

THE SFSFS SHUTTLE

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The Newszine of the South Florida Science Fiction Society

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February Meeting The next SFSFS meeting will be held Saturday, February 27, 7:30 p.m., at The Book Club, in Lauderhill.

Address: 5312 N. University Dr., Lauderhill

Phone: 748-7500

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Program: Fran Mullen and Doug Wu will lead the group in a filk singing session, explaining how to and for what reasons.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! (your editor speaks) It's a brand new year for us in the Society. We have so much to look forward to - new works by our favorite authors, new conventions (yet another chance to try and meet Harlan by the coffee machine in the hotel to engage him in heated argument), new movies, new art forms (maybe even a new life form or two), and a lot more of everything. Let's get the new year off to a good start by first throwing out all our new year's resolutions. The only resolution I made was to read at least one book by a new author (I don't suppose that means L. Ron.) and to finally get my pilot's license. (You didn't know I was flying this thing without a license?) Let's get The Shuttle moving before any catastrophes happen - like trying to land it.

SOLSTICE 4 A tentative release date for SOLSTICE 4 has been set for June 1988. The deadline for submission of material for publication is April 30, 1988. Articles, artwork, poetry and original short fiction are to be given to Linda Hill, who will be the editor for this issue. For further details, contact Linda at the next meeting.

WHO TOUR AT WPBT SFSFSers recently helped out at The Doctor Who tour, when it made a stop in Miami at WPBT, Channel 2. Guests included Dr. Who Producers; John Nathan Turner and Eric Luskin, and Nicola Bryant who played Peri in the series. Also in attendance were Mary Sounder of WPBT; Sandra March, SFSFSer and Omnicon chairperson; Gail Bennett, Dr. Who artist and club member, and many others. Everyone had a lot of fun and those lucky enough got to fly The Tardis. (I still think I see it flying around somewhere in Dade county).

WRITING RITES There will be a writing committee meeting, Feb. 21, at 2 p.m. at Terri Wells' pad, 2626 N.E. 10th Terrace; Wilton Manors. Bring 6 copies of your work for everyone to examine carefully and critically acclaim you as one of science fiction's upcoming writers. Also, bring munchies. For more info call, Terri at 564-4143.

TRAVELLING FETE The Travelling Fete is a relaxcon to gather fans to honor a science fiction guest. The fete will move around the state to be near the Guest of Honor. Travelling Fete I will be held July 1987 in the Cocoa Beach, FL area. The Guest of Honor is Joseph Green.

COA Carol Gibson, 540 NE 37th St., Pompano Beach, FL 33064

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JANUARY MEETING REVISITED 21 members, 4 guests were at the last SFSFS meeting. New members included Cynthia Warmuth, Diane Dorick, Hayes Tubbs, and Harry Andruschak. Minutes will be available to SFSFS members by request from Kat Max. Current membership is estimated at 58 members - 22 regular, 21 general, 4 children and 5 honorary. Pun fines collected were .25, and Peggy Gemignani was the sole contributor. New operating procedures were passed unanimously. It was decided that net income from conventions in a regular calendar year run by SFSFS shall be set aside to finance future conventions in the following calendar year unless the regular membership shall decide otherwise. Limit shall be \$3,000 or 35% of the budgets from the previous calendar year, whichever is greater. (Now that that's finished, let's break out the law books and try to decipher this!)

The program was very interesting and entertaining. Will Eisner spoke about the growth of comic art with that of science fiction. He stated that science fiction and comic art have grown closer together in at least the past twenty years and now both evolve parallel to each other. He also talked about his own art from The Spirit to the present day. He has worked everything from comics to instructional material for the army. Many thanks to Will Eisner for stopping by to see us again.

BOARD MEETING The SFSFS board members met at Bill Wilson's place on December 30. Topics discussed were:

1. Storage Space for the art show panels and a SFSFS library. It was decided to check into various storage facilities in the area.
2. Publication of bylaws. The bylaws will be kept in The SFSFS Membership Directory.
3. Committees for 1988

Carol Gibson - Chairman	Bill Wilson - Deputy Chairman
Kat Max - Secretary	Carol Porter - Deputy Secretary
Peggy Dolan - Treasurer	Linda Hill - Deputy Treasurer
Terri Wells - Chairman of Creative Writing Committee	
Carol Porter - Publicity	
Joe Siclari - Programming (for three programs)	
Linda Hill - Special Events	
Kat Max - Publicity Chair and Membership Directory	
Linda Hill - Clubzine	
Tony Parker - Press Gang	
Peggy Gemignani - Strategic Gaming	
Dina Pearlman - Literary Discussion Group	
Richard Klein - Membership Development	
Richard Tetro - Transportation Committee	
Joe Siclari - Relaxcon Chair	
Edie Stern - Tropicon VII Chair	
Judy Bemis - Filking	Richard Klein - Media Research
Newsletter - Peggy Ann Dolan, Carol Porter	

The following are still open: Meeting Space, Discount Program, Library and Fund Raising. The Computer Committee was disbanded.



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Sat., Mar 19

Location : Pearlman/Bennett Residence  
3705 E. Shore Rd., Miramar

TOPIC

ALTERNATE UNIVERSES & HISTORIES

Keith Reynolds	<u>Pavane</u>
Melissa Scott	<u>Alexander</u>
Somtow Sucharitkul	<u>The Aquiliad</u>
(S. P. Somtow)	
Harry Harrison	<u>A Transatlantic Tunnel Hurrah</u>
Ronald Clark	<u>Queen Victoria's Bomb</u>
" "	<u>The Bomb That Failed</u>
Ward Moore	<u>Bring the Jubilee</u>
Phillip K. Dick	<u>The Man in the High Castle</u>
Robert Silverberg	<u>Gate of Worlds</u>
Jack Williamson	<u>The Legion of Time</u>
L. Sprague de Camp	<u>Lest Darkness Fall</u>
Orson Scott Card	<u>Seventh Son</u>

Fri., Apr. 15

Location: Miranda/Clemens Residence  
4700 Jeffreys Ave., W.P.B.

TOPIC

SERIOUS WOMEN WRITERS

Virginia Kidd	<u>Women of Wonder</u>
Pamela Sargent	<u>The Shore of Women</u>
Andre Norton	<u>Witch World Series</u>
Kate Wilhelm	<u>The Mile Long Spaceship</u>
" "	<u>The Killer Thing</u>
Ursula LeGuin	<u>Left Hand of Darkness</u>
Mary Shelly	<u>Frankenstein</u>
" "	<u>Collected Tales &amp; Stories</u>
James Tiptree	<u>10,000 Light Years from Home</u>
" "	<u>Warm Worlds &amp; Otherwise</u>

Sat., May 21

Location: TBA

TOPIC

MILITARY SCIENCE FICTION

Joe Haldeman	<u>The Forever War</u>
" "	<u>All My Sons Remembered</u>
H. G. Wells	<u>The War of the Worlds</u>
Robert Heinlein	<u>Starship Troopers</u>
Stanislaw Lem	<u>The Invincible</u>
Michael Moorcock	<u>The Warlord of the Air</u>
" "	<u>The Land Leviathan</u>
Gordy Dickinson	<u>The Dorsai Series</u>
Fritz Leiber	<u>The Big Time</u>
" "	<u>Destiny Times Three</u>
Barrington J. Bailey	<u>The Fall of Chronopolis</u>
Fred Saberhagen	<u>The Berserker Series</u>

Fri., June 17

Location: TBA

TOPIC

FOREIGN SCIENCE FICTION (NOT ENGLISH)

Gerard Klein	<u>The Overlords of War</u>
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Sat., July 16	Location: TBA	TOPIC	HUGO NOMINEES
Fri., Aug. 19	Location: TBA	TOPIC	HUGO NOMINEES
Sat., Sept. 17	Location: TBA	TOPIC	HUMOROUS SCIENCE FICTION
Fri., Oct 21	Location: TBA		
TOPIC			SCIENCE FICTION STORIES BY MAINSTREAM CLASSIC WRITERS
Sat., Nov. 19	Location: TBA	TOPIC	ROBOT/CYBORG STORIES

No December Meeting - too busy with Tropicon VII. All meetings are at 7:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.

MEDIA RESEARCH A video production meeting will take place on Thursday, February 4, at The BGPC At 7:30 p.m. Bring lots of good ideas and plans. The upcoming production The Sisyphus Stone and plans for the next video production, Mythstar will be discussed. For more information on how you can help, please come to this meeting.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC COMPILATION Joe Siclari has compiled a 150+ item annotated bibliography on SF fandom. The bibliography will be published in a new book on science fiction fandom to be published by Greenwood Press. The editor is Joe Sanders, a long-time fan and professor at Mentor College.

GAMING UNDER THE STARS Peggy Gemignani reports that she is currently under negotiations with Under The Stars, a local book club, in hopes of introducing beginning gaming there. This would be most helpful to those who have never attempted role playing games. For more info, contact Peggy at 771-4658.

GOING CONS

NOSF3	Jan 22-24, 1988	New Orleans, LA
BOSKONE XXV	Jan 29-31, 1988	Springfield, MA
OMNICON VIII	Feb 5-7, 1988	Ft. Laud., FL
LUNACON	Mar 11-13, 1988	Tarrytown, NY
9th Intl Conf on Fant. (Academic Conference)	Mar 24-27, 1988	Dania, FL
NORWESCON 10	Mar 24-27, 1988	Tacoma, WAS
MAGNUM OPUS CON 3	Mar 25-27, 1988	Columbus, GA
CORFLU 5	Apr 29-May 1, 1988	Seattle, WA
OASIS	May 21-22, 1988	Orlando, FL
DISCLAVE	May 27-30, 1988	New Carrollton, MD
NOLACON	Sept 1-5, 1988	New Orleans, LA
46th World Science Fiction Convention		

IMPORTANT NOTE Anyone who has any tentative future meeting notices must give the info to Kat Max and/or Carol Porter for inclusion in The Shuttle. ALSO DUES MUST BE PAID BY JANUARY 31, OR ANY MEMBER WHO HASN'T MUST BE VOTED IN ALL OVER AGAIN. (So, avoid unnecessary aggravation by paying in your dues ASAP.)

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SFSFS Calendar

JANUARY 9 - SF Discussion Group - Heinlein's The Past Through Tomorrow & Sterling's Schismatrix  
16 - Business Meeting - Coral Springs Library  
Program: Will Eisner, comic art and his influence on the field  
17 - Creative Writing - Doug & Kathy Wu's

FEBRUARY SF Discussion Group  
Business Meeting - BGPC  
Deputies must be proposed for approval to BOD or membership by this meeting  
Media Research Creative Writing Filking

MARCH SF Discussion Group Business Meeting  
Media Research Creative Writing Filking

APRIL SF Discussion Group Business Meeting - BGPC  
Media Research Creative Writing Filking  
Deadline for Solstice 4

MAY SF Discussion Group Business Meeting - BGPC  
Creative Writing Media Research Filking

JUNE SF Discussion Group Business Meeting - BGPC  
Creative Writing Media Research Filking

JULY Business Meeting Creative Writing  
SF Discussion Group Media Research Filking

AUGUST Business Meeting Creative Writing  
SF Discussion Group Media Research Filking

SEPTEMBER Business Meeting Creative Writing  
SF Discussion Group Media Research Filking

OCTOBER Business Meeting - BGPC  
Creative Writing SF Discussion Group  
Media Research Filking  
Video Production - filming deadline  
Annual Membership Questionnaire in Shuttle  
Notification of annual election in Shuttle

NOVEMBER Business Meeting  
Notification of annual election in Shuttle  
Slate of Nominees for annual election in Shuttle  
"Dues are due" notice & renewal in Shuttle  
SF Discussion Group Media Research  
Creative Writing Filking  
Video Production - Deadline for entering

DECEMBER 2,3,4 TROPICON VII GOH - Poul Anderson  
Business Meeting - BGPC Annual Elections  
SF Discussion Group  
Reminder of dues final deadline in Shuttle  
Membership Directory update in Shuttle

# In Defense of the Pun

by

**Walter A. Willis**

In the last FAPA mailing but one Harry B. Warner said something so dreadful that I can hardly force my hand to write it down. (Three of my fingers are willing enough, but my thumb and forefinger are opposed.) He said -- Ghod forgive him -- that the pun was "the simplest and lowest form of humour". Comes the next FAPA mailing and I see that Warner is still alive -- by FAPA standards anyway. He has not been struck down. Obviously Simon Salt Peter, patron saint of punsters, has left it to me to warn the Warner, and to prove that the pun is not only the most complex, but the very highest -- I might even say the all-highest -- form of humour.

1. THE ARGUMENT FROM AUTHORITY. In the two most famous books in the world, the humour consists almost entirely of puns. Everyone knows that this is so with Shakespeare, but the Bible is an even more striking example. This is not generally regarded as a humorous work, not by Christians anyway -- but there is one joke in it, and that joke is a PUN. I refer of course to the famous verse: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I shall build my church." If I may say so without being impious, this is not a very good pun, but then it has lost in translation. In the original language of course the word for 'Peter' meant also a rock or stone -- c. f. the Latin 'petrus' or the French 'pierre'. It was on this pun that the whole structure of organised Christianity was based, and on it the Roman Catholic Church maintains its claim to the apostolic succession. Can anyone doubt that the history of Christianity and the Western World would have been very different if Peter's name had happened to be 'Sandy'?

Truly, as Ackerman said in the Fancyclopedia, "the pun is mightier than the sword, and now that it and it alone of all forms of humour has approval at the very highest level there hardly seems to be any need to look for any other recommendation. I might just point out that puns occur throughout the highest works of English literature, from stray lines like "tread softly, for ye tread on hollowed ground" to the later works of James Joyce which consist almost entirely of puns and wordplay. I might also quote, without looking in any particular direction, the following passage from Fowler's MODERN ENGLISH USAGE:

"The assumption that puns are *per se* contemptible... is a sign at once of sheepish docility and a desire to seem superior. Puns are good, bad, or indifferent, and only those who lack the wit to make them are unaware of the fact."

2. THE ARGUMENT FROM FIRST PRINCIPLES. In the 'Preface to the Lyrical Ballads' Wordsworth came off with one of those statements so profound that one remembers them all one's life and applies them to every situation. This statement was to the effect that the basis of all aesthetic satisfaction lay in the recognition of similarity in dissimilarity and vice versa. This is very true when you come to think of it, and it might also be an actual definition of the pun. But the pun is not only the most artistic form of humour, it is different in kind and superior to all other types. The origin of laughter, I suggest, is in the savages abrupt release of breath in relief at the unexpected downfall of a dreaded enemy. The most primitive form of humour is therefore the spectacle of the 'boss symbol' slipping on a banana skin, and almost every form of humour is a variant on this. All depend for their effect on the discomfiture of other human beings -- mother-in-law jokes, jokes about foreigners, jokes about people at a disadvantage in sexual positions, jokes about deaf people or morons or lunatics. All jokes are more or less sadistic. Think of any joke you know and see how true it is. There are only two exceptions, the shaggy dog story and the pun. Even the shaggy dog story is suspect, because you are enjoying the discomfiture of your audience when they expect a point and find none. This leaves only the pun as the representative of humour in its most advanced and complex form, the very punnicle of civilisation.

3. THE ARGUMENT FROM PRACTICE. The pun is one of the most genuine forms of humour because it is usually spontaneous. The opportunity comes and passes and only the quickest mind can seize it before it vanishes never to return. It is seldom prefabricated wit. For the same reason it is difficult to quote, because it usually needs an explanation of the circumstances, which spoils the element of surprise. As an illustration take the complaint in VOM about the artist who kept defaulting on his obligation to produce a cover. Ackerman's comment was: "He's got ain'ts in his paints." Ackerman kept up for years a barrage of puns like this. Not that he only made good puns. He made them ALL. But among them were some that deserve to rank with the greatest in history, puns that are remembered not just because they are clever in themselves, but because they add meaning as well as amusement. I would hate to have to choose Ackerman's best pun -- it would be a life's work -- and otherwise the best example I can give is from a speech by an Irish MP in the late 19th Century. He was making an impassioned attack on Irish absentee landlords when someone shouted "Treason!" Quick as a flash he retorted: "What is treason in England is reason in Ireland, because of the absentee!"

It could be, of course, that he had a confederate in the audience. Most people who like puns have some in reserve that came to them as it were in vacuo, and which they file away in their memory banks to await the appropriate set of circumstances. For instance, the next time I come across one of those old-fashioned washing sets -- a jug and bowl on a chest of drawers -- I shall say: 'Ah, ewers of water and drawers of wood!' And Bob Shaw here brought off a beauty the other day. While staying with friends he asked where the salt was and they told him it was in a jar on the shelf. When he looked the jar had fallen over and the salt spilled out. This was it. The chance of a lifetime! "The salt, dear Brutus," he said, "lies not in the jar, but on our shelves."

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DISCOUNT CORNER The following business members provide discounts and other benefits to SFSFS members.

BOOK CLUB - SFSFS members get \$2.00 off the regular annual Book Club dues of \$11.95. Book Club Members get 20% off on all books purchased, 40% off NY TIMES bestsellers, and a monthly newsletter. (They have a super selection of Heinlein.)

5312 N. University Dr.  
Lauderhill, FL 33321  
(305) 748-7500

BROWARD GAME PLAYERS CLUB - SFSFS members get a 10% discount off annual club dues (regularly \$30.00). Contact Bill Crane for information about parties and special events sponsored by the BGPC.

7619 N. Davie Rd. Extension  
Hollywood, FL 33020  
(305) 435-2832

BURGER FRESH - Club members get 25% off any item or meal (not including specials).

2001 N. Federal Highway  
Pompano Beach, FL 33062  
(305) 782-8393

PAPERBACK EXCHANGE - SFSFS members get 20% off total used book purchases. New owner Carol Leigh has a good selection of SF and other books.

1659 NE 163rd St.  
N. Miami Beach, FL 33162  
(305) 940-0819

SOFTWARE CELLAR - SFSFS members get 25% off list price on all software.

50 E. Oakland Park Blvd.  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33322  
(305) 563-0333

CARRIAGE CRAFT BOOK SHOPS - SFSFS members get 20% off on books (used and new) and software.

480 NE 125th St.  
N. Miami Beach, FL  
(305) 895-2904

SHUTTLE CREDITS Guest editor, Carol Porter. Next month's editor, Gary Alan Ruse. Press Gang, Tony Parker, Terri Wells, Judy Bemis.

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The South Florida Science Fiction Society is a non-profit organization established for educational purposes. For more information, write: SFSFS, P.O. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143

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AT A GLANCE

- Jan. 23 Board meeting, Carol Gibson/Linda Hill residence, 7:30 p.m. (See Directions inside).
- Feb. 4 Media Research at BGPC, 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 13 Filk Singing Meeting, 7:30 p.m., for more info., call Judy at 391-4380.
- Feb. 19 Literary Discussion Meeting, Siclari/Stern residence, 7:00 p.m., phone number - 392-6462.
- Feb. 21 Writing Committee Meeting, Terri Wells' house, 2 p.m., phone number - 564-4143.
- Feb. 27 General Meeting, The Book Club, 7:30 p.m., phone number, 748-7500.

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