cupcakes in America" website. Allah Snackbar! The busy little beavers of the SIS and GCHQ had infiltrated the servers and replaced the on-line documents. (Courtesy of the *Daily Telegraph* for 02 June 2011.)

David Hayter, screenwriter on *The Scorpion King*, *X-Men*, *X2*, and *Watchmen*, has been announced as the screenwriter for a forthcoming movie adaptation of Anne McCaffrey's Hugo-winning novel *Dragonflight*. How he will get in the sensitive but hunky vampire for Lessa to wuv is an interesting problem, but I have confidence in confidence alone . . .

Meanwhile, HBO and BBC Worldwide productions have announced plans for a new version of *I, Claudius*. What was wrong with the old one?

I was listening to local talk radio on June 3 when the host announced the death of James Arness, who had played Marshall Dillon on *Gunsmoke* for many years. I sat down hard and reflected on the loss of a legend. *Gunsmoke* was a staple of my childhood life. This is a sad day for the show's many fans.

— Lisa

South Polar veterans will also remember Arness as the title character in their beloved movie *The Thing from Another World* (1951).

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000790/>

## OBITS

We regret to report the death of **Terry Jeeves** on **May 29, 2011**. Terry's skills spanned the entirety of fandom; he was a fan artist, a fanzine editor, a fan-writer, a club organizer (having helped set up the British Science Fiction Association), a prozine cataloguer (*Checklist to Astounding SF*), and in the mundane world a schoolteacher and WWII R.A.F. veteran. His stories of the absurdities and improbabilities of his service and after, *Wartime Daze (or How I Won the War)* and *Other Bits* were collected by our own Tom Sadler (reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 9 #4). He received the Rotsler Award for Fan Art, the Doc Weir Award for service to British Fandom, and the First Fandom Hall of Fame Award.

We have lost the kindly old bloke who told us stories about his faintly daft chums.

## MONARCHIST NEWS

Grandmum gave Wills the title of **Duke of Cambridge** as his wedding present. This title has been granted to several royal princes. The title was first given to four different sons of James, Duke of York (the future James II), Charles, James, Edgar, and Charles, all of whom died in infancy. The next grant was to the Erbprinz Georg August von Braunschweig-Lüneburg, grandson of the then heir to the British throne the Kurfürstin Sophia; he later became King George II. The next grant was to his great-grandson Prince Adolphus, whose son and heir George became Commander-in-Chief of the British Army.

In addition, Prinz Adolphus von Teck, the brother-in-law of George V, became Adolphus Cambridge, Marquess of Cambridge, in 1917 when the various royals gave up their German titles. The title became extinct with the death of the second Marquess in 1981.

Speaking of royal weddings, the Dragon King (*Druk Gyalpo*) of Bhutan, **Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck**, will marry **Jetsun Pema** in October. The Bhutanese call themselves the Dragon People. Does Anne McCaffrey know about this? How about Naomi Novik?

Having decisively lost the election he provoked, **Count Mikhail Georgivich Ignatiev** will step down as party leader. Of the Liberal Party of Canada, that is, having seen the Liberals lose their position as the Opposition to the NDP and having lost his own seat (Etobicoke-Lakeshore). Michael Ignatieff, as he is more commonly known, is the grandson of Tsarist Minister of Education Count Pavel Nikolaivich Ignatiev and great-grandson of Tsarist Minister of the Interior Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatiev.

## THE VITAL FRINGE

Commentary by Joseph T Major on  
*THE PATRIOT*  
by Harold Bienvenu (1964)

James Pierson describes in his *Camelot and the Cultural Revolution* (2007; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #5) a triumphant political and cultural movement, and its reversal. At the end of the Second World War, even though their beloved Franklin had not seen its end, American liberalism was not only triumphant, it was universal. This would be the American Century; the democratic powers had broken the old regime and the new tyranny alike.

The scene seemed a little off very quickly, what with the closing down of the Soviet bloc, but in turn, the ideas found their conceptualization: Arthur Schlesinger's *The Vital Center* (1947). Schlesinger explained, well, everything; the New Deal had triggered a political restructuring, a paradigm shift in politics, and now it was the universal basis of reasonable political concepts in America. The political mainstream consisted of those who wished to advance the gains of the New Deal and those who wished to consolidate them; only fringe political movements opposed it.

Said political movements did indeed announce themselves, and a small cottage industry arose to oppose them. *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950) presented itself as a psychological investigation into such organizations. It has been critiqued because of the bias of the tests. There were a number of fringe movements; remnants of the Old Right, all their nativism, anti-Semitism, racism, and such on display. There is some discussion of this in Joseph W. Benedersky's *The "Jewish Threat"* (2000; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 4 #4). Newer organizations sprang up, though, and took a more activist position.

But, it seemed, a number of proponents of the Vital Center couldn't believe that anyone would oppose them. Some of them sought to pull a *The Jungle* (1906) and write a fictive, but based on fact, exposé of this new menace.

There doesn't seem to be much available about Harold Bienvenu, the author of this particular book. He displays a pretty good knowledge of the strange new mix of California politics and society.

The story begins at a political rally for an organization called "American Patriots". The rally's organizer, William Allan Boardman, is worried about cancellations — the smog is pretty bad that day, and a lot of the attendees are canceling because they just can't get in. While musing over the pending setback, his thoughts go back to How It All Began.

In 1960 (there is a certain lack of dates, but it is possible to assign them by checking the text) William Allan Boardman left the Army, where he had been a public information officer, to go into business for himself in Southern California.

He seems to have been lucky; his first client was a prosperous and connected individual.

Walter Tighe is the elderly, successful, founder and proprietor of a booming restaurant and entertainment chain called Frontier Village, where customers can dine on hearty meals cooked according to the Tighes' own California pioneer recipes amid authentic California pioneer buildings, lovingly restored. Tighe is worried about the erosion of the American ideal, and wants to encourage the resurgence of such.

His second client is a young club singer, Lori Stevens, who rather quickly becomes intimate. It's the third client who becomes significant.

Mr. Tighe has found someone to help promote their beliefs, a free-lance minister, a crippled Korean War veteran, the Reverend John Bell. Bell delivers some fire-breathing speeches on the evils of communism and how it is threatening the American ideal. Boardman is not altogether convinced, but he is willing to cooperate.

And then he has the great idea. How could anyone object to being an American patriot? And so, the American Patriots, Inc., an institution of chivalry, humanity, mercy, and patriotism, is founded, with the Reverend Bell as its president, Walter Tighe's son George and several other yes-men as its board, and William Allan Boardman having nothing to do with it on paper, yet intimately involved in its activities and management.

It all comes down to the money. Boardman, or his firm anyway, gets a substantial percentage of the membership fees in return for managing the organization. Basic membership is \$5 (the ever-valuable Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank inflation calculator makes that out to be the equivalent of \$37.29 today) and for more money one gets more benefits.

The American Patriots begin to expand. Boardman, being "outside" as it were, becomes more cynical about the politics. He notes how simplistic and even thread-bare the concepts being presented are, by people who seem to have no idea of the situation beyond America Good Commies Bad.

His cynicism extends into other venues. It seems that among those other memberships is a corporate one. Now if the American Patriots only buy at stores that are corporate members of the American Patriots, why then that's a big bloc of purchasing power. And Boardman suggests that firms do do that sort of thing. One rather tearing scene has a store owner who won't join up denouncing Boardman as being morally worse than he was — and he had done time! (Nowadays companies jostle one another to get loyalty programs, which is why my wallet (and even my keychain) has so many cards.)

The organization contains the seeds of its own demise, as it were. Nowadays, we would say that the Reverend Bell suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. He drinks, because of all the strain from his memories of the war and all the work he is doing now. When drunk, he rather fails to present the proper image of a leader of the American Patriots.

Boardman has another assistant. Walter Tighe's oldest grandchild, Cordelia, has insinuated herself into the affairs of the

company and organization. She is competent, effective, and has a certain distancing from the beliefs of her father and grandfather. For example, when the Reverend Bell becomes incapacitated from drinking, she knows a sanitarium to send him to.

The American Patriots are reaching their natural limit, so to speak, being very effective in Southern California and neighboring areas, but not quite able to spread beyond this. (Rather like Alfred William Lawson's Direct Credits Society, which was quite active, but only where Lawson spoke, and he didn't believe in radio because all the stations were owned by those public enemies the financiers.) There may be a financial problem, the expansion of the organization has reached a point where their books may have to be investigated, and the parasitical association of Boardman's firm on the American Patriots will not look good. This is an up-or-out situation.

Then Cordy Tighe brings up a lateral solution. She arranges a meeting with one Charles M. Smith, owner of the rich and powerful Cali-Mex Oil company, notorious for having left a briefcase full of money on an airplane, and not being very forward with any sort of reward to the man who found it, but otherwise anonymous. Smith has a very simple proposal; Boardman should run for Congress. There needs to be someone in Congress to defend the oil depletion allowance, and the incumbent in the Thirty-ninth District is somewhat hostile to the idea; hence he should be replaced by someone who can be trusted to defend America's petroleum reserves. This run would entail ditching the American Patriots and marrying a proper personable and supportive Loyal Political Wife, like say Cordelia Tighe.

Boardman's principal objection is that he doesn't get any warmth from Cordy. He's perfectly happy with Lori, unsuitable for a distinguished congressman that she is. Then he finds out why he doesn't get any warmth from Cordy. She tells him she was seduced by a woman in college, and in spite of being treated rather aggressively at that sanitarium she conveniently knew about (where Reverend Bell was helped to recover from one bout of drinking), remained like that.

But she will submit to the indignities of marriage in order to get power. Which leaves the American Patriots to deal with.

The city is about to finally look into the books. Boardman has been putting off the audit with various accusations of unpatriotism, pro-Communism, and other such diversions.

And the Reverend Bell's drinking has become worse.

Amazingly, all their problems can be solved in one neat, clean, simple action: give the Reverend a bottle of whiskey and a speech containing a personal insult aimed at the mayor. Which he proceeds to take in and give out, respectively.

Oh, the embarrassment. The board votes to dissolve the organization and donate the remaining funds in the treasury to charity.

This frees everything up. Boardman marries Cordelia Tighe, announces his candidacy, and

wins. Lori Stevens flees and picks up her career up north. And the Reverend Bell kills himself by driving his car into Boardman's office.

Bienvenu has a remarkably thorough knowledge of the time and place. His portrayals of fringe right politics are well informed, as when he discusses the Liberty Amendment to abolish the income tax (and his viewpoint is also well defined, when Boardman ridicules it). He can be remarkably clever; for example, there was no Thirty-Ninth Congressional District in California in 1962, so he can invent an incumbent who makes a suitable opponent. (Named, of all things, "Dick Dickson" — but he's a Democrat who can't be trusted because, you see, he's against the oil depletion allowance.)

Some of his characterizations from real life are barely painted over. "Frontier Village" is based on Knott's Berry Farm, where indeed diners could be served hearty meals cooked to California pioneer recipes amid authentic California pioneer buildings. The founder was Walter Knott — and his wife was named Cordelia. (I don't know about any granddaughters.) Walter Knott was known as a proponent of right-wing views.

The origins of Charles M. "Satchel" Smith are a little less so. The oil business brought out the most eccentric and extreme in people. Having to deal with an interest in horses, *Blood and Money* by Thomas Thompson (1976) was a natural source for some of these observations; Thompson describes the outré life of Texas wildcatter Davis Ashton "Ash" Robinson as background to the main story of the death of his daughter Joan Robinson Hill and its aftermath. On a bigger scale there are the super-rich Texas oil families whose lives are recounted in *The Big Rich: The Rise and Fall of the Greatest Texas Oil Fortunes* (2009) by Bryan Burrough. And you will recall how the dealings of Earl Kemp and Fred Pohl with H. L. Hunt went. This is the sort of person Satchel Smith is, though no one particular person seems to be the specific model.

What's most interesting is the model for William Allan Boardman. Let us consider the career of an advertising man from Louisiana named Edward Young Clarke. Clarke was hired in 1920 to recruit for a revived institution of chivalry, humanity, mercy, and patriotism. His efforts were wildly successful, raising the membership of the group to over two million nationwide. The campaign was eminently profitable for his subordinate organizers and himself, since under the agreements he made for the recruitment campaign, the organizers got most of the money raised from initial memberships — eight dollars out of every ten-dollar membership fee. (That membership fee is \$110.10 in today's prices. That's a big investment.)

Clarke got into moral problems (he and his business partner, Elizabeth "Bessie" Tyler, were arrested in a brothel! Hm) and the group found him no longer suitable. He went to prison in 1924 for violating the Mann Act, taking his mistress over state lines. The organization

declined about then, eventually dissolving in 1948 over tax problems.

What organization? Let's let Robert A. Heinlein tell us:

... Shortly thereafter [the Reverend Nehemiah Scudder] teamed up with an ex-Senator from his home state; they placed their affairs in the hands of a major advertising agency and were on their way to fame and fortune. Presently they needed stormtroopers; they revived the Ku Klux Klan in everything but the name — sheets, passwords, grips and all. It was a "good gimmick" once and still served . . .  
— "Concerning Stories Never Written" (1953)

Edward Y. Clarke was national recruiter, or in the grandiose and baroque terminology they used, "Imperial Kleagle", of the second Ku Klux Klan. Thus, William Allan Boardman has, like Scudder and the Senator, revived the Klan, but not in name. And not in other matters, either, such as the racialism. (One of the board members is Jewish, and there is no particular racial impetus in the Patriots' doctrines.)

The relevant comparison is the observation about the Klan by Tonkinese commentator Ngyuen Sinh Cung, made in an article published in 1924:

[The] Ku Klux Klan has all the defects of clandestine and reactionary organizations without their strengths. It has the mysticism of Freemasonry, the mummeries of Catholicism, the brutality of fascism, the illegality of its 568 various [Klaverns], but it has neither doctrine, nor program, nor vitality, nor discipline.

Thus we have the American Patriots, possessed of a rah-rah go-America vision, but without a coherent doctrine or workable program, against many things, but not for anything. A study of this thesis might have done well in the fighting in Vietnam, against a government led by this commentator, who had by then become known as Ho Chi Minh.

Bienvenu presents the ideology such as it is of the Patriots as naïve, simplistic, and ignorant. Thus there is a long discussion of the ethics of praising Patrick Henry as a great American patriot when he had opposed the Constitution. This would be more effective, and could lead to insight on the nature of Federalism and anti-Federalism, were it not conducted in the tone of "ha ha stupid rubes who believe Patrick Henry actually liked the U.S."

Similarly, the discussion of the shallowness of the Patriots' view of Communism comes up. Now Bienvenu, like the postwar New Dealers, is not a Communist. The book certainly does not descend into the nigh-deranged fantasies of the extremes of anti-Communism. There is all the same more of the ridicule of those who don't have the sophisticated view of Communism that the enlightened ones of the Vital Center possess.

The book ends with a editorialist wondering if Boardman will make a good Senatorial candidate in 1964, his victory being one of the few Republican successes in California in 1962. (Nineteen sixty-two was the year, you'll recall, of "You won't have Dick Nixon to kick around any longer," after his loss to Pat Brown, Sr. in the gubernatorial race.)

The implication is that he will win that also; he was a good organizer. Someone who could make a system work efficiently would function well in Congress. Bienvenu makes an even more devastating characterization in a scene where Cordy is talking to Boardman and tells him that she is like him in that neither of them can actually love any other person. Which is close to saying that they are successful sociopaths; "successful" in being able to fully pretend to be human.

One is entitled to wonder what the character would make of a book that was first published in English in 1963. Probably, wondering what scam this guy with the jumbled name was working, another one of those pathetic "ex-Commies" trying to sell the "Commie threat" line, in this book *One Day In the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. The author probably wouldn't take it very seriously, either.

And yet, in the end, it didn't matter. One point that Bryan Burrough makes is that for all the effort the "Big Rich" made in politics, they had no effect. They couldn't even keep the oil depletion allowance; it was abolished in 1974. Their other social initiatives were equally futile. Most notably, the Hunt brothers' attempt to create their own silver-backed currency collapsed spectacularly and at great expense to them, albeit not before handicapping the efforts of forensic specialists in identifying corpses. (Archived X-Ray films were burned to extract their silver to sell in the Hunts' boom market, thus destroying records that could be used to identify corpses by their bones.)

But then, the "Vital Center" also collapsed when it was challenged, though the challengers proceeded to take up its position that there had been a paradigm shift in American politics and no opposition to their politics was legitimate. Schlesinger also write an obituary for his concept: *The Disuniting of America* (1991), a last plaint against "political correctness".

One could say that Bienvenu knows the words but isn't quite sure of the tune. He has an understanding of the "how"; the ways in which such organizations operated, the ways that they perceived the world. His understanding of the "why" is less sure.

Like most such commentators, he seems to lack the understanding that others see the world differently. This was a fundamental flaw of, for example, the Vital Center types and the McCarthyites alike, that they assumed that their opponents had the same basic view of the world, but for reasons of power or accident or gain chose to act differently. There was no intellectual opposition, just an organization. And yet just the two groups mentioned had intellectual underpinnings, perceptions of the

world. They differed — and there was so little common ground, even though the perceptions were of the same world.

This kind of singular perception is more obvious in utopian novels, as has been noted in the discussion of Étienne Cabet's *Voyage en Icarie* (*Travels in Icaria*, 1839, discussed in *Alexiad* V. 6 #1). The author has conceived the structure of the new polity with great effort, to contrive a political and social system that is perfectly molded to human nature and needs. Therefore, all opposition has to come, not from any objections to the structure (which is by nature perfect) but from entrenched interests which are defending their unjust positions and acquisitions. The system is perfect and cannot be wrong.

For example, some observers might find President Newton Morrow of Robert Rimmer's *Love Me Tomorrow* (1976) to be a cult leader. The activists of his political party are often also members of his wife's religious group (which features worship services consisting of nude dance performances, sometimes with live sex). They wear translucent one-piece coveralls that are "environmentally friendly". They even speak a jargon, interlarded with words from Loglan (Lojban not having been invented then). Yet, far from being ridiculed as absurd, Morrow is a serious candidate, the only substantial opposition to him being a secret conspiracy of businessmen, military officers, and such, who find something wrong in his policy proposals to repudiate the National Debt, create a government-controlled computerized economy, nationalize banks, cartelize industry into employee-run firms, and so on.

Less blatantly so, more within the field, examples of this obsessiveness can be seen in the works of Mack Reynolds and of John Dalmas. Again, the system is if not quite perfect, far superior to the established situation, and only a conspiracy of adherents to the old power structure stands in opposition to the benevolent catastrophe.

Even the "ambiguous utopia" of Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974, 1983) only had problems because a few unworthy people had lapsed into un-Odonian principles. By the time she was *Always Coming Home* (1985) it was to complete goodness.

(As said, there was no Thirty-Ninth District in California then. The Republican senatorial candidate in the 1964 election was the actor George Murphy. He ran against Pierre Salinger, the former Presidential press secretary, who had been appointed to replace Clair Engle after he died of a brain tumor in the summer of 1964. Murphy won, so you see celebrity politics are nothing new there. Then, of course, in 1966 another actor won the governorship.)

### **TURKISH DELIGHT**

Review by Joseph T Major of

### **THE DERVISH HOUSE**

by Ian McDonald

(Pyr: 2010; ISBN 978-1-61614-204-9; \$26.00)

**Best Novel Hugo Nominee**

This novel begins with a bang. Not a figure of speech, but a suicide bombing of a tram ("trolley car" in American).

Now I doubt McDonald actually wants to confront the whys and wherefores. Female suicide bombers, like the one in this scene, generally are recruited through a process which entails giving them a chance to make amends for the shame of their having been raped by their recruiters; they aren't the devoted ultimate revolutionaries of propaganda.

From there, though, it settles down to following the common lives of commonplace people in the city that bridges the continents. Indeed, one might well count Constantinople . . . **Istanbul** as a principal character in the book, given now McDonald evokes the layered and diverse history of the City.

Commonplace people; a commodity trader making a big deal, a nine-year-old boy playing Boy Detective, an Indiana-Jones style archaeologist searching for a legendary human artifact . . . there are diverse people, none going to be the Hero Who Changes the World or the Survivor Who Escapes the World-Changing Events. There aren't any world-changing events, just ordinary people in a society twenty minutes into the future — well, seventeen years from the writing.

And yet, there is a consideration. Is this a future of the "real" Istanbul, or of an Istanbul based on illusions and beliefs? As the news describes the Islamist agitation and riots in the all too real Turkey, this secularist, diverse culture seems to be being driven away.

The author has great and powerful skill at characterization, at description, at setting. These are the ordinary people of a future world, the users of technology, not the awe-struck gawpers at the Wonders of Our World. The culture, the world is not ours in a different dress.

### **REAL LIFE WITH ZOMBIES**

Review by Joseph T Major of

### **FEED**

by Mira Grant

(Orbit: 2010; ISBN 978-0316081054; \$9.99)

Volume I of the Newsflesh Trilogy

**Best Novel Hugo Nominee**

Or, perhaps, bloggers with zombies. The culture of blogs intersecting with the culture of zombies, the perfect sort of work for this era.

Several years before the setting of this book there was a zombie outbreak, thanks to a tailored virus, and the world has somehow managed to survive in spite of facing enemies within that can't be prevented and require immense resources to defend against in a world where commerce is utterly disrupted.

The only people who seem able to handle this are the transfigurative culture of bloggers. Presumably because they stay in their own blogroll and can filter against the zombies.

Culture has responded to the shock by going into stasis. Think cyberpunk, where hip netheads of the future were depicted as liking bands that were like so five minutes ago back when the book was published.

This is a story of two of the "cool" and like so contemporary cultures. Think of it as today's *They'd Rather Be Right* or *Stand on Zanzibar*.

### **'ALF A SIXPENCE**

Commentary by Joseph T Major on

### **BLACKOUT**

(Spectra; 2010;

ISBN 978-553-80319-8; \$26.00) and

### **ALL CLEAR**

(Spectra; 2010;

ISBN 978-553-80767-7; \$26.00) and

by Connie Willis

**Best Novel Hugo Nominee**

In 1971, the Labour government undertook a massive and thoroughgoing transformation of the British currency. From thenceforth, the pound would be "decimalised", divided into one hundred pennies.

The system before that was in the ancient British style, an accumulation of different ways that had come together irregularly, often fitting oddly, with patches applied atop patches.

The Pound (£) originated as the value of a pound of silver; the troy pound that is still theoretically used as the unit of weight of precious metals. The symbol, you will notice, is a script "l"; an abbreviation for *libra*, Latin for "pound".

The pound was divided into twenty shillings (s). The term comes from *schilling*, an Anglo-Saxon term denoting the price of a cow in Essex or a sheep elsewhere. Livestock prices have gone up in recent years. A slang term for shilling was "bob", hence the comment about Bob Cratchit taking home fifteen copies of his name every week. (39£ a year and provide your own coal — Scrooge was economising on more than household expenses. One hopes that in that new spirit of charity the three ghosts imbued him with he gave Cratchit a raise to a full quid for the new year.)

The shilling was divided into twelve pence, or pennies (d). The word "penny" derives from the same source as the modern German word *pfennig*. The "d" symbol comes from the Roman *denarius*. Pennies were originally small silver coins; thus the error in Laurence Olivier's *The Chronicle History of King Henry the Fifth with His Battel Fought at Agincourt in France* (1944) where, after beating up Ancient Pistol (Robert Newton), Fluellen (Esmond Knight) says "there is a groat to heal your pate," and gives him a *copper* coin, that's wrong. The groat (an old coin worth four pence, and sometimes called a "fuppence") was silver.

Later on the British penny became a fairly substantial copper coin. When a music hall audience disapproved of the performance of the Marx Brothers, showing their opinion by tossing pennies at the stage, Groucho said "At least throw silver!"

The penny was divided into halfpence (½d), also called "ha'pence", and into farthings, from Anglo-Saxon *feorthing*, "fourth part". There were four farthings, or two halfpence, to a penny. Aside from obsolete coins like the groat, intermediate coins minted were the threepence, or thrupenny (3d) and the sixpence (6d), being

a quarter and a half of a shilling respectively. Kipps is opining above that a threepence is better than a ha'penny, that is.

Coins in between the shilling and the pound were the florin, which was two shillings, the crown, which was five shillings, and the half-crown which was two shillings and sixpence, or as they would say, "two and six". Hence the price on the Mad Hatter's (Jervis Tetch or the other guy) hat, "In This Style 10/6", that is, the hat sells for ten shillings and sixpence. Or half a guinea.

The guinea coin was minted with gold from the Guinea area of Africa, beginning in the late seventeenth century. After some fluctuation, due to the high purity of the gold, the value of the coin settled at twenty-one shillings. While no guinea coins were struck after 1813, objects of some value were costed out in guineas; horses for example.

John Masters the writer and soldier once observed that he did not dare too much research for his works, out of a concern that he would place any obscure and amusing fact into his text regardless of its relevance or value to the story. Putting *all* his research, at great and formidable length, into the story, and indeed shaping the plot around said research, would apparently have been anathema.

In a seemingly contradictory approach, Masters also wanted to make sure that his characters spoke properly. In response to a publisher's objection to his using military terminology in a story featuring soldiers, Masters wrote a comical version of a sailing story in which the characters very carefully and laboriously refuse to use nautical terms. It ends with their ship sinking in a storm, because of the delay involved in so describing the parts of the ship. What he would have said to a story, even a screwball comedy with characters agonizing over the consequences of their acts and then going on and doing them anyway, set in Britain in the nineteen-forties, that had commerce being transacted in decimal currency . . .

### THIS EARTH OF HOURS

Review by Joseph T Major of

**THE LOST FLEET:**

**BEYOND THE FRONTIER:  
DREADNAUGHT**

by "Jack Campbell" [John G. Hemry]

(Ace: 2011;

ISBN 978-0-441-02037-9; \$25.95)

Sequel to *The Lost Fleet* series

James Blish's story "This Earth of Hours" (*F&SF*, June 1959) is a puzzle piece. A group of humans find themselves stranded on a desert planet after the inhabitants inexplicably attack. Finding out what's wrong with that previous statement is the bulk of the story, and yet as it ends, with the survivors setting out for a desperate return voyage, Blish hints that an even greater story is forthcoming, one that might have been quite interesting.

Their leader Flo-Mar 12-Upjohn (Blish was doing just a little too much for the drug industry at that time, I guess) might envy John Geary,

trying for the moment not to be "Black Jack" Geary, hero of legend and recent events alike. Geary doesn't owe his position to getting married, but he is getting married all the same. *Now* he can marry Captain Desjani. Such a romantic encounter, him, her, her amazed parents, and about fifty thousand interviewers each and every one of them absolutely certain the romantic couple can spare an hour or two for a personal interview. At least Geary isn't as bad off as Lucas Trask, whose wedding was interrupted by a press vehicle with somewhat different equipment.

Such a romantic honeymoon, too, several hundred warships and a combat mission. Not to mention various political maneuverings that might be sinister and might be merely corrupt and stupid. The latter is more likely though the former must be considered. Some of the ships are having various troubles too. At least crew morale is satisfactory; so far nobody's taken the captain's potted plants and blown them out the airlock.

(An observation that arises from the experience of the author, clearly. The block obsolescence of the massive array of wartime ships, how the necessary compromises of their construction plagued the crews, and the like. All they need now is for Captain Desjani-Geary to have to buy fuel for the fleet on her own credit card (the Admiral's cards are all way past their expiration date), the way Dan Lenson once had to (*China Sea*, (2001)).

And their first task on the mission is to recover three hundred prisoners of war the Syndic is holding on to. Three hundred flag-rank officers, it turns out. Which grim experience indicates has the unpleasant possibility of three hundred Fighting Falcons trying to assert their seniority, officers grown up in the bad new ways and willing to pull rank and seniority. Somebody doesn't like Admiral Geary.

The Syndic is showing signs of decay, falling apart after the revelation of the pointlessness of the late war. For the moment the Alliance is better off, slightly. And with this depressing note the First Fleet heads on into the territory of the aliens who started the whole thing, to find out something about their whys and wherefores.

They seem a little depressed. I mean, blowing up damaged ships to make certain none of them are taken prisoners. But they do have human prisoners, involved in a sinister and strange experiment.

Oh, there was one little problem on the trip. Co-President Rhione, you recall, the one-time lover of then Captain Geary, was kicked out of her political office and assigned to be political observer on the trip. Including observing the rescue of her husband, who still has some of the bad new virtues. Calling Admiral Geary out isn't the best thing to do in this situation. At least he gets stopped before matters get fatal.

And then, as they plunge into definitely enemy territory (instead of the questionably enemy territory of the Syndic) the nature of the foe becomes less clear. Weep, weep, beyond time for this Earth of hours.

There seem to be many crises ahead for the now Rescued Fleet, and no doubt there will be many more confrontations, re-examinations, and realizations when this voyage is . . . [To Be Continued]

### COLD IS THE SEA

Review by Joseph T Major of

**THEN EVERYTHING CHANGED:**

**Stunning Alternative Histories of American  
Politics: JFK, RFK, Carter, Ford, Reagan**

by Jeff Greenfield

(G. F. Putnam's Sons; 2011;

ISBN 978-0-399-15706-6; \$26.95)

As you know, Bob, when Captain Rich Richardson, the protagonist of Captain Edward L. Beach's trilogy of submarine novels, had a scene in the final one where the characters discussed the engineering problems of the submarine force before the obnoxious Admiral Rickover, er Brighting stepped in, they recalled the unfortunate commander of the horribly malfunctioning submarine USS *Trigger* (SS-564). Without mentioning his name: which just happened to be Edward L. Beach. See the discussion of these works in *Alexiad* V. 7 #6.

One presumes that Captain Richardson and Captain Beach alike would have been appalled at the Point of Departure of the first of these three scenarios; at the time, I believe, they would have been in Washington. They might even have encountered a presidential aide named Greenfield, who does in fact make an appearance in this book, merely a name in a list of staffers, but still . . .

This is alternate history told by one who had been there and done that. It may surprise people to learn, moreover, that in spite of Greenfield's associations and political allegiances this is neither a Kennedywank nor a Democratwank.

In our first scenario, we have a real-life event that goes differently because Jackie decides not to see off her husband. A suicide bomber had decided that the accession of JFK was so perilous to the strength of the Republic that the tree of liberty needed to be refreshed in the blood of patriots and tyrants. Not, however, innocent women and children. But if Jackie and Caroline don't come to the door . . . JFK goes up in a world-shattering boom.

The story continues as Lyndon Johnson struggles to secure his succession, then deals with the problems of civil rights and foreign pressure. The story rises to a climax with the Cuban Missile crisis, followed by the results of the terrible strain on the President . . .

The second scenario might well be called, "If Bobby Kennedy Had an Atom of Security". Steve Smith decides to clear the way for the candidate on that epochal night of the California primary. Which means he takes a bullet for the Senator.

The remainder of the campaign is marked by maneuverings, dirty dealings, misfortunes, schemes, and the usual procedures of politics. And then when Bobby is handed the problems of the world, he finds that not everyone will be as cooperative. (In a footnote, Greenfield references *A Disturbance of Fate* (2002, 2003;

reviewed in *Alexiad V. 2 #5*), politely not mentioning its wankish nature.)

In the third, Gerald Ford manages to recover from a verbal stumble the way that in the real world he recovered from a physical one. You will recall how he discredited himself in the candidates debate with the statement that Poland wasn't dominated by the Soviet Union. Now if he had managed to say that they didn't think themselves a glorious part of the Socialist Revolution, but needed an occupying army to confine their bodies for all that their spirits denied the situation . . .

The result is an interesting comparison. One might well call it an "unreliable narrator" scenario, wherein Ford's foreign policy is depicted as stumbling, yet in perspective we see that its long-term results would be far more favorable. As when the Iranian crisis is shaped into a far more advantageous result for the non-Islamists.

But perhaps not, for in a hard-fought election Gary Hart beats Ronald Reagan. Only to find that his own failings have consequences . . . the facility with which Greenfield handles this both in fiction and in annotation is quite clever.

Similarly, in the "Kennedywank" department, Greenfield does describe some quite malicious and vicious satire devoted to Teddy Kennedy, and in the aftermath of a far less damaging and fatal Chappaquiddick incident at that. It would deprive David Irving of one of his malicious little quips.

### FRESHNESS OF EVIL

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*THE EICHMANN TRIAL*

by Deborah E. Lipstadt  
(Schocken Books; 2011;  
ISBN 978-0-805214260-7;\$24.95)

There seem to have been a lot of fifty-year anniversaries this April. There was the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil War Centennial and the fiftieth anniversary of the first manned spaceflight. And this.

In a dry, understated tone, Professor Lipstadt recounts how Israel sought to make a public accounting of the Holocaust through the trial of a significant perpetrator. The case had many legalistic difficulties.

Lipstadt's principal concentration is not in newly uncovered facts, though there are a few. (The bit about the improvised crematorium is ghoulis.) What has needed to be done, and is done here, is the expunging of a particular trope regarding the insignificance of Eichmann as a person and as an operator.

She demonstrates in all too uncomfortable detail that far from being the SS-Man in the Black Flannel Suit, Eichmann was an active and aggressive operator in the project of extermination of the Jews. There was very little banal about him, but very much evil.

(This discussion also requires an analysis of the research Arendt did for her book. She did not attend much of the trial, and did not read anything beyond the transcript, missing the observations that the attendees had.)

Lipstadt confines her purview to the trial itself. Aside from some debunking she avoids the background to the man's capture, which has been recounted in many books, each of which claims that all the preceding ones are lies. (It is rather reminiscent of the string of biographies of Groucho Marx which came out after his death, each of which said that the preceding works were like that.)

Similarly, she glosses over the international reaction. Some of it was quite detached, as with the Japanese philosopher who proposed that Eichmann be sentenced to lose all civil rights in Israel, because the shame of there being a country where he had no rights was the worst punishment imaginable. "Ach, Dolfie, I hear you don't have any rights in Jewland! Bwa-ha-ha-ha-ha!" One sees a certain cultural divide there.

Neither does she discuss some of the more recondite precedents. The Israelis used the justification of "universal jurisdiction" to justify trying Eichmann. Now that Israeli government officials are besieged by genocide indictments filed by Belgian and Spanish prosecutors, they may be less than thrilled about their predecessors' decisions.

She has been criticized for talking too much about her own trial. These are items in a much greater historical process, where one historical issue was tried out. She also mentions the Zündel trials in Canada, where the government forgot to stipulate the historicity of the Holocaust the first time and ended up having it challenged in court, which was what Zündel was charged with having done in the outside world.

### THE HUNT FOR RED JENNIFER

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*PROJECT AZORIAN*

*The CIA and the Raising of the K-129*  
by Norman Polmar and Michael White  
(Naval Institute Press; 2010;  
ISBN 978-1-59114-690-2;\$29.95)

. . . "Av-o-lo-ha!" Coruscating cantillations of musical chimes such as had emanated from the Polynesian deities of the iridescent ocean arose from the Moon Pool. "Av-o-lo-ha!" I looked and beheld a shimmering cylinder of ancient and mottled aspect arising from the water's surface, clutched intimately in the spidery arms of the grabber, like some abyssal creature of unimaginable antiquity weirdly capturing the srrush of the Ishtar Gate of ancient Babylon.

"Dr. Goodwin, there's no point in your coming down just yet. There's plutonium from the torpedo warheads in there. And it looks as if we lost the crypto gear when the hull broke." He paused. "Damn funny squeak that hoist makes, doesn't it?"

— Not by A. Merritt

Last year, the drilling vessel *GSF Explorer* conducted deep-sea drilling off the coast of

Angola. It's not quite mining for manganese nodules; on the other hand, it's not quite what the ship was actually built for, either.

"Secrecy" in a CIA project means the project has a public relations director from the start. Perhaps not so bad, but CIA covert operations seem to be being conducted under a blaze of publicity, with vast technological innovations that turn out to have half-vast usefulness, and a general inadequacy of result.

Ever since this project became half public, as it were, there has been speculation piled upon speculation. Which is a pity, because the story is one of an immense, innovative technological solution — that failed, that had a tragic flaw.

Not to mention the ridiculous speculation.

The *K-129* wasn't quite the exemplar of technology that the capitalist states deployed; she was, for example, diesel-powered. Her crew was likewise unusual, or at least the command staff; the commanding officer, Captain First Rank Vladimir Ivanovich Kozbar, was Ukrainian and the executive officer, Captain Second Rank Aleksandr Mikhaylovich Zhuravin, was a "rootless cosmopolitan" — Jewish, that is (Alexander bar-Micha'el?). And both Kozbar and Zhuravin were considered up and coming officers. After this cruise, Kozbar would get a plum staff post and Zhuravin would step up to command of the *K-129*. No Marko Ramius problem here! A more significant consideration was that the only sailor with more than four years service on board was an instructor. In cooking.

The authors recreate the final voyage of the *K-129*, admittedly speculation, but informed speculation. Including her last moments.

On March 11, 1968, at just about precisely midnight local time, something happened on board the *K-129*. From data retrieved by the Air Force's system for detecting nuclear detonations, the course of events can be determined, somewhat. Indications were that there was a fire on board, the missile propellants ignited, and the sub went down. And down and down.

There it was, out there, in international waters, ready for the first passer-by. If passers-by were to be found in the abyssal depths of the Pacific Ocean.

The spy submarine *USS Halibut* (SSN-587) was dispatched to the location in the Pacific identified by those flyboys. The Navy's own system seems to have missed the bus. She found the other boat on the bottom, broken in two and otherwise damaged, but not crushed. Her snorkel was up, which indicated that she had been near the surface when whatever happened, happened. (The *Halibut* had an interesting story herself, having been built to launch the Regulus cruise missile, which didn't work out. They had to do something with her afterwards.)

It's somewhat surprising to see how quickly, by the standards of government programs, the decisions were made and implemented. Plans began in July of 1969. In July 1970 the decision was made to build a ship to lift the hull from the sea bottom. The ship designs were done by

March of 1971.

Enter a guy who writes a nine-step memorandum of instructions on how to open a can of fruit, takes two hours, a cup of hot water, and 84 Kleenex tissues to clean the phone cord before he answers a call, and demands his own special stainless steel cutting blade to cut the beef for his Arby's roast beef sandwich. If he was an ordinary working stiff he'd be stark raving mad, but Howard Robard Hughes, Jr. was one of the richest men in the world. He was still stark raving mad, but he could afford it. (Consider the story of the Baskin-Robbins banana-nut ice cream.) Also, he could afford to build a ship that could raise a sunken submarine (or be seen as being able to afford it), and to provide a plausible cover for its building.

More recent biographical information indicates that at this point in his life, Hughes was no longer making such decisions, so associating the name of "Hughes" with the project seems primarily to have been part of the cover story. His decisions at that time were more on the order of what movie to see and what patch of skin he could use as an injection site. (See *Hughes: The Private Diaries, Memos and Letters* by Richard Hack (2001), Page 347, for this.) The bills that nominally went to whichever of Hughes's enterprises was the nominal builder were actually paid by the CIA.

The cover story was of an exciting, innovative project for mining the ocean, recovering manganese nodules. (Now if he had filtered minerals out of the ocean as in Sir Arthur C. Clarke's "The Man Who Ploughed the Sea" [*Satellite Science Fiction*, June 1947] . . .) And so, the *Hughes Glomar Explorer* was built, containing the processing equipment, built around a hold which could be opened to the sea from below (the "Moon Pool" and did anyone involved read Merritt?) and topped with a giant derrick, one of the last few commercial vessels built and operated in the U.S., apparently. The authors say she was battleship-sized; 618' 8" long with a beam of 115' 8 1/2". (For comparison, the USS *North Carolina* (BB-55) [see *Alexiad* V. 9 #5] is 729' long with a beam of 108'.) She was launched November 4, 1972 and finished trials in August of 1973.

The ship was very high-tech. One factor in deep-sea drilling is the means by which the ship is kept over the site. Anchoring is not feasible; so such ships have positioning thrusters, which communicate with transponders placed on the seabed. The book includes a photograph of the bow thrusters taken as the ship was being built.

The ship had other interesting features. The authors describe in detail how the crew was well-tended if not actually coddled. That cooking instructor on the *K-129* (Chief Petty Officer Viktor Mikhaylovich Labzin) would likely have found a proper place on the *Hughes Glomar Explorer*. There were other recreational facilities, movies, books — and plenty of opportunity for exercise, given the size and construction of the ship.

The ship's beam was too wide for her to transit the Panama Canal locks — the limit that constrained the *Iowa* class battleships and *Essex* class aircraft carriers. The long sail around

Cape Horn gave the crew time to work up. In a masterpiece of planning, the dock where the secret equipment was brought on board was in sight of docks where Soviet ships docked.

And sure enough, when the *Hughes Glomar Explorer* got to the site, a Soviet "fishing trawler" turned up. But you see, they hadn't had any idea where or when the *K-129* had sunk and this was how they finally found out.

The boat was 16,000 feet down, and at a spot near 40° N. 180°. This location will prove important later. That also meant they had to lower the grabber on some *three miles* of pipe.

The grabber was built specifically for that purpose; for example, it had differing numbers of grab arms on each side, with a gap to accommodate the boat's sail, where the missile tubes were.

The grabber was lowered and in an impressive feat of manipulation captured the forward part of the hull. The lowering took ten days, from July 21 to July 31, 1974. Now the problem was to raise the wreckage. And things were going fine when . . . on August 4, the hull broke in two and the part they really wanted fell back to the ocean floor.

The steel of the grabber arms had weakened when driven into the sea floor to surround the hull, you see. That and the strains of lifting and the damage to the hull caused the break.

They had the forward 38 feet of the bow, with two nuclear-armed torpedoes and six corpses. The bodies were buried at sea; this book gives the names of the three identifiable men. There are pictures of the others, even a picture found on board the hull [Page 129]. And, irony of ironies, a manganese nodule, caught in the hull, too radioactive to be processed.

So then, the *Hughes Glomar Explorer* returned to port, preparing for another effort. The authors quote contradictory statements on the broken-off section of the hull. If it had shattered, as stated, why did they plan a second recovery expedition?

And then it came out. Washington is a leak-prone culture and sure enough half-comprehended stories on this Top Secret venture were front page news. This was where the overall code name "Operation JENNIFER" came out. Which revelation put paid to further plans. The grabber was scrapped, it had no other use. The *Hughes Glomar Explorer* was mothballed, finally taken out of storage and converted into a more ordinary drilling ship, and is now named *GSF Explorer*.

Then the speculation began . . . Theories proliferated about the nature and success of the mission, and also about the nature of the ordinary mission. Even from the officer commanding the submarine squadron that had included the *K-129*, Rear Admiral Viktor Ananevich Dygalo, who believes that the *K-129* had collided with an American submarine.

You will recall the dramatic if not melodramatic book *Red Star Rogue: The Untold Story of a Soviet Submarine's Nuclear Strike Attempt on the U.S.* (2005; reviewed in *Alexiad* V.6 #2), where the secret Soviet plot to trigger a war between the Main Adversary and the

Hegemonic Deviationists was revealed. The authors go into some details about how implausible this was. For example, the Chinese had one missile submarine, which was in port, unusable. The *K-129* was not within missile range of Pearl Harbor. The eleven men added at the last minute were trainees (see above about CPO Labzin). And so on.

The response to this is of course that all evidence to the contrary is forged, while the crucial supporting evidence has been hidden or destroyed. Several writers, such as David Aaronovich (*Voodoo Histories: The Role of the Conspiracy Theory in Shaping Modern History* [2009, 2010; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 9 #2]) and Daniel Pipes (*Conspiracy: How the Paranoid Style Flourishes and Where It Comes From* [1997]) have written of the history of conspiracism; what is needed is a study of its methods. The closest that I have seen is the commentary on David Irving's research methods given in Richard J. Evans's *Lying About Hitler: History, Holocaust, and the David Irving Trial* (2001).

To Seaman Vladimir Mikhaylovich Kostyushko, Senior Seaman Viktor Aleksandrovich Lohkov, Seaman Valeriy Georgivich Nosachev, and their fellow crewmen of the *K-129*: On Eternal Patrol.

#### WHAT IS THE YETI?

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**LOOKING FOR MR. SMITH:**

***A Quest for the Truth Behind The Long Walk, the Greatest Survival Story Ever Told***  
by Linda Willis

(Skyhorse Publishing; 2010;  
ISBN 978-1-61608-158-4;\$24.95)

As you know, Bob, the Greatest Survival Story Ever Told is actually *Mawson's Will*. And in fact, Willis's massive research efforts for this adventure turned up some interesting testimonies that indicated that the survival was not quite as edgy as the original had indicated.

One of the employees of British Security Coordination was one Ivan T. Sanderson. Evidently, the Man Called 48100, William S. Stephenson, well known for finding all sorts of unique and extraordinary talents, and setting them to innovative and insightful use, missed one. Imagine what impression it would have made on American public opinion and Nazi morale had it been announced that, for example, Abominable Snowmen had been marshalled into a special operations unit of the Indian Army, while their Canadian cousins were enlisted in the Royal Bigfoot Corps. Or that Great Sea Serpents were being trained to tear out the bottoms of Nazi blockade runners. Or that the Bermuda Triangle was about to debouch a force of unimaginable extra-dimensional warriors (led by an old American flush-decker destroyer, well never mind).

Yes, Sanderson was one of those amusing and imaginative, but not quite perhaps credible, types known as cryptozoologists. And his thrilling work *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Come to Life* (1961; 2008) describes many



sightings of a large hairy hominid during travels into several remote nations of the world. Including one in the mountains of Tibet, where five prisoners were making a daring escape from Soviet Siberian slave-labor camps . . . and how one prisoner didn't make it because of their detour to avoid the Yeti.

The book *The Long Walk* (1956) by Slavomir [Sławomir] Rawicz (and Ronald Downing), describes that one incident among many. The story of the escapees from Siberian slave labor camps struck a nerve. Rawicz describes how he and six other prisoners including an American who was known only as Mr. Smith made a break for it, later joined by an eighth, a woman. They headed south, crossing the Gobi Desert and on into China, then Tibet, and finally India, losing comrades along the way. Finally, the four survivors, lean, filthy, and desperate, were rescued, taken to a hospital, and treated before being released.

The book evoked some questions at the time. In a review for *The Spectator*, travel writer Peter Fleming raised some questions about the journey, such as how they had managed to cross the Gobi without water, and why didn't they see a particular main road in China. And then there was that encounter with the creatures in the mountains. (That was the year that Peter's brother came out with *Diamonds are Forever*.)

And there it stood. Linda Willis had been there, if not exactly done that, and when she read the book she began to hunt down the sources and the people.

And when she began, she had one advantage: Slavomir Rawicz was not only alive, he was willing to talk. He helped clear up some misconceptions right away, including describing how they did figure out how to find water during the crossing of the Gobi.

Why he let the misconceptions stand was something of a different matter. His writer, Ronald Downing, had died in the sixties, and his children hadn't kept notes.

From there, Willis's narrative segues into a long effort of trying to find sources, running into dead ends, getting half-resolved hints, and trying again and again. This work becomes not so much a book about finding out about *The Long Walk* as a book about doing the research for finding out about it. (Why does this remind me of the works of the Female Person from Colorado? But then, there aren't any simple answers that are pointlessly ignored; *Looking for Mr. Smith* is an abject failure at being a screwball comedy.)

Then, in one of those half-hearted, evasive encounters, a strange story came to her purview. A Polish refugee described how he and six other prisoners including an American who was known only as Mr. Smith made a break for it, later joined by an eighth, a woman. They headed south, crossing the Gobi Desert and on into China, then Tibet, and finally India, losing comrades along the way. Finally, the four survivors, lean, filthy, and desperate, were rescued, taken to a hospital, and treated before being released.

This series of unfortunate events seems

familiar somehow. Yet its teller, Witold Glinski, said he had never read *The Long Walk* until the seventies. Strangely enough, he revealed many details of his escape that were not written in that book, that matched perfectly details that Rawicz had revealed, yet were not in his book. Hmmm. (On the other hand, Glinski said they never saw any Abominable Snowmen, only Tibetans in fur caps and coats.)

And why didn't Glinski confront Rawicz, saying "You stole my story!"? Because he thought Rawicz was a man he knew as Batko, one of his associates who had killed two Russian guards to get at a railway car which turned out to be full of cocoa, and after the escape had killed two more people in Antwerp.

More research on Willis's part found Batko, or at least proved he probably wasn't Rawicz. Not only that, but it turned out that Rawicz almost certainly hadn't been the man who escaped from Russia; there were records that he had been amnestied and sent through Persia to join the Free Polish Army in the Middle East. Other research found out that Rawicz had been discreet, albeit some might say dishonest, about his own background and even his own name. Consider the circumstances, though.

Then the hard part began. Both Rawicz and Glinski agreed that "Smith" indeed went by "Smith". She started looking for Americans named "Smith" who had gone to the Soviet Union. And actually found one who might be the right one. His picture is on the back cover. Alas, this now spoils the proposed idea of having Glinski try to pick "Smith" out of a picture lineup. Not to mention assuming to begin with that his name was "Smith".

And "Smith" (whatever he went by) seems to have vanished into the haze of the Raj. More research here, including trying to enlist the aid of the (second) Viscount Slim of Burma, the son of the man who turned *Defeat into Victory* (1956, 1961). But no luck.

This isn't quite a complete story, there is no closure. Too much of it is about researching the topic, not the topic itself. Then too, now there are accusations that *Glinski* also "stole" the story.

This hasn't stopped the original story being made into a movie, *The Way Back*, which stars Ed Harris as Mr. Smith.

*The Way Back* (2010)  
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1023114/>

This is a story of discovery. With all the advanced techniques and resources available, so much comes down to failing memories, to old people having passed on without having passed on their knowledge, to cryptic solutions and unsolved mysteries.

*Unsolved Mysteries* had a lot of nonsense; flying saucer stuff and other woo. It also did corrections when a hoax was proven (i.e., the Gulf Breeze UFO case) and updates when crimes were solved, lost loves reunited, and other mysteries were resolved. Of which many did follow. And it had Robert Stack saying:

**For every mystery, there is someone, somewhere, who knows the truth.**

### DIVINE MISTRESS

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**THE FOURTH PART OF THE WORLD:  
*The Race to the Ends of the Earth, and the  
Epic Story of the Map That Gave America its  
Name***

by Toby Lester  
(Free Press; 2010;  
ISBN 978-1416535348;\$16.99)

In Frank G. Slaughter's *Divine Mistress* (1949), the protagonist, Dr. Antonio Servetus, a fictional brother of John Calvin's victim Michael Servetus, and a physician (like so many of Slaughter's characters), has rediscovered Botticelli's painting "The Birth of Venus" [*Nascita di Venere*]. He is very much taken with the image of the goddess, modestly if un-Hellenically veiling her intimate parts. Then he is introduced to the comely young Lucia Bellarmi, a descendant of the model, a sister of the discoverer Amerigo Vespucci.

When the entire cast relocates to Spain (just like a sitcom reboot), Antonio and Lucia unexpectedly find themselves in the toils of the Spanish Inquisition. No-body expects the Spanish Inquisition! Their chief weapon was surprise, surprise and fear, fear and surprise! Er, their two chief weapons were fear, surprise, and the copious use of torture!

So when Lucia has her clothes stripped from her so she can be tortured, and she imitates the pose for the painting, Antonio *finally* realizes he's not in love with the image but the actuality. Bloke was a bit thick there, wot?

Fortunately not everyone then was that oblivious. Like with the fictional Dr. Servetus of that book, this book begins with the discovery of a lost treasure of human art and knowledge. This, however, is a map. Not just any map; it was the map that first recognized the discoveries from across the ocean as more than just islands, but an entire new continent, a fourth part of the world, and gave it a name, "Vespuccia" — er, "America".

Where did the idea of a "fourth part of the world" come from? The early modern image of the world was of a *oikumene* divided into three parts, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Lester discusses how mapping was divided between the symbolic and the commercial, without much exchange between the two. The transition from the separate realms of the sailing chart, with intricately drawn coasts and islands, and blank inlands on the one hand, and the "T-O" maps with Jerusalem at the center and Wonders on the fringes on the other, to a complete map required the rediscovery of the classical era geographer Claudius Ptolemaeus and his instructions for making a map.

Then people had to go and do. Such as the Genoese sailor Signior Colombo, who whatever his faults was a master mariner with wide experience in the inmost sea of the earth and the open ocean alike. As you know, Robertito, nobody then of any education really believed the world was flat. The problem Colom, or

Colón, or Columbus had with the geographers was that his estimate of the diameter of the Earth was quite wrong.

He thought he had found some islands off the coast of Asia, and once he got them settled, he would head a little farther west and deliver his letter to the Great Khan. The Hung-chih (pinyin: Hongchi) Emperor just might have been a bit offended at getting a message sent to the barbarian usurper, and getting to Dayan Khan of the Northern Yuan, the Great Khan (and yes, the direct descendant of Kublai Khan the Shih-tsu Emperor) might have required some inconvenience of travel.

Vespucci came a little later. He seems to have exaggerated some of his voyages a little too much, and then there were matters such as the division of the world between Spain and Portugal that he didn't need to get embroiled in. He did begin to consider that, hey, there was a fourth actual continent.

From there came the Waldseemüller Map, or perhaps we should say *Universalis cosmographia secundum Ptholomaei traditionem et Americi Vespucci aliorumque lustrationes* ("The Universal Cosmography according to the Tradition of Ptolemy and the Discoveries of Amerigo Vespucci and others"). One of those discoveries being the large land mass with the name printed on it of "America".

Lester describes not only the intellectual process that led to the specific construction of the map, but the physical process. The idea that those lands that Columbus, Cabot, and Vespucci had found weren't just islands, but a greater landmass, a fourth part of the world to add to the other three, required a fundamental intellectual realignment. The T-O world turned out not to be the entire world.

Also, the map came unassembled, and part of the accompanying text explained how to paste up the sheets to make a full map. As new explorations found new lands, and old copies wore out, the Waldseemüller map became a historical curiosity, then a bypassed one.

The last surviving copy was found in a back room of a German prince's Schloss. This book is in part to commemorate the sale of that map to the US last year for the staggering sum of \$10 million. But, you see, it's the first family picture.

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### TRANSITUS

Review by Joseph T Major of Ruth Downie's *PERSONA NON GRATA*

(Bloomsbury; 2009;

ISBN 978-1-59691-609-8; \$24.00) and

*CAVEAT EMPTOR*

(Bloomsbury; 2011;

ISBN 978-1-59691-608-1; \$25.00)

Sequels to *Medicus*

(2006; reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 6 # 6) and

*Terra Incognita* (2008)

The worst nightmare that the mind of man could ever conceive has happened to legionary medic (*Medicus*) G. Petreus Ruso; he has been thrust into a Connie Willis novel. If he were as ineffectual as the usual character from a scroll by the Homo Femineus ab Coloratum, he might

well end up dead, or *Persona Non Grata* anyway.

No good deed goes unpunished; trying to stop five drunken legionaries from killing a British boy, he ends up breaking his foot. Just as well, because he has a letter from his home in Gallia Narbonensis begging him to come home.

And when he finally gets there, he finds that everyone — impecunious brother, chattering sisters, domineering stepmother, and so on — insists on telling him half the story. Which gets bad when the steward of one of his brother's creditors — debts for which Ruso is nevertheless responsible — dies of poison while there to discuss payment plans. Did I mention that said assistant was married to Ruso's ex-wife? Their prior relationship, various circumstances, and the prospects of her future all add to the tension.

So, having to deal with crime, finances, gladiators, a ship which may have been sunk deliberately, and these pernicious seditionists called Christians, Ruso plunges into trying to solve all his problems. Which leads to some quite nerve-wracking scenes in the arena, with the thugs, and so on. And did I mention the problem of his servant Tilla the Britannic woman going off with a couple of Christians to do her own investigation? You know the sort of thing that happens to runaway slaves, never mind Christians.

Of course, sometimes what happens to runaway slaves, never mind Christians, is that they get married. And in marrying Tilla, as well as in all other cases, Ruso should remind himself: *Caveat Emptor*.

Back in Britannia, Ruso thinks everything is going to be all right for a change. Change turns out to be what's involved, when he ends up getting conscripted to search for a missing tax man, his escort, and some VMMMDXXXII denarii in tax revenue that they were carrying.

When the missing tax man turns up dead, sans pecunia and sans escort, the problem takes a different turn. Before it's all over, Ruso will discover a homegrown mint (and you know what that means), find out that a rebel line is still not extinct (ouch), learn the hard way what a brazier can do (and he isn't even on Mars being "Omnilingual"), and encounter Tilla holding a baby between a furious local mob and a band of overage Roman soldiers.

I guess these days you can't sell an historical novel any more unless it's a mystery. Salve!

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### THE WAY THE CANON WAS

Review by Joseph T Major of

*BAKER STREET IRREGULAR*

by Jon L. Lellenberg, BSI

"Rodger Prescott of evil memory"

(Mycroft & Moran; 2010;

ISBN 978-0-87054-186-5; \$39.95)

Write what you know. In this case, Jon Lellenberg had been set to write a history of the Baker Street Irregulars. Having all this information, he decided to make some use of it. And so this.

Our story begins in the thirties, when legal associate Woody Hazelbaker is facing a reduction in force at his law firm. There's a depression out there, you know. Then, the last of the founding partners called him in and gave him an opportunity at a peculiar assignment, one that required ability and security.

Or at least the assignment would get security. A mobster getting out of the rackets, having covered his tracks in owning legitimate, semi-legitimate, and not so legitimate businesses, wishing to dispose of same to persons of the same import, needs to unsnarl a complex legal structure of covert ownership and control. Which Woody finds himself pitchforked into doing.

From there, he gets himself snarled between two women, a soulless capitalist and a soulful bolshevik, neither quite what she seems, or perhaps more than that. It makes getting wound up in the covert lobbying to block the Nazis quite a release from stress, particularly when his wife lets him loose after the second abortion, and his girlfriend disappears into the deadly swamps of political war.

Then shooting war breaks out, and Woody finds himself at loose ends. Until someone takes note of his skill at acting covertly and misleadingly, and he finds himself helping out in the deception program — the Double-Cross System!

All which comes together in the end, as Woody finds a new war forthcoming, and settles some old scores . . .

Now what is the tangled skein that runs through this tale? Why, getting invited to the Baker Street Irregulars dinner! And getting in with the many, varied, and bizarre folk who all had that tangled skein of Holmes in their lives.

This is something which may not be readily apparent to the readers: Most of the characters in this novel are real people, and Lellenberg has gone to some effort to get them down right. (I recall noting with some pleasure how for example "W. E. B. Griffin" had done this in the earlier volumes of his *The Corps* series, and how he had changed course in inventing a fictional OSS station chief in Chungking [but then, the real one, Commodore Milton "Mary" Miles, had been something of a jackass].) Even if the scope and setting means that such colorful sorts as Alexander H. Wollcott are thrust into absurdly small supporting roles.

Among those who do appear at more length is Fletcher Pratt (and his sometime collaborator L. Sprague de Camp is referred to). Fortunately, Woody relied on him for an introduction to codes and codebreaking, not the Civil War (unlike some people who tried to give the Confederacy Sten guns, only to find that Fletcher had not bothered to mention John Brown's raid [*A Rebel In Time* (1983, 1988) by Harry Harrison].)

(I have to wonder if someone who had been involved in the Double-Cross system and might know of ULTRA would be allowed in a front-line assignment.)

Lellenberg presents the theme of networking; of connections, of cooperation, of different people brought together by common interests

and common purposes.

(Interestingly enough, Woody never bothers to go buy a particular copy of *Cosmopolitan* — the one with “The Case of the Man Who Was Wanted”, the pastiche that was thought to be an unpublished original. Lellenberg has written a book about the discovery, publication, and shocking revelation of that story: *Nova 57 Minor* (1990).)

## HORSES

by Lisa



Last year's crop by Bernardini's sire, A.P. Indy, will be his last. The 22-year-old stallion has aged out from stud. During that career he did his part to keep the Bold Ruler sire line going.

My Derby horse, To Honor and Serve, is out of the Derby with an injury. That leaves only Stay Thirsty to represent Bernardini in the Derby and hence to be my Derby horse. As the Fogelberg song *The Run For the Roses* says, the Derby is “the chance of a lifetime in a lifetime of chance.” Many times the Derby winner is the best horse left standing. If Stay Thirsty fails to be one of the twenty who go in the starting gate that first Saturday in May, I'll have to scramble to find another colt to follow.

Animal Kingdom won the Derby. Somehow he slid beneath my radar. But now he is the only colt who can win the Triple Crown. I think it unlikely he can do it but I would love to be wrong.

Animal Kingdom failed to win the Preakness, although I think he was probably best. He was coming hard but simply ran out of ground. Shackelford held him off just long enough.

I was pleased to learn Stay Thirsty would be in the Belmont. The track that day turned up sloppy. Derby winner Animal Kingdom had a very rough start, nearly losing his jockey. Shackelford couldn't hold on in the slop. For a moment I thought Stay Thirsty would be the winner but then Ruler on Ice surged past him. It

was still a creditable performance on his part.

## STORM ALERT

by Lisa

Last night, April 19, we had a severe weather alert. We gathered up flashlights and battery radios and hunkered down downstairs. The sirens sounded off and we listened to the endless announcements. I called my friend Beth and Joe called Tim. We stayed downstairs perhaps an hour before the all clear sounded.

We went to bed and when we woke in the morning I learned New Albany, the Indiana town just across the river, had taken a beating. In tornado country when the sirens go off you know that if you are not being pounded someone else is who deserves it no more than you do and that it could be your turn next time. You have dodged the bullet this time but sooner or later there will be another bullet you might not dodge.

But for it to be New Albany really struck home. The only thing geographically dividing Louisville from New Albany is the Ohio River. The sheer randomness of where the tornado strikes can be as frightening as the actual tornado. I don't envy the people whose job it is to predict where the actual strike will happen. Fortunately the only things lost were things, not lives.

## GARDEN NEWS

by Lisa

This year the ice storm got the hosta that came with the house. I considered for a while then decided I would replace the plant. I began doing online research and stumbled on native plant research. The more I thought about this idea the more I liked it. At a local grocery I chanced to see an ad for a native plant sale at the Louisville Nature Center. I ended up buying a columbine and a poppy. When they settled in I still had the urge to have more plants so I went to a local nursery where I acquired an astilbe and a heuchera (coral bells).

The latest and last purchase was a Jacob's Ladder, obtained at a local grocery center. It was an impulse buy and with it I broke my big rule about only buying plants from a good garden center. I have paid for it. The plant isn't in good condition. I have been watering it twice a day and it is not settling in as easily as the quality plants.

## COUNT SZURKE AND THE SILVER TIASSA — TALES OF THE DEVINE MCGUFFIN

*TIASSA*, by Steven Brust  
(Tor Books, New York City; April 2011;

ISBN: 978-0-7653-1209-9;

Vlad # 13; Hardcover; 335 pages; \$24.99)

A review by Grant C. McCormick

Vladimir Taltos, a Baron of House Jhereg and the Count of Szurke, has had a very interesting life: despised outcast, Imperial nobleman, assassin, businessman, criminal, loyal friend, fierce enemy, and more, and often

many of these at the same time. This book, *Tiassa* (more of a collection of novellas and interludes branded around a common theme than a novel), covers several episodes in his life involving a Silver Tiassa<sup>1</sup> made by the goddess Mafenyi, from when it was delivered to Vlad by a girl out of a dream who had not yet been born, to when it passed out of his life (at least for now) to a boy for whom Vladimir himself had been a nightmare.

The Prologue is a short section from very shortly after he got it, set shortly after *Dragon* and well before *Yendi*, in the internal chronology<sup>2</sup>, and segues into the next part. This first section, “The Silver Tiassa,” is just a few pages long, set shortly before the Prologue, but covering all of time, space, and the multiverse, narrated by the girl<sup>3</sup> out of the dream. In this part, we learn of the provenance and previous possessors (one of whom is Paarfi of Roundwood) of the argent McGuffin.

The next section, “Tag”, has a portrait of the crimelord, Vlad, as a young lover. Set shortly after *Yendi* (wherein he met Cawti, the human assassin who killed him and with whom he has fallen in love), he is engaged to Cawti, and soon to be married with her. Unfortunately, his plans are — not waylaid, not disrupted, not even seriously delayed — sidetracked by a client who owes Vlad considerable money, and by the attack on and the near-death of the enforcer who Vlad had sent out to remind the debtor of his obligation to pay. In following up, Vlad meets the Blue Fox, a Tiassa and self-proclaimed highwayman whom Brust's readers will have met before elsewhere. He is the first of several Dragaeran Tiassa the we meet in this work, just about all of whom are closely related. This leads to a nice little comedic con-job and to the question, who is conning whom? This is the second-longest of the sections, and is set many years before the next.

“Whitecrest,” the next portion (and the third-longest) involves Count Khaavren, Captain of the Phoenix Guard; his wife, Daro, the Countess of Whitecrest; and their son, Piro, Viscount of Adrilankha; all Tiassa. It also involves Vlad's estranged wife, Cawti, and Cawti's former partner, the Dragon Princess Norathar e'Lanya; and follows (by some few years) the events of *Issola* and *Dzur*. The Silver Tiassa itself never appears in this section, but is the justification of a Jhereg attempt to find and kill Vlad (who also is absent in this section), using a Crisis of the Empire as the pretext. The viewpoint character shifts with each chapter, and shows us sides of these characters we probably never expected to see.

This is followed by “Conception (An Interlude),” a quite short piece in which Verra wishes to have a grandchild, and the Silver Tiassa is borrowed, then returned. It is set — whenever, wherever.

Now we come to the work of Sir Paarfi of Roundwood in this volume, the longest (naturally), entitled “Special Tasks.” Set (I believe) somewhat before *Iorich* (but it would neither surprise nor distress me to learn it were set after), it involves many players from earlier works, both in the *Vlad Taltos* cycle as well as

in the *Phoenix Guards* cycle. “Special Tasks” concerns the Special Tasks group of the Imperial Executive (which was last seen back in *Orca*), of which Count Khaavren is the Brigadier, and how it was used to investigate the mysterious incident of the body of an Easterner who was apparently also a noble, that washed up on the shore of the Adrilankha River, some distance upstream of the city itself, and is told from Khaavren’s viewpoint. The Silver Tiassa is sought by the Empress as a closure to the events of “Whitecrest,” some years before, and another friend of Khaavren’s (Prime Minister Pel) also wishes information on this Easterner. And a family of Issola learn that a beating is not the best thing to bring to someone fearing assassination and worse.

In many regards, this is my favorite part of *Tiassa* — partly because I love Paarfi’s style, and partly because I love seeing Vlad as rendered by Paarfi. One of my favorite (partial) paragraphs that does *not* involve Vlad:

The older Dragonlord was called Cialdi, and, though he looked old, he was, in fact, older. He had achieved the post of Superintendent of Investigations for the Adrilankha Police as far back as the Interregnum. After the Interregnum, he had come so near to identifying and gathering sufficient evidence to convict the mysterious Blue Fox, that Piro, the Viscount of Adrilankha, had recommended Cialdi to Piro’s father, who was, as the reader is no doubt aware, Khaavren. Cialdi was an expert on Jhereg operations, having taken the lead in bringing down Lord Hiyechin’s palm-steel operation, as well as having discovered the means whereby stolen jewelry was being smuggled out of the city. Cialdi, then, worked for both Khaavren and Piro (as well as reporting to the Lord Mayor of Adrilankha, and the Chief City Constable). It should be added that, as no conclusive evidence had been found, the matter of the Blue Fox was never mentioned by any of them (except, occasionally, the Chief City Constable, who remained utterly oblivious to what the others, and, of course the reader, all knew).

The very last portion of *Tiassa* is the Epilogue, set immediately after “Special Tasks” (and by “immediately,” I mean a few hours at most), but is voiced by contemporary Vlad. It concludes the volume nicely, Lord Khaavren finally gets to see the Maltese *Tiassa*, and Vlad realizes that he has been tricked by the same person (Special Tasks agent Timmer) twice in essentially the same way. His ward (the boy, Savn, mentioned in the first paragraph) gets the Silver *Tiassa* (at least for now), and may have a better chance of healing.

All in all, a very pleasant work, and one that I most enjoyed. I think it may have answered more questions than it raised (one such raised question being, “Who was Court Wizard during the recent Jenoincursion during *Issola*, and

for how long?”). Such answers will have to wait until the next book, if then.

\* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> The *tiassa* is one of the seventeen totem-animals of the Dragaeran Empire’s Zodiac, the Cycle. It has been described as “a large panther, with batlike wings.” It is also one of the seventeen houses of the Dragaeran people. The population of the House of the *Tiassa* are stereotypically known for the intelligence and quick-wittedness, and their vivacity. The illustration on the dust-jacket of the book shows a gray-and-white tiger with bat wings.

<sup>2</sup> It also has an unnamed Steven Brust as an off-stage character.

<sup>3</sup> Devera, the daughter of the Dragons *Aliera e’Kieron* (who in turn is the daughter of *Adron e’Kieron* and the goddess *Verra*), and *Kieron the Conqueror* (long-dead [by about 200,000 years] founder of the Dragaeran Empire, and direct ancestor to *Aliera* on her father’s side [as well as her bother in that earlier life — shades of *Lazarus Long!*]). As far as I can tell, *Devera* is never named in the book.

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### BURNED OUT COLD IN THE FREEZER BURN

A Review of Lois McMaster Bujold’s

#### *CRYOBURN*

(Baen Books; HC; November, 2010; ISBN 978-1-4391-3394-1; \$25.00)

By Grant C. McCormick

**Best Novel Hugo Nominee**

(Originally reviewed in *Alexiad* V. 9 #6)

Lois McMaster Bujold seems to be writing mostly fantasy these days, and very good fantasy it is. However, I am a guy who prefers science fiction, and after several years, she has written a most excellent science fiction novel, *Cryoburn*. Like all of her science fiction published to date, it is set in the “Vorkosiverse” — the future-history universe of a humanity which has settled in the Nexus, amongst the stars of our portion of the galaxy. Most of these works involve one family — the Vorkosigans of *Barrayar*. And most of these Vorkosigan works center around one particular Vorkosigan: Miles Naismith Vorkosigan.

Miles is the son of his father: the most significant *Barrayaran* military *and* political figure of his generation (who in turn is the son of the most significant military figure of *his*); and the son of his mother: a former Captain of the Beta Colony<sup>1</sup> Survey Service, and the most influential woman of the century on *Barrayar* (a most male-dominated planet), now the vicereine and vicereine of the planet *Sergyar*. With these two as parents, a body crippled and handicapped from before birth by a failed assassination attempt upon his parents, and a Will to Succeed that allows no failures, Miles himself is an elemental force wrapped in an all-too-fragile container.

Well, Miles has at last survived to a middle age of thirty-nine, married and a father himself,

after a career that has seen him as a soldier, spy, mercenary fleet admiral, covert-ops agent (not the same as spy, but close), diplomat, corpse<sup>2</sup>, detective, and (most recent and current) an Imperial Auditor of the *Barrayaran* Empire. It is in these last three capacities that the Emperor *Gregor Vorbarra* (his liege and older foster brother) has had him attend the Northbridge Invitational Conference on *Cryonics*<sup>3</sup> on the planet *Kibou-daini*, which is sponsored by some of the very large *Kibou* cryo-stasis corporations. Some of which are looking to expand into the *Barrayaran* Empire. And something just doesn’t smell right . . .

At the start of *Cryoburn*, Miles finds himself drugged, dazed, and disoriented, wandering lost through the underworld of *Kibou*, while his Armsman, *Roic*, is being held by terrorists, following a botched terrorist attack. Through the kindness of strangers and his own abilities, Miles rescues himself, and helps rescue the others (and many sundried others they are). And then the *real* story begins . . .

*Cryoburn* is an excellent book, well worth reading. I enjoyed it from the opening scene through the last closing drabbles. This book shows us Miles as an adult, where it Counts.

\* \* \* \*

<sup>1</sup> Don’t let the name fool you: Beta Colony is an Alpha dog in the Nexus.

<sup>2</sup> Following a needle grenade and a period of cryo-stasis. He got better.

<sup>3</sup> One of the seminars was a *fascinating* one, involving an *extremely* severe case of trauma, involving a needle grenade . . . Miles was riveted — one might even say on pins and needles.

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### And as year follows year, More old men disappear, Someday no one will march there at all.

Report by Joseph T Major

We regret to report the death of **Claude Stanley “Chuckles” Choules** on **May 4, 2011** in *Salter Point*, a suburb of *Perth*. Born **March 3, 1901** in *Pershore*, *Worcestershire*, he entered the *Royal Navy* in 1915. He served on board *HMS Revenge* in the *Grand Fleet*. In 1926 he was dispatched to *Australia* as part of a training team for the new *Royal Australian Navy*, and ended up transferring to it, where he served through the *Second World War*.

He was married to *Ethel Wildgoose* for seventy-eight years, until her death in 2003, and had three children (*Daphne*, *Anne*, and *Adrian*), eleven grandchildren, and twenty-two great-grandchildren. He did not go to *Remembrance Day* celebrations out of a dislike for glorification of war. During his last years he quit giving interviews, having become blind and mostly deaf. The funeral was **May 20** in *Fremantle*, *Western Australia*.

He was the last surviving combat veteran of the War, the last male veteran of the War, the

last witness of the scuttling of the High Seas Fleet, the last veteran of both wars, and the last veteran of the Royal Navy from the War. He was the third oldest verified veteran .

Thanks to **Evelyn Leeper, Guy H. Lillian III, George W. Price, John Purcell, and Martin Morse Wooster** for noticing.

Remaining are:

#### Poland

Józef Kowalski\* (111) 22 Pulk Ułanów

#### United Kingdom

Florence Beatrice Patterson Green (110),  
Women's Royal Air Force

\* "WWI-era" veteran, enlisted between the Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles

We went to a Memorial Day event in Henderson. In my hometown, Memorial Day is a big event. Residents and visitors congregate on Main Street which is blocked off for the event. It was hot that day so shady spots were prime real estate. We secured such a spot and settled down. No sooner had we done so than the roar of motorcycle engines sounded behind us. I turned and looked, not sure what I was going to see. It was a contingent of the Patriot Guard, there to help commemorate the day. The day was somewhat marred by a veteran's getting sick from the heat and requiring an ambulance. After that, though, came the recognition of veterans by branch of service. When Anchors Aweigh's time came my father stood, at 86 still able to assume military posture.

— Lisa

#### 'Usāmah bin Muhammad bin 'Awad bin Lādin

Sha'ban 8, 1376 — Jumada I 28, 1432  
(March 10, 1957 — May 2, 2011)

**YOU CAN RUN TO THE ENDS  
OF THE EARTH, YOU  
COWARD, BUT YOU'LL NEVER  
RUN FAR ENOUGH!**

It was Sunday, May 1. I was already in bed when Joe brought me the news that Osama bin Laden was dead, killed in a firefight with Navy Seals. I sat up straight.

"You're sure?" I asked. "This isn't some Al Qaeda trick?" He assured me it was for real. I wrapped my arms around myself, remembering all the death and destruction nine and a half years ago. I remembered all the death and destruction. We all remember those horrific images our televisions showed us. For the first time in nearly ten years I would go to bed without the knowledge the man responsible was still thumbing his nose at the United States. The sense of a burden I had lived with so long I was barely conscious of it except at odd fleeting moments was gone. I lay awake, feeling the strangeness of the burden's absence. Until that moment I had not realized how much that burden had been with me. Thank you, Mr. President. I do believe I could kiss you, except that the Secret Service would slam me down for the attempt and rightfully so. And thank you, Seals whose names I don't even know but am

very grateful to you.

May 8, 2011

It has been a week free of bin Laden now. There have been many confusing and conflicting reports. There has been some discussion of bin Laden's being unarmed. I don't care if he was. No. He freely chose to declare war on the United States. At the time of his death he was plotting another attack on us. How many of the people in the World Trade Center were armed? And just how exactly were the Seals to know the world's foremost terrorist was unarmed?

Several days later Obama was on the radio saying that anyone who doubts bin Laden got what he deserved needs to have his head examined. I considered this statement, because I believed that what bin Laden deserved was to have his head on a stake overlooking the World Trade Center as a lesson to the next ten generations that it is really not a good idea to kick sleeping giants. Still, it was Obama's call as to what to do with the corpse. And just maybe, it was pretty selfish of me to deny the poor hungry fishes of whatever ocean the *Carl Vinson* was in a good meal and to criticize Obama for giving them one.

— Lisa

In the book *SEAL Team Six: Memoirs of an Elite Navy SEAL Sniper* (2011), Howard Wasdin describes how the unit had to overcome a foundational problem:

We didn't follow the Dick Marcinko Charm School of arrogance and alienating people. Marcinko created SEAL Team Six, served time in jail for defrauding the government, wrote his autobiography, entitled *Rogue Warrior*, and made a video game. Although I respect that he created Team Six, Marcinko gave us a black eye by disrespecting people who weren't SEALs — and disrespecting SEALs who weren't part of his clique. I was on a flight once with a pilot who was amazed at our behavior in comparison with the loud, obnoxious, gun-waving attitude of Marcinko's SEALs. Even worse, Marcinko cheated the government out of money, putting Team Six under a dark cloud of suspicion. He had been imprisoned for conspiring with a civilian contractor to overcharge the government for explosives and pocketing the money. Especially at SEAL Team Six, subsequent commanders worked hard to clean up the crap stains Marcinko left behind.

— *SEAL Team Six*, Pages 121-122

During the Grenada Intervention, SEAL Team Six, under Marcinko's successor, was assigned to rescue the Governor-General, Sir Paul Scoon. Wasdin gives a very favorable portrait of the rescue, while other sources have been less positive about their efforts.

The belligerent, arrogant image projected by Marcinko in his memoirs and fictions (and the boundary between them is blurry) and by his defenders (I have seen his corrupt explosives deal characterized as "trying to get the best weapons for the boys") has not aided the image of the unit, for all that it is the image presented of such special warfare units in fiction, print and drama. Moreover, using a naval unit for that particular mission somehow seems out of its area of responsibility. The rebuilding and rehabilitation of SEAL Team Six has been effective, made obvious on a worldwide stage.

It now appears that the unit has been for some time known as the **United States Naval Special Warfare Development Group**. The embarrassment of the German TV network which put up the distinctive patch of a STAR TREK™ unit of that name has been noted. Meanwhile, a well-known entertainment company has trademarked the term "SEAL Team Six". The prospects of the Poopy Panda Pals version . . .

Also involved was the Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), the Night Stalkers. They are stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, south of Hopkinsville, so presumably I haven't seen them, though they've seen me. This unit was formed after the disastrous improvisation of Operation EAGLE CLAW, the attempted rescue of the hostages in Iran, in order to provide a reliable team of special operations aviation.

That a "joint" — involving more than one service — mission could go off at all, much less without outstanding disaster, is a testimony to an improvement in such functions. It used to be that the Army and the Navy were worst enemies, with the other countries somewhat lower down on the targeting list.

— Joe

#### YOU'RE SO VAIN

by Joe

There was a partial eclipse of the sun on June 1, 2011, visible in Japan, Korea, Siberia, Canada, and Greenland. The maximum eclipse was visible at 67° 8' N, 46° 8' E., in Siberia.

This eclipse was part of Saros 118, which began on May 4, 803 and will end on July 15, 2083. The next eclipse in this saros will be on June 12, 2029, which will be a partial eclipse visible in Europe, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Greenland, and Canada (Nunavut, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia).

July 1, 2011 will see the first eclipse of Saros 156, a partial eclipse visible only at sea north of Dronning Maud Land. The maximum duration will be at 65° 24' S 28° 36' W. This saros will end on July 14, 3237. There will be a total of four solar eclipses in 2011, all of them partial.

There will not be a total solar eclipse until November 13-14, 2012 (the track crosses the International Date Line), visible on land in Australia (Northern Territory and Queensland). This eclipse will be part of Saros 133, which began on July 13, 1219 and will end on September 5, 2499.

<http://www.hermit.org/Eclipse>

<http://www.eclipse.org.uk/>

<http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html>

## ELEMENTAL UPDATES

by Joe

The artificial elements ununquadium (Uuq), element 114, and ununhexium (Uuh), element 116, have been recognized by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC).

The discoverers of ununquadium have proposed the name of “flerovium”, after Soviet physicist Gregory Flyorov. Ununquadium, in spite of being “eka-lead”, below lead in the periodic table and therefore theoretically sharing its properties, appears to act more like a noble gas. It was first created in the laboratory at Dubna, in the Moscow Oblast of Russia, in 1999, by bombarding a plutonium target with calcium ions. About eighty atoms of the element have been recorded. The discovery was confirmed at Berkeley in 2009.

Because of irregularities in the discovery of nobelium (No), element 102, it was at one point proposed to rename the element flerovium (Fl), but the name “nobelium” was already in wide use by then.

The discoverers of ununhexium have proposed the name of “moscovium”, since the element was discovered in the Moscow Oblast of Russia. The chemical properties of ununhexium have not yet been determined, as only thirty atoms of the element have been recorded; it is “eka-polonium” in the periodic table. It was first created at Dubna in 2000, by the bombardment of a curium target with calcium ions.

Attempts at synthesizing ununennium (Uun), eka-francium, element 119, having not yet proven successful, at present the researchers at Dubna are trying to produce unbinilium (Ubn), eka-radium, element 120, which is believed to be one of the most stable elements in the island of stability. It would have won the immunity challenge, in other words.

The next element beyond, unbiunium (Ubu), eka-actinium, element 121, is interesting in that it would be the first element of a new group of the periodic table. Such groups are by electron shells; hydrogen and helium being the first group, with one shell of electrons, lithium to argon being the second group, with two shells, potassium to xenon being the third group, with three shells, and so on. Unbiunium would have a sixth shell of electrons.

The late Alfred Jarry (author of the play *Ubu Roi*) and Gary David Goldberg (owner of Ubu Productions and of the late dog Ubu Roi) have not made any statements regarding the matter. “*Éléments!*” and “*Sit!*”, respectively, have been considered.

## THE JOY OF HIGH TECH

by Rodford Edmiston

Being the occasionally interesting ramblings of

a major-league technophile.

### Spinning

Autogyros have never been properly appreciated; yet the concept refuses to die.

An autogyro — or gyrocopter — is very much not a helicopter. . . yet there are some strong similarities between them. Both use a rotating wing above the body of the vehicle to provide lift. The rotor for an autogyro is close to what you would find on a helicopter, both mechanically and aerodynamically, though the rotor head is much simpler. Functionally — and this leads to the mechanical and aerodynamic differences — the only difference is that the rotor does not propel the gyrocopter. Actually, there have been helicopters where most of the propulsion did not come from the rotor, but from another source, but those are rare.

The real difference between the two types of aircraft is important. In flight, the rotor of the gyrocopter is not powered, but spins like a maple seed pod due to its passage through the air. This spinning through the air produces lift, though not in the same way as a helicopter’s main rotor. Actually, since gyrocopters came first, the helicopter produces lift in a different way than an autogyro does. A helicopter forces air down through the rotor disk. A gyrocopter reacts to air moving across and upwards through the rotor disk. The details of these different methods of lift production are actually a bit complicated and won’t be explored further in this brief study.

Propulsion for a gyrocopter comes from a propeller, either tractor or pusher. As mentioned above, most helicopters get propulsion from the rotor. Helicopters can provide forward thrust by tipping the rotor forward, usually by dropping the nose. However, they also can produce thrust by changing the angle of attack of the blades, which is much safer close to the ground. This added complexity is what makes helicopter rotor heads so much more expensive — and less reliable — than those of a gyrocopter. If a helicopter’s engine fails at altitude, a helicopter can autorotate, dropping fast to spin the blade up in flat pitch, then hitting the collective just before landing to turn that kinetic energy into lift to soften the impact.

That is how a gyrocopter lands routinely. It just does that in a slower and more controlled manner than a helicopter can. Though it doesn’t have to go through the switch from powered rotation to autorotation, because it is already autorotating. That is how it flies normally.

A gyrocopter can make vertical takeoffs under the right conditions. Those usually involve a strong headwind. However, many gyrocopters have a power takeoff which can use the engine to spin up the blades in flat pitch on the ground. They then disengage the PTO and hit the collective. They still need a headwind to actually take off vertically, but even in still air the pre-spin greatly reduces the takeoff distance. Without the pre-spin their takeoff distance is still shorter than that of most fixed wing aircraft. Some autogyros don’t even have collective pitch control of the rotor. These don’t use a PTO for spinning the rotor on the ground, either.

Naturally, their rotor heads are even simpler and cheaper.

Autogyros are inherently stable. Due to this and the autorotation method of generating lift they are safer than helicopters. They are even safer than many types of fixed-wing aircraft, because they are impossible to stall. Haul back on the stick and a gyrocopter climbs until it runs out of speed . . . then begins settling. At a fairly slow, steady rate, which can be held all the way to landing. This, of course, assumes the propeller is still producing thrust. Without that things proceed a bit faster, but still slower and safer than with a helicopter.

Autogyros were, in fact, designed by a man — Juan de la Cierva — who wanted to create an aircraft which could not stall. The first successful flight was made in 1923.

Gyrocopters are easy to learn to fly. Depending on who you ask — and which specific models you are comparing — they are easier than fixed-wing aircraft.

Most gyrocopters made today are single- or dual-seat. The smaller ones usually lack even a skin, so pilot and any passenger sit out in the slipstream. In the past there were models large enough to carry passengers and cargo. Most of these larger ones were hybrids, with a lower, fixed wing as well as a rotor.

Because of their simpler construction, autogyros are much cheaper than even the smallest, simplest helicopter. This, combined with their safety, makes them a popular aircraft for people who want to fly on a budget. Not only are autogyros inexpensive to own and operate, you can safely learn to fly one with fewer lessons than almost any fixed-wing aircraft. Far fewer than for a helicopter.

People want helicopters because they want true VTOL capability. Which ignores the fact that many helicopters need a certain amount of forward speed before they can fly out of ground effect. Still, they can lift off the ground in still air, as well as hover and move sideways and even backwards. Advantage there goes to the helicopters. Which is pretty much all they get when compared to autogyros.

Gyrocopters are inherently more efficient than helicopters. The latter use a substantial part of their power to counter the rotational torque imparted to the body by the air drag on the spinning main rotor. Most use a vertical tail rotor for this. Some use two main rotors. A few use more than two main rotors. Since there is no drive to the rotor of an autogyro there is no torque to counter. (Well, there is a tiny amount from the friction of the rotor bearing, but that’s easily countered in flight by the aerodynamic controls.) Because of this efficiency an autogyro can carry more cargo faster further than a helicopter of the same size.

There is more behind the difference in speed between the two types of rotorcraft than the helicopter’s power drain to counter rotor torque. Because of the complexities involved in producing propulsion from the main rotor the helicopter is usually limited to under two hundred knots. Partly this is because the blade moving forward (the advancing blade) gains lift from the forward motion of the helicopter, while

the blade moving rearward (the retracting blade) loses lift. A gyrocopter still encounters this effect, but is less affected by it due to the details of the way the rotor interacts with the air.

Note that — as mentioned above — some autogyro designs have a fixed lower wing. This raises the top speed since the rotor can be put in a low drag configuration and most of the lift generated by the fixed wing. This arrangement is still slower and less fuel efficient than a pure fixed wing plane, though. Advantage to the fixed wing, though for STOL aircraft which can match the autogyro in rolling takeoff and landing distance the difference is pretty minor.

So why aren't gyrocopters taken more seriously? I suspect a large part of the reason is that they came first. Helicopters — with their better VTOL capability and maneuverability — were seen as an improvement, and autogyros fell out of favor. They are seen as old fashioned, even quaint. The stuff of pulp fiction.

Not for everyone, though. There are still several companies which make autogyros, mostly for sport use. One of these is Farrington Aircraft Corporation, of Paducah, Kentucky.

### Yabba-Dabba-@#\$\$!

Taral Wayne

A couple of days ago, I spotted an item in the news that got my instant attention. Seth MacFarlane had sold a new animated show. And what stroke of genius has he had this time? A revival of *The Flintstones!*

Of course, we all know that with his track record, MacFarlane could probably pitch a cartoon show about a high school for condiments, or dental inlays that fight crime, for all the network executives care. They'd still buy it, because he makes Fox Television a shitload of money. But, since he's Seth MacFarlane, you can be sure that whatever the premise is, it will involve a supposedly-typical, dysfunctional, nuclear American family. They will do nothing special or unusual, and will possess potty mouths that would make a proctologist proud. The aggregate I.Q. of the main characters will barely equal that of a china cup.

Would you say that was a fair description of *Family Guy*, *The Cleveland Show* and *American Dad*? I would.

Personally, I never liked *Family Guy* much. It has its moments, but the cut-aways (to Peter at My Lai or Peter dating Sarah Palin) have never made the least sense, and the fart and vomit jokes are just bloody tiresome. I wasn't at all surprised when *Family Guy* was cancelled. Unfortunately, I couldn't believe my ears when I heard that it was given a new time slot a couple of years later. The potty humour in the new series was even more childish than in the original.

Worse, MacFarlane was allowed to create a new series, *American Dad*. I hardly know anyone in fandom who couldn't have come up with a better idea than a pale imitation of his first show. Did MacFarlane do *anything* but swap around some of the characters from *Family Guy*? Joe Swanson — the tough cop who

is next-door neighbor to the Griffins, becomes the right-wing, FBI agent and father in *American Dad*. He has a daughter and son — just as Peter has Meg and Chris. Agent Smith has a good-looking wife — like Peter's. Other members of the Smith family include a Mutt & Jeff pair just like Brian, a talking dog, and Stewie, a child prodigy. Roger is an extraterrestrial, however, and Klaus is a talking goldfish. The repartee between both pairs is identical. There have even been cross-overs between the two shows.

As though two more-or-less identical cartoons on Fox's *Adult Swim* wasn't enough, MacFarlane was given a green light to produce a *third*. It's hard to believe, but *The Cleveland Show* is even *less* original than *American Dad* — the third show is a mere spin-off based on the Griffin's neighbors, the Browns. Cleveland is not a particularly interesting neighbor either, since his only distinguishing features are that he's a) black, and b) inert. In an outstanding display of artistic integrity, Cleveland's son, Cleveland Jr., appears to have shrunk a few inches, gained an unwholesome amount of weight, and no longer suffers from Attention Deficit Disorder.

That's what I love about show business — how talent and originality is rewarded! Seth MacFarlane is clearly a man of ideas — first he sells Fox a show that's as much like *The Simpsons* as Matt Groening's lawyers would allow. Then he creates a show that's just like the show that he copied from *The Simpsons*. Next he creates a spin-off from the show that he copied from *The Simpsons* — in other words, a copy of a copy. And now, he's given the chance to revive a cartoon from decades ago that, arguably, *The Simpsons* is an imitation of. Seth MacFarlane is a man of ideas, all right . . . they just don't happen to be his.



Yet, I know several people in the animation business who have tried, time and again, to sell their ideas to a studio . . . and failed, time and again. Why have the Suits given Seth MacFarlane an automatic meal-ticket, but not them? Who did MacFarlane have to kill? Who did he sleep with? Is his type-O signed on a dotted line at the bottom of a document filed

away somewhere in hell?

Where do I sign? I could come up with ten better ideas than ripping off *The Simpsons* while walking to my floor's garbage chute and back.

I guess the studios just don't *want* better ideas. That would imply taking a risk, however slight. Usually, they want the *same* ideas — ideas that have been tested and already shown to have a dependable bottom line. In their purely imitative mindset, they might even imagine the copy surpassing the original. Such is the executive vision of Nirvana — no ideas at all, and whopping bonuses at the end of the year for not having them.

There can be little doubt about it — Seth MacFarlane is **pure** American network-TV originality at its best!

I'm really looking forward to the first new *Flintstones* episode, too, where Fred leaves his Bedrock home, steps in about thirty pounds of gross dinosaur poo, then shouts for Wilma. Knowing Seth MacFarlane, it should be no more than ten seconds after the opening credits. "Yabba Dabba *Crap!*"

### TWIX COCONUT

Candy Bar Review by Johnny Carruthers  
<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>

I think I first read about this limited edition on Candy Blog back in February. At the time, it was still an upcoming release (Cybele had received some advance samples), and I filed the information away under "keep an eye out for these."

It was last month that Twix announced on their Facebook page that the Twix Coconut had been released. For at least the past two or three weeks, I had been looking at all of my usual outlets, but the Twix Coconut was noticeably conspicuous by its absence. I was beginning to think that Louisville would be the last area where the Twix Coconut would be released.

Then this past Monday, I walked into Speedway, and I finally saw the Twix Coconut on one of the displays. Considering that the manager was busy stocking the display with other confectionary products, I was guessing that she had just put the Twix Coconut in place a few minutes earlier. (This was something that the manager confirmed when I asked her about it.) Needless to say, I quickly grabbed a couple of bars for review purposes. (And I have started seeing them elsewhere. Slowly but surely, they are starting to appear on the shelves. Emphasis on the slowly.)

At first glance, this particular Twix variation is not that dissimilar to the original. A vanilla cookie, topped with caramel, and covered in milk chocolate. The variation in this case is that the caramel is coconut flavored. No actual coconut, though; just the flavor.

When I opened the package, the faint aroma I encountered was primarily chocolate. There was a slight bit of a coconut scent, but not much.

I had seen a few other online reviews of the Twix Coconut before I finally found the bars on sale, and two descriptions stood out in my mind. These were comparisons to both German

chocolate cake and Samoas — the Girl Scout cookies — and I saw both more than once.

The coconut flavor of the caramel is very pronounced. It reminds me a little of the Snickers variation that M&M/Mars produced as tie-in with *Indiana Jones And The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull*, although the coconut-flavored caramel in the Twix did not have the spice (whatever that spice may have been) flavor that the Snickers did. In fact, I would say that the coconut flavor in the caramel is probably the dominant flavor in this candy bar.

After finally trying a Twix Coconut, I have to say that both comparisons made in those other reviews are fair ones, particularly the comparison to Samoas. It's probably because of the cookie base of the Twix bar; it more closely resembles the crunch of the Girl Scout cookie than the softer texture of a German chocolate cake.

As I just stated, the coconut flavor in the caramel is the dominant one in the Twix Coconut bar. It does not, however, push the other flavors out of the way. It blends well with the flavor of the milk chocolate. Even the vanilla flavor of the cookie can be detected, albeit somewhere in the background. But as is the case with most of the Twix bars, the flavor of the cookie is almost always somewhere in the background.

As I noted at the beginning, this is a limited edition, and as always, the standard disclaimer for limited editions apply. Given that it is just hitting the shelves (at least in my area), it should be around for at least a couple of months. What happens after that is anyone's guess.

### GOOD & FIERY

Candy Bar Review by Johnny Carruthers  
<http://chocolatescifi.livejournal.com/>

I've seen this particular candy off and on for a couple of years now. I honestly can't tell you if this is a limited edition, a seasonal edition, or if Hershey just has some unusual distribution glitches with this particular product.

Good & Fiery is another variation on the Good & Plenty theme. And while I avoid Good & Plenty like the plague (I've said it before; I can't stand licorice), I was intrigued when I saw the Good & Fiery box. Once I determined that there was no licorice involved, I eagerly snatched up a box. (And several more after that, once I had sampled that initial box.)

The package describes Good & Fiery as "sweet and spicy chewy candy." There are four different flavors in each box: lemon, orange, apple, and cinnamon. Well, that isn't entirely accurate. The first three are combinations of the respective fruit flavors and cinnamon. The fourth, of course, is just straight cinnamon.

The lemon/cinnamon combination is perhaps the one that strikes my tastebuds as being the strangest. I'm not quite sure how to describe the taste. Perhaps the closest I can come is that it tastes like a hot lemonade that has had a cinnamon stick steeping in it.

I think that maybe the orange/cinnamon candy is my favorite of the quartet. When I was

a boy (many, many centuries ago), my mother was given a recipe for a hot spiced tea mix. I don't remember what spices were in it, but I do remember that the two main ingredients were instant tea and Tang. (I'm sure she still has the recipe, but I may have to ask her to email me a copy.) The orange Good & Fiery candy reminds me of that spiced tea.

At initial glance, it's a little tricky determining which is the apple and which is the cinnamon. Both are shades of red, with the apple/cinnamon candy being the lighter of the two. The apple Good & Fiery candy tastes like a mug of hot apple cider — in a slightly chewier form, of course.

And finally, we have the cinnamon Good & Fiery candy — or if I really want to get silly, the cinnamon/cinnamon combination. This cinnamon candy is pleasantly spicy, but not overwhelmingly so. It has a cinnamon kick, but nothing so potent as, say, Red Hots.

One thing I have noticed with all four flavors of Good & Fiery is that they leave something of an aftertaste on the tongue. It isn't cinnamon, but it isn't any of the other flavors, either. I'm not sure how to describe it, which I find a little frustrating.

As I said at the outset, I'm not completely certain if Good & Fiery is a regular part of the Hershey product line or not. I first saw it on the shelves during the fall a couple of years ago (right around Halloween, as a matter of fact), and I'm fairly certain I've seen on sale each fall since. I've also seen it on sale during the rest of the year, but the sightings are somewhat erratic.

### SOLVING THE 1897 AIRSHIP MYSTERY

by Michael Busby  
(Pelican Publishing Company; 2004;  
1-58980-125-3; \$24.95)  
Reviewed by Rodford Edmiston

This is a topic I have read about before, and which I have an abiding interest in. While the author provides an extremely detailed investigation and comes to plausible conclusions, overall I did not like the book, for stylistic reasons.

The airship was the flying saucer of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. Given the number of both legitimate inventors and crackpots working on flying machines, this is understandable. There were likely actual secret developmental flights. Between these and people having their attention directed towards the heavens by sightings and rumors and seeing things long there but with which they were unfamiliar, there was a flood of reports.

Keep in mind the context. Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin began his airship work in 1891. Propelled balloons were proposed at least half a century earlier, with the first known powered flight taking place in 1852. Tethered balloons — with telegraph contact to the ground — were used as observation platforms during the War Between the States. There were multiple demonstrations of early airships which were somewhat successful during the last half of the Nineteenth Century. So, lighter than air craft

were on the public mind.

Likewise, heavier than air flight was being developed. Also in 1891 Otto Lilienthal began work on his gliders (which were very much like some rigid-wing modern hang gliders) and later wrote a book which greatly aided the Wright Brothers. That same year, Samuel Langley built a flying, steam-powered model which traveled through the air for over a kilometer.

Airship sightings were occurring all over the world. However, there was a series of sightings in the US during the last half of the eighteen-nineties which bring to mind a plague of locusts . . . or perhaps an aerial invasion.

Again, consider the time. The Spanish American War began in 1898, with tensions rising for well more than a year before that. Some at the time hypothesized that the mysterious airships were Spanish vessels, sent to scout the US prior to attack or even invasion. Tensions between Spain and the US over Cuba had been heightened for years. Indeed, some claimed to have heard the occupants of these airships speak an unintelligible language which they assumed was Spanish. (Interestingly, most of these reports came from regions bordering Mexico, where you would think the inhabitants would recognize Spanish when they heard it.)

The author, as mentioned above, does a good job of covering contemporary airship sightings, and also of providing analysis of them. For one series of reports, he pieces together multiple sightings over about a day in chronological order to support the hypothesis of a single airship traveling a rough loop around a large area. He even uncovers contemporary weather reports to explain why the estimated speeds — often based on travel times between sightings — were different in different directions of travel.

My objections to this work come from a combination of his writing style and his preconceptions. He seems to have settled on a form for the "real" design of the airships, of which there appear to have been several of different sizes following the same general plan. Any other descriptions are described by him as obvious hoaxes, or the the products of alcohol, laudanum or opium.

He also rejects out of hand — and with considerable sarcasm — any psychological explanation, including optical illusions. Note that even today, professional pilots — both civilian and military — will occasionally report Venus as a nearby flying object pacing them. Frequently, when Venus is prominent in the sky, even educated people are prone to mistaking it for something hovering just above the ground. Multiple other natural phenomena are often mistaken as guided craft. According to Busby, this can't happen.

As for his style, he repeatedly bombards the reader with multiple rhetorical questions and sarcastic comments. All designed to ridicule any suggestion that any analysis besides his is nonsense. Busby also repeatedly starts with an assumption and argues towards it, ignoring or dismissing out of hand any other explanations. Those alternate explanations he does consider are hand-waved away.



The author only questions eyewitness accounts when they provide some detail which doesn't fit his model. Otherwise, they are all persons of responsibility, as well as accurate and objective observers. He seems completely unaware that even trained observers have trouble judging distance, speed and altitude of flying objects.

In spite of these failings, Busby makes a good case that these airships were a series of developmental or experimental models produced by a specific group of men. He even provides considerable evidence that these men knew each other and worked together.

Note that many of the accounts of these sightings report communication with the occupants of an airship, who sometimes even gave their names. On some occasions someone on an airship would ask for someone local by name. In several of these incidents, the airship was on the ground for repairs or to take on water or some other provision. In these communications a similar theme presents itself: The vehicle is an experimental model, they won't reveal any details due to patents being in progress, but vaguely mention electricity for propulsion and aluminum for structural material.

As for why the sightings simply ended — with no commercial or military deployment and no great public announcement of the development of successful aerial navigation — there are multiple possible reasons. Perhaps the technology was simply too expensive, or the test flights revealed an inherent flaw. Perhaps the inventors ran out of money and gave the idea up as not worth the trouble. Perhaps too many of the responsible people were killed or seriously injured. (The book contains multiple reports of an airship on the ground while the occupants effected repairs. There were also reports of mysterious explosions and debris, and even a dismembered body following one crash which damaged local property.)

Many better documented attempts at airship construction showed promise but were not developed for various reasons. Note that one French aeronaut built and flew a very successful small dirigible. His navigation was so precise he could fly safely down Paris streets, even docking with balconies to accept congratulatory glasses of wine from building occupants. Yet he never took this beyond a hobby. In commenting on the reports described in this book, William Randolph Hearst at the time dismissed the entire idea of airships being anything more than a curiosity.

As outrageous as this attitude seems in the light of today's understanding of the commercial value of aviation, it is still not uncommon. Some people either never think of commercial applications, or consider those to be base and crass. If the sightings described in this book actually were of some series of developmental aircraft, the responsible parties might simply have grown tired of the pursuit and moved on. Perhaps embarrassed by their strange hobby, they never claimed responsibility for the sightings, or sought public recognition for their work. That, however, seems very unlikely.

One cause not considered by the author involves acetylene. In some of the accounts of conversation with airship occupants that combustible gas is mentioned. One specifically explains that the lift gas is a mixture of hydrogen and acetylene.

Acetylene is a metastable compound. It has the unnerving characteristic of spontaneously decomposing, releasing large amounts of energy in the process. This is one reason it produces such a hot flame in welding/cutting torches. A few years ago there was a story of some people who were taking acetylene filled balloons to a party in their car, who were seriously burned when the acetylene in one decomposed and set off all the others. Until the invention of anticatalyst mesh, acetylene was dangerous to keep in storage tanks. If these airships used acetylene for part of the lift or as a fuel, they were literally bombs waiting to go off.

There are numerous typographical errors in the book. Some are likely reproduced from quoted source material. However, there are also some instances in the modern text where a close word with a different meaning is used. One example being "heresy" where "hearsay" was obviously intended. A repeating problem is the substitution of "quite" for "quiet." Where was the editor in all this?

At the very end, the author tries to tie the airships into the explosion of the *Maine* in Havana Harbor in 1898, ignoring the fact that an analysis of the wreckage several years ago provided strong evidence it was due to an undetected fire in a coal hold.

Someone wanting to know about the topic would find this to be a good place to start. Buy the paperback version (if it came out) or borrow the book from a library. Just keep in mind the weaknesses, and that it is not alone in exploring this mystery.

## PRENATAL FANTASIES

Reviews by Carol Clarke

***Mercy Blade*** by Faith Hunter

The third of the Jane Yellowrock novels about a skinwalker whose night job is hunting rogue vampires in the city of New Orleans. In this book her job changes some to help contain a group of werewolves who have been banned from the city of New Orleans by her boss the master of the city and a vampire king. She fines she is in trouble when over run by werewolves and the guy who she has been sent to tell he is not welcome also in the city the "Mercy Blade" saves her life. But is he the one setting her up for trouble in the first place. Just who is he really loyal too. If you want to find out read the book. It is awesome.

***Steel*** by Carrie Vaughn

Carrie Vaughn steps away from her normal fair of Kitty books to write a young adult novel. Jill Archer is a fencer who just came in second at the state finals and she is upset about it. Her family takes a vacation to Bermuda and she finds a broke Rapier. Somehow when she ends up in the ocean with the broken piece she ended up back in the time of pirates where the blade

came from. From there on it's an adventure to get to the evil pirate, help the good pirates or at least the better pirates and somehow get back home. It's actually a good book. Even though the plot is predictable it still somehow makes you feel a little like you are on a real pirate ship and what that would be like. I enjoyed the book a lot.

***Apple's Discord*** by Carrie Vaughn

Again Carrie steps away from her normal fare of Kitty books and gives a tale of a woman Evie Walker and the mystery of her father's basement. In a house that is magically protected there is a basement filled with mythological items like the Golden Fleece, Excalibur and a golden apple that started the Trojan War. People come to the town of Hope's Fort, Colorado looking for items that belong to them; and her father and then Evie give them to their rightful owners. Only, people come who aren't the rightful owners and it's their job to not give them the item. Hera wants the apple but it isn't hers. She tries many tricks with magical helpers to get it but tradition, the house, and Evie and her dying father stand in her way. The story skips around in time giving flashes into the characters who gave away stuff to be kept in the basement and of who wants stuff from the basement, family history of who and how the basement got there. The world the story takes place in is a world a lot tougher than our world, where it's on the brink of world war. And checkpoints are common in the US. Evie, a comic book writer, is both drawn and repulsed by her coming role as the keeper of the basement and it might be easier if her father would just explain a few things but he leaves her in the dark about it, and it's magic. Actually, I find I can't put the book down, it's so good. I put it on my read again soon list.

***Personal Demons*** by Kelly Armstrong

Eighth book in her series of acclaimed Women of the Otherworld series. In *Personal Demons* Hope Adams, a Tabloid reporter / half demon, is tricked into investigating a gang hell bent against the Cabal, the supernatural mafia like organization who run other supernaturals. As Hope infiltrates the gang everything brakes loose and for a girl addicted to chaos she finds herself in too deep when the murders start to happen. Good story well written and leaves you wanting more.

***Moon Sworn: A Riley Jensen Guardian Novel*** by Keri Arthur

If you have ever read a Riley Jensen novel you know they take place in Australia. Riley manages to get herself in lots of trouble. This time she is kidnapped and has her memory erased. Which is not easy for a half werewolf/half vampire twin. She struggles to get her memory back and find her real brother, not the imposter posing as her twin brother. *Full Moon Rising* is the first book in the series.

***Undead and Unfinished*** by Mary Janice Davidson

The latest in the Queen Betsy series. Betsy

takes her half sister, the devils daughter, on a trip through hell just to get her familiar with her mothers domain. It's classic Betsy with witty lines. Puzzles to be solved and all the gang backing her up: Husband Sinclair, Baby Jon, Mark and the rest of the crazy characters. It's a laugh a minute as with all her books its best to read them in order starting with *Undead and Unwed*.

**Me, Myself and Why** by Mary Janice Davidson

In this departure from her normal Queen Betsy Novels Mary Janice Davidson takes on a trip with the insane. A FBI agent with multiple personality disorder. Cadence Jones, the saner part of her three "sisters", as she calls her personalities, is trying to solve a serial killer murder. Only, her different personalities keep popping out. Shinto, a hard core organizer and martial arts expert, pops out when Cadence can't handle a situation. And when Shinto can't handle a situation the dangerous Adriane could out and takes care of everything in a totally "I am completely nuts and lethal" way. Add into the mix a perspective boyfriend who likes all three of her personalities and you have a dangerous but very funny experience. I loved the story and recommend it highly.

**River Marked** by Patricia Briggs

Her latest book in the Mercedes Thompson line starts with Mercedes's wedding to Adam the pack alpha. Unfortunately she is up against a river monster and werewolves can't swim or even get near water or they sink. It's a good book with the introduction of Coyote from Indian lore. It goes into some of the lore surrounding the character of Coyote in the mythology of American Indians. It also explores Adam and Mercy new status as husband and wife away from the pack. It is one of the better Mercedes Thompson books.

**Pale Demon** by Kim Harrison

Rachel Morgan is having her troubles once again. And once again the main problem is with Trent, an elf, who she promised to get to the west coast where she is also heading for her brother's wedding and the witches council trial for her. The witches are not making it easy for her, keeping her from flying, so by car she must go. Strangely so must Trent who is on an elf quest which leads him to be followed by assassins. One of these assassins attacks leads to the St. Louis arch being demolished and a demon being released. It's a great book but you have to read the other books in the series to follow all the ends and outs. Start with *Dead Witch Walking* which is also awesome. Rachel, a witch, as always is aided by her partners: Jix, a pixy, and Ivy, a living vampire.

### SOURCE CODE

Movie Review by Pat McCray

I'm always hesitant to suggest any science fiction film. Sometimes, fanish standards are nosebleedingly high. (I'm reminded of a catastrophic screening of *The Quiet Earth*, a devastating portrait of loneliness and scientific

responsibility, where the movie was dismissed with a quibble that a ringed planet depicted at the end was an inaccurate representation of Saturn.) Sometimes, fan standards are shockingly low. (*Babylon 5*. That's all. Just. . . *Babylon 5*.)

Having now alienated the people I wanted to, let me suggest *Source Code* to the rest of you. I see a lot of new movies. About sixty a year in theaters. Consequently, Sturgeon's Law is demonstrated endlessly. *Source Code* is such a great film — and such great science fiction — I'm not sure how it got made. So there. That's a review of *Source Code*. *Source Code* actually is the movie that everyone who enjoyed *Inception* thought *Inception* was.

### WHAT THE DUKE OF YING SHOULD HAVE WRITTEN

(1323)

"Ah, to think that I was once Emperor of Song if only for a little while when I was very young. It was like a pleasant garden that I passed on a journey without any time to go in. How different my life would have been if I had gone in, though not necessarily happier. Now, having passed by that garden and found another, I am content. All praise to the merciful Kublai Khan! All praise to his heaven-sent successors! All praise is offered to them, and humblest gratitude."

If the Duke of Ying (former Emperor Gong) had written that, he might have survived, but instead he expressed only his regret, and the Great Mongol frowned, and a quiet life of study and contemplation came to an abrupt end, all because of a few inopportune strokes of a brush and a stray thought.

— Darrell Schweitzer

### DOES THAT SEEM FAIR?

ConReport on ConGlomeration  
by Joseph and Lisa Major

It rained the entire weekend. April 2011 has had more than three times as much rain as usual.

We both had Friday off, and so didn't stir out of the house until noon. The Crowne Plaza had been, in its previous incarnation as the Executive Inn West, venue of the last few RiverCons, so at least I knew the way and layout.

And as we got into line to buy memberships, there was **Rod Smith**. **Susan Baugh** came by after a few minutes, and we all talked about various ongoing matters. Shortly thereafter **Tom & Anita Feller** got in line, but by then we had gone into the Dealers' Room to start our purchases.

**Tim Lane** and **Elizabeth Garrott** were there, talking about Tim's latest work

conundrum. Basically, Salem Press, which has published Tim's writings on various topics of political interest, is closing up. Libraries are less able to buy the large reference books they produce. This is a problem.

**Carol Clarke** was looking at books, too, and I ought to have pointed her to those J. F. Lewis books. **Perry Bramlett** had some comments, mostly about the Heinlein biography. He also wondered why I didn't have another book of my articles. **Joel Zakem** and **Bob Roehm** were doing a little dealing, next to the slot where Steve & Sue Francis, well out of this insanity, were selling some of the collection of the late and lamented Jack Young. Joel had commented that while there were a lot of old friends there, if this con hadn't been only right across town, he wouldn't have gone. Sue Young was there too and we talked about going with her to BreyerFest at the Horse Park.

Other people getting nipped by the financial downturn had their booth in the corner, where **Leigh Kimmel** exchanged tips about fictional projects, while **Larry Ullery** recounted how he had retired ahead of a desire to force him out.

After a while we retired to the Con Suite, talking until it was time for dinner. Lisa and I wanted to see what was around, so we drove out and down Preston Highway. It started raining hard and didn't really quit until we turned back and had dinner at a profoundly mediocre Bob Evans. Which someone later characterized as an old people's restaurant.

I'd bought a couple of old library copies of *Rocket Ship Galileo* (1947; NHOL G.048) and *Farmer In the Sky* (1950; NHOL G.083) and looked over them while eating that mediocre meal. I was again struck by how Heinlein had taken the events of his own experience and reinterpreted them for the books; they drew strength from their creator's life. There don't seem to be any edition numbers, and the copy of *Farmer In the Sky* has the Clifford Geary scratchboard illustrations.

The only party was Xerps, and not seeing much point in loud music played in the dark so you can't see the booze you're drinking, we went home.

On Saturday, after a breakfast at the nearby Cracker Barrel, we turned up at the con hotel and made plans for the evening. A lot of the afternoon we spent in the con suite talking with the Fellers, Tim, and Elizabeth, and at one point I made a cellphone call to Guy Lillian to wish him well. We all did, and I hope he got the message.

Anita had been nibbling at chicken wings all afternoon, so she didn't want to go. Tom joined us and we went to the Cardinal Hall of Fame Café, which had a pretty good menu. **Grant** joined us after his computer group wrapped up, and we listened to predictions of bad weather.

The Masquerade was very brief. It wasn't bad, understand, just brief. **B. J. Willinger** did his traditional Master of Ceremonies task with the usual panache. The more interesting item was the **tlhIngan** band, which in a sense of multiculturalism started playing the theme from Jabba the Hutt's party. (The thought of a band

of Klingons storming Jabba's compound, bat'leth held high . . .) One of the costumes, by the way, was Han and Leia as retirees. (Eating at Bob Evans?)

The parties were a little better and we had a decent time. Grant should have come to see the guy's steampunk computer. The rain quit by the time we quit for the night.

Sunday morning we finally dared the hotel buffet. It wasn't at all bad. I settled up with Larry Smith: \$230. The Hugo Nominees wouldn't be announced until the evening, blast it. (But I don't think he had *The Dervish House* and I don't think I'll bother buying the Female Person from Colorado's latest screwball comedy or the zombie novel. Besides, there's always the Hugo Nominations Packet, a benefit of being a Worldcon member.)

The program was not particularly good or even noticeable. Peter David, the guest of honor, made a pretty good showing at the Masquerade judging.

One of the more melancholy parts of the Opening Ceremonies was the announcement that the con was seventy rooms short of its required room block. Everybody's having it hard. There may not be a ConGlomeration next year.

So many of their problems are self-made. Steve Francis said they don't advertise. By their standards, they do; they have a website.

Or perhaps the concept of cons is going out of style. Someone referred to MidWestCon as "OldPhartsCon".

— Joe

Since this was a local convention it was a good occasion to be with local friends and not too faraway friends like the Fellers. There was not much in the way of programming but being with friends made up for it. The Klingon band, Il Troubadore, who performed during the masquerade was worth hearing. I enjoyed their performance so much I had to have Black Cauldron, the album they were selling.

I also bought a set of throwing knives from Michael Williamson. I don't pretend to have any knowledge of knives but I really liked the simple elegance of their design. Perhaps someday I will spend some time researching knife collecting.

Larry Smith was there. I had set myself a limit of ten books and ended up buying twelve. Two over the limit is not excessive. I also bought an Ace double edition of J.T. McIntosh's *One in Three Hundred*, which is one of my favorite SF books of all time.

— Lisa

### **THOUGH HE MIGHT BE MORE HUMBLE, THERE'S NO POLICE LIKE HOLMES**

Trip Report by Joseph T Major on  
**The Thirtieth Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium**

"Holmes: Then, Now, and Forever"  
Dayton, Ohio, May 13-15, 2011

### **Saturday, May 14, 2011**

We got going early enough. Lisa and I stopped off at the Dairy Queen at the shopping center where the Highland Branch of the library is to have breakfast. Filled up at the Thornton's station on Bardstown and Goldsmith, because it usually has low prices. And then, using the new GPS, we were off to Dayton in a regular procession of showers.

The trip went easily enough. We got registered and went through the various tables of stuff, talking to old acquaintances. The building was a bit warm; the loading door was wide open and they had fans blowing the air out. From where we were parked, we could have gone directly into the meeting room.

Bill Cochran called the Symposium to order. Cathy Gill was delayed. Getting through the announcements and such, he quickly handed over to the first speaker.

### **I Think This Is the Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship**

Regina Stinson, BSI ["A Little Ribston Pippin"]

She discussed the other friendships of Holmes and Watson. From Victor Trevor, whose family problem got Holmes launched on the stormy seas of the true art of detection, on down, Holmes was much advantaged by a network of connections (connexions?) and associations. As much held true for his historian. This is something that many don't quite seem to regard.

### **Writing the Ultimate BSI Novel: History Into Fiction**

Jon Lellenberg, BSI ["Rodger Prescott of evil memory"] interviewed by Susan Dahlinger, ASH, BSI ["The Bruce-Partington Plans"]

I'll say one thing, this little item meant a lot of sales of *Baker Street Irregular*. Lellenberg began by describing how he had been commissioned to write the history of the BSI, and found how the tale grew in the telling. Then, having all this information, he figured he could reuse it. See the review for more.

### **Sherlock Holmes and the Golden Age of Technology**

Bill Mason

Holmes used the burgeoning technology of the era to his advantage. One of the interesting features of the Victorian Era was that there was such a technological contrast within living memory; older people could still recall a time when the fastest means of land transport was no different than it had been three thousand years previous, but now change was obvious and constant. Holmes used telegrams ("the Victorian Internet"), train travel, and other new developments to further his efforts. (The history of the *real* change in a sense overshadows the tales of women in corsets and goggles building brass zeppelins . . .)

At the break, several people besides me bought copies of *Baker Street Irregular*. George Vanderburgh, the guy now runnint

Mycroft & Moran, recognized my surgical scar. He's *done* a lot of those kinds of operations. Then, Bill called us back for the second session.

### **Sherlock Holmes: Did His Method Vary As He Matured?**

Lorraine Reibert

Rather, the Canon shows how Holmes's methods developed as he gained experience. He got more tricks under his belt, as it were.

Moreover, there was the problem of finances. You'll recall he told the Duke of Holderness (or Greystoke [or was it — oy! — Greystoke]) "I am a poor man" and the expenses of his investigations and preparations contributed to that.

### **August Derleth and Solar Pons**

George Vanderbergh

He discussed that part of Derleth's life which was not squamous, rugose, cthonic, and mephitic; his life in dealing with mysteries. For example, when he wanted more of what he got from reading Sherlock Holmes, he wrote not pastiches, but stories about another detective named Solar Pons ("sun bridge"), someone very much like Holmes. And Pons fandom has its own structure, with *A Praed Street Dossier* instead of *The Baker Street Journal*, and so on.

Cathy came in then. Both she and Stewart, her husband, have very bad knees, and there are days when getting up and going requires extra effort. She read messages from absent friends, such as Greg Sullivan, now more involved with raising a cute and beautiful daughter in Massachusetts. The history of the Symposium came up as well.

### **The Slate Mines of North Wales**

Marcy Mahle

This kept up the Symposium's tradition of papers on the late Victorian era, the times, places, and people that Holmes worked among. In this case, digging slate out of the Welsh hills, splitting it very finely, and making writing surfaces, roof tiles, and so on. Including artificial hills; Mahle had a picture showing a mining village beneath a towering hill made up entirely of discarded slate. *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain* would have done so with a few weeks' discards.

### **Page 15, Line 41**

Vincent Wright

That cryptic reference being a description of the location of the newspaper advertisement of early 1881 that described a fine set of rooms on Baker-street that were for rent. From that, Wright had a location for the real site of "221B" and he discussed how this fitted, or didn't, with other theories.

There is more and more information to be found on the Internet, and more advanced theories can be proven or disproven.

Cathy was her usual merrily flippant self for the break and the recall. Her jollity in the face of her and Stewart's health problems is to be

noted. She resolved that next year they would get to the hotel on Thursday.

### The Pressure of Public Opinion: The Campaign to Save Undershaw

Jacquelynn Morris, ASH

Louisa Hawkins Conan Doyle had consumption (now called tuberculosis). Her husband moved her from one spot to another to find the pure air that would promote her recovery. Finally, a friend mentioned a location in Surrey that possessed such an atmosphere, as well as being near other facilities. And so, ACD built a fine new big house in Hindhead, Surrey, and called it Undershaw.

It had many features to aid Lady Doyle's health and attend to her needs, some petty, such as low steps on the main staircase, some grand. The home was made for a writer as well, with light and air and a good workroom. It was there that *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and "The Empty House" were written.

Alas, Lady Doyle passed away in 1906. Sir Arthur remarried the next year, moved out, and eventually sold the place after his son Kingsley, for whom he had intended it, died in 1918. In 1924, Undershaw became a hotel, proudly advertising the Doylean connection. Times change and it was sold again in 2004.

The current owners, a rather veiled organization called Fossway, Ltd., have less amenable plans, calling for dividing the house up into three semi-detached residences for example. The local authorities are not too keen on this plan, and so the building languishes, falling into ruin. Morris had a number of graphic pictures showing the wretched state.

Some would say that the building ought to be owned by the National Trust, the British conservation group that preserves buildings of historic interest. Alas, it takes money to preserve, to buy, to repair, to maintain. The last figure the developers quoted for the place, several years ago, was £1,500,000. But that was more of a tossed-off figure than an actual quote, and they don't seem to be interested in selling.

<http://www.saveundershaw.com/>

### Conan Doyle and the Divorce Law Reform Union

Dana Richards

He didn't seem to want to put this forward. Richards described how obscure and hard to find the pamphlets he wrote for this were. Conan Doyle was not a child of divorce or a divorcé himself. He was, however, a child of a bad marriage, and he may have wished that his mother could have been able to put away his drunken and violent father.

### Robust Naivete

William Cochran, BSI ["Murray"]

The "robust naïvete" being the wonder and love of being this sort of person, who devotes immense mental effort to re-creating an era from the past.

As the dealers packed up and everyone else went off to sit around, we went over to the hotel

and checked in. I had paid in advance, so there was that. Afterwards, we had dinner at the Perkins Café on the way between the two hotels. Unfortunately, for various reasons, neither Alex Slate nor Frank Bynum could make it, and we missed them and wished them well.

From there we went back to the main hotel, sat in on the end of the banquet, after which it was time for:

### Reader's Theatre: "The Wrong Cab" by Daniel M. Andriacco

This was a radio play with a large number of characters. Fortunately, many of the cast could do double (or in one case, triple) roles, but there were still about ten people there up front.

The story was about a modern detective who thought Sherlock Holmes was utter nonsense . . . and then found himself swapping minds with Dr. John H. Watson, dealing with a case of a hideous murder in a wax museum.

The modern detective might well have taken notice of one A. A. Rouse, who undertook a drastic solution to his debt crisis. Having found out that the whole art of detection includes more than the usual questions, he learns something about life and his job.

After we got back to the Super 8, I went and showed Tim how to get logged into the Wi-Fi network, so he could check his email.

And so to bed.

Miles driven: 154.6

### Sunday, May 15, 2011

I finished *Then Everything Changed* over breakfast at the hotel. We loaded up the car, checked out, and drove over to the convention hotel.

### Sherlockian "Brain Buster" Quiz

The game this morning was a different sort, "Holmesian Jeopardy", with Robert Cairo as our Alex Trebek and also our Ricky Pohl. [Frederik "Ricky" Pohl IV, son of the Hugo-winning fan and occasional dirty pro, has worked on *Jeopardy* as a question maven.] It went quickly, since some of the attendees had to leave early to catch their planes.

Cathy commented that the attendance was about the same as usual. She also said that that Mike Resnick would be more than welcome to deliver his commentary on *A Study In Terror* and that everyone would appreciate it, even though it would not quite be in keeping with the theme of the 31st Symposium. (See below.)

She was less than impressed with the prospect of Sacha Baron Cohen playing Holmes. I can't understand why. "Jagshemash. My name Sherlock Holmes, best detective in Kazakhstan . . . I go Montenegro have sexytime with Irene Adler. She very nice. I will drink the blood of every Scowrer in the U.S. and A.!"

And on that note, we departed. The Borders where Elizabeth had left her cane last year is now closed. So much for that. And as I was pulling out of the hotel lot, the "Check Engine" light went on and stayed on the rest of the day.

[The part that had been replaced back in January for \$\$\$ had failed. It was under warranty, though, and the replacement was only a matter of time and inconvenience.]

We filled up at a Pilot truck stop south of Dayton and went home amid bouts of pouring rain. Once we dropped off Tim and Elizabeth, Lisa and I went to a Borders that was open, afterwards had dinner, where I finished *Baker Street Irregular*, then we did a little grocery shopping and went home.

The next Symposium will be on the topic of "Canonical Critters" and will be **May 18-20, 2012**. A potential problem is that the Holiday Inn where the Symposium is being held is in the process of being sold to Wyndham Hotels, a prospect which will very possibly drive up the price of meeting room space. For information inquire:

**Cathy Gill**  
4661 Hamilton Avenue  
Cincinnati, OH 45223-1502 USA  
[chirpsworth@fuse.net](mailto:chirpsworth@fuse.net)

Particularly if you have an item that would be of interest to Sherlock Holmes fans. Or of his writer. As you can see, there are items about the writer of the stories as well. Earlier Symposia have had presentations on other works by ACD, so (say) a paper on the dinosaurs living on *The Lost World* would not be out of place.

Miles driven: 161.0  
Books Read: *Then Everything Changed*, by Jeff Greenfield  
*Baker Street Irregular*, Jon L. Lellenberg

Total mileage: 315.6  
Gas bought: \$66.12  
Time out: 8:11 A.M.  
Time back: 5:31 P.M.

### THE 2011 HUGO AND JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD NOMINEES

(Courtesy of Renovation)

#### Best Novel

*Blackout/All Clear* by Connie Willis (Ballantine Spectra)

*Cryoburn* by Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)

*The Dervish House* by Ian McDonald (Gollancz; Pyr)

*Feed* by Mira Grant (Orbit)

*The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* by N.K. Jemisin (Orbit)

#### Best Novella

"The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen's Window" by Rachel Swirsky (*Subterranean Magazine*, Summer 2010)

The Lifecycle of Software Objects by Ted Chiang (*Subterranean*)

"The Maiden Flight of McCauley's Bellerophon" by Elizabeth Hand (*Stories: All New Tales*, William Morrow)

"The Sultan of the Clouds" by Geoffrey A.

Landis (*Asimov's*, September 2010)  
 "Troika" by Alastair Reynolds (*Godlike Machines*, Science Fiction Book Club)

#### Best Novelette

"Eight Miles" by Sean McMullen (*Analog*, September 2010)  
 "The Emperor of Mars" by Allen M. Steele (*Asimov's*, June 2010)  
 "The Jaguar House, in Shadow" by Aliette de Bodard (*Asimov's*, July 2010)  
 "Plus or Minus" by James Patrick Kelly (*Asimov's*, December 2010)  
 "That Leviathan, Whom Thou Hast Made" by Eric James Stone (*Analog*, September 2010)

#### Best Short Story

"Amaryllis" by Carrie Vaughn (*Lightspeed*, June 2010)  
 "For Want of a Nail" by Mary Robinette Kowal (*Asimov's*, September 2010)  
 "Ponies" by Kij Johnson (Tor.com, November 17, 2010)  
 "The Things" by Peter Watts (*Clarkesworld*, January 2010)

#### Best Related Work

*Bearings: Reviews 1997-2001*, by Gary K. Wolfe (Becon)  
*The Business of Science Fiction: Two Insiders Discuss Writing and Publishing*, by Mike Resnick and Barry N. Malzberg (McFarland)  
*Chicks Dig Time Lords: A Celebration of Doctor Who by the Women Who Love It*, edited by Lynne M. Thomas and Tara O'Shea (Mad Norwegian)  
*Robert A. Heinlein: In Dialogue with His Century, Volume 1: (1907-1948): Learning Curve*, by William H. Patterson, Jr. (Tor)  
*Writing Excuses, Season 4*, by Brandon Sanderson, Jordan Sanderson, Howard Tayler, Dan Wells

#### Best Graphic Story

*Fables: Witches*, written by Bill Willingham; illustrated by Mark Buckingham (Vertigo)  
*Girl Genius, Volume 10: Agatha Heterodyne and the Guardian Muse*, written by Phil and Kaja Foglio; art by Phil Foglio; colors by Cheyenne Wright (Airship Entertainment)  
*Grandville Mon Amour*, by Bryan Talbot (Dark Horse)  
*Schlock Mercenary: Massively Parallel*, written and illustrated by Howard Tayler; colors by Howard Tayler and Travis Walton (Hypernode)  
*The Unwritten, Volume 2: Inside Man*, written by Mike Carey; illustrated by Peter Gross (Vertigo)

#### Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form

*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1*, screenplay by Steve Kloves; directed by David Yates (Warner)  
*How to Train Your Dragon*, screenplay by William Davies, Dean DeBlois & Chris Sanders; directed by Dean DeBlois & Chris Sanders (DreamWorks)  
*Inception*, written and directed by Christopher

Nolan (Warner)  
*Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, screenplay by Michael Bacall & Edgar Wright; directed by Edgar Wright (Universal)  
*Toy Story 3*, screenplay by Michael Arndt; story by John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton & Lee Unkrich; directed by Lee Unkrich (Pixar/Disney)

#### Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form

Doctor Who: "A Christmas Carol," written by Steven Moffat; directed by Toby Haynes (BBC Wales)  
 Doctor Who: "The Pandorica Opens/The Big Bang," written by Steven Moffat; directed by Toby Haynes (BBC Wales)  
 Doctor Who: "Vincent and the Doctor," written by Richard Curtis; directed by Jonny Campbell (BBC Wales)  
*Fuck Me, Ray Bradbury*, written by Rachel Bloom; directed by Paul Briganti  
*The Lost Thing*, written by Shaun Tan; directed by Andrew Ruhemann and Shaun Tan (Passion Pictures)

#### Best Editor, Short Form

John Joseph Adams  
 Stanley Schmidt  
 Jonathan Strahan  
 Gordon Van Gelder  
 Sheila Williams

#### Best Editor, Long Form

Lou Anders  
 Ginjer Buchanan  
 Moshe Feder  
 Liz Gorinsky  
 Nick Mamatas  
 Beth Meacham  
 Juliet Ulman

#### Best Professional Artist

Daniel Dos Santos  
 Bob Eggleton  
 Stephan Martiniere  
 John Picacio  
 Shaun Tan

#### Best Semiprozine

*Clarkesworld*, edited by Neil Clarke, Cheryl Morgan, Sean Wallace; podcast directed by Kate Baker  
*Interzone*, edited by Andy Cox  
*Lightspeed*, edited by John Joseph Adams  
*Locus*, edited by Liza Groen Trombi and Kirsten Gong-Wong  
*Weird Tales*, edited by Ann VanderMeer and Stephen H. Segal

#### Best Fanzine

*Banana Wings*, edited by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer  
*Challenger*, edited by Guy H. Lillian III  
*The Drink Tank*, edited by Christopher J Garcia and James Bacon  
*File 770*, edited by Mike Glycer  
*StarShipSofa*, edited by Tony C. Smith

#### Best Fan Writer

James Bacon

Claire Brialey  
 Christopher J Garcia  
 James Nicoll  
 Steven H Silver

#### Best Fan Artist

Brad W. Foster  
 Randall Munroe  
 Maurine Starkey  
 Steve Stiles  
 Taral Wayne

#### John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer

Award for the best new professional science fiction or fantasy writer of 2009 or 2010, sponsored by Dell Magazines (not a Hugo Award).  
 Saladin Ahmed  
 Lauren Beukes  
 Larry Correia  
 Lev Grossman  
 Dan Wells



Ah . . .  
 It's Hugo  
 voting time  
 in Fandom!

Votes are due by **July 31**.

Novelwise I have a strange situation. Both *Cryoburn* and *The Dervish House* have their virtues and their failings. But they're the only two nominees I think are honestly worthy.

Fannish voting seems to be broken. There's the podcast problem. There's the problem with the artist of XKCD getting a Best *Fan* Artist nomination. And in other venues, the winner of TAFF was the guy who came in *third* in the voting; the first and second place finishers didn't make their required minima in one continent's voting or the other.

It's going to be interesting if the YouTube video "I Passionately Desire You to Form a Carnal Connection with Me, Ray Bradbury" wins:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1IxOS4VzKM>

The singer/performer, Rachel Bloom, has in my opinion less than optimal taste in writers, but then Robert Heinlein, who would have been more likely to accept, and who really is "the greatest sci-fi writer in history", has passed on. Mike Glycer among others has posted the photograph by John King Tarpinian of Bradbury watching it . . . with an amused grin on his face.

Congratulations to Mike R., Claire & Mark, Guy, Chris, Mike G., Steve, Brad, and Taral.

And to all those who nominated StarShipSofa profound shooms of lip-music brrrrrr. And they can kiss my sharries. But you, O my brothers, remember sometimes thy little Hugo that was. Amen. And all that cal.

— Joe

I have been thinking about the video, “Fuck Me, Ray Bradbury”. I’ve even seen it. I found it quite strange. However, there can be no denying the young lady has good taste and no little intelligence, to have worked in all the references to Bradbury’s work as well as she did. If it does win the Hugo there will be many raised eyebrows outside fandom about the video’s openly sexual nature. And yet, is SF not traditionally about moving outside boundaries? Certainly the young lady is not in any way, shape, form or fashion advocating sex with minors. She is over 18 and Bradbury has not been a minor for nearly 73 years. To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Bradbury has not declared himself insulted by the video. If he were to do so, then I would have no hesitation in saying the video had no business being a Hugo nominee. But having seen the video, I don’t think it is any more explicit than Heinlein’s *Stranger in a Strange Land*.

Will I vote for it? I don’t have any plans to do so. It has no content apart from the young lady’s desire to know Ray Bradbury in all senses of the word. A Hugo winner should have at least some content. I have not seen the other nominees so I can’t compare them with Blume’s video. Her video may outshine them. It is my opinion, though, that SF films and shows should be held to the same high standard I would have for literary Hugo nominees.

— Lisa

## NEBULA AWARDS

Announced at the Nebula Awards weekend at the Washington Hilton in Washington, DC, USA on May 22, 2011.

### Short Story

“How Interesting: A Tiny Man”, Harlan Ellison® (*Realms of Fantasy* 2/10)  
“Ponies”, Kij Johnson (Tor.com 1/17/10)

### Novellette

“That Leviathan, Whom Thou Hast Made”, Eric James Stone (*Analog Science Fiction and Fact* 9/10)

### Novella

“The Lady Who Plucked Red Flowers beneath the Queen’s Window”, Rachel Swirsky (*Subterranean Magazine* Summer ‘10)

### Novel

*Blackout/All Clear*, Connie Willis (Spectra)

### The Ray Bradbury Award for Outstanding Dramatic Presentation

*Inception*, Christopher Nolan (director), Christopher Nolan (screenplay) (Warner)

### Andre Norton Award for Young Adult

### Science Fiction and Fantasy

*I Shall Wear Midnight*, Terry Pratchett (Gollancz; Harper)

The first notice I could find of this was the *Publishers’ Weekly* blog, complete with a lament by the blogger that the winners’ list was completely honky. Great, affirmative action Nebula awards lists.

It’s a pity that “I Passionately Desire You to Form a Carnal Connection with Me, Ray Bradbury” didn’t win the Ray Bradbury Award. It would have been so appropriate.

## 2011 PRIX AURORA AWARD NOMINEES

(courtesy of File770.com)

### Professional Awards

#### Best English Novel

*Black Bottle Man* by Craig Russell, Great Plains Publications

*Destiny’s Blood* by Marie Bilodeau, Dragon Moon Press

*Stealing Home* by Hayden Trenholm, Bundoran Press

*Under Heaven* by Guy Gavriel Kay, Viking Canada

*Watch*, by Robert J. Sawyer, Penguin Canada

#### Best English Short Story

“The Burden of Fire” by Hayden Trenholm, *Neo-Opis* #19

“Destiny Lives in the Tattoo’s Needle” by Suzanne Church, *Tesseracts Fourteen*, EDGE

“The Envoy: by Al Onia, *Warrior Wisewoman* 3, Norilana Books

“Touch the Sky”, They Say by Matt Moore, *AE: The Canadian Science Fiction Review*, November

“Your Beating Heart” by M. G. Gillett, *Rigor Amortis*, Absolute Xpress

#### Best English Poem / Song

“The ABCs of the End of the World” by Carolyn Clink, *A Verdant Green, The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box*

“Let the Night In” by Sandra Kasturi, *Evolve: Vampire Stories of the New Undead*, EDGE

“Of the Corn: Kore’s Innocence” by Colleen Anderson, *Witches & Pagans* #21

“The Transformed Man” by Robert J. Sawyer, *Tesseracts Fourteen*, EDGE

“Waiting for the Harrowing” by Helen Marshall, *ChiZine* 45

#### Best English Graphic Novel

*Goblins*, Tarol Hunt, goblinscomic.com

*Looking For Group, Vol. 3* by Ryan Sohmer and Lar DeSouza

*Stargazer, Volume 1* by Von Allan, Von Allan Studio

*Tomboy Tara*, Emily Ragozzino, tomboytara.com

#### Best English Related Work

*Chimerascope*, Douglas Smith (collection), ChiZine Publications

*The Dragon and the Stars*, edited by Derwin Mak and Eric Choi, DAW

*Evolve: Vampire Stories of the New Undead*, edited by Nancy Kilpatrick, EDGE

*On Spec*, edited by Diane Walton, Copper Pig Writers Society

*Tesseracts Fourteen*, edited by John Robert Colombo and Brett Alexander Savory, EDGE

### Best Artist (Professional and Amateur)

(An example of each artist’s work is listed below but they are to be judged on the body of work they have produced in the award year)

Lynne Taylor Fahnestalk, Brekky cover art, *On Spec Fall*

Erik Mohr, cover art for ChiZine Publications

Christina Molendyk, Girls of Geekdom Calendar for Argent Dawn Photography

Dan O’Driscoll cover art for *Stealing Home*

Aaron Paquette, *A New Season* cover art, On Spec Spring

### Fan/ Amateur Awards

#### Best Fan Publications

**No award will be given out in this category due to insufficient eligible nominees**

#### Best Fan Filk

Dave Clement and Tom Jeffers of Dandelion Wine for “Face on Mars” CD

Karen Linsley; concert as SFContario Guest of Honour

Phil Mills, for “Time Traveller” (song writing)

#### Best Fan Organizational

Andrew Gurudata, organizing the Constellation Awards

Brent M. Jans, chair of Pure Speculation (Edmonton)

Liana Kerzner, chair of Futurecon (Toronto)

Helen Marshall and Sandra Kasturi, chairs of Toronto SpecFic Colloquium (Toronto)

Alex Von Thorn, chair of SFContario (Toronto)

#### Best Fan Other

Tom Jeffers, Fundraising, FilKONtario

John and Linda Ross Mansfield, Conception of the Aurora Nominee pins

Lloyd Penney, Articles, columns and letters of comment – fanzines

Congratulations to Lloyd; but it looks like CanFans don’t read fanzines.

## FANZINES

*Auroran Lights* #3 April 2011, #4 May 2011

R. Graeme Cameron, Apt 72G, 13315 104th Avenue, Surrey, BC V3T 1V5 CANADA

[rgraeme@shaw.ca](mailto:rgraeme@shaw.ca)

<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Beyond Bree* April 2011, May 2011, June 2011

Nancy Martsch, Post Office Box 55372, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-5372 USA

[beyondbree@yahoo.com](mailto:beyondbree@yahoo.com)

<http://www.cep.unt.edu/bree.html>

Not available for The Usual; \$15/year, \$20

foreign, \$10/year electronic.

*Dark Matter* #3 April 2011  
Nalini Hayes  
[darkmatterfanzine@gmail.com](mailto:darkmatterfanzine@gmail.com)

*The Drink Tank* #273, #277, #278, #279, #280, #281, #282, #283, #284  
Christopher J. Garcia  
[garcia@computerhistory.org](mailto:garcia@computerhistory.org)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*eI* #55 April 2011  
Earl Kemp, Post Office Box 6642,  
Kingman, AZ 86402-6642 USA  
[earl@earlkemp.com](mailto:earl@earlkemp.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Fadeaway* #22, #23  
Robert Jennings, 29 Whiting Road, Oxford,  
MA 01540-2035 USA  
[fabficbks@aol.com](mailto:fabficbks@aol.com)

*File 770:159* April 2011  
Mike Glycer, 705 Valley View Avenue,  
Monrovia, CA 91016-2446 USA  
[MikeGlycer@cs.com](mailto:MikeGlycer@cs.com)  
<http://File770.com>

*Fish Out of Water* #426, #427, #428, #429, #430, #431, #432, #433, #434, #435  
Marty Helgesen, 11 Lawrence Avenue,  
Malverne, New York 11565-1406 USA

*Fortnightly Fix* #22  
Steve Green  
[stevegreen@livejournal.com](mailto:stevegreen@livejournal.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Journal of Mind Pollution* #36 January 2011  
Richard A. Dengrove, 2651 Arlington Drive  
#302, Alexandria, VA 22306-3626 USA  
[RichD22426@aol.com](mailto:RichD22426@aol.com)

*The Knarley Knaws*  
Henry & Letha Welch, 15290 Upper Ellen  
Road, Los Gatos, CA 95033-7814 USA  
[knarley@welchcastle.com](mailto:knarley@welchcastle.com)  
<http://tkk.welchcastle.com/>

*MT Void* V. 29 #40 April 1, 2011 — V. 29 #50  
June 10, 2011  
Mark and Evelyn Leeper, 80 Lakeridge  
Drive, Matawan, NJ 07747-3839 USA  
[eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net)  
[mleeper@optonline.net](mailto:mleeper@optonline.net)  
<http://leepers.us/mtvoid>

*Opuntia* #70.1G May 2011; #70.3 June 2011  
Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta  
T2P 2E7 CANADA  
Dale also sent *The Nanton Lancaster  
Society Newsletter* V. 24 #2 for  
Fall/Winter 2010, for which many  
thanks.

*Southern Fandom Confederation Update* V. 1  
#20 April 2011, V. 1 #21 May 2011, V. 1  
#22 June 2011  
Warren Buff, 22144 B Ravenglass Place,

Raleigh, NC 27612-2936 USA  
[warrenbuff@gmail.com](mailto:warrenbuff@gmail.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*This Here* #15  
Nic Farey, 3345 Cape Cod Drive, Las  
Vegas, NV 89122- USA  
[fareynic@gmail.com](mailto:fareynic@gmail.com)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*SF Commentary* #82, June 2011  
Bruce Gillespie, 5 Howard Street,  
Greensborough VIC 3088, AUSTRALIA  
[gandc@pacific.net.au](mailto:gandc@pacific.net.au)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*Vanamonde* #873-877  
John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado Street, No.  
409, Los Angeles, CA 90057-1456 USA

*Visions of Paradise* #164, #165  
Robert Sabella, 24 Cedar Manor Court,  
Budd Lake, NJ 07828-1023 USA  
[bsabella@optonline.net](mailto:bsabella@optonline.net)  
<http://www.efanzines.com>

*WARP* #77  
<http://www.monsffa.com/monsffahtml/warp.html>  
The password is: **WibblyWobbly**

*The Zine Dump* #27  
Guy H. Lillian III, Post Office Box 163,  
Benton, LA 71006-0163 USA  
[GHLIII@yahoo.com](mailto:GHLIII@yahoo.com)  
<http://www.challzine.net>

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### WORLDCON BIDS

2013  
San Antonio  
<http://www.texasin2013.org>

2014  
London  
<http://www.londonin2014.org>

2015  
Spokane  
<http://spokanein2015.org>

2016  
Kansas City

2017  
Japan  
<http://nippon2017.org>

2017  
New Orleans  
[neworleansin2018@gmail.com](mailto:neworleansin2018@gmail.com)

2019  
2020  
New Zealand  
<http://nzin2020.org>

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### HEALTH NEWS

by Joe

Through March and April I had a problem

with a wound on my nose, a small round spot which would scab over but never fully heal. Sometimes it would open up again and bleed when I took a shower.

When I went to see Dr. H regarding my usual checkups and some other matters, including shifting prescriptions to a mail-order service, I mentioned this, and he had the staff arrange an appointment with a dermatologist.

The dermatologist's office is not too far from home. Dr. B had a name that was pronounced much like one of my classmates from U of L, who had wanted to become a doctor. This Dr. B spelled her last name differently and clearly wasn't my classmate.

She snipped a bit from my nose and sent it in for tests. Sure enough, it turned out to be a basal-cell skin cancer, and I made an appointment for surgery.

Then, I had to reschedule, because I'd made it the same day that I had an appointment with my internist, Dr. K, and they told me that their surgery would take all day. (And then Dr. K rescheduled *that* appointment.) So on a rainy Tuesday, Lisa and I went to the dermatologists, where another doctor, Dr. M, would do the work of extirpating the untoward growth.

The surgery was not overly incapacitating. I started to read *The Dervish House* during the wait between surgical sessions, but quit since I wasn't sitting in the brightly-lit part of the waiting room. After they finished cutting, but before they sutured the wound, I got out to go get lunch. As I said, it wasn't that far from home, so we ate there.

No one at work the next day mentioned the big blob of white bandage on my nose. I took it off before quitting time and looked at the intricate scar. The wound had bled some and was still bleeding a little for about a day.

A week later they removed the stitches. I could nip over from work and the whole thing took about half an hour. The wound is healing well, and I will come back in six weeks for a checkup.

You've heard of "phantom pain". I've got "phantom itching". My nose itches, but when I scratch the place, I don't feel anything. The nerves should grow back soon.

Now there's only the bill, which is \$\$\$\$ of which I have to pay \$\$\$ . Another reason you won't be seeing us in Reno, I'm afraid.

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### JOCKWORLD NEWS

by Lisa

I have resumed walking several days a week but shorter distances than pre-holidays. I am trying to work gradually up to the longer distances by adding a block every week. This morning it was great walking weather. It was cool and crisp although rain threatened, it never quite materialized. It was a very welcome relief from the smothering heat of the past few days.