



# PSFS News

The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society

March 1998

*Our March Guest:*

## Stuart Moore

### Announcements

*Copies of any official PSFS correspondence should be sent to both the Secretary and the One Year Director for filing in the Society's official records.*

The Philcon web site is: [www.netaxs.com/~philcon](http://www.netaxs.com/~philcon)

**Newsletter Submissions and Announcements** can be e-mailed to [rak@netaxs.com](mailto:rak@netaxs.com), mailed to the Society's P.O. Box or the Kabakjian's home address, or given to the Secretary or Rich K. in writing at the meetings.

**Dues Reminder** - to all Active and General members: Your dues are due every April 1st. If your dues are not paid by July 1st, you automatically become a Suspended member *and you will not be able to vote at any meeting* until they are. If you are having severe financial difficulties, you can contact any Board member for special consideration. Check your Bylaws. If you need a copy, contact the Secretary by phone, e-mail, or pick one up at the Meeting.

**Art Group** - meets the fourth Saturday of every month at 10 a.m. for 4 hours. Please help P.S.F.S. by supplying your own materials such as pencils, paper, and other art supplies. You can contact hosts Bridget Boyle or Barb Higgins for the specific supplies you'll need. Call (215) 423-2076 or e-mail at "[bridget@phillynet.com](mailto:bridget@phillynet.com)" or "[bridget@psfs.org](mailto:bridget@psfs.org)" for more information or directions.

**For Sale** - Franklin Mint issue of Star Trek 3 Dimensional Chess Set untouched and complete with certificate. Asking price of \$150 or best offer. Contact Rik Ivey at (610) 876-1145.

**Cassidy Kindergarten School for underprivileged children** - the children going to this school can not afford to buy their own books. If you have any books for 5 to 8 year olds please give them to Mattie Brahen at the P.S.F.S. Meetings.

**Carol Kabakjian** - has a collection of Star Trek action figures (all in the original packaging) for sale. Contact her if you're interested.

**Dino Fest** - 1998 in Philadelphia at the Civic Center from March 27 to April. All the top people in the field of paleontology, dinosaurs, and other things. Our own Bob Walters has been selected as the Art Director for the project.

**Babylon 5** - The 5th season, originally promised to be run on 22 consecutive weeks without reruns, will now be briefly interrupted by the NBA playoffs, after episode 512.

**Hugo Information** - Terry S. S. Graybill reminded everyone that the deadlines for nominating and voting for this year's Hugos will be a month early this year. The Society's 1998 Hugo Predictions Panel program will be in June.

**Lost** - One teal hat, at last month's meeting. If you know anything about this hat please contact Terry Graybill.

**Terry's kitten** - Iesha (sp?) died about two weeks ago.

**Worldcon hotel reservations** - If you got a negative response, don't panic. some of the hotels had the wrong information. If has been corrected and you should be getting updated information. Contact Bridget Boyle for more information.

### Membership Status

*Note: Status Changes from inactive to general or general to active become effective after the meeting has adjourned.*

#### **First Timers:**

Fred Ollinger, Jim Baxter, Patrick Hatfield,  
Mohamed Rafiq Batcha, P. R. Sathanarayanan,  
Guha Lakshmanan, David Rosignoli

**New Members:** None

**Members at the February Meeting:** 53  
(49 active, 3 general, 1 inactive)

**Non-members at the February Meeting:** 7

## Meeting Minutes

These are the minutes of the General meeting held on February 20th, 1998, at International House. The meeting was called to order at 8:10 pm.

**Proxies:** Diane Weinstein, Lee Weinstein, and Jerry Crosson to Oz Fontecchio; Peter Radatti to Tony Finan

**Corrections to the Minutes:** Carol reported that there was a 14th proxy: Leslie Ann Alpert to Gary K. Feldbaum. The meeting date for April 1998 should have been for the 17th not the 10th. The minutes were approved as corrected.

### Officers' Reports:

**President:** Tony said, "hello and welcome to the meeting." He said he's only got 2 months to go and he's counting the moments.

Don't schedule anything for the weekend of March 6, 1999. This is when Tina and Tony will be married.

**Vice President:** Oz is still negotiating for our Principal Speaker and Artist Guest for Philcon 1998. The location of our after meeting get-together is The New Deck Tavern, at 3408 Sansom St. They have reserved a room for 30 for us and will keep the kitchen open until midnight. They've bought an extra case of Chimay for us as well. See Oz for the "three secret substances".

**Secretary:** Reminders to the members: Please sign in the book or it doesn't count toward your membership determination. The book is on the Treasurer's table from before the meeting starts until it's declared closed after the guest speaker is done.

If you've got an announcement, meeting, or special event you want listed in the newsletter please give me the information *in writing*. If I don't receive the information in written form I won't guarantee that your notice will be listed (*accurately if at all*) in the Newsletter. You can e-mail me at rak@netaxs.com, come to the meeting and give the information to me or to Rich (at the Treasurer's table), or snail mail it to the P.O. Box or my home address (in the Society's Directory).

**Treasurer:** Gary is taking members dues money for 1998. Your dues have been, are, and ever will be due on April 1.

**2 Year Director (Tina):** has no report as 2 year Director, however as the President-Elect she said if you're interested in keeping your committee job in 1998 or wish to volunteer for a committee for 1998 to contact her soon.

**Temporary 2 Year Director (Bruce):** (see the Board Minutes.)

**1 Year Director (Shelley):** No report.

**Special Business:** The special election to fill the remainder of the term of Sr. 2-year Director Avi Freedman,

who resigned in January. The re-voting (see last month's Newsletter) of the run off elections for the two-year and one-year director. At this point Tony Finan (as one of the two candidates on both ballots) stood up and conceded the two-year vote to Shelley Handen and the one-year vote to Oz Fontecchio (the other candidates). Tony opened nominations for the 2 Year Director replacement. John Syms nominated, several second, Tony Finan (accepted). Tony's nomination was questioned. Gary said according to Article 6, section 2, of our Bylaws, *no person can hold more than one office at a time, although a person may hold one office and be elected to hold another office at the conclusion of his/her term of office*. Tony said that the Board will appoint some to hold the office until April 1st when Tony will take over. Someone pointed out Article 6, Section 7, *Whenever any office (including that of President) shall become permanently vacant, an election shall be held without undue delay to fill the vacancy*. It was then pointed out that we are having the required election. (*The Bylaws don't say the person elected has to take over immediately*. CK) Tony called for a straw poll to find out how many were against his running. Result 2 against, many for. Ira K. nominated, Lynn K. second, Hank Smith (accepted). Don F. nominated, Lew W. second, Becky J. (accepted). Three judges were picked; John Syms, Darrell Schweitzer, and Joni Brill Dashoff. The list of active members was read and the ballots were handed out. Tony won on the first ballot.

Here is the List of the PSFS Board of Directors for 1998:

<b>President</b>	<b>Tina Blanco</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Tim Binder</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Carol Kabakjian</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Gary Feldbaum</b>
<b>2 Year Director</b>	<i>Bruce Bloom (thru 3-31)</i> <i>then Tony Finan</i>
<b>2 Year Director</b>	<b>Shelley Handen</b>
<b>1 Year Director</b>	<b>Oz Fontecchio</b>

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!

### Committee Reports:

**Technology:** Tim reported that the web-sites are up for both P.S.F.S. and Philcon. Thanks to Avi Freedman for providing access and thanks to Becky J. for inputting the information. If anyone requires a P.S.F.S. e-mail address see Tim. Addresses are: [www.psfs.org](http://www.psfs.org) or [www.philcon.org](http://www.philcon.org) and [www.philcon.com](http://www.philcon.com)

**Space Sciences:** Hank Smith has a list of events to be held in the near future. Please see him for details.

**Programming:** (See Announcements for details.)

**Special Events: Mobie Night:** none at this time.

**Book Discussion:** March's book will be *The Postman* by David Brin, March 8 at 2:00pm at Shelley's, 28 Rosedale Rd, Wynnewood. April's book will be *We* by Zambiatin, at 2:00pm, day & place TBA. Call Oz at (215) 563-7538 for more info.

**Art Group:** Bridget announced that the meetings are still being held every month. (See *Announcements for details.*)

**Philip K. Dick Award:** Gary said that the winner has been selected and will be announced at Norwescon. Dave Hartwell will be going out to present the award and to represent our interests. We've received \$900 in donations toward the award. Gary said it usually takes \$1700 for the award and related expenses: \$1000 prize, \$500 award for special citation, & \$200 expenses which to go the people making the certificates and presentation folders. He asked for up to \$800 to make up the difference between what's needed and what's been donated. Once again someone asked why we don't give out the award at Philcon. The award ceremony is funded by Norwescon and is presented there in March. Philcon is in November. Most of the sponsors would not be happy if they had to wait 8 extra months to hand out the awards. When we accepted the award as our own it was already being given out at Norwescon. Bridget asked why other SF Societies don't contribute. Answer: because it's our award, not theirs. (See *March 1997 Newsletter for details.* CK) Tim moved, several second, to call the question. Passed many to few.

**Education:** Lew reported that the application for the historical site has gone in with letters of support from Jack Williamson, James Gunn, and Gregory Benford. If it doesn't work this year he said he'd get more letters for next year.

**No Fund:** John Prenis has stuff. Take it.

**Cookbook Committee:** The book is still open for donations. This book, if we actually make it, can be sold to other fans to make some money for our Society. Please give us your recipes. They can be in any category and can include foods by you, a relative, or friend. They can be something you've made up or gotten from other cookbooks. We'll even take joke recipes, but let us know if it's a joke.

### Old Business:

**Motion from Last month:** to reinstate the office of scapegoat. Gary F. moved, Don F. second, to table until next month. Passed 31 plus 3 proxies to 6.

### New Business:

**Motion:** Hank S. moved, Lynn K. second, to extend business for 10 minutes. Passed.

**Motion:** John S. moved, Several second, to donate \$50 to the Paskow collection in memory of Jo Clayton. Passed unanimously.

**Motion:** Gary F. moved, Rich F. second, a budget of \$400 for a deposit to the International House meeting space. Passed.

Meeting adjourned around 10:58 pm.

## Board Meeting Minutes

These are the minutes of the PSFS Board meeting held on February 26th, 1998, at Shelley & Bruce's home. The meeting was called to order at 8:06 pm.

**Board members present:** Tony, Oz, Carol, Gary, Shelley, and Tina

**Others present:** Rich K. and Bruce B.

### Officers' Reports

**President:** said, "Hi."

**Vice President:** Oz said thanks for dinner.

**Secretary:** No report.

**Treasurer:** The Philcon numbers have not been finalized.

**Two Year Director (Tina):** Dinner was great.

**Temp. Two Year Director:** Bruce Bloom was appointed to fill this position until April 1. He said, "Shelley makes good chicken."

**One Year Director (Shelley):** No report.

**Committee Reports, Old Business:** none

### New Business:

**P.S.F.S. Budget:** is recommended, by unanimous vote of the Board, as follows:

Meeting Space	3000	
Secretary	1000	
Publicity	750	(increased)
Programming	5000	
Special Programming		(eliminated)
Treasurer	200	
Special Events	500	
Milton Award	350	
Refreshments	600	(reduced, closer to actual)
Oversight	100	
P.O. Box	110	
Archives	25	(reduced)
Book Discussion	25	
No Fund	0	(halved)
Hotline		(eliminated)
BoD Emergency *	300	
President Emerg. *	300	
Bulk Mail Permit	85	
Annual Banquet	600	
Movie Discussion		(eliminated)
Philip K. Dick Award	800	(new line item, not new exp.)
Insurance	1800	(formerly in Philcon budget)
<u>Art Group</u>	<u>220</u>	
TOTAL	15765	

\* These items are required by the Bylaws and may not be changed.

Adjourned at 9:30 pm.

The next Board meeting will be held on March 16th at 8:00 pm at Oz's (see **Meeting Notices** for details.)

## Philcon Meeting Minutes

These are the minutes of the Philcon '98 meeting held on March 1st, 1998, at the Dashoff home in Philadelphia. The meeting was called to order at 1:34 pm.

**Committee members present:** Rich & Carol, Tony & Tina, Todd & Joni, Ira & Becky K., Winnie, John & Laura, Gary, Oz, Hank, Vicki W., David B., Lynn, Mark & Margaret, Lew

### Officers' Reports:

**Chairman:** Tony thanked everyone for coming. There will be a con and we'll be there.

**Vice-Chair:** Oz gave no report.

**Secretary:** Carol gave no report.

**Treasurer:** Gary gave no report.

**Department Reports:** none given at this meeting.

### New Business:

**Membership Rates:** After brief discussion the adult rates were set at: \$30 till Sept. 15; \$35 till Oct. 31; \$40 at the door. Currently children's rates are: 0-5, free; 6-12, half the adult rate; 13 & up, full price. Child's membership must be bought by an attending adult. All children ages 0-15 must have a release form signed by a parent or guardian. Rich proposed the following children's pre-reg rates: 0-5 free; 6-10 \$10 (1/3 adult rate); 11-15 \$20 (2/3 adult rate). Children's at the door rates would be: 0-5 free; 6-10 \$15; 11-15 \$25. There would be no change of the release form. (*Note: children's ages will be as of November 13, 1998.*) A proposal of a flat \$5 per child (age 2-6) badge rate was made. A maximum \$ limit for families was proposed. **Suggestions:** hole punch or mark in some way the badges of the under-age children. Include adult's badge number on every child's membership & release form. After much discussion in which everyone went off on tangents of childrens programming, responsibility policies, "lost" child policy, and overburdening the con suite (*since the con suite is usually under budget and has leftovers I don't think this would be a problem - CK*), Tony took a straw poll to see how many were in favor of the new children's rates: 7 for to 8 against. It was decided that we'd table further discussion and an actual vote of the subject until next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** See last page for meeting information. *This is the budget meeting.*

*Adjourned at 4:17 pm.*

Call the PSFS Hotline  
(215) 957-4004

PSFS & Philcon Meeting Info  
Leave Messages

Last Minute Meeting Cancellation Info

### Book Discussion Report

## H.G. Wells: War of the Worlds

reported by Lee Weinstein

The first discussion topic of 1998 was H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*, 101 years old this year.

We started by discussing Wells, himself. Crediting with founding modern science fiction as we know it, Wells considered himself to be more of a fantasist. He was trained in science, and had some experience in scientific journalism before becoming a fiction writer. He was a socialist, and his political ideas come across with subtlety in his early fiction, but much more stridently in his later work.

*War of the Worlds* is the prototype for all later alien invasion stories, although one member named a single obscure novel by another author that attempted the same theme a trifle earlier.

The members of the group were all impressed with the power of the book, despite the long stretches of exposition, a technique no longer fashionable in writing. People felt that the characters were well-drawn and believable. Someone stressed that the hellish depiction of war and its resulting devastation was both realistic and considerably ahead of its time. In Wells' era, war was generally glorified.

One topic discussed was Wells' Mars, based on Sciperelli's observations, and his Martians, clearly related to Wells' own projections of the future evolution of man, in one of his early scientific essays. A few members questioned the Martians's total unawareness of the existence of bacteria, as well as their direct usage of human blood, but for the most part, everyone agreed that the book was well thought out.

Another topic was how the book read as a commentary on Victorian society and British imperialism. One person noted that the insane Curate may have been Wells' comment on religion, a notion that was subverted in the sixties film version.

After discussing the book, we played an excerpt from the infamous 1938 radio adaptation by Orson Welles and discussed the panic that ensued when people thought that Martians were really landing.

Finally, we talked about the film and TV versions and their shortcomings.

The next discussion topic, slated for March, will be *The Postman* by David Brin.

## Missing

Young book review column, answers to the name of "Shiny, Juicy New Stuff." Last seen in August. If found, please return to the Editor. Reward will be its inclusion in the next newsletter.

# 1997 Philcon Budget

as of July 1997

Art Show		Masquerade Video	600
Awards	25	Media Ops (Films/Video)	1,900
Equipment	800	Miscellaneous	
Mailing	750	Operations	70
Phone	75	Beepers	300
Reception	2,500	Insurance	2,200
Triplicate Forms	150	Nursing Supplies	25
Set-up	150	Phones	130
Babysitting		Parties	
Snacks	130	Meet the Pros	250
Room	470	Pre-con parties	450
Con Suite	2,300	PhilconTV	600
Contingency	500	Programming	
Dealers Room		Mailings	200
Mailing	600	A.V. Coordinator	2,600
Surcharge	850	Workshops	
Electricity	100	Artists	25
Den	600	Costume	25
Exhibitions	125	Writers	10
Filking		Science	25
Filkers Coffee	395	Filk	
Filk Contest	50	Childrens Prog.	50
Gaming Room	75	Programming Ops	200
Gopher	200	Easels	
Green Room		Publications	
Food	325	Advertising	100
Coffee Set-up	1,000	Flyers	1,500
Guest Bar (drink chits)	600	Pocket Program	1,600
Guests of Honor		Program Book	4,500
Transportation	5,500	Web Page free	
Food	1,100	Publicity/Media Rel.	1,200
WAM	800	Registration	
Hotel Liaison		Badges	300
Curtains	300	Postage	1,000
L Room Exp. (non-con)	350	Ribbons	300
Rental (Func. Space)	10,700	Supplies	100
Security	720	Secretary	10
Tips	1,000	SFWA/ASFA	1,808
Information	50	Signs	150
Gaming Liaison	50	T-Shirts	
Logistics	500	Transportation	
Masquerade	1,200	Treasury	300
Masq. Ribbon Awards	300		
		<b>TOTAL (so far)</b>	<b>57,868</b>

# Philcon 1998 Committee: Your Attention, Please

The next meeting of the Philcon Committee will be held on April 4th, and the primary item of business will be setting the budget. The previous year's budget is supplied to the left as a starting point, so you will know in advance of the meeting what you had last year, and whether you will need any increases (or decreases) this year. This should help to speed up the procedure.

## Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	Tony Finan.....(215) 744-6045
<b>Vice President</b>	Oz Fontecchio.....(215) 563-7538
<b>Secretary</b>	Carol Kabakjian.....(610) 623-1139
<b>Treasurer</b>	Gary Feldbaum.....(215) 673-4044
<b>2 Year Director</b>	Tina Blanco.....(215) 744-6045
<b>2 Year Director</b>	Bruce Bloom (18 April 1)...(610) 642-6061
<b>1 Year Director</b>	Shelley Handen.....(610) 642-6061

Questions? Comments? Contact any Board Member at the above numbers or use the Hotline.

To send e-mail to the board, write to [bored@cyber.com](mailto:bored@cyber.com)

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## PSFS News

PSFS News is the Newsletter and Corporate Minutes of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, published monthly as a benefit of membership. It is available free to Active and General Members of the Society, and to any SF club or organization wishing to trade newsletters. Non-members or Inactive Members may subscribe at an annual cost of \$10/year.

PSFS News welcomes submissions, and is seeking to expand. Anyone wishing to contribute articles (book or movie reviews, discussion group or convention reports, announcements, etc.) is encouraged to do so. We prefer that articles be e-mailed (send to [rak@netaxs.com](mailto:rak@netaxs.com)), but they may be mailed if necessary to the P.O. Box. Deadline is two weeks before the next general meeting.

PSFS News is produced on a Macintosh using ClarisWorks 4.0, and is printed on a Desk-Writer 320. Emailed articles may be either submitted as plain text, or as attached Claris-Works files (use macbinary or binhex if available). Other file formats may be possible. Art-work or photos are also welcome in any Mac graphics format, or we can scan originals if mailed to us.

PSFS News Editor & Publisher: Rich Kabakjian. Secretary: Carol Kabakjian. Regular contributors: Henry Lazarus, Lee Weinstein. All contents © 1997 by The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society and the individual contributors.

## Books for February

by Henry Leon Lazarus

One thing I've noticed lately is that fantasy and science fiction are mixing together. Elements from the fantastic are finding their way into purported science fiction. Rigorous background elements seem to make up much of the fantasy that I enjoy reading. This must make for confusion in the bookstores that try to separate fantasy and science fiction, but it means that the field is healthy and alive to me.

Consider Elizabeth Ann Scarborough's *The Godmother's Web* (hard from ACE). Like the other books in this series, Ms. Scarborough mixes myths and fairy tales into modern times by adding a magical figure. This time the figure, Spider Woman, is a mythical figure out of Hopi and Navaho legends. However, instead finding simple fairy tales, Ms. Scarborough uses the myths to show us the reality of Hopi and Navaho tribal cultures as they attempt to survive today in the third world of today's southwest America. David Zindell completes his four part series with *War in Heaven* (paper from Bantam Spectra) by showing us the undersides of start-up religions, in the far future when the creation of real (computer) Gods is not only possible but common. Danlo returns to a Neverness stricken by privations because of the war over the potential God that the religion, that worships his father, is building out of several moons in the system. In facing his past as a primitive and his beliefs in non-violence, Danlo comes to understand his beliefs in divinity.



L. E. Modesitt, Jr. continues the story of *The Soprano Sorceress* (paper) by telling how, as regent, she puts down the revolt of the southern lords of her country and stops another country from seizing part of hers in *The Spellson War* (hard from TOR). The gritty details of this world make it as real as any science fictional one. As usual Mr. Modesitt's use of balance in the use of power

makes the fantastic background more plausible. Gregory Benford has his scientist researcher bend reality almost to the fantastic when her use of uranium in an atomic accelerator creates a mini-universe, or *Cosm* (hard from Avon). This fun tale is as much about the politics of real science as about the big bang and life of the universe, though that is covered to the depth that you would expect a scientist/writer to create. There's enough action silliness to satisfy any reader.



Peter F. Hamilton finishes off his fun tales of telepathic detective Greg Mandel. This time he is on the hunt for the creator of *The Nano Flower* (Hard from TOR), a flower with DNA that couldn't possibly exist in this world and offers exciting tech-

nology for those greedy enough to pursue the clues that lead Greg and his friends eventually to a hollowed out asteroid. I thought the ending a bit silly, but really enjoyed the ride getting there.

I also enjoyed Mark Sumner's *Insanity Illinois* (paper from ACE), the latest News from the Edge In which Savvy investigates an island in which the population has gone nuts and faces not only the nuts but the C. D. C. before she solves the very mundane mystery.

Graham Joyce examines growing up in England in the 60's with a boy who can see a very impish *The Tooth Fairy* (Hard from TOR). He and his two friends survive the antics of boyhood antics, the horror of murder, and the dark side of drugs before he can find a way to banish the male/female creature. Patrick O'Leary has a tale teller on a ship telling a dark story of wizards and death after a dead woman has been dragged up in their nets in, *The Gift* (hard from TOR). This was fascinating, but didn't work as well for me.

I read Deborah Chester's *The Golden One* (paper from ACE) in a hospital bed, glad for reading I couldn't put down. This is the first of nine presented by Lucas Films about a culture mixed with a number of alien species. The heroine begins life as a pet of the heir to the throne of the ruling species and will eventually overthrow this species. I can only hope that Ms. Chester writes the whole series. I also enjoyed the latest tale of the second century equivalent with magic by Harry Turtledove which puts *Fox and Empire* (paper from Baen) on opposing sides. Add in a four-year-old half god who likes to pee on people as he flies overhead and Fox's half working magic and you have the usual humorous fun this series always has.

Collections this months include *Virtual Unrealities* (trade from Vintage), with some of Alfred Bester's best tales (but not, alas his dental story), *The Pure Product* (hard from TOR) a collection of John Kessel's tales, and *More Than Honor* (paper from Baen) which is a must for fans of David Weber's Honor Harrington's novels. I loved the tree cat story and liked the background details of the series, but could live without the stories written by others.

Paperback reprints this month include the third in Robin Hobb's Farseer series, *Assassin's Quest* (Bantam Specter) which disappointed me a little. Charles Sheffield's tale of how a man goes to the end of time, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow* (Bantam Spectra), Gregory Benford's enlargement of Isaac Asimov's classic, *Beyond the Fall of Night* (ACE), Chris Bunch's raunchy fantasy, *The Seer King* (Aspect), William Barton's dark and raunchy tale of a star ship mechanic with his own starship, *Acts of Conscience* (Aspect) which I didn't fully enjoy, but which has been nominated for the John Campbell award, and the third Serpent War, Raymond E. Feist's *Rage of a Demon King* (Avon Eos).



(Omitted from the February newsletter due to lack of space.)

## Books for March

by Henry Leon Lazarus

Characters have history in mundane fiction. In Science Fiction and Fantasy the background, whether our own or invented, can have history, too. The writer can use that history to follow a future or to invent a past that can seem very unreal, but real to the characters in the story.

Consider Charles de Lint's *Somewhere to be Flying* (hard from TOR), a truly wonderful book that assumes that American Indian myth figures like the tale teller Jack Daw, the impetuous Crow Girls, and the evil Cuckoos have always walked among us. In modern, urban America trouble starts when Coyote tries to get Raven's pot (something like the holy grail) and leads some of the killer Cuckoos (mob killers) into the chase. Mr. De Lint makes the reader believe in this odd past and adds odd and interesting characters for solid interest.



Steven Barnes uses real magic to create twins with magical powers who have created a sex cult in modern Los Angeles. Cat and her huge partner Jax are hired to find a missing heir caught in the middle of this cult in *Iron Shadows* (hard from TOR). This was fun and exciting, but not as believable. Elliot S. Maggin assumes super heroes are real in *Kingdom Come* (hard from Aspect). Their rumbles are truly dangerous to passersby and when they fight in a war against one another, even the Earth may not be safe. Mr. Maggin kept this odd assumption believable, but the enumerable comic characters made following them a challenge.

Greg Bear assumes that *Professor Challenger's Lost World* (Arthur Conan Doyle) really happened. A boy and his father help return circus dinosaurs to the plateau in South America in 1947 in a tremendous boy's adventure, *Dinosaur Summer* (hard from Warner). Larry Segriff continues his tale of Tom Jenkins, now in the Space Patrol, in *Alien Dreams* (paper from Baen) as his ship fights pirates and investigates aliens. Its fun to watch Tom grow up.



For some light fantasies there is Daniel Hood's *Scales of Justice* (paper from Ace) in which Liam has to solve a murder while serving as investigator on a circuit court. I can't wait for the next mystery in this series.

Anne McCaffrey tells of the early life of Robinton, *The Master Harper of Pern* (Hard from Del Rey), filling in a gap in the history of the dragon planet. It was very neat to see familiar characters arrive and find



their places where they would be found in earlier written, but future books.

James A. Halperin posits a best-case scenario for cryogenic freezing by following the life of Benjamin Smith, born in 1914 and frozen for ninety one years after his death in 1985. Eventually he becomes *The First Immortal* (hard from Del Rey) and lives happily every after. Mr. Halperin makes a compelling argument for freezing, but I still wonder. Greg Egan looks at tech-

nology for moving humans inside software universes. I've never seen the concept handled better. Eventually copies of these computers are sent out through out the galaxy searching for life in a *Diaspora* (hard from Harper Prism). Discovering extinction ahead the dive through numerous dimensions (using very complicated and difficult physics) to find the truth about that prediction.

S. M. Sterling puts Nantucket Island in the *Sea of Time* (paper from ROC) by sending it back to the Bronze age. With Coast Guard Sailing vessel along, they bring industrial revolution and war to England in this first book of a trilogy that's already exciting the internet. It's a lot of fun. So is Ben Bova's continuation of a tale of a lunar colony surviving by nanotechnology started in *Moon Rise* (paper from Avon Eos). The two thousand colonists have to defend themselves from U.N. Peace Keeping forces determined to shut them down. They have only their wits and the harsh lunar environment to protect them in this *Moon War* (hard).



Bernard Werber looks at intelligent insects in *Empire of the Ants* (hard from Bantam). We see ant life through a worker, a male, a soldier, and a Queen. Also there's a house with a cellar that people never return from. Very odd. Michael Kanaly considers intelligent *Virus Clans* (trade from ACE), and the effect these minuscule beings might have in modifying human beings. Vivian Vande Velde tells an intense tale of a witch who turns animals into her soldiers and a boy who has to follow her evil orders to avoid turning back into wolf in *The Changeling Prince* (paper from Harper Prism). I couldn't keep my eyes off the page.

I don't know if Isaac Asimov would have approved, but three modern writers have been commissioned to finish his famous Foundation series. Greg Benford started with *Foundation's Fear* (paper from Harper Prism) which started midpoint in Hari Seldon's life. *Foundation and Chaos* (hard) is Greg Bear's turn to tell of Robots feuding behind the scenes during the famous trial of Hari Seldon that will lead to the establishment of the Foundation on Terminus.

Media Books include *Star Trek Science Logs* (Trade from Pocket) by the science advisor to the series, Andre Bormanis. He tries to explain the science behind famous episodes. Peter David has novelized the recent *In the Beginning* (paper from Del Rey) which sets up Babylon 5 and recently played on TNT.

There's a new collection about Chicks in Chain Mail, *Did you say, Chicks?* (Paper from Baen and edited by Esther Friesner) which is just as much fun as the first. Spider Robinson has collected some of his stories and essays in *User Friendly* (paper from Baen). Finally, classic H. G. Wells tales are available in *Thirty Strange Stories* (Trade from Carroll and Graf).

TOR has released Lisa Goldstein's *Walking the Labyrinth* about a magical circus family in trade paperback. Also new to paperback are: Anne McCaffrey's tale of early Pern, *Dragonseye* (Del Rey), Roger McBride Allen's second Robot mystery, *Inferno* (Ace); Jerry Jay Carroll's odd tale of a stock broker turned into a dog in a fantasy world, *Top Dog* (Ace); Jack L. Chalker's conclusion to his Wonderland series, *The Hot Wired Dodo* (Del Rey); S. M. Stirling's fun tale in the brain universe, *The Ship Avenged* (Baen); Ian M. Banks tale of a funny response to a galactic invasion, *Excession* (Bantam Spectra); and Steve Perry's fun tale of a single invading alien to our time, *Target Earth* (Aspect).



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## Meeting Notices

### General Meetings

Unless otherwise specified, General Meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month in the South America Room at International House, 37th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Business meeting starts at 8 pm. Program starts at 9 pm.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Guest/Agenda</u>
March 13, 1998	Stuart Moore
April 17, 1998 (3rd Friday)	Catharine Asaro
May 8, 1998	( <i>unscheduled</i> )
June 12, 1998	Annual Hugo Panel
July 10, 1998	( <i>unscheduled</i> )
August 14, 1998	( <i>Date may be changed</i> )

<u>Date</u>	<u>Host/Location</u>
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### Board of Directors

Thur., Feb. 26, 1998, 8:00 pm	Oz Fontecchio, Philadelphia; (215) 563-7538
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### Philcon '98 Meeting

Sat., April 4, 1998, 2:00 pm	Todd & Joni Dashoff, 830 Barlow St, Philadelphia; (215) 676-4194 <i>Budget meeting</i>
Sat., May 16, 1998, 2:00 pm	Rich & Carol Kabakjian, 17 Lewis Ave., East Lansdowne, PA (610) 623-1139

## About the Society

The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society (PSFS) is a non-profit organization that meets monthly to discuss and promote science fiction and fantasy in literature, the arts, and popular culture. Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at International House, 37th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia. Meetings consist of business proceedings from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., followed by a guest speaker involved in some area of Science Fiction or Fantasy, such as writers, editors, artists, publishers, etc.

In addition, PSFS sponsors an annual science fiction conference, Philcon, and has many special interest subgroups; such as the Book Discussion Group, which meets monthly to discuss a work of science fiction or fantasy; and the Special Events Group, which attends science fiction and fantasy movies and other events.

Membership in the society is open to everyone. Becoming a member is easy. Attend your first meeting; we'll say "Hello." At your second meeting, you can nominate yourself for membership or ask someone else to nominate you. At the next meeting you attend following your nomination, you're eligible to be voted in as a General Member. Our current dues are \$15 for a full year (\$24 for couples), and attendance at 4 meetings each year maintains the status of Active Member.