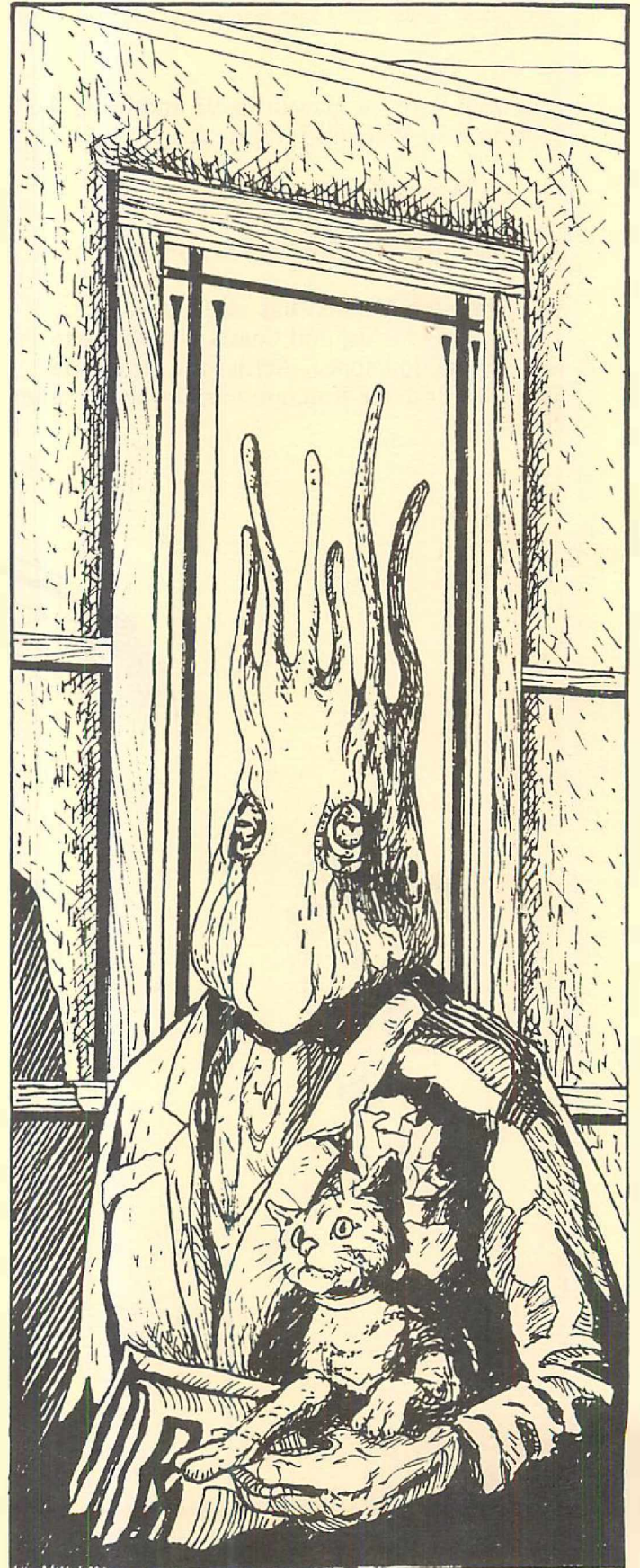


MAY 1990

FROM  
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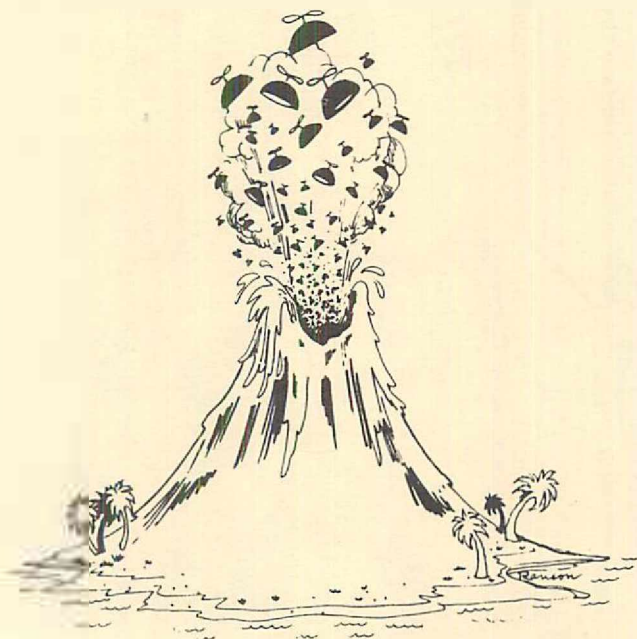
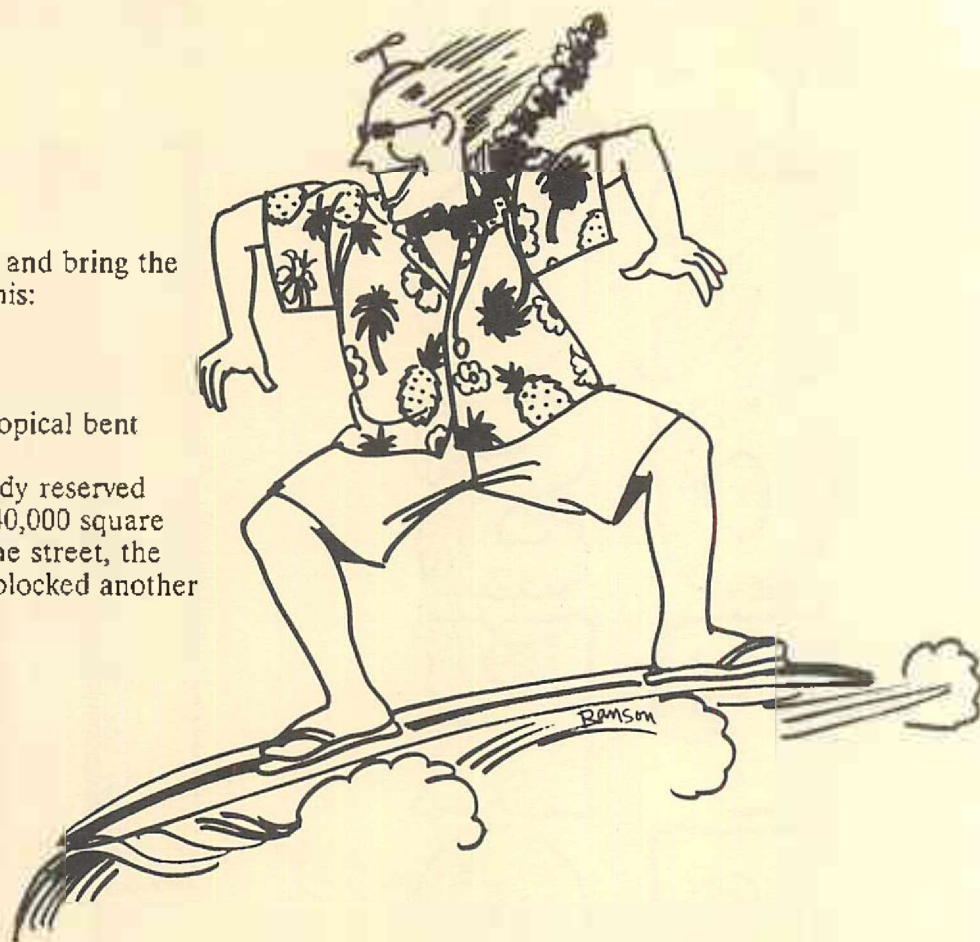


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# Proper Boskonian 27

May 1990 Issue

*Proper Boskonian* is the semi-annual genzine of the New England Science Fiction Association.

Send contributions (writing and/or art and/or LoCs) to *Proper Boskonian*, NESFA, Box G, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139.

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## Important Announcement

Contraption is sponsoring the Charlie Card Fund for United Cerebral Palsy. To raise money, they've produced the *Fantasy Art Calendar*. The calendar runs from April 1, 1990 to March 31, 1991 and features the art of Sheryl Birkhead, Heather Bruton, Kevin Davies, Tom Dow, Tim Eldred, Giovanna Fregni, Mary Hanson-Roberts, Linda Leach Hardy, Teddy Harvia, Peggy Ranson, Bill Ware, Robin Wood and Diana Stein. It features convention dates and addresses as well as other useful or amusing information. It will be available at Contraption for \$5.00 or by mail for \$6.00 including postage and handling. Make checks to Contraption and mail to P.O. Box 2285, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

The Charlie Card Fund is named for the son of Orson Scott Card, who was Contraption's very first Professional GoH. Charlie has cerebral palsy. The fund is Contraption's way of saying "thank you" to a great writer and his family for supporting our convention. United Cerebral Palsy offers many kinds of assistance to people like Charlie, through the generous assistance of people like you.

For every calendar sold, about \$3.40 will be given to UCP. Only printing and postage costs are being deducted.

## Why You Are Getting This

- ☐ You roasted Kurt.
- ☐ You contributed! Yay! Thank-you!
- ☐ You are mentioned somewhere in this zine.
- ☐ Please contribute in the future.
- ☐ We trade, or we really ought to.
- ☐ I'm sufficiently perverse that I'm not telling you why.
- ☐ You provided moral support.
- ☐ Sheer whim.
- ☒ You're a NESFA member, 1990 Corflu attendee, or fall into one of the previous categories.

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## Official Notices

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This zine is available as part of your NESFA dues (currently \$15.00 a year for subscribing members); a contribution of writing, art, and/or LoC; \$2.00 per issue; trade; and/or editorial whim [*Hi, Mom and Dad. I always told you I'd get my name in print.*]. Fannish ads are accepted on whim. Try me and see. This issue is free to all attendees of the 1990 Corflu.



## Editorial Laurie D. T. Mann

Welcome to *Proper Boskonian* 27!

Actually, this is the "Fall of 1973" issue, since *PB* is, technically anyway, a quarterly zine that was first published in the late '60s. I plan to publish *Proper Boskonian* semi-annually, in the spring and fall.

*Proper Boskonian* has been napping for a few years. Joe Rico edited two issues of *PB* in the mid-80s, and Mark Keller planned to edit some in the late '80s. However, many local fans were very involved in running a Worldcon, and, as a result, not much was written for *PB*. Most of the local fanpubbing energies went into *Instant Message*, *Mad 3 Party*, and the Noreascon progress reports. I hope this will change.

*Proper Boskonian* starts with a clean slate. We have no LoCs from previous issues, and we will not be publishing anything intended for previous incarnations. This incarnation of *PB* will have more material from non-New England fans than past versions.

Why am I doing this? I've been a fringe fanzine fan for nearly fifteen years. I was the first editor of *M3P*, but resigned after one issue due to being incredibly busy. About two years ago, I was hit by the fanpubbing bug again, started writing LoCs and articles, published two personalzines, and then got completely inundated by Noreascon III. I emerged from NIII an older and wiser fan - I've even got the gray hair now to prove it! Last winter, I took over publication of the *Boskone Program Book*. While I collected material, wrote, and edited the publication over a very short period of time, I enjoyed doing it. Then, it dawned on me:

Fandom is supposed to be fun!

When the first Corflu progress report said that there would be a con activity called "Real Soon Now Is Now," I figured what better way to prove *that*, than to "have more fun than humanly possible" and pub an ish of *PB*? Anyway, I've been ~~nagging~~ encouraging people for months to produce some work for *PB*. While I did not get what I expected, I received material I really liked. Many, many thanks to the contributors for the *Return of Proper Boskonian*! They include:

Joe Rico, Mark Olson, Harold Zitzow, Peggy Ranson, Ingrid Neilson, Kitty, Mary Sughrue-Yacino, Jon Singer, Joe Mayhew, Leslie Turek, Richard Newsome,



Illustration by John Osborne/Phil Tortorici

Quantum Buc (AKA Elliott Buchholz), John Osborne, Evelyn & Mark Leeper, Diana Stein, Phil Tortorici, Pat Morrissey, Ben Yalow, Merie Insinga, L. Halliday Piel, Stu Shiffman, Alexis Gilliland, Teddy Harvia, and Pam Fremont.

Many thanks to the New England Science Fiction Association, who agreed to fund the revival of *PB*; to Claire Anderson, for her tireless efforts in mimeo; to George Flynn, who proofread almost every word; and to Sarah Prince and Merle & Aron Insinga for their advice. Thanks also to Jim & Leslie for putting up with a faned in the family.

And speaking of contributors, will Kitty please identify herself (himself?), or can some reader identify this artist for me? This artist left some illustrations with Mark Olson for *Helmuth* at Boskone without further identification. I want to be sure Kitty gets *PB*. Thanks.



## My Philosophy of Fanediting

I have strong prejudices about fanpubbing. These are my favorite genzines:

*FOSFAX, Lan's Lantern, M3P, Pirate Jenny, Rune*

I like fanzines that provide a breadth of material, good illustration, humor, and some debate. While I admire the work that goes into fine zines like *OtherRealms*, *Instant Message*, *Pulsar*, *Airglow*, *Pieces*, *Dillinger Relic* and *File 770*, they each have a narrow focus. And that's fine. But while I read and enjoy these zines, I really find myself waiting to read and LoC the genzines. So, while *PB* will have some conlistings and local news, it is not a newzine. While *PB* will have some reviews, it is not a reviewzine. While *PB* will contain some personal writing, it is not a personalzine. *PB* will not be publishing fiction, but will accept feghoots, parodies, and other forms of short humorous fiction. I hope *PB* will have a little bit of everything, including plenty of art. I hope, over time, to build up an interesting lettercol. But that takes time and a LoCable zine.

If you'd like to contribute to *PB*, I promise the following:

- I will either accept or reject your material in a reasonable amount of time. Three months sounds reasonable. I'd like to build up a small backlog of illos, so I can't guarantee when illos will see print. LoCs do not fall under this general guideline, but I do promise to WAHF everyone who writes.
- I will publish the addresses of all contributors to an issue, including people who write LoCs. This is to make it easier for other fans to reach contributors, send others their zines, etc. If you don't want your address published, just say so. Given the networking of fandom, it's helpful to include any network or E-mail addresses that you have.
- I have great respect for the acronyms "DNP/DNQ," (Do Not Print/Do Not Quote), but, please label such pieces of your essays or LoCs explicitly. Likewise, if you choose to use a pseudonym, make it clear.

In an "ideal universe," everything is keyed into the global network once. People who can send contributions via E-mail, or who submit material on disk, all earn chocolate chip cookie credits, for decreasing the number of NESFA work credits I'll need to spend on this zine. However, I know not all of you have computer access, and legible hard copy is vastly preferred to nothing. When you submit something, please send me a copy of it and keep your original. I can accept submissions in any of the following ways:

PB Editor, NESFA, Box G, MIT Branch PO,  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Laurie\_Mann@es.stratus.com UUCP

uunet!lectroid!es!Laurie\_Mann UUCP

IBM disk, high or regular density, 3½ or 5¼ inch†

MAC disk†

† Please label with your name & address.

## Next Issue

*Proper Boskonian* 28 will be out in early November. This means I need all substantial articles and art by September 20, and all LoCs and spot art by October 1. If you are sending material within three weeks of the deadlines, please send it to my house (12 Shady Lane Ave., Northboro, MA 01532-1729), rather than to the NESFA box. You can call me, between 6 pm and 10 pm EDT nights, or on weekends, at 508-393-9492.

*PB* will have the following regular features:

Reviews of Interesting Non-SF

Neglected Authors

Convention Column†

Computer Column†

† No, these columns do not appear this time. But I hope they will next time.

If you would like to write/draw material for any of these columns, please contribute. What else am I looking for? ConFiction reports, essays on your favorite foods and why, what you did on your summer vacation, and thoughts on some of the trends that developed in fandom/SF/the world over the last decade. You can write about these topics, draw about these topics, combine the two skills, or contribute just about anything you want. Ben Yalow has already written an article for the "Neglected Author" column on Fredric Brown, and I will be writing an article on planning relaxacons for the "Convention" column. There is the possibility for articles like "Stodginess As A Way of Life," "The Lesser Plant Tells All About the NESFA Group Mind," "One-Hundred-Twenty-One Reasons Why Chocolate Chip Cookies Are Better than Sex," and a recent interview of L. Ron Hubbard by Salman Rushdie, with illustrations by Claude Degler. With genzines, almost anything is possible!

Cheers!

*Laurie*

## Sushi-Chefs I've Known and Loved

Jon Singer

Originally distributed in ba.foods on USENET

One advantage of living in San Francisco is being able to eat sushi at a variety of establishments in the Bay Area. One advantage of being on USENET is the frequent discussions about sushi in ba.foods, one of the Bay Area newsgroups. As with all things on USENET, there have been flame wars, but as I hope we all know, flaming sushi is a definite No-No.

I am kinda surprised at the number of people in ba.foods who said they liked Watercourse Way. Not only does it fail one of my criteria utterly by not having a bar (see below), but I have eaten there 3 or 4 times, and have never been impressed either by the rice (again, see below) or the freshness of the other ingredients. Moreover, when I tried to order some nice veggie things they had on the menu, they told me that they had just discontinued all of them. This is a Bozo No-No: lots of vegetarians inhabit the Bay Area, and they now have a hard time meeting their needs at Watercourse (unless the veggie stuff has been restored since I was last there). It is not an easy thing to be a vegetarian who likes to eat with friends.

I was also surprised by the person who said that Ikenohana was the only place where they had ever found scallop and lobster sushi. True, lobster is relatively uncommon, but scallops should be available at most decent Bay Area sushi bars.

I will, when cashflow allows, give Bonsai and Sushi Zen a try. Cashflow, unfortunately, seems to be at an ebb right now. Meanwhile, Ikenohana and Kirala are my favorite sushi places so far in the Bay Area. Kirala is in Berkeley on Shattuck Avenue, on the same block as the Berkeley Bowl, a couple blocks north of Ashby.

I have two reasons for yacking here. They are as follows:

1. To explain why I like, say, Ikenohana a lot better than, say, Watercourse Way.
2. To point out some things about sushi and the people who make it that I think are pretty important. For example, I saw lots of people talking in ba.foods about large portions, and about freshness. While I don't care about quantity myself, many people do, so that's cool. Freshness, of course, is really important. But in something like 20 or 30 messages that were forwarded to me, I don't recall a single

one that mentioned rice!

Not one mentioned tea, either.

Ikenohana typically serves some of the greenest green tea I've ever seen at their sushi bar; Genmai-cha (tea with puffed brown rice) at their dinner tables; and some interesting reddish stuff at the noodle-bar, which is only open at lunchtime. They serve three different kinds of tea. They don't have to do that. They could, quite reasonably, serve you Genmai-cha regardless of where you sit or what you are eating. But they don't. Seems to me that it is this kind of attention to detail, this kind of concern about what fits where, that makes the difference between a restaurant that is good, and a restaurant that is *damn* good.

My experience, if you care, is reasonably extensive, but not phenomenal: I have been eating sushi since maybe 1960, but I've only been hot-and-heavy at it since perhaps 1975, and I have not eaten at every great place I've ever heard of, or anything like that. I haven't been to Japan, either.

Now let me talk a bit about my criteria.

1. The heart of sushi is rice. Sure, if the other ingredients are not topnotch, the sushi won't be great, but superb rice usually tends to go with topnotch ingredients anyway, and even merely good ingredients will make fine sushi if they are on great rice, whereas the best ingredients will only make OK sushi if they are on mediocre rice. Ikenohana not only has wonderful sushi-rice, they even have very nice plain-old-dinner-rice. I regard that as a good sign.
2. I want to sit at a sushi bar. Watercourse Way loses instantly here because they don't have a sushi bar. The reason why I want to sit at a bar is twofold: First, I am deeply concerned with freshness, not only of the ingredients, but also of the preparation. What is the point of having really fresh fish, if you leave it sitting on the counter for fifteen minutes after you cut it? I don't want to watch my order sit on a counter getting stale. No no no! A hand-roll is supposed to be handed to you just as it is finished, because it is supposed to **crunch** when you bite into it. Soggy sushi is soggy crud. I want to order one thing at a time, so it doesn't get stale while I'm



eating the previous item. The salmon-skin handroll sitting in the holder is going to get just as soggy while you eat your Hamachi and Maguro as it would sitting on the counter waiting to be delivered to a table. No thanks. One item at a time is plenty fast enough for me.

Second, I like to watch them make it, and I like to give them a hard time while they are making it – livens up their day, livens up mine.

So I typically avoid ordering sushi if I am sitting at a table. That's a good way to have an OK meal, which is not usually what I'm after. I've had lots of OK meals already.

3. I am concerned about the quality of the fish and other items. (No surprise here.)
4. I am concerned about depth and breadth of the selection. If I go into a sushi place and ask for some slightly odd item, like Kanpyo (gourd shavings – sounds icky, tastes rather pleasant), I want them to have it. Especially if I've been wanting it for 3 weeks or so!

There are, of course, some things that are, regrettably, just uncommon. I know of very few places I can walk into and get Ni-hotate. I know of few places that regularly carry Kohada. Sniff.

5. I do not care about portion size, myself. Big hunks of stuff are just as nice as little hunks of stuff.
6. I will take good sushi from the hand of anyone who cares to make it, but there are some people who are real artists. I do not necessarily mean excessively flamboyant, either, though most of the artists I know have, well, distinctive personalities. There are three sushi-chefs who really stand out in my experience.

I am, anyway, going to talk about these three artists here at some length, because they are amusing and because there are some important things I've learned from them. Expository lump warning! (This is long.)

#### **Sammy**

Sammy typically inhabits Boulder, Colorado, so he is a bit outside of our realm, but he is somewhat singular, and worth mentioning. The first time I met Sammy, he was furtively eating a Wendy's hamburger out of a bag, and claimed that he didn't like sushi. This guy, I thought, is nuts!

I was right, but he was lying about the sushi (I've seen him making sushi and shoving it down his throat on several occasions).

One evening when Sammy was working at Sushi Koi in Denver, my turn came, and I asked him for Tako (octopus). He looked at me and said, disbelievingly, "You eat that stuff?" and went on to the next person at

the bar. When he came back to me about ten minutes later, I asked him again for Tako. He said, "No." and went to the next person. Ten more minutes. This time I demanded my goddam octopus, and he gave it to me. Sometimes I really think he didn't want to do it, and I shouldn't have asked him. Sometimes I think he was testing me, and it was a damn good thing I kept at him for it instead of caving in. Life is filled with strangeness.

Another time I asked him for Tako he said, "You like Tako?" and pulled out from behind the counter a paper bag which contained... you guessed it, a taco. He took a loud crunchy bite from it, and said "Don't tell anybody." Then he put it back, and gave me my octopus.

Now, I tell you these things, which are true, and I have witnesses for some of them. They are not the whole story, though. Just to let you know that Sammy is a bit, well, strange.

Sammy has all these little "specials" that he makes from time to time. He invented a thing that he called a "caterpillar roll" – this was an inside-out makizushi with eel in the middle, some sesame seeds on it, then Nori, then rice, and thinly sliced avocado on the outside. In order to handle the thing while he was making and cutting it, he had to wrap it in plastic-wrap, which he left on when he served it so you could take your time eating it – the avocado stayed nice and green.

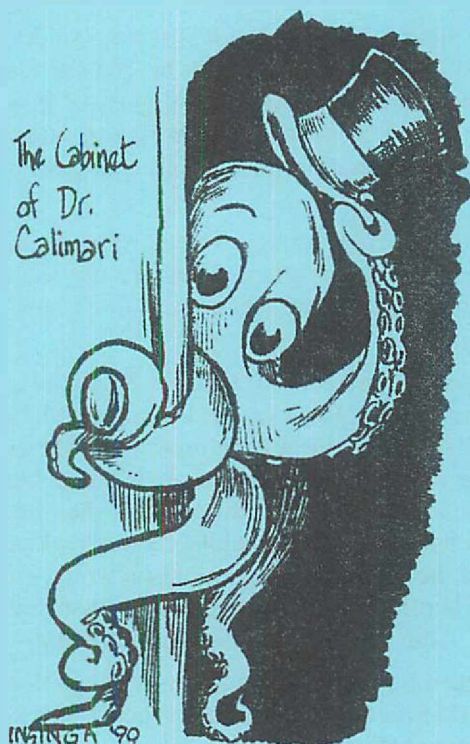
If you asked him what he had that was special, he would tell you that he had 24 different specials every night. He was not really kidding.

But the magic was not just in the specials. One evening, I sat in front of Sammy and watched him make 6 or 7 Kappa-maki (cucumber rolls) in a row, for the tables in the restaurant. He was quite methodical about it, cutting Julienne strips of cucumber and rolling them up in rice with seaweed around it. You know, the usual stuff. I got kinda inflamed, watching this (I like cucumber), so when he looked at me and asked what I wanted, I said, "Would you mind if I asked you to make Kappa-maki?" He looked kinda sharp at me, and I was afraid for a moment that I had done something wrong. Then he took a hunk of cucumber, put his thumb on top of it, and commenced to slice it into transparent, paper-thin sheets. When he put the thing together, he added Shiso and sesame seeds... it was the best Kappa-maki I ever ate.

So why was mine different from the other ones? The best answer I can give you is that it was different because I gave enough of a damn about it to ask him personally and specifically for it, and to sit there and watch him make it, right after watching him make at least half a dozen of them. Ordering from the table is anonymous.

If there's more than one sushi-chef on, you don't even know which one made your order, unless you watch really carefully, and even then you don't get to see them do it, or talk with them about it.

Sometimes, the regular things are how you tell a really great place from a merely good place.



*Illustration by Merle Insinga*

#### **Kashiba Shiro-san**

The best sushi bar I have ever eaten at in my life is Nikko, in Seattle. Nikko looks like hell from the outside – a rundown, somewhat dusty-dirty house, way the hell out King Street in Seattle, at the corner of Rainier. It may have been the first sushi bar in Seattle.

The way I first heard about it is that a sweetie of mine sent me an article about where Seattle chefs eat when they go out. Every single person who mentioned sushi said they went to Nikko. Every one of 'em.

Shiro-san is a heavy traditionalist. You know how sushi-chefs give you a little tray with gari (pickled ginger) and a little lump of wasabi on it? Shiro-san gives you a tray with gari on it. You want your sushi hotter, you tell him, and he makes it with more wasabi in it. If you want a California roll, you have to fight with him, which he doesn't really like, but he will eventually give in and make it for you. Only it won't have any avocado in it: there is no avocado in his restaurant. I have discussed this with him explicitly, and he has

no objection to new sushi. He even likes some of it. Won't make it himself, though, because he feels that it is important to have someone around who maintains the older traditions.

Sushi itself is apparently a relatively new thing – it was invented about 700 years ago, if I understand correctly. Sushi bars seem to be much newer than that – I've been told that they are only about 75 years old. To get back to Shiro-san, I went into his restaurant about 27 times during 1987. Every single time I sat in front of him (about 24 of those times), he fed me at least one thing I had never previously eaten. I had never even heard of at least a quarter of them. For example, he served me monkfish-liver pâté once. (The only other place I've ever encountered this item is Joshu-ya, in Berkeley, an otherwise OK-to-pretty-good place. Seeing the monkfish-liver pâté listed as a daily special sure surprised me!)

At the bar, at Nikko, there is a laminated menu with some things on it that are regular items. They have a Japanese name, an English name, a price and a bit of explanation. Things like Oshitash, Age-dashi tofu, Chawan-mushi, stuff like that. (Nikko makes among the best Age-dashi tofu and Chawan-mushi I have ever had.) Paperclipped to this menu is a 3x5 piece of paper from a little pad, on which Shiro-san has written the specials of the day, in Japanese. No English, no price. Sometimes he is willing to explain them. Sometimes he doesn't want to talk about it.

I went into Nikko just after New Year's, at the beginning of 1988, and asked about the special menu. The Japanese guys next to me were very forthcoming, and said that they had Ika-somen, and this and that and the other thing, and Osechi-santemori. "Uhh, what?" I asked. At that point, Shiro-san came over and explained that Osechi-santemori means 3-things-special-for-New-Year's. Osechi-gotemori, likewise, would mean 5-things-special-for-New-Year's, but he only had the 3-things version.

"Would you like to try?"

There is only one legitimate answer when a sushi-chef asks you this question, unless you are severely allergic to it or have an active phobia. (Besides, I was thoroughly intrigued by that point anyway.)

What I got was a little tray. On the little tray were, from left to right, the following things:

Two pieces of sweet-pickled seaweed, with two little bitty sweet-pickled cooked fish on them.

A square of gel, the bottom part of which was yellow-brown, and turned out to be made from Kabocha (Japanese pumpkin); the top was clear, and had a chestnut imbedded in it. I believe that



the gelling agent was Kanten (Agar-agar, common in Japanese cooking).

A cube of Daikon (Japanese white radish) about one inch on a side. The top had been cut into many times, about halfway down, so that it was a sort of brush. On top of this was a single red ring of Togarashi (Japanese hot pepper), to let you know what kind of pickle you were dealing with.

Very lovely stuff.

I had been there one evening the previous spring, when Shiro-san was dishing out some sort of muck from a longish tube. I inquired. The stuff was steamed coltsfoot, a root that they apparently acquire at the right season from someone down in Oregon. It had beancurd skin mixed into it. It was to die for.

During the summer, Ikura (salmon roe) is a seasonal specialty of the house. I believe that they take the roe out of the salmon themselves; then they wash it and put it into the same kind of longish tube, with a dark-red liquid that contains sake and who-knows-what-else; the eggs, when you order them, are dipped out with a slotted spoon. You know how Ikura are typically slightly slimy and somewhat salty? This is a slightly different item we are talking about.

Last fall, I went back to Seattle for the World Fantasy Convention, and went to Nikko. My luck, it was fall, and it was Matsutake mushroom season. They make a soup, which they serve in a tiny kettle, from which you pour it into a little bitty bowl; it is a fine clear broth, with slices of the mushrooms and various other things in it. Into this soup, you squeeze a piece of lime. It is at the same time delicately fragrant, and strongly flavored – the mushrooms apparently grow on the roots of pine trees, and have a distinctly piny flavor.

This is not just someplace where you can get a big hunk of fish on some rice. Sure, you can get Hamachi and Maguro and all the regular things there. They are all very good there. But if you only eat the regular things, you will never even find out about the Matsutake mushroom soup, or the monkfish-liver pâté, or the little stuffed pickled squids that Shiro-san serves with seaweed and a piece of frozen-and-thawed tofu (yes, the frozen tofu is pretty weird), or the twenty or thirty things I haven't mentioned because this article is too long already.

Howard-san (that's not really his name, but that's what they call him)

Howard-san at Ikenohana in Cupertino is another one. I have spoken with him about customers. He said that if he offers someone 3 things and they refuse all 3, he stops offering. I bring this up because I think it is true

of Shiro-san, Sammy, and most other real artists in this business. If a sushi-chef offers you something, it's not just someone passing a box of crackers around.

These poor bastards, especially in this area, have to stand around making hundreds and thousands of California rolls and pieces of Maguro day in and day out for people who aren't even bothering to taste them.

How would you feel? Could you smile and be happy if you were trying to feed people who consistently mispronounced the names of the foods they were ordering, when they even knew the damned names? Could you maintain your composure if you were constantly trying to feed people who would only order 3 different things out of the hundreds you knew how to make, and wanted to order too much of all 3 at once?

I once went into Ikenohana for lunch with Ted Lemon, and when we sat down at the bar, Howard-san said hello and then went away. We looked at each other, somewhat mystified. Then Howard-san came back with a little plate. He set the plate in front of us. The majority of what we could see looked sorta like pink yogurt. Sticking out of this were three aqua-colored objects that proved to be Japanese-style pickled broccoli hearts. The pink stuff was a strawberry-Okara sauce on top of sliced fresh raw scallops. It was, how do I say this, fucking amazing. Howard-san had wanted to do some sorta special something, and this is what it turned out to be, when he did it.

Howard-san has mostly been utterly merciless with me. He says the most outrageous things, most of which I believe implicitly, until I see this little wicked grin starting. This is the price we pay for artistry.

Last night, I was taken out to Ikenohana for dinner. Instead of ordering, we asked Howard-san to feed us.

At one point, he gave us each of us a dipping-dish filled with Pon-zu for the next item, which turned out to be a plate with three pieces of sushi on it. The one on the left was Shirame, with a little blob of ground daikon, to which had been added just enough Togarashi to make it pink (a standard garnish, as it happens); in the middle was Tai, with some shredded scallions; on the right, Shima-Aji, with a piece of Shiso leaf draped over it. Three pieces of white fish, three different kinds, each with its own garnish. A very delicate and beautiful contrast. Needless to say, it was superb. (I'm not even going to mention the octopus salad that he built for us later in the meal. Enough is, after all, enough. Now, back to the contrast combination.)

Would you ever think to order such a combination? I can tell you very plainly that it would never occur to me! One more ingredient in the pursuit of magic

is revealed: the job of the sushi-chef is not merely to produce the items you request; it is also to know what is particularly good today, and to offer it to you. In order for the chef to do this, he has to have room to work. If you hem him in by insisting on ordering all your favorites in linear order, you won't get to find out what's fresh, what's in season. You may assure yourself, in some cases, mediocre sushi by ordering things that happen not to be fresh or in season.

Clearly, some chefs are artists and some are not. Equally clearly, people tend to have food preferences. For example, though I like mayonnaise (Japanese mayonnaise is a common ingredient in various recently-invented sushi items), my physician doesn't want me eating too awful much of it, so I get to request that it be kept down to a dull roar. Aside from necessary restrictions, though, the more freedom the chef has, the better your meal will be.

At least, that's what my experience has been.

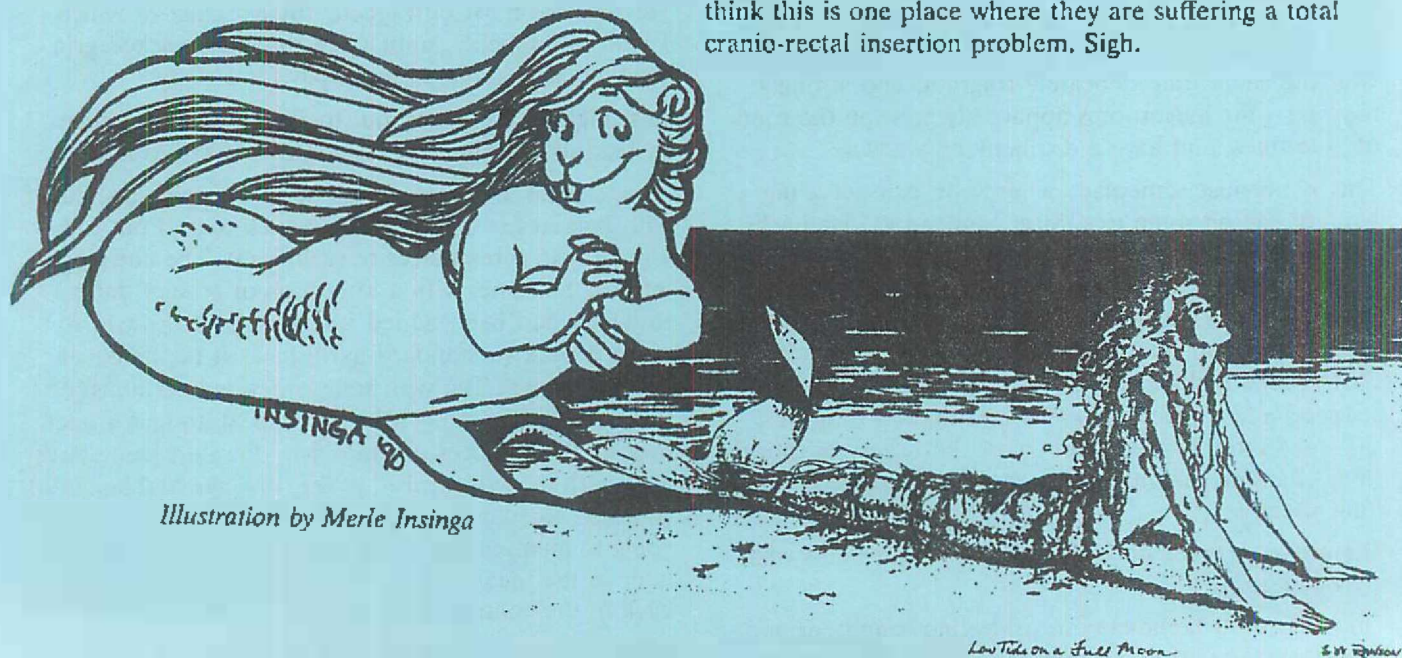
Be warned, however: a good bit of this essay is the fact that I have taken the time to get to know the chefs at Ikenohana (and Kirala, to a lesser extent) pretty well, and that is perhaps the most important secret of great sushi: if the person who is making it has had time to decide that you really care about what you are eating, you are much more likely to find magic.

The problem, of course, is that when you first walk into a sushi bar, you *don't* know the chef, the chef doesn't know you, and if you expect magic because someone has told you how great the place is, you are probably looking for trouble. Chances are that you will get very good sushi, and you will wonder why the idiot who told you about it thought it was the best place in the world when it's just another good sushi bar. Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain't. Maybe you have to get to know it before it will shine.

On the other hand, only a few people are really accomplished artists, and that is as true of sushi-chefs as it is of auto mechanics. As I said above, I think I know three of them. Akira-san at Kirala may be a fourth one; if I have more chances to eat there, I may find out.

Remember, a crowded restaurant restricts the chef's freedom. When the place is hopping, he may not have the time to ply you with specials, so you will probably want to ask whether it's OK to just leave it in his hands. I expect your chances are pretty good with most of them, most of the time. There are limits, though.

I have been referring to the sushi-chef fairly consistently with masculine pronouns. This is because I have sat in front of perhaps 40 or 50 men, and 1 or 2 women. Seems like this is probably the result of pervasive Japanese cultural attitudes about women and their place in society. Frankly, as much as I like lots of Japanese culture, I think this is one place where they are suffering a total cranio-rectal insertion problem. Sigh.



*Illustration by Merle Insinga*

*Illustration by Peggy Ranson*



# Neglected Authors

APA:NESFA

[The "Neglected Authors" columns are an outgrowth of some panels we've had at Boskone over the last few years. A summary of the author's works were provided at some of the panels. We're printing the James Schmitz and John Campbell handout in this issue. Next issue, we'll include the handout on Fredric Brown.]

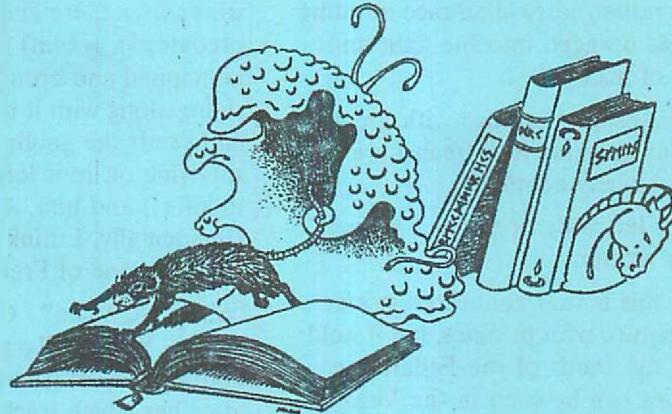


Illustration by Ingrid Neilson

## James H. Schmitz Mark L. Olson

James H. Schmitz was born in 1910 in Germany of American parents. He moved back to the US during WW I and again, permanently, in 1938 as WW II loomed. He wrote, primarily for *Astounding/Analog*, mainly from 1950-1975 (with most of his work appearing in the 1960-1975 period) and left a body of eight novels, two collections, and perhaps forty stories.

A number of themes recur throughout his writing: the nature of a galactic government, "rich" technology (there's lots left to discover), the criminal element (many of Schmitz's heroes skirt the edges of the law, and his heroes are menaced by criminal organizations as often as by aliens), and psionics/psychology. He is noteworthy for having a substantial majority of competent female protagonists in his stories.

### Novels

*The Demon Breed* Nile Etland, a young biologist, stumbles onto a secret alien invasion hiding in her ocean homeworld's unique floating islands of vegetation. In spite of incredible odds, she singlehandedly routs the invaders using a pair of mutated, intelligent otters and her knowledge of the planet's wildlife.

Schmitz manages to make this otherwise implausible outline reasonable. Etland discovers that the same race of aliens had fifty years earlier tried a different secret invasion of another human planet and had been mysteriously thwarted. To explain this (since humans were so obviously their inferiors) the aliens had developed a theory that Mankind is ruled by secret supermen. Etland discovers this and poses as one of these supermen. In Schmitz's view any human has the potential to act like a superman.

*A Tale of Two Clocks* (AKA *Legacy*) My personal favorite among Schmitz's novels. Trigger Argee is young, highly intelligent, in superb shape, and has contacts at high levels of the Federation Overgovernment. (Schmitz had a fondness for heroines like that.) She's involved in the Plasmoid Project, an attempt to understand some strange, apparently artificial, life forms discovered on a planet once inhabited by the extinct Old Galactics. She (and the project) are menaced by many unknowns (quite impossible to synopsise) and, in a fast series of adventures, Schmitz brings it all to a satisfactory conclusion.

In this book Schmitz does his best job of showing a future of dazzling complexity (like the best cyberpunk, but

without its infatuation with gratuitous nastiness), technical and governmental. He never lacks inventiveness – this is very definitely Sensa Wonder SF – but he doesn't cheat: everything follows properly.

*The Witches of Karres* Probably Schmitz's best-known work, *The Witches of Karres* is half a fantasy. Pausert, a tramp starship captain, buys three young girl slaves to save them from beatings and discovers that they are witches from Karres, a mysterious planet which uses psionic technology in an otherwise technical universe. Karres is busy battling a rather nasty alien race invading our universe. Pausert gets dragged into the fight and develops psionic powers of his own.

The vatches in this story (psionic entities with great powers who think that our universe is a dream) are an imaginative invention and nicely handled.

*The Witches of Karres* was left wide open for a sequel, which – alas – was never written.

*Agent of Vega* Actually, this is four connected stories. It's pure pulp space adventure with psionics, but it holds up pretty well. Many of the seeds of the Federation of the Hub of later stories can be seen in the Vegan government.

#### Stories

"Balanced Ecology" Two children try to save the diamondwood grove on their farm from being clearcut for timber. Since the diamondwood grove owners themselves have moved to legally protect the groves from overexploitation, the bad guys try to use force to get control. Unbeknownst to everyone, the grove is a self-aware multispecies symbiosis which actively cooperates with the children to the point of eating the bad guys. The story ends with the grove congratulating itself for having successfully included (in both senses) Man in its balanced ecology.

"Just Curious" This is a cute story. In what might be today's world, a telepath is helping a mob boss to eliminate his competitors by using his talent to "tune in" on people wherever they may be and experience their thoughts. Without the telepath's knowledge, the boss kills his last rival and then asks the now-redundant telepath to tune in to the rival. The telepath screams and goes mad with suffering. The mob boss remarks that he was just curious what might happen.

"Novice" The first Telzey Amberdon story. Telzey, a 15-year-old college student, is on vacation on a primitive planet when her latent psionic abilities are trained by the telepathic cat-like natives so she can act as an ambassador – the cats have enjoyed the past 75 years of being hunted by humans (humans don't know that the cats are intelligent because the cats have an entirely

mental civilization; the cats also enjoy hunting difficult game, so they've been hunting the human hunters with about 50:50 split of who bags whom), but the trend of the past decade has been for the human hunters to become less sporting and use air cars and bigger guns. Telzey's newly-awakened psionic abilities progress far beyond the cats' expectations, and while she resolves their problem, she is left ready for further adventures.

"Goblin Night" Telzey is on vacation in a primitive park when she stumbles across a rich, sadistic telepath whom lives there and gets his jollies by sending an alien predator (a goblin) to hunt people whom he has had kidnapped and brought to the park – and telepathically riding along with it to enjoy the kill. He learns of Telzey and sends the goblin after her. She disposes of it (by surviving on foot long enough for a giant guard dog to kill it) and him. A satisfying and suspenseful story. (Incidentally, I think that the Analog cover for "Goblin Night" is one of Freas's best paintings.)

"Sleep No More" One of the better Telzey Amberdon stories. While still a fairly inexperienced psi, she stumbles onto a group of (secret) alien invaders who set a predator after her which tracks its prey telepathically and then teleports in for the kill. Telzey is able to psionically shield herself from the animal as long as she is awake, but once she falls asleep, she is doomed. Exhausted, she cleverly deduces the predator's mode of tracking (it tracks by sensing the prey's own image of where it is) and kills it (she pictures herself inside a rocky cliff and opens her shields, it teleports there and dies).

#### Other Books

*A Nice Day for Screaming and Other Tales of the Hub* (collection)

*A Pride of Monsters* (collection)

*The Endless Frontiers* (minor space opera)

*The Telzey Toy* (one of the lesser Telzey novels)

*The Lion Game* (a decent Telzey novel built up out of three stories)

*The Universe Against Her* (the first two Telzey stories)

Much of Schmitz's output remains uncollected and is available only in the magazines.



**John W. Campbell (Don A. Stuart) Ben Yalow**

John W. Campbell, Jr. (1910-71) began his writing career as one of the early greats of space opera, with novels such as *The Black Star Passes* (first of a trilogy), *The Mightiest Machine* (first of two books), and others. As such, he was considered in a class with E. E. "Doc" Smith, Edmond Hamilton, and the other early space opera writers. However, after a few years, he began to write concept/mood SF, which more closely resembled SF as it was later to be found in the Golden Age. These stories were written under the pen name of Don A. Stuart, so as not to confuse readers who knew what to expect from a John W. Campbell story. The first of these stories, "Twilight," appeared in *Astounding* in 1934. In 1937, Campbell took over as editor of *Astounding* (now *Analog*) a position he held until his death. From that point on, his vision appeared mainly in the stories of others, but the themes of the Golden Age are foreshadowed in the writings of Don A. Stuart.

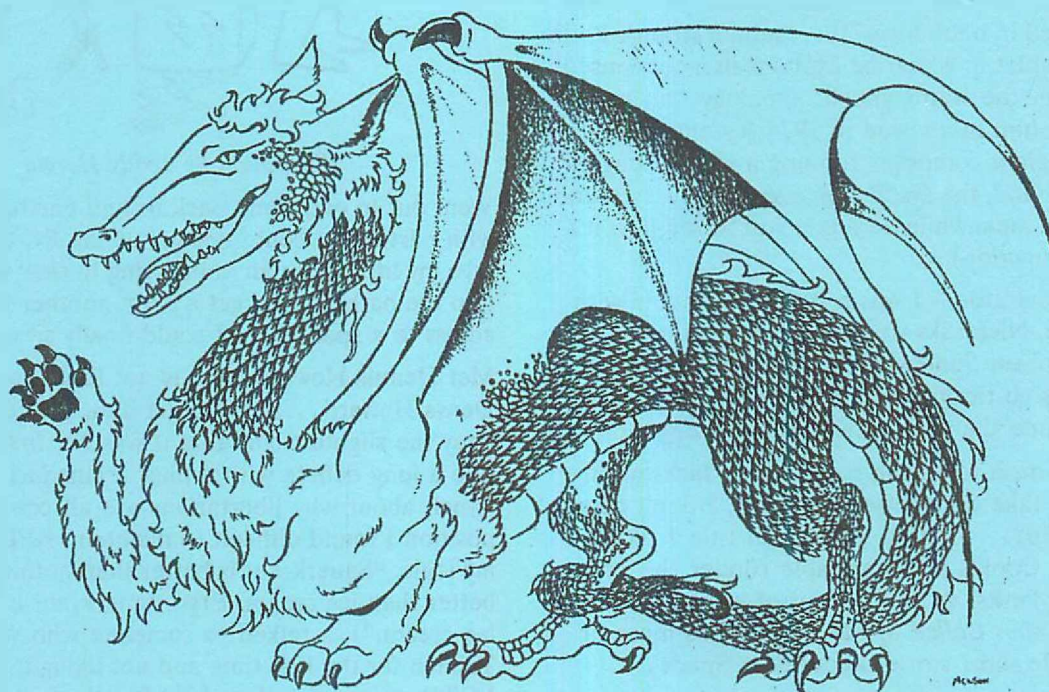
There are few sources for the Don A. Stuart stories. Almost all were collected in two anthologies: *Who Goes There* (Shasta, 1948), and *Cloak of Aesir* (Shasta, 1952). There was also an anthology, *The Best of John W. Campbell*, issued by Del Rey and the SF Book Club in 1976.

**Major stories include:**

"Twilight" A time traveler tells about his encounters with the dying human race. This theme is also covered in "Night," which is set even later, as the Solar System is dying of old age, and only a few machines are left to mark the end of civilization.

"Who Goes There" Humans fighting an alien monster in an isolated camp in the Antarctic. This has been made into a movie twice, under the title *The Thing*. Unlike the movies, all we know about the monsters' appearance is 3 red eyes and blue wormlike hair. The story isn't as graphic as modern horror, but is all the more terrifying because of that.

"Forgetfulness" A technical civilization, first exploring the stars, finds an older civilization that has forgotten its technical origins.



*Illustration by Ingrid Neilson*

## Bits and Pieces of Noreascon III

The first two articles were originally distributed in `rec.arts.sf-lovers` on USENET

### Richard Newsome

Noreascon III was my first Worldcon since the last one in Boston, so it seemed a little bit to me as though time had stood still for 9 years... there I was back at the Hynes, with pretty much the same crowd... trying futilely to find someplace I felt like eating within walking distance of the Sheraton (I wound up going to Pizzeria Uno twice)...

Went to the APA-55 party and had the pleasure of being ~~W~~ of the people there, talked to somebody whose husband (a linguist) had invented his own language and expected her to use it whenever they had a conversation (is this grounds for divorce?)... ran into Linda Bushyager in the APA-VCR room and told her much I had always loved *Granfalloon* (why can you never find old fanzines in the huckster room?)...

Bought two old copies of *Unknown* from Bob Madle (why has L. Sprague de Camp's marvellous *None But Lucifer* never appeared in book form?)... found a strange Philip K. Dick pamphlet in which he explains in a condensed but lucid form the weird gnostic theology that was "revealed" to him in a vision in 1974 (essentially, the universe is a giant computer running a slightly buggy program that God, the sysop, will eventually get around to patching... meanwhile he lets it run to see how it's going to malfunction)...

Back to the Sheraton - I was a sharing a double with Nick Simicich. Nick asks would I mind hosting the @ party in the room Sunday night? Mind!!? Yowsah! Watched Nick go through endless hassles hooking his portable RT into the net - UNIX is not pretty...

Made a mad dash to Logan to see Tom Jackson off (don't \*ever\* take the subway to Logan, I don't care if you save \$10)... found a Kornbluth title I didn't have at Glen Cook's huckster table (under the pen name Jordan Parks) as well as out-of-print Dashiell Hammett (*A Man Called Spade*, Hammett's more or less forgettable short stories about Sam Spade)...

Went out for ice for the @ party, which entailed following a long and poorly marked trail across the fifth floor, down to the ground floor, through a series of tiny hallways and unmarked doorways to a badly-lit loading dock where the official con Ice Maiden was

doling out massive sacks of ice to anyone who could find her. Eighty pounds was all I could carry, not having thought to bring a hand truck like everyone else...

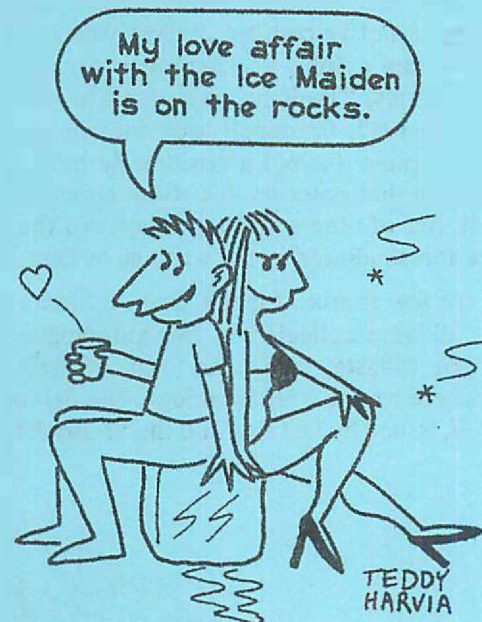


Illustration by Teddy Harvia

Went out to eat, came back to find our room jammed with partiers... could not get at the PC to sign in to save my life. Spent an hour trying to slow wedge my way into the bathroom to get a beer, another hour filtering across to a spot where I could finally sit down...

Met Dennis Howard, who is not to be confused with Denys Howard... met Cecilia Tan, who did not give away the slightest clue that it was her first con... got into a long debate with 4 libertarians including Keith Lynch about why libertarians are all communists (a position I found difficult to maintain. KFL's analysis of my logic: "Sauerkraut is better than nothing. Nothing is better than ice cream. Ergo, sauerkraut is better than ice cream.")... talked to someone who was reading Tolkien for the first time and not liking it much. I think LOTR starts going downhill after the first hundred pages or so... watched a bunch of obvious-not-netters crash the party ("Net addresses? Sure, we got 'em... uh, mine is, uh, lemme see...")... talked to a Swede from Stanford who is developing his own computer language,



never saw the drunken Finn though...

Party ran out of beer and Nick's friend and I went out to see if we could buy some at midnight on a Sunday night. Unfortunately, Boston has strict blue laws regulating the sale of beer, and Boston shop keepers (unlike New York bodega operators) actually obey them. So I wound up wandering around looking for someone who would sell me beer, finally winding up in the Hynes where the snack bar was going full blast and they offered to sell me as many large cups of beer as I could carry. Which turned out to be a dozen. Had a long woozy (I had already had 4 or 5 beers myself) walk back to the @ party, carrying the box of beers \*very\* gently, in constant terror that someone was going to jostle me and spill the lot; but made it safely back to the room, losing only 1 of the 12 in the process... party had quieted down a bit in the meantime and it was actually possible to squeeze in the doorway... 12 beers lasted longer than you would think possible, due to the fact that so many of the people who were left at that point were soft-drink drinkers... saw the Leepers but didn't have a chance to talk to them...



Illustration by Teddy Harvia

Next day got up and ran into old drinking buddy Teddy Harvia, complimented him and another fan artist on absolutely smashing convention art show this year. SF artists, both pro and fan, are beginning to seem more talented to me than the writers... finally went to \*one\* program item, panel on burn-out, and one movie, *Baron Munchausen*, other than that did not attend any programming whatsoever at the con, and didn't miss it... got trapped in several conversations with people I wanted to scrape off my shoe after the first ten seconds, but other than that enjoyed almost everyone. Too bad it's two years 'til the next US worldcon.

Evelyn C. Leeper

*[Evelyn writes very comprehensive convention reports, and allowed us to print a few excerpts.]*

Noreascon 3, the 1989 World Science Fiction Convention, was held August 31 through September 4 in Boston. The attendance was approximately 7200.

#### Dealers' Room

The Dealers' Room (a.k.a., the Hucksters' Room) was smaller than I expected, certainly smaller than some previous Worldcons. (It was probably comparable to Nolacon 2 - it will be hard to beat the one at Conspiracy though.) As usual, books probably represented less than half of the room and there were used book dealers as well as antiquarian-type book dealers (and of course, new book dealers). I had a very short list of books I was looking for, but still managed to find a half dozen books I was looking for, as well as William Contento's *Index to Science Fiction Anthologies 1977-1983*, our big splurge (but worth it!).

#### Art Show

I got to look at the Art Show only once (Sunday morning). It was well-lit and moderately well-arranged, though the three-dimensional pieces were somewhat cramped (probably the artists' decisions not to buy extra table space more than anything the con could control). We bought a couple of prints in the Print Shop - it was quick to do, since they were all numbered and filed. I got a bidding number and bid on one piece of art (The Hound of the Baskervilles). The only problem was that they wanted a photo ID and New Jersey drivers' licenses have no photos. So after producing almost a dozen non-photo pieces, I remembered that I had my AT&T badge, with my picture on it. Note to con goers: bring a picture ID. (Not a problem for me next year - I will have my passport with me in Holland. Of course, transporting the art will be the major problem!)

The quality was high overall, higher than in some previous years, though the best pieces are either marked "Not for Sale" or priced such that they may as well be marked "Not for Sale." I noticed one artist had marked minimum bids of \$1 on all his pieces, trusting the crowd to bid them up. They did, though I'm not sure if he got as much as he had hoped. Still, it shows he has confidence in his work speaking for itself. The amount of media art was down - thank goodness!

#### Con Suite

Rather than a traditional con suite, Noreascon 3 had the ConCourse, a large exhibit hall with areas set aside for various exhibits (History of Worldcons, History of Fanzines, Costuming), freebie tables, message board, food service (fast food catered by ARA), and a lot

of sitting areas where you could sit down and talk or read. (They also had a separate reading room, to which Mark and I donated a couple dozen books. We also lent our Constellation crab mallet and bib to the Worldcon exhibit.) While there were complaints about having to pay for the food (usually there are some free munchies in the Con Suite), I think the ConCourse was a better idea, particularly as it was in the Hynes near the programming, rather than a long walk away in the Sheraton or the Hilton.



Illustration by Joe Mayhew

The Writers Strike Back – Writers Review Critics  
George Alec Effinger, Kathe Koja, Sandra Miesel,  
Lewis Shiner, Susan Shwartz (moderator)

Are reviews valuable? The panelists agreed that a good review may help get your next book published even if the current book doesn't sell especially well. And if your current book "does" sell well, a bad review probably won't affect getting your next book published. And a good review means respect and "ego-boo" and everyone enjoys that. (A bad review means you tell yourself the reviewer just didn't understand the book.)

The panelists were less agreed on whether a reviewer needs a science fiction background to review a science fiction book. Some claimed yes, and asked if Beowulf could be judged fairly by contemporary standards. Miesel said no and Shiner said yes, almost at the same instant. This may be more a reflection of their writing styles – Shiner's work (especially *Deserted Cities of the Heart*) is much more based in mainstream tradition and doesn't have a lot of science fiction trappings.

Effinger finds science fiction criticism apologetic: reviewers want to get science fiction "accepted" and at the same time impress the reader with their own erudition rather than review the book. He says that authors should never try to refute a reviewer, especially in public, though he

concedes that if a reviewer makes some obvious error of fact, a letter to the reviewer pointing this out is not out of order. But a lengthy diatribe about how the reviewer was too blind to see the point the author was trying to make merely makes the author look foolish. Effinger claims he would rather have a well-thought-out bad review than a shallow good one, but also said he had never seen one such of his works (such chuckles here).

A member of the audience asked if an academic critic wasn't needed to put science fiction criticism at a literary level because s/he has the tools? Thomas Clareson (from the audience) responded that, "Some science magazines are for the general public, others for specialists. Literary critics are talking to themselves in ever-narrowing circles," and expressed the opinion that criticism should be accessible to all. Miesel recommended (and I second) C. S. Lewis's *Experiment in Criticism*. (Note that this is much more readable than Ezra Pound's *ABC of Reading* or Thomas Eagleton's *Literary Theory*, both of which were heavily recommended at Readercon. My opinion is that this is typical of the differences between Readercon and a Worldcon – without criticizing either.)

As far as actually reviewing the critics, there wasn't very much. Effinger and Shiner both said (in response to a question from the audience) that *The New York Review of Science Fiction* had fallen flat on its face, printing two kinds of articles. One was the very esoteric literary analysis that didn't make any sense, and the other was the shallow sort of review one finds everywhere else ("I really enjoyed this book because it had good characterization and a believable plot.")

Panel: Computer Networks  
and Viruses: How Close Are  
*Neuromancer* and *Shockwave Rider*?  
Richard Stallman, Chuq von Rospach,  
Ben Yalow, Saul Jaffe (moderator)

First the panelists' credentials: Stallman is developing a free operating system (and seems to be a bit of an anarchist), von Rospach works for Apple, Yalow works for City University of New York, and Jaffe works for Rutgers University, all in the fields of computers and networking. Though the title was "viruses," one of the major topics was the "Internet worm." When someone described that worm as benign and harmless, it was pointed out that the time spent tracking it down, combined with the time spent by engineers and others who sat idle while their computers were inaccessible, amounted to a considerable financial damage. Eventually, even those audience members who started out saying "Well, it was only the big companies who were hurt and it felt good to see them suffer" had to admit that a lot



of other people were hurt as well. IBM, for example, cut themselves off from the Internet and this meant that the usual electronic means of communication customers could use to get questions answered or problems resolved were not functioning.

Some basic principles were stated. More security in operating systems leads to less functionality in information exchange by making it more difficult. Mac viruses tend to be more benign than PC ones. (No one gave any reason or justification for this.)

Several non-standard examples of disasters were given. Accidentally deleting your own files is the most common example of destruction and, all things considered, may cost the most in terms of person-hours. Then there is the migrating head-crash. The technicians put the diagnostic pack in a drive that had a head-crash and damaged it, but not realizing this, proceeded to put this pack in several other drives and destroyed them all as well. The example the panelists gave was of a PDP-11, so must be several years old, but I know of at least one recent instance with VAXes. And Stallman observed that the "adventure" program was a virus - it merely used a human vector to transmit it from machine to machine. People \*wanted\* to put it on their machine!

Why do people write worms and viruses? Many reasons were given: ego-boo, social malcontents, "see what I can do," and even industrial espionage. Stallman saw viruses and worms as an almost political protest, people fighting against a repressive system. He claimed that the more restrictive the operating system, the more likely people were to attempt to sabotage it. However, the statistics presented by other panelists seem to indicate that it is the most open systems which are attacked, and that familiarity has more to do with it than repressiveness. UNIX systems are attacked far more frequently than MVS systems.

One of the major dangers is that systems will become too top-heavy with virus protections. And as Yalow summed up, "What you can build you can break."

#### Another Look at the @ Party

The @ party was held once again in Nick Simicich's room. It was loud, often too much so. After a couple of visits from the hotel security people, we took to shushing everyone on general principles every five minutes or so, just to get the noise level down. The usual one-shot was put together (with emacs, an editor I don't know any better than the IBM thing Nick had last year). We arrived late and missed a lot of the people I had hoped to see, but did have a chance to talk to Tim Maroney, who seems very different in person than electronically. Mark spent a fair amount of time talking to a couple of people including someone who works for AT&T in

another location about 3 miles from ours. (For this we went to Boston?) The conversation included libertarian science fiction, and since I recently panned a couple of libertarian science fiction books because of gratuitous rape scenes, one of the people was wondering if I was just down on the Libertarians or what. At least he will be relieved to hear that I will not be making the same criticism of Korman's *Jehovah Contract*.

There were plenty of eating places nearby, both cheap and expensive, and I was very pleased with all the meals I had time for.

My only major complaint was that the beanie propeller hats sold out in under an hour and I couldn't get one.

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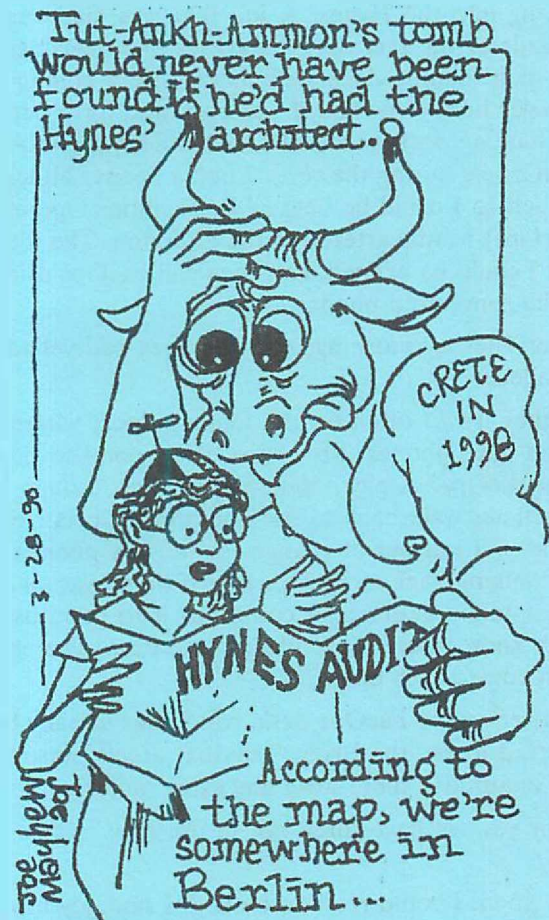


Illustration by Joe Mayhew

## **Diary of a Mad Fan**

### **Beep Me! Beep Me! Beep Me Senseless!**

#### **Joe Rico**

What follows is my impressions of Noreascon III, where I worked as the Hynes Convention Center liaison. I give it only in the barest chronological order (the whole event is mostly a blur to me), relying instead on the topic that gave new meaning to the term "hell days" – those seven hellish days that fen called a Worldcon. I write this as a cautionary tale to others, to preserve fannish history, and to set the record straight. Besides, my therapist suggested I do it.

In a word, Noreascon III meant beepers to me.

One of my first tasks was to aid the convention in moving into the Hynes. A job that was made more difficult by the fact that the Hynes had neglected to tell their loading dock staff that we were coming. So Tuesday before the con, I was back and forth between the loading dock and Hall C of the Hynes (AKA the ConCourse during the con). I had a beeper attached to my belt so I could be beeped by Facilities Operations (FacOps) headquartered in the Sheraton. The idea was that I could be beeped, and then call FacOps using one of the convention phones.

As of Tuesday morning, these phones had yet to be installed.

Further, I was often on the loading dock, where we didn't have phones. My choice to respond to beeps from FacOps? A pay phone on the dock, though I did sometimes walk back to the Sheraton. It occurred to me after I ran out of change for the pay phones and was walking back to FacOps that if there was an extra walkie-talkie available, I could put it to good use. I don't know where these ideas come from; I've always been cursed with them.

I arrived at the FacOps desk, which was already being referred to as "the Bridge" by that area's personnel, and inquired if there were any extra radios.

"Why yes, we have three not in use now," came the reply.

"Oh good. I could really use one," I said, joyfully.

"Sorry, we are saving them in case someone needs them."

It quickly filtered through my already-numbed sponge of gray matter that I wasn't "Someone." Who did they mean? I wasn't a SMOF? Perhaps someone who was a capital S Someone could conceivably use three radios at once.

Further explanations revealed that their response was

based on two perfectly compatible philosophies for FacOps. The first is the well-known reasoning of the librarian who, when asked how many books were out in circulation, said, "Four, but we are trying very hard to get them back."

The second philosophy was most perfectly expressed at Chicon IV, which called for Operations to be the eyes and ears of the convention. Radio-equipped rovers would report to the Office, which in turn would phone or page committee members to handle problems. Carried to illogical extremes, this ploy demanded that people who "Do" shouldn't have radios, and people who "Report" must have them.

Feeling that the "Someone" rationale expressed by the nameless FacOps person defied argument, I withdrew without a radio and made getting the Hynes phones installed a priority.

But I was still not prepared for the avalanche of beeps that would assault me throughout the con. Besides the standard problems that any con has, I also got numerous calls for rooms to be cleaned and water setups to be refreshed. To the latter, I can only say that dry water setups are a problem at every SF con, and at no other type of event I've attended. It's just another example of conditioning – fan sees drink, fan drinks drink. This mentality, one of many that makes fen so endearing, goes along with fan sees food, fan eats food; fan sees book, fan reads book; fan sees pro... but I digress.

Both the problems of the rooms being cleaned and the water setups being refreshed go to the heart of the issue of when a con has the right to tell a facility how to run its own internal operations. The knee-jerk response is whatever the con wants from the facility, the con should get. After all, we paid for our space. The problem with this approach is that it builds up a lot of bad will with a hotel or convention center real quick. This was a typical case of that. Ops rovers would see a room needing cleanup on the third floor at 8:15 am. They would radio this to the Bridge, who would beep me about it. I was now supposed to jump on the Hynes to clean the room. However, I wouldn't because I knew the Hynes was cleaned according to a schedule. The third floor rooms were cleaned between 8:30 and 9:00 am. This isn't to say that all concerns from the rovers were unfounded, but if I didn't give the Hynes an opportunity to do their job on their own, I would have been in the face of a Convention Center Authority person three times a day!



## My Life as a Faned

Leslie Turek

Some of you know me as chairman of Noreascon 2 and/or editor of *Mad 3 Party*, but I've been in fandom quite a bit longer than that. In the beginning there was MITSFS and *Twilight Zine*. I discovered MITSFS (the MIT Science Fiction Society) in my freshman year at college. One of the women in my dorm, Sue Hereford (now Suford Lewis), had belonged to LASFS in high school, and she introduced a bunch of us to science fiction fandom. Not that MITSFS considered itself to be part of fandom. Its motto was, "We're not fans; we just read the stuff." But at MITSFS we discovered the same cheerful irreverence, quirky sense of humor, and acceptance of the oddities of others that is characteristic of fandom. We found MITSFS to be a refuge from the pomposity and conformity that we were sometimes smothered by at Harvard, and we got into the habit of dropping in to the MITSFS meetings about once a week. And since, at that time, MIT was a predominantly male institution, we were welcomed with open arms.

One of the people we met there was Dave Vanderwerf (known as DAVE). DAVE was a nice guy who had a reputation as being somewhat ineffectual, but he was a fan and proud of it. Why, he had even attended Discon I in 1963. And he subscribed to and read fanzines. In spite of his reputation, DAVE turned out to be the founding father of organized Boston fandom. It was his idea to have a local convention called Boskone and he ran the first couple of them, he established the Skylark Award, and he initiated the first Boston Worldcon bid (Boston in '67). He also tried to found NESFA, but he got the name wrong, and his club, the Boston Science Fiction Association, failed to get off the ground.

At that time, DAVE was editor of the MITSFS fanzine, *Twilight Zine*, which came out more-or-less quarterly. (This was my first exposure to the phrase, "Real Soon Now.") I got involved in helping to put out a couple of issues, and rather enjoyed it. So when DAVE got tired of the job, I suggested to my ex-roommate and best friend, Cory Seidman, that we take over as a team.

The only problem was that, at that time, I couldn't write. Or at least I was convinced that I couldn't, due to a very intimidating freshman writing course that had totally screwed up my head. After that, I made a science of discovering courses that would fulfill the Harvard

Liberal Arts requirement without requiring hardly any written papers: Economics and Music to name two.



Illustration by Peggy Ranson

So we made a deal: Cory would do any writing that was required, and I would handle the organizational parts, like maintaining the mailing list. We would share the labor-intensive jobs, like typing and collating. Publishing a fanzine in those days was a fairly primitive operation. We typed directly onto mimeograph stencil, using corflu to paint over mistakes. We were thrilled to have access to a new-fangled machine, the IBM Selectric typewriter. It had a removable type ball, so you could select the typeface, drop in an italic ball for titles, a Greek letter ball for equations, and so forth. Larger point sizes for headings had to be done by hand, by use of lettering guides and styli with points of various diameters. We did have access to electrostencilling through commercial services, but it was very expensive and we used it only for artwork. Since the charge was by the page, we would cram several pieces of artwork onto one sheet, and

then cut them apart and glue the fragile electrostencils into holes cut into the typed stencils.

We ran off each issue on an A.B. Dick mimeo available at MIT for general student use, and in the process we learned a lot about running that particular machine. I remember that it used an ink pad rather than a silk screen, which had the feature of leaving a grid of white spots on any solid black area. We learned to purchase and install a brand-new ink pad each time we ran off a new issue. The mailing list was originally maintained on index cards, although later I believe we converted to punched cards and used hand-wired accounting machines to print out address labels.

Cory wrote great editorials in a typical light fannish style. Her subject matter was sometimes fannish (generally con reports), but also ranged from a defense of the borough of Queens ("Rego Park is so called because it was first developed by the Real Good Construction Company. That makes it highly typical of our rich cultural heritage.") to a description of the cookies served in our Radcliffe dorm on Saturday nights to the poor souls who didn't have Saturday night dates. For the rest, the job of the editor was mostly just trying to extract material from people, rather than being terribly selective. Sometimes we got material just by noticing amusing things around us rather than actually getting someone to write something. (The cover for our first issue was a baroque etching featuring triumphal arches that we stole from a placemat found at Ken's at Copley, our favorite late-night hangout.) Being published at an institute of technology, *TZ* tended to emphasize the techie approach to life. Some of the contents included:

Excerpts from the minutes of the MITSFS meetings. We had fun coming up with the title of this feature, which started out as "Return of the Son of the Ghost of MITSFS" and progressed through such titles as "The Ex-Wife of the Son of the Ghost of MITSFS." The minutes were almost totally content-free, but served to give a good idea of the flavor of the meetings. (Many years later I dropped in at a MITSFS meeting and found that nothing had changed!) Sample excerpts: "The set of treasurers present is empty" and "Arluis entered and snarled with aristocratic contempt that such a device [a Coke machine] would attract riffraff. He was ignored."

A series of great cartoons of geniis in bottles by Jack Gaughan. ("Genii in the Pepsi Generation," "Disposable Genii - No Deposit No Return," "Genii Made into a Lamp," and so forth.)

Excerpts from exams, such as one question from an

18.02 (MIT Physics) midterm. It started by quoting a situation from a James Bond novel in which he guessed that his martini was bugged. The question asked the students to "calculate the moment of inertia of a stuffed olive where part of the pimento has been replaced by a radio transmitter (neglect the toothpick antenna)."

Transcripts of WTBS (the original name of the MIT student radio station, now called WMBR after selling their previous call sign to Ted Turner for big bucks - but that's another story) commercials for Apple Gunkies (those "rhomboidal pellets of true-fruit flavor, machined to exacting tolerances by skilled native craftsmen with pride in their work").

After a while, Cory got a little tired of getting stuck with all the writing, and encouraged me to give it a try. Since I had been studying computer programming (Yes, Virginia, they did have computers in those days), I came up with the idea of writing a story in Fortran instead of English. My first attempt was about Goldilocks and the three bears, and was titled `SUBROUTINE STORY(GOLDIE)`. It was a compilable Fortran program that used concepts like arrays and iteration to show `GOLDIE` stepping through the `WOODS(100)` and `COTTGE(3)`, and conditional statements to test `IF (TOOHOT(PORIDG))`. We had plans for a whole series of Fortran stories, starting with `IF (IHAD(HAMMER))`, but luckily we never went any further with this concept.



*Illustration by Ingrid Neilson*

All told, we published six issues on a quarterly schedule in 1966 and 1967. Then we graduated and left *TZ* for other hands to continue. Fanzine publishing was a great introduction to fandom because it was a great way to meet people. There weren't as many regional



conventions in those days, and travel was expensive, so the main way fans got to know each other was through fanzines. There were a number of people we got acquainted with by receiving their letters or their artwork for *TZ*, and it was always a great thrill to meet one of them face-to-face at a convention.

The following year, DAVE got involved in another bright idea. A popular fannish newszine, *Focal Point* (the *File:770* of the day), had recently ceased publishing fan news, and was sorely missed. DAVE, Ed Meskys, and Charlie Brown, chatting late at night at the 1968 Boskone, I think, came up with the idea of a distributed newszine. Three editors, each in a different city, would publish issues in rotation. The idea would be to spread the burden of publishing, and also to collect more gossip because each editor would theoretically have his own network of sources. DAVE and I wanted to call it *Pulsar*. (Pulsars had just been discovered and some people thought they were interstellar communications beacons.) But Charlie and Ed voted for *Locus*.

DAVE edited the first trial issue and I typed it up. It was a single two-sided sheet which was sent free to about 2000 people to solicit subscriptions. The feature story was on the death of Anthony Boucher; a Lunacon report described how discussion of the movie *2001* with Arthur C. Clarke dominated the proceedings; and there was a note that *Star Trek* had hired John and Bjo Trimble to handle their fan mail. The first trial issue came out on May 10, 1968, and announced a bi-weekly publication schedule and a subscription rate of 10 issues for \$1.00. Dave did a second trial issue and the first real issue, and the next 4 issues rotated through editors as planned. At that point, Ed became rather busy with organizing a Tolkien conference, and Dave acquired a second job and was fufiated (forced away from it all) for a few months. So Charlie got stuck with the next few issues, working up to 250 subscribers and a price of 8/\$1.00. By issue 8 (Sept '68), Charlie announced that he and his wife Marsha were now the sole editors of *Locus*. The rest is history (and a whole bunch of fan Hugos.)

At this point, we skip over many years. During this time, DAVE dropped out of fandom. Cory married Alexei Panshin and they moved to Perkasio, Pennsylvania, where now they write serious books of SF criticism like *The World Beyond the Hill*. And I became a convention-running fan and left fanzines behind for a long time... Our story jumps ahead to 1986 when Boston seemed sure to be selected to hold the 1989 Worldcon. My dilemma was to find a job I'd enjoy doing that I could volunteer for before I got dragooned into doing something more energetic than I had in mind.

For Noreascon 2, in 1980, George Flynn had published *The Voice of the Lobster* – a fanzine devoted to providing a behind-the-scenes look at running a Worldcon. It became a forum for people to send in their suggestions, and for us to explain the reasons behind our decisions.

I liked the idea of having such a fanzine, but I wanted it to do more. I thought we could use it to communicate with the convention staff. To run a modern Worldcon, we needed to recruit hundreds of people from out of the area to help out at the con. I figured that the more these staffers knew about our plans, the easier it would be for everyone to work together smoothly when they all got to the convention.

So I presented to chairman Mark Olson the idea of a combination fanzine that would serve both purposes. It would be sent free to our staffers (and people we expected to recruit) and would also be available by subscription to anyone who was interested. At that time, we already had a bid fanzine that had been started by Laurie Mann. Pat Vandenberg had edited it for about two years and was now ready to hand it off to a new volunteer. So I took over *Mad 3 Party* for the last year of bidding and the three years of con planning.

Fanzine production had really changed since *Twilight Zine* days. We now used computers and laserprinters for text editing and typesetting; offset printing for reproduction; and did our mailing list on a database management system. It was a good thing, too, because it would have been extremely difficult to put out a timely zine without this new technology. (Toward the end I was putting out a 22-page issue every 6 or 7 weeks.) Circulation grew steadily throughout its run; issue 33 went to about 570 people: 250 subscribers, 270 committee and staff, and about 50 freebies to newszines and Worldcon bids and committees.

The most original issues of *M3P* were produced in my first year of publishing, summer 1986 through summer 1987. At that time, there wasn't much Noreascon 3 business to report on, so I made a major effort to write articles that involved digging up facts and drawing conclusions. The Bid Finances Issue (December 1986) described the Boston in '89 bid strategy, and compared bid expense reports obtained from the 1988 and 1989 bidders. The Body Count Issue (June 1987) had articles on where people spend their time at conventions, based on actual statistics collected at ConFederation and Boskone.

After we won the bid, *Mad 3 Party* became less my own work and more straight reporting of convention news and policy. It covered just about every aspect of the convention planning, from organization structure and hotel negotiations, to Hugo administration and area

brainstorming. During this period, I did get to practice one skill that I had started to learn as chair of N2: explaining policy decisions to people who didn't know all the background facts, and writing calm responses to angry letters. One major example of the latter was the furor that blew up over the masquerade. We had been brainstorming in order to try to come up with some new ideas for running the masquerade, and we published an article that discussed some of the ideas under consideration. The costume fans, as might be expected, were intensely interested in this, and picked up the article for re-publication in a couple of their journals. But rather than getting a set of calm, reasoned responses to the ideas presented, we got letters that were clearly from very upset and unhappy people who were feeling threatened at the whole idea of change.

This incident illustrates something more subliminal I was trying to do with *M3P*, which was to illustrate by example a way of working as a team, and of making good decisions by conducting a rational discussion. One reason the masquerade issue blew up so badly is that the article got read out of context by people who hadn't been following *M3P* all along and didn't realize that our way of making decisions was to talk things out, openly and in great detail, before trying to focus in on a solution. They thought we had already made a decision to run the masquerade a certain way. But I think that the people who read *M3P* regularly did begin to understand this process and understood that we were proposing new ideas so that we could discuss them.

It's hard to tell for sure, but I like to think that *M3P* made a major contribution to Noreascon 3 by giving people from outside the local area a good understanding of what our plans were and how we would work together. When the committee assembled, everyone knew (more or less) what was where, who to see for what kind of problem, what our policies were, and generally what to expect.

People have asked me if I would consider editing a similar publication for some future Worldcon. Aside from the minor problem of where would I find the energy, I really don't think it would work. For such a zine to be useful, you need not only to have a committee and con chairman who are strongly committed to having their work openly discussed, you also need an editor who is intimately connected to the decision-making body and aware of all of the significant things that are happening. There's just no way a *Mad 3 Party* could be produced remotely. (Lucky for me!) But I would like to see future Worldcons make the attempt, because I think they will find that it's worth the effort for them, and will also be a great benefit for the Worldcons which

follow them. The more that information is shared, the less each new committee will have to reinvent the wheel.



*Illustration by Joe Mayhew*



## Redesigning the Hugos to Suit the Winners

Joe Mayhew

[Conventions have had cartoon-ins or cartoon-wars for many years. Unfortunately, the results of these ventures have usually languished in someone's portfolio. When Joe proposed that the theme of Boskone's cartoon-in be "Redesigning the Hugos to Suit the Winners," I asked him if PB could publish the results.]

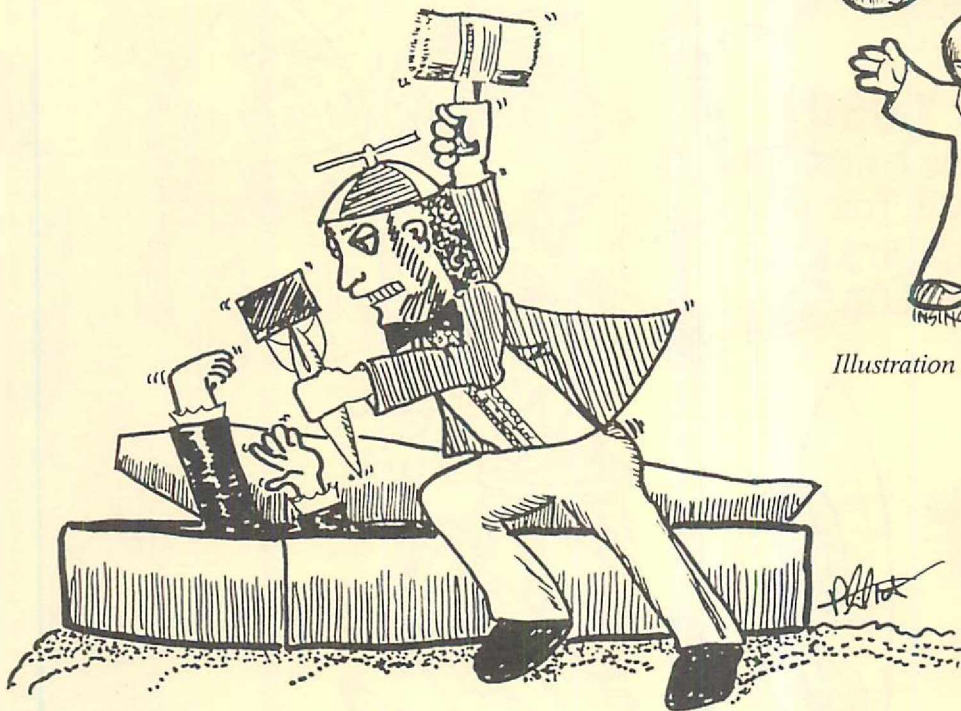


Illustration by Phil Tortorici

How to Eliminate Multiple Hugo Winners From Future Competition

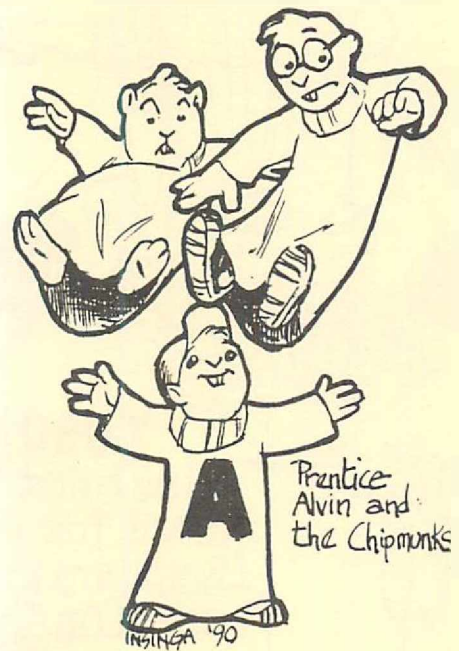


Illustration by Merle Insinga



BOSKONE XXVII  
CARTOON-IN

Reported by  
Joe Mayhew  
201

"Let the Hugo fit the crime."

Some  
HUGO  
Prototypes

Back-to-Back  
HUGO

ANONYMOUS  
AUTHOR  
HUGO

HUGO FOR  
BEST COMMERCIAL  
PHONE-CHAT SERVICE  
"Call me and Smol"

YE  
HUGO  
FOR  
BEST  
W

Dr. Whogo

JACK  
IN  
THE  
BOOKS  
FOR MOST  
CONTRIVED  
TRICK  
ENDING

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BEST  
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FOR  
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FAN  
LIBELZINE  
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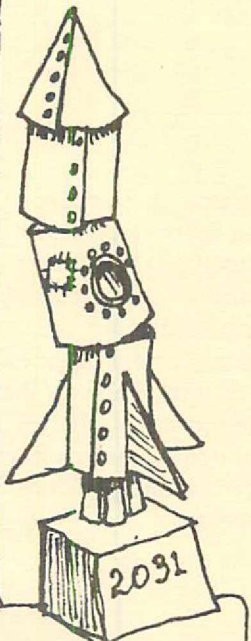
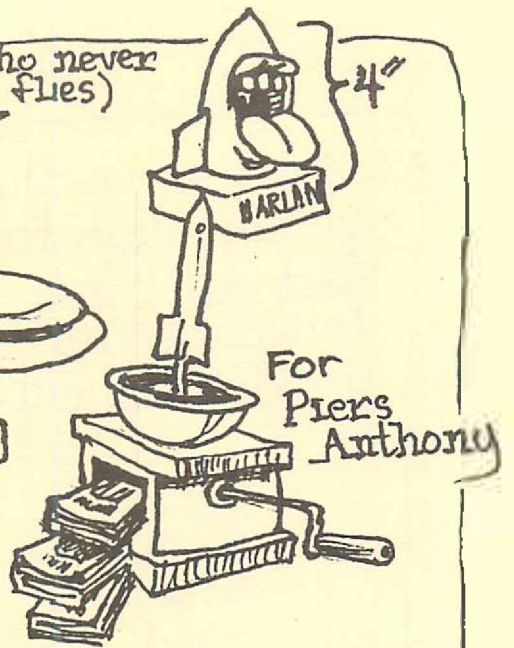
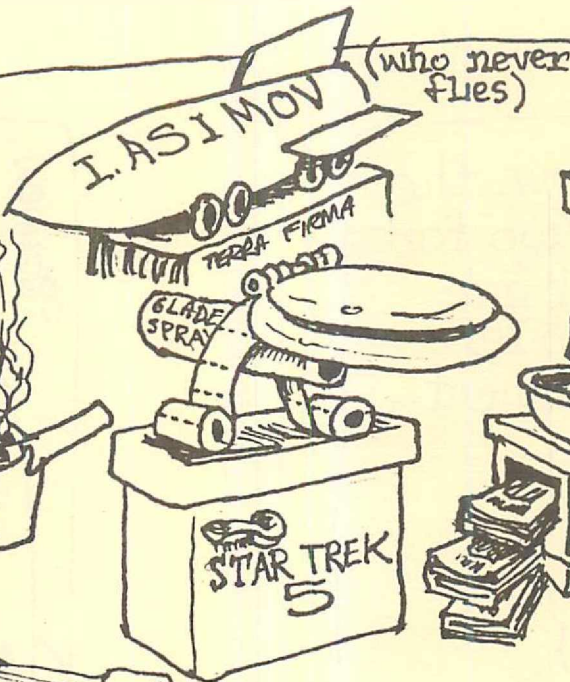
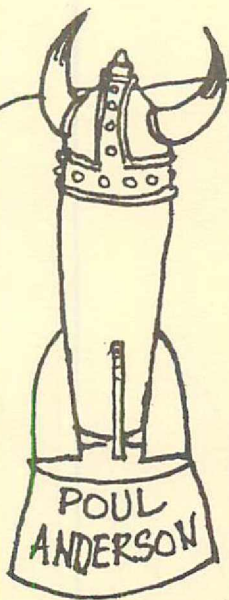
SMOOTHEST  
TUCKERIZATION

Practical  
Joke  
Hugo  
(Havana)

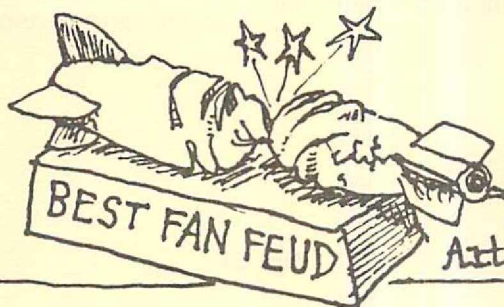
FOR MOST  
RUN-ON  
SERIES

Shared  
universe  
Hugo



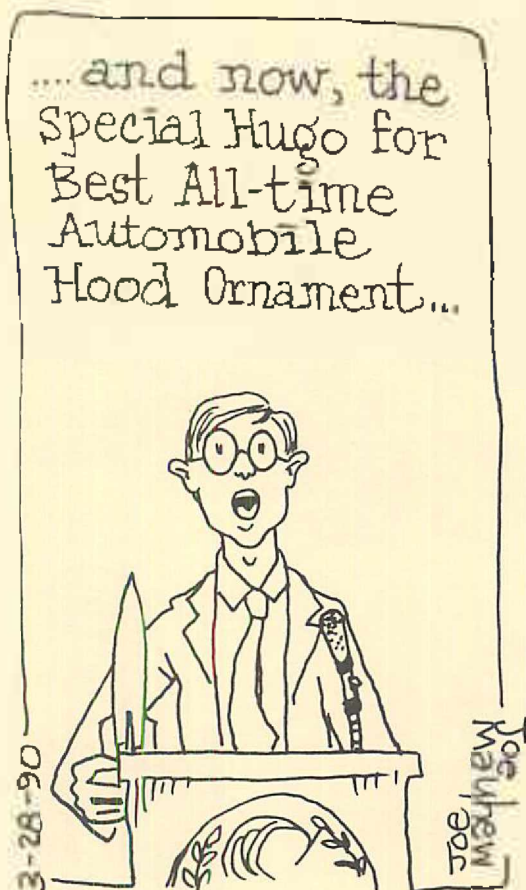


Hugo for new  
sequel to  
old series



Some of these were  
my ideas, many were  
from fans who didn't  
sign their names:  
two I can name are  
Art Delano & Larry Baker.





*Illustration by Joe Mayhew*

*[So, Joe, since you made the ballot this year, have you redesigned the Hugo in case you win??]*

### **New Tax Law Changes** Harold Zitzow

The IRS has issued a ruling which states that any person who has cloned himself or herself at any time during the ten-year period preceding the 1990 tax year must obtain a new separate Tax ID Number for each clone and ensure that each clone files a separate, timely Federal Income Tax return for the 1989 tax year.

It is unacceptable to the IRS that the prototype and the clone (or clones) file a single return showing their combined income as the income of a single individual (or as the income of one of the spouses filing a Married-Joint return).

Subject to IRS rulings concerning late or amended returns, each clone must file a late return (subject to interest and penalties) and the prototype must file an amended return, for each of the taxable years preceding 1989 during which clones existed and did not file separate returns. Records must be available, subject to audit by the IRS, which show the apportionment of the income (originally reported by one individual) among two or more individuals; if unsupported by records, each individual will be assessed tax, interest, and penalties on the entire income originally reported.



## Book Reviews

Mark Olson

APA:NESEA

*300 Years of Gravitation* by Stephen W. Hawking and W. Israel

I was unimpressed by Hawking's best-seller *A Brief History of Time*, because I thought that it was trivial – it really didn't have much to say. It's all right as an introduction for the general public, for people who know nothing about the subject and want to get a glimpse of it, but I really want to see books which assume a decent undergraduate-level knowledge of physics and tell me what's really happening.

Of course, I can't really participate in events – even if I hadn't forgotten half the math I once learned, I never learned nearly enough to follow the details of what's happening in gravitational physics (one of the true frontier areas of science). What I can do, however, is hear the discussions, following part of what is said. I can read and understand the order-of-magnitude calculations which frequently carry the essential arguments.

This book was just what I was looking for. It's a collection of review papers on the state of gravitational theory as of about the start of 1988. But that doesn't say everything. It's a collection of review papers which are exceptionally well-written and well-thought out. (With a couple of exceptions.) They cover their territory without falling into over-erudition, yet have substance. (Hawking & Israel did a similar previous volume for the century of Einstein's birth, and it was equally well-written.)

While the book is about gravitation, it covers literally everything, since one of the major trends in gravitational research chronicled in this book is the steps being taken toward unifying gravity (General Relativity) with quantum mechanics. Many people are surprised to learn that General Relativity is a classical theory. So we have things like Quantum Cosmology. I was continually amazed by the unification taking place here: General Relativity, a number of elementary particle theories, topology and cosmology are all coming together. What's more, it's beginning to look like they come together naturally as aspects of the same thing.

The paradoxical Inflationary Universe is reviewed at considerable length; Other major topics are Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Black Holes, and Gravitational Radiation.

Highly recommended.

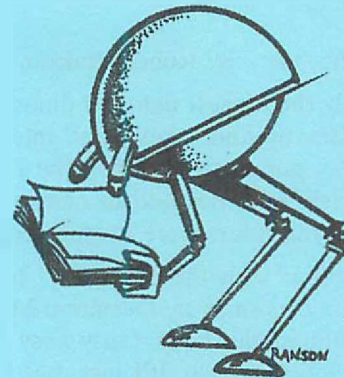


Illustration by Peggy Ranson

*The Penguin Dictionary of English and European History 1485-1789*

It's not exactly what the title says: It's more of an encyclopedia with short entries than a dictionary. Perhaps 300-500 people and events from the period 1485 to 1789 and connected with European history are given writeups ranging from a paragraph to several pages.

The book covers English history disproportionately (about 1/3 of the entries are English). Even the dates are a giveaway: the English tend to date the end of the Middle Ages by the date of the accession of Henry VII, while the modern age of barbarism begins with the French Revolution.

I learned a lot of fascinating history here. (Did you ever hear of the Defenestration of Prague? A Bohemian revolution in the 1600's began with the tossing of two royal agents out of an upper floor window of the palace. (They fell on a garbage heap and survived.))

Wonderful bedtime reading.

*The Problems of Mathematics* by Ian Stewart

I've recently read a number of books giving a tour of the current state of mathematics. This is among the best.

Mathematics is undergoing a renaissance these days – there seem to be a whole set of interesting new fields opening up, and some of the classic problems have been solved.

Furthermore, new and unexpected links have been found between parts of mathematics that on the surface appear unrelated.

Stewart does a good job of surveying the field and manages to convey both the complexity (maybe subtlety is a better word) and the excitement of the rejuvenated field. He does this without excessive technicality (anyone with high school algebra can appreciate the book).

Highly recommended.

### *The Dinosaur Heresies* by Robert Bakker

Bakker is probably the biggest name in dinosaurs these days – he's charismatic and takes some interesting, but not completely popular positions. *The Dinosaur Heresies* is a longish book devoted to convincing the non-specialist that dinosaurs were warm-blooded.

I was already familiar with the concept (I had read *The Warm-Blooded Dinosaurs* by Desmond Morris some years ago), so I found the book fairly easy sailing. It's not that it is too technical, it's just that it is very thorough.

I did find it to be a little too much of a tract aimed at convincing the reader of a particular view – I did not come away from it feeling that I had been given a completely balanced discussion.

In spite of that, it was a most entertaining book (heavily illustrated with Bakker's own excellent drawings) and gives a pretty complete view of dinosaurs and their evolution. In particular, Bakker does a very good job of giving us an idea of just how long the dinosaurs were around, and placing the various kinds of dinosaurs in relation to each other. (Dinosaurs as a major class of animal lasted 150,000,000 years – an extraordinary length of time. Many of the most famous species, however, missed each other by many tens of millions of years. We are closer today to the *Tryannosaurus* than *T. Rex* was to *Dimetrodon*.)

If you like dinosaurs (and who doesn't?) and want to know more, this book's for you.

### *The Thirty Years' War* by Geoffrey Parker

I just finished David Eddings nice new start (*The Diamond Throne*) of a pseudo-medieval multi-volume series, but it's hard to take it very seriously after reading a good history. The real world is so much bigger and stranger than most fantasy worlds (and Eddings is a lot better than average).

The Thirty Years' War may well be the most complicated war ever fought. It's easy to answer Where? When? and Who? It lasted (more or less) thirty years (roughly 1618 to 1648). It was fought mostly in Germany which

it devastated. The combatants at one time or another included every European power. But why it was fought? That's a lot harder because the reasons kept changing.

To set the stage, Germany at the beginning of the 17th century was not a nation in our sense of the word: it was the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (to which is always added "which was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire"). The HRE was the fairly direct successor of Charlemagne's empire of a thousand years earlier. It consisted of an Emperor who was elected by the hereditary Electors (four large territorial princes and three Archbishops). The Electors (at least the secular ones) were the Big Powers of Germany.

The Imperial Diet (not quite a Parliament, though if things had gone differently, it might have become one) had two additional houses: a house of territorial rulers (princes, counts, dukes, landgraves, margraves, etc.) which at the time of the Thirty Years' War contained about 150 and a house of Imperial cities (roughly the same size). The Imperial cities were not part of any territorial ruler's domains and often had substantial holdings themselves.

So, to start with, Germany had several hundred not-quite sovereign states in it. (We'll ignore the 200-300 Imperial Knights, who were barons whose holdings were measured in acres, but who were sovereign within them.) To add to the fun, several countries were also part in and part out of the HRE: the Austrian Monarchy was ruled by the Hapsburg family (who also ruled Spain), but had half of its lands in the HRE and half outside. The Spanish Netherlands were also mostly part of the HRE, but the northern part (roughly modern Holland) had successfully revolted 50 years earlier. The Spanish Netherlands were ruled by Spain.

It was a mess. To make things worse, the Reformation was only a century old in Germany and people were still far from reconciled to the split in Christendom. An agreement had been reached (the Peace of Augsburg) that each little sovereignty would be either Catholic or Lutheran, but not both (except, of course, for a list of 50 or so exceptions). Since then, Calvinism had made substantial headway, leaving the Lutherans hating and fearing the Calvinists more than they did the Catholics.

And did I mention that the top Hapsburg was invariably elected Emperor? And that the Hapsburgs were about 95% Catholic?

What started out as an attempt by the Emperor to suppress a religious revolt in Bohemia (now part of Czechoslovakia) managed to spread into a pan-German civil war. It was widely viewed as a Catholic vs. Protestant war, in spite of the fact that the Lutherans were split down the middle as to which side they were on.



This stage of the war seemed to be settling down, when Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden intervened. He was building up a Swedish empire in the Baltic and wanted to pick off some Polish and northern German ports to increase his security. He also wanted to advance the Lutheran cause. Gustavus Adolphus was one of history's great generals and made short work of the armies which came against him, until he was killed in the course of his victory at Lützen.

One of the results of Sweden's intervention was that it forced the other great powers to get further involved (they'd been supporting various players from the beginning). Catholic France naturally supported the Calvinists (as soon as it had finished wiping them out at home), while Lutheran Denmark supported the Catholic Hapsburgs (well, opposed Lutheran Sweden, at any rate). Heathen Turkey was also on the Protestant side.

I could go on and on – a war which started on nominally religious grounds included more and more geopolitics as time went on. Towards the end of the war, soldier's pay became one of the biggest issues. The war was fought mostly by mercenaries, and nobody ever had enough money to pay them. Sweden owed its army so much that by the late 1630's it didn't dare quit the war until it won sufficiently large war reparations that it could pay the soldiers – otherwise they might invade Sweden!

Germany was devastated – some parts suffered population losses of 70% over the period, while the country as a whole lost between 30% and 40% of its population. I suspect that a lot of the German national character, which so devastated the 20th century, was formed here.

This is an excellent book which manages to give a lively summary of a big and complicated chunk of history. If you are ever tempted to write quasi-medieval or late medieval fantasy with great armies roaming the countryside and mercenaries and the like, you should read about the Thirty Years' War.

Highly recommended.

*Paradigms Lost* by John L. Casti

This is a remarkable book. What Casti has done is to look at about a dozen Great Questions in science, present the arguments on both sides of them, and then try to explain what his personal conclusions are and how he arrived at them.

The sorts of questions he chooses to look at include:

- Did life evolve from non-living matter?
- Is there intelligent life out there?
- Is E. O. Wilson's sociobiology substantially correct?
- Is the Chomskian theory of language development

correct?

- It is possible to develop true ("strong") AI?
- Is there an objective reality underlying quantum mechanics?

He does an excellent job of describing what the basic question really is about, and then describing the varying opinions people hold. As far as I can tell, he is scrupulously fair about it – whenever I knew enough to check him, he was doing a honest job.

I'm also quite impressed with the reasoning leading to his conclusions. It seems clear and where he comes to a different conclusion that I do, it's quite plausible.

Another nice thing: he includes annotated lists of source material if you want to explore further. And he's perfectly willing to describe a book as "complete but too dull to be worth reading."

Highly recommended.

*Mathematics: The New Golden Age* by Keith Devlin

In spite of not being very mathematically inclined, I read about mathematics with fascination. Devlin's book seems a good general summary. He's not afraid to include an equation, but the book's not sophisticated at all.

Recommended.

*The Dragonhiker's Guide to Battlefield Covenant at Dune's Edge: Odyssey Two* by Dave Langford

I'm indebted to Stu Shiffman for loaning me this one. I believe that it's Dave Langford's second book of parodies. At any rate, it's quite good – I'm going to look both for it and for his first book (alas, they're both British small press).

I particularly liked "The Spawn of Null-Q" by A. E. V\*n V\*gt, and "Duel of Words" by Fr\*nk H\*rb\*rt. The parodies are fairly broad and have a frenetic style – a surprise to anyone who knows Langford's other writing.

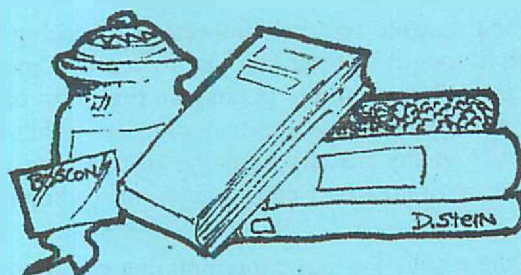


Illustration by Diana Stein

*The Pre-History of The Far Side* by Gary Larson

Gary Larson is one of the best cartoonists going. *The*

*Pre-History of The Far Side* is an omnibus collection which covers how he got into the business, his best and worse cartoon, his favorites, discussions on how he created some, cartoons his editor wouldn't print, and others. Wonderful!

*The Annotated Hobbit* J.R.R. Tolkien & Douglas A. Anderson

This was somewhat of a disappointment. I expected more annotations than were here. In fact, about 50% of Anderson's additions were the inclusion of illustrations from various foreign editions of *The Hobbit*. (The French illustrations were particularly cloying.)

I learned a lot less from this book than I expected.

*The Treason of Isengard* by Christopher Tolkien

*The Treason of Isengard* continues Christopher Tolkien's analysis of J. R. R. Tolkien's creative processes. In this volume, we continue on from Moria and end just after the end of *Fellowship of the Ring* with Frodo going East and with Pippin *et. al.* at Meduseld.

I didn't find this book to be quite as fascinating as the previous (*The Return of the Shadow*), but it's still a wonderful opportunity to see a true master at work.

While Tolkien always kept firmly in mind that he was creating Middle-earth, he still felt that his writing process was as much one of discovering what really happened as inventing it.

For example, he kept coming back and again to the evil giant Treebeard who lived in Fangorn Forest and generally menaced people (at one time Gandalf's delay was due to his capture by the giant Treebeard rather than by Saruman). Yet when the story finally reached Fangorn, Treebeard turned out to be an Ent, and Gandalf's captor turned out to be Saruman the White, whom Tolkien had previously thought to be on the side of good. There's no real evidence that Tolkien had this in mind during the 2-4 years it took to get that far.

I think that anyone seriously interested in writing an epic fantasy ought to read this just to see how much work it is to do a good job. (I imagine that most of the tedious epics we're subjected to these days didn't go through very many drafts!) Actually, anyone interested in the nature of creativity can profit from reading these books.

I enjoy them (but I'm not contemplating committing an epic fantasy).

*The Macintosh Way* by Guy Kawasaki

This is a recent book by Guy Kawasaki, the ex-president of Acus and a former Apple Macintosh software

evangelist. I wish that it had come out a year ago - I'd have asked everyone working on N3 to read it.

The gist of this very idiosyncratic and entertaining book is that the Macintosh Way (not practiced at Apple, by the way) is to put the product and the customer first in all things. Kawasaki put into words many things which I have been trying to say over the past three years and which were practiced to a large extent by N3.

I really wish I had read this when we were just starting to plan Noreascon. I recommend it to everyone.

I should make it clear: the book was fun to read, too.

*Silver Pigs* by Lindsay Davis

This book is a delight. It's a hard-boiled detective novel set in Flavian Rome (right after the death of Nero and the Year of the Four Emperors). The protagonist is a "private informer" who stumbles into a conspiracy involving the theft of ingots of silver from Rome's British mines to provide funds to overthrow the newly-seated Emperor Vespasian.

It proceeds quite nicely, interestingly and plausibly to its conclusion. I liked it.

The only thing which bothered me was that the detective wasn't a Roman. He was a modern detective living in ancient Rome. I never felt the significant differences in culture that I should have felt. I'm not sure that the book could have been written to have been true to both the hard-boiled detection genre, ancient history and been interesting.

Recommended.

*The Alphabet Effect* by Robert K. Logan

This one disappointed me. The thesis was intriguing: the use of an alphabet (as opposed to ideograms) predisposes a culture towards science, rationality, monotheistic religion, a rule of law and the like.

Logan starts out well, but he quickly gets into a world-class arm-waving mode. He makes a point using plausible arguments, and then in the next paragraph assumes the point to be true as part of a plausible argument to support his next point. Fine, so far, but he takes the chain out so far so far that his later discussions are more nearly speculations than reasoned conclusions.

I leave the book convinced that the use of an alphabet puts a predisposition into a culture, but not at all convinced that it is so dominant a force as Logan imagines.



## The Kurt Baty Roast

**Laurie & Jim Mann**

## Designing Computer Boards, Building Tree Houses, and Crashing the Stock Market: The Baty Connection



*Illustration by Merle Insinga*

Kurt Baty is not a native Texan, though he wants to be.



He lived there for a while, considers himself a Texas fan, and plans to move back some day. If you have met Kurt, you probably remember him. Saying that Kurt is energetic is an understatement. Just watching Kurt is enough to tire out most fans.

Kurt was born and got into fandom in Iowa. He spent a few years in Texas, and adopted the state as his own. He went to work as a hardware engineer for Data General. In 1979, he and Michelle Doty got married. They moved to Massachusetts in 1980, where Kurt went to work for Stratus Computer, then a start-up company, to design communications boards. Michelle went to work for Digital Equipment (DEC). Kurt's employee number is something like 18, and Stratus currently has 2400 employees.

After 8 years at Stratus, he decided it was time to move on, so he found a job with a start-up chip company out in Silicon Valley. This confused everyone, since for years he'd been telling everyone that he was going to quit and go to Texas. But we didn't quite let him off scot-free. Kurt is the first employee in Stratus's history to be roasted. About 50 of Kurt's friends showed up to both wish and baste him well!

The Kurt Baty Roast was the brainchild of Stratus engineer Will Babetski. Doug Steinfeld changed from work clothes to a tux with a shocking red cummerbund. Doug, acting as the MC for the evening, read a letter from Bob Wambach, a Stratus engineer who moonlights with a rock and roll band called Motives.



Illustration by Stu Shiffman

#### ►Bob Wambach's letter

I wish I could be there in person, but you know how the popular saying goes: "Long distance is the next worst thing to blowing it off completely." Unfortunately, since you quit your job as my roadie, that only leaves Bill Foster [*Stratus' president and founder*], and he's very undependable. In fact, he'll probably be late showing up to set up for tonight's gig. I can't wait to see what his excuse is this time.

Yeah, you're going to take some ribbing tonight. OK, let's face it, Kurt, you're in for some major league abuse. But it's because we share so many fond memories. I'll always remember everything you've taught me over the years about making one's house marketable. I'm sure you'll always remember the day I got you to suck wind selling those IBM calls and then IBM went up over 5 points in the next 45 minutes. Hey, what's a few grand among friends, right? I'm sure you'll hear similar tales from the rest of the distinguished assembly here. The important thing is, we're all here together, except for me.

The real important thing is, and I'm sure you'll agree, that there's something rather touching about getting insulted by your best friends. Of course, as my personal going away gift to you, I'd be very willing to publicly humiliate you in front of a bunch of people you don't know if you'd like to come over to the Log Cabin for a fruit juice or something. The band doesn't know many sci-fi tunes, but you could sing the theme from *2001: A Space Odyssey* for everyone.

Stay humble, buddy.

#### ►John McNamara, a Hardware Engineer

I first met Kurt when he was about to disappear for about four months or so to go on a leave of absence and work on a science fiction convention. I guess it was in Texas [*Lone Star Con*]. At that time, I was working for Bill Long with Bob Wambach, and we were just about ready to start designing modules for the bus that Kurt had designed. Kurt was going to design a communications option. Bill kept asking him about it as the day for his departure got closer and closer. Kurt said "Don't worry, don't worry. I've got it almost done."

The day Kurt was to leave, Bill stopped in, and Kurt said, "Yeah, I got it, I got it. It's in my desk drawer."

Once he left, we all converged on his desk drawer. We found these three drawings. One contained a 68000 chip with three latch chips, one contained a couple of SCC chips, and one contained some level-converter chips. With the exception of the wires on the first page, there weren't any wires on the chips.

Kurt: "Yes, but they didn't have any bugs, either!"



Because the design is so rare that has no bugs, I should probably give it to you. I did check it with the lawyers, because it is proprietary information, and so on and so forth. But the head lawyer took a look at it and said "If this falls into the hands of Tandem [Stratus' main competition], that's just fine."

►Gardner Hendrie, a former Data General Engineering director, and founder of Stratus, now a venture capitalist

I thought I'd tell you a few stories, a little of my history with Kurt. I tried to hire Kurt right out of school, but he decided he didn't want to work at Data General in Westboro and wanted to go to Texas. I sort of lost track of him. Then when Stratus got started, Ken Wolff, his "agent," called me and told me about this guy in Texas, and said that maybe I remembered him. I said that of course I didn't remember him, though I really did. So Kurt came up and I decided to hire him.

Ken told me a little about Kurt. I remember sitting down and having a little discussion with Kurt. I think he was known as 8080 Baty [*The 8080 was the Intel chip that was to be replaced by the 8086 and 8088, the hearts of the IBM PC world. The 8080 never went much of anywhere.*], because he really liked to design with the latest and greatest. I pointed out to him that this was a start-up, and we sort of had this rule, that you've got to make the first product work – If you're a year late, you're out of money, and you're probably out of business. You can't take too much of a risk. I remember telling him about the law about taking 10 risks, each on only 90% probability that they might work. That sounds like a good deal. But if you put all those risks in a product, you've only got a 50-50 chance of that product working.

So, there was sort of a rule that we tried to promulgate about risks, especially about semi-conductor elements that we might use. So there was a rule that I developed over the years: If the chip hadn't been in production when you started the design with some volume production, then this was a significant risk. Well, Kurt started working on the comm boards.

Now, Kurt is a very broad-based fellow. You've heard about his aeronautical engineering. And we all know about his interest in science fiction. And we know that he's an architect. We'll probably hear about his architectural work with trees. But Kurt has a problem. He's really interested in science fiction. The problem is, Kurt, we can't take science fiction into the business place. Now, I have a piece of science fiction here, a spec for a "special" chip Kurt wanted us to buy. Now, a lot of you know what happened with this chip. The authors clearly went to Worldcon regularly.

Kurt: "They would've won a prize at World Fantasy."



Illustration by Ingrid Neilson

But, Kurt, you've learned a lot. I understand that you've reformed. I understand that you are going to get out of the computer business with all this high tech stuff, and you're going into the gas business. I just hope that when you write your chip specs, that you remember to keep science fiction and engineering apart.

►Ken Wolff, Kurt's co-worker both at Data General and Stratus

First, I'd like to thank you for keeping me entertained over these last ten years. When I first met Kurt, he was right out of grad school. He was a real enthusiastic guy, and he still is, to some extent. I had a good time playing with Kurt and his little projects.

Then, one day I talked to Gardner and decided that I would go to Stratus. And Kurt heard about this, and he got real excited. This sounded like a lot of fun. I told Kurt that we'd have to design real computers now. Before I let him talk to Gardner, I decided to find out if he knew what a real computer was.

You know that Kurt is from Iowa. I asked him "What's a stack, Kurt?" and he said "It's when you climb up in the barn and you jump out of the hay, you land in the stack."

And I asked, "Kurt, what's heap?" "Well, after the cow's done with the stack, you've got a heap."

Well, he's been designing computers ever since.

Kurt's been the designer of a few new concepts. In economics, business, and architecture. When I first met Kurt, he was interested in trading on the stock market, and soon he was. It became apparent to me

that he was tripling his salary on the stock market, and I became fascinated. Then I learned about the "Kurtsian Accounting Scheme." This scheme says that if you invest \$1,000 this week in a stock, and then you sell it the next for \$990, you've made \$990!

Anyway, Kurt's added a few more spectacular things in design. He designed a tree house for his yard in Medway. He was always watching me working on my ham radio tower. He'd discuss stresses. He realized that in order to build a suspension bridge from his house to his tree house, he'd need some sort of heavy anchor. He took an electric saw and cut up his deck. Then he dug out the dirt from under his deck and replaced it with concrete. The suspension bridge was up, and everything was fine until the first rains when the water started leaking into his house's foundation. So Kurt discovered some basic principles of construction!

I was there the day that Kurt invented "Kurtsian waves." Back when we'd built our first computer, and had it sitting in a wooden box, Kurt would look at me and say, "My computer keeps failing, and I don't know why. I think it's Kurtsian waves." Sure enough, when we finally got to putting a slice of pc board in it – and it's a true story that Kurt actually figured out something having to do with physics – the things started to work. I was real impressed.

Kurt has also made some advances in the field of mathematics. When we were first getting going, Kurt had a rare problem that interacted with Steve's code. Then, one day Kurt came bounding into my office and said "You'll never guess. We figured it out! I have this bug, and Steve has this bug, and the chances of both bugs happening at the same time are about one in 100,000 years!"

So the next morning, he came in and said "Guess what? It happened again!"

Kurt, you've advanced the state of art of design, the state of the art in architecture, the state of the art in investing. I'd like to thank you for an interesting ten years.

►Laurie Mann, Publications Production Specialist

Most of you will be telling Kurt at work stories. I have a few Kurt at play stories (though there were times when it was hard to tell the difference).

I met Kurt and Michelle in early '83 at a science fiction club meeting. Kurt explained to us that he'd lived in Massachusetts for a few years, and had been very busy at work. Most of us couldn't conceive of having a job that would keep us quite that busy, but now some of us know better. Kurt had been a fan for years, and made an impression on fandom as an enthusiastic bidder for

the Texas NASFiC.

As you might expect, Kurt was in his element throwing bid parties. He'd talk about how great Texas was, wear one of those big cowboy hats and string ties, and make up crocks of chili until 4am. He'd tell armadillo stories. In fact, almost no one in fandom guessed that Kurt really wasn't a Texan – he had the Texan act down just perfect. There was one clear giveaway that Kurt wasn't a real Texan – Kurt never drank beer.

Despite this fraud, Texas won the bid anyway, and the rest is history.

Now most of you know about Kurt's book collection. Now Kurt is what many of us would call a "collector's collector" – he buys the books for the sake of collecting books. If he doesn't read them, that's OK, but at least he owns them. For that matter, he buys books that not even he would want to read! To contain these books, Kurt built a large addition to his house. Kurt used to go into gory and endless detail about how this contractor was doing this wrong, or how the addition was getting delayed again. But the months of complaining and griping paid off, and Kurt and Michelle wound up with one of the neatest houses I've ever seen.

Unfortunately for Kurt and Michelle, no one in the market thinks a tree house is a feature.

►Jerry Stern, Communications Director

I'm here tonight to honor a great con man.

Some might say that Kurt is the father of Stratus communications. Kurt was a prolific engineer, he designed a lot of comm products. My favorite was the C104.

For those of you who don't go back that far, the C104 was our first synchronous communication card. Gardner already mentioned the "special" chip that was selected for this card. But he didn't tell you the whole story. You could take a C104 and plug it in, and the system would really smoke. That card could go 4800 baud, half-duplex! It could sustain that rate for 12 seconds before getting hopelessly hung!

Now I played a role in the selection of this chip, because in those days I was busy working on StrataLINK. But Kurt would say that we really needed an I/O chip and he went around to people who'd worked with communications. So he asked me if I knew anything. Well, it was true that I had worked with some of the chips, but I didn't know much about the newer ones. He went on to the next engineer, but later I went to him later and said I'd been reading an ad that claimed this chip could do X.25 level-2 right in the chip itself. I then got a 30 minute lecture from Kurt on what a turkey company that one was.



Well, I must have been out of my mind, because then Kurt went and selected that "special" chip we've all heard so much about tonight.

It wasn't as bad as it sounds. This "special" chip only had three problems. The first one was that it wouldn't run bisync. The other two problems were that it wouldn't run SDLC or X.25.

I don't know if we've talked about the fact that Kurt is also a software engineer. Kurt specialized in high-speed, low memory utilization programs. He had a lot of tricks to make some of our boards go fast without using too much space. I really have to applaud Kurt for getting all that in the little amount of memory that he had.

But some of these tricks would make a programmer cringe. One of them that I remember was that there was a lot of states that you had to check in programming the comm controller. There was no point in checking for states that couldn't happen. The ones you'd never see. But we found out over the years that many more states are possible than we originally thought.

The most recent attempt for anyone to try to modify Kurt's firmware was Charlie Davis's attempt about three years ago, when Kurt was in Texas. There was this problem with trying to set Data Terminal Ready correctly. He spent an entire summer trying to figure out how to fix it, and it boiled down to a one line change. He made the change, but shortly thereafter, he had to back it out.

I want you to know, Kurt, that long after all of your products are gone from the product line, that there will still be a place in our system the we preserve in memory of Kurt. That place is called page0. We will never again put any code or data on page0. After all, that's where Kurt piddles if he breaks. *[Kurt is what we affectionately call the communications controller board that Kurt designed.]*

►Steve Webber, a Stratus Software Director

Kurt and I spent a lot of nights together and it wasn't very pleasant. We used to work the 10-4am shift when we were trying to get my software and his hardware and his software to work together. Kurt's done a lot for the company. But one of the things that no one has mentioned, and I thought it was pretty amazing, was his scheme for synchronizing boards and getting everything to work together. Every night, we'd work on it, and Kurt would say, "No, that's not what I said. You put that polling call in here, with that communications controller and the following arguments." And it was pretty amazing, but it only took about a month to get all that to work. And that was the foundation we used for all the other boards, too.

Kurt's obviously done a lot of innovative things for Stratus. He's supposed to leave them with Stratus and not take them with him. He should probably read his non-disclosure agreement that he signed back in 1980. I read mine, recently. Kurt's been threatening to take all his designs with him, but we have the plans, they're in concrete in our vault.

►Paul Green, a Software Director

Kurt, I've brought along a few props here. *[He pulls a few cards, boards, and listings out of a bag.]* It's a little hard to talk about these boards without actually showing them. Here's a C100 communications controller.

Kurt has some funny phrases. One of them is "It's never done that before." Another that I'll always remember is "Isn't that the neatest thing you ever saw?" And another is "Gee, I've never made any mistakes." Now, if I pass this board around, you'll see that there are a few wires on the board. *[Wires are usually added to correct bugs on the boards.]*

But it was from Kurt that I learned about hardware design. I'd always thought that when you designed a printed circuit board and you left off a chip that there was nothing you could do; you'd have to rev the board. But Kurt assured me that you could mount a chip on a pc board upside down. And sure enough, I have a board here with a half dozen resistors, and ICs mounted upside down. I think this one's called the dead bug patch. *[So called because the upside down chip looks like a dead bug lying on its back.]*

That dead bug patch exists because Kurt believes in black and white - if it's written down, it must be true.

Doug Steinfeld: "That's why Kurt never writes anything down!"

Right. I neglected to bring the spec for those boards. I just couldn't find them in the hardware documentation directory.

I remember the day on the phone when we discovered something on a board wasn't latching the Data Set Lead. There was noise hitting the line, or lightning striking, and the 2 comm controllers turned Data Set Leads when they went to sample the line.

Kurt: "That was the 'special' chip!"

So the two comm controllers that were supposed to be acting in lock step were going off in different directions. And it wasn't just page0 getting it that time. It sort of kicked the operating system right in the soft spot. Just in case anyone wants to know how many times we've had to change Kurt's boards, I've brought along the engineering change orders *[required everytime someone has to changefix the original design]* for some of his products. *[Paul drops the listings. One product has over*

*6' of changes. The other, roughly 30'!]*

I've learned many things from Kurt over the years. I've learned a lot about Roman and Greek coins. About how to build model rockets that break the sound barrier. About testing resistors for James van Allen. How Kurt single-handedly saved several satellites. I learned about buying first editions of science fiction books, and how that's different from buying hardcore editions.

Laurie: "That's hardback edition!"

Oh yes, a Freudian slip there. And I learned how to finance farms in Iowa. But I must say that I learned nothing about the stock market from Kurt.

Kurt was unique in the beginning. A lot of us were coming from big, established companies and thought, well, "We're just going to work for a year here, and if it goes down the drain, we'll all go to work for DEC." Kurt was really the only one who said, "I really want to work for a start-up. I'm really glad to be here. Isn't this going to be neat? Aren't we having fun? Aren't we having fun? Aren't we having fun?" Of course, this would be at about 10pm at night, and the rest of us wanted to get home to go to bed.

I remember August of 1981, and we were trying to get our first Stratus up and running. I think we set a record for how many times we could crash. There was a time when to find any bug you needed every hardware and software engineer in the company in the lab at the same time. The game was "Prove It's Not Your Bug." So we'd all stand around and throw out hypotheses, like "Well, it can't be a binder bug, so I'm free." In order to fix any one bug when we did find it, we had to fix ten bugs before it. It was really very exciting.

But I must say, Kurt, I don't ever want to have a month like that again as long as I live.

►Doug Steinfeld, hardware engineer

One day I insulted Kurt (not an uncommon occurrence), but I had a slight reservation about what I said because I thought it might be a little harsh. Sure enough, Kurt looked as miserable as the time when Robert Heinlein told him that "Your science fiction collection is the most pitiful I've ever seen, and that stained glass window is ugly to boot." Anyway, I immediately apologized and took him out to lunch.

He didn't seem to hear the apology, but understood the "take you out to lunch" part. While we were eating I apologized again, and he said "What? Oh, I just had a bad headache and wasn't paying attention..." My mistake. But I'm a Class-2 person: I haven't made that mistake again: I haven't apologized for insulting him since, and I offer no apologies for tonight.

Kurt was working on the C200 comm controller, which was the successor to the original C100. He had wanted to make all these wonderful changes, but Gardner knew he had to restrain him. He tried to do this by telling Kurt that he could make any changes to the C100 that he wanted to, but he had to rework a C100 himself as the prototype. Didn't work. Kurt began to get tired of debugging this board, since it generally meant finding which of the 4000 wires he'd pulled loose.

He decided that he needed to relax and take out his frustrations and energy on something outside of work. Most of you know that he decided to go injure a pine tree. He went off to build the largest and strongest tree-house on Hill Street. He used nails, huge bolts, nuts, and washers, 2x4, 4x4, and plywood. He used a lot of this stuff, and having seen his creation, I'm not sure exactly where it all went.

It's sort of an art-deco hodge-podge, kind of like his bus design or C200 code. For example, there are stairs to get from the "entry hallway" to the "living room." These stairs have stringers and risers, but no treads (that's the part you stand on for you apartment dwellers). This is significant when you're 60 feet in the air. Also, the walls aren't attached (the plywood just slides around) and the railings are flimsy. Now this was last week, mind you.

Charlie Davis and I saw this creation before the famous suspension bridge was built. Oh yes, the suspension bridge. I think that Kurt built this treehouse just so he could build this bridge. The last realtor listed it as "has charming, unique views of the surrounding picturesque countryside." That didn't work either. Well he started building the bridge by sawing up the deck that's attached to his living room. Once he had a nice hole in the deck, he dug a hole in the ground underneath, and dropped in a bunch of obsolete rails from a 54Æ cabinet as an anchor. He then had concrete poured all over this mass of metal, and was ready to run the steel guy wires.

Then Michelle noticed that they were getting water in their basement. You see, there's a small matter of waterproofing compound on the foundation, which this boat, er, bridge anchor seemed to have pierced. Well, most of his designs have had to be ECO'd... anyway, Kurt rents scaffolding for 3 months and weaves the lines that hang from the cables. The bridge is actually pretty stable, although you have to walk across 10 feet of 2x6 to get to it... walking the plank takes on a whole new meaning.

Kurt, we're going to miss you. No one else at Stratus, past or present, has ever been roasted before, and that shows you just what we think of you. Good luck, and if you ever want to come back, I'm sure that there's a



job waiting for you in Facilities.

►Kurt Baty

I thank you all very much. I greatly appreciate the chance to be harassed one last time by this group of individuals. I have really enjoyed a lot working with all of you. In all seriousness, it's been a lot of fun. I would have fun doing just about anything, but I've had a lot of fun doing it with you.

Epilogue

Life threw Kurt a series of curve balls. He and Michelle failed to sell their house. Kurt decided he really did not like the little chip company in California as much as he expected, and moved back to Massachusetts. Kurt is now consulting for Stratus. He spends his spare time on a "minor" project -- compiling the index to all the SF books ever written.



*Illustration by L. Halliday Piel*

# Star Trek: The LOST Generation

## Quantum Buc

USENET

**FLASH!!!**

Would you believe . . . that *Star Trek: The Next Generation* is a ripoff? Hard to believe, but true. Irwin Allen, of *Lost In Space*, *Time Tunnel*, and *Land of the Giants* fame has filed a lawsuit against Gene Roddenberry charging that he stole a script Mr. Allen was commissioned to write for the "then-proposed" Star Trek revival. Mr. Roddenberry supposedly returned the script unread. However, read the attached excerpts from Mr. Allen's script and see for yourself if it bears any resemblance to what we now know as *ST:TNG*.

[Scene opens with the newly commissioned SAUCER Class starship: U.S.S. Enterprise warping through space. Zoom in on the registration numbers: JUP-ITER2-D. Focus in on the bridge, as Captain John Luke Picardson records the log.]

**Picardson:** Captain's Log, stardate 7. The Enterprise has been sent on its maiden voyage to open negotiations with the planet ReallyFarPoint, at Alpha Centauri. We will meet up with my first officer, Don Riker, who is already on detachment at the base. This ship represents the finest technology the Federation has to offer. On board are many families, which will colonize far away planets. Boy, I love children.

[Picard turns off the log and turns to DATA the Robot, the almost human android who longs to be a real person]

**Picardson:** DATA, are we near ReallyFarPoint yet?

**DATA:** NEGATIVE, CAPTAIN PICARDSON, WE SHALL ARRIVE IN EXACTLY 8.2 SPACE HOURS.

[Suddenly, Zachery Troi, the empathic ship's Doctor, screams out.]

**Troi:** Oh, The pain. The pain of it all. We are doomed!

**Picardson:** What's the problem now, Troi? You know, you really don't belong on the Bridge.

[The young navigator, Will Crusher, son of the Chief Medical Nurse, Maureen Crusher, reports to the captain. Young Crusher is the youngest person ever to serve on a starship. He's a super-genius. The captain thinks of him as if he was his own son. The captain has a bit of a crush on his mom.]

**Will:** Golly, sir. There's a really big power surge approaching.

**DATA:** DANGER! DANGER! ALIEN APPROACHING!

**Troi:** Oh, the pain!

[There is a sudden blinding light on the bridge, and a giant Carrot Man is standing on the bridge.]

**C:** I am Carrot Man. You can call me C. I represent the Vegetable Continuum. You are trespassing into our space. Go back. You will receive no further warning.

**Picardson:** We are on a peaceful, colonizing mission.

**C:** We don't want you furry mammals in our space anymore. Go away.

[C disappears]

**Troi:** You! Yar. You're security chief. Why didn't you kill that monster. He'll destroy us all!

[Judy Yar, security chief, looks uncertain. Tears begin to swell in her eyes.]

**Picardson:** That'll be enough, Troi! We are on a peaceful mission. Judy was right not to fire.

**Troi:** Well, I will assume we will be giving up this silly mission and returning to Earth.

**Picardson:** We are going on. We have crew members waiting for us at ReallyFarPoint.

**Troi:** But that hideous creature will destroy us!

**Picardson:** Well, to be safe, we'll detach the saucer section and put all of the women and children aboard. You're free to join them.

**Will:** But, sir! We can't detach!

**Picardson:** Why's that, son?

**Will:** Because the ship is just one big saucer, sir.

**Picardson:** Hmm. You're right. Then it's settled. On to ReallyFarPoint.

**Troi:** This isn't the last you'll hear from me! I'm going to get something to eat. Come along, you bumbling boobie.

**Picardson:** Yes, DATA. Go along and keep the good doctor out of trouble.

**DATA:** WOE IS THE LIFE OF AN ANDROID!

**Troi:** Hurry along, you tin ninny. I have an excruciating back-ache.



[They depart down the turbo-lift]

**Yar:** Why do we put up with him, Captain?

**Will:** Golly. He's not so bad, once you get to know him.

**Picardson:** That'll be enough of that. Have you built that new super-anti-matter-converter for your mother yet?

**Will:** I'm still studying up on Quantum-anti-matter-physics, sir. I should have it invented before dinner.

**Picardson:** Just don't forget to eat your dinner. You know how your mom gets upset when you skip your daily veggies.

**C:** [Offscreen] Veggies??!!! That's the last straw! Face the wrath of the Vegatable Continuum!!

[All freeze as the voice booms across the bridge. Suddenly the ship lurches as it is thrown across the vast reaches of space!]

**Will:** I can't get control sir! We're moving at incredible speed!

[Picardson lunges for the intercom to call Chief Engineer Penny LaForge]

**Picardson:** Penny! We're out of control. Can you stop us?

**LaForge:** Eeeeeeeeeek!!!

[Suddenly the ship stops its terrible momentum]

**Picardson:** Will, where are we?

**Will:** Unknown, sir. We are farther than any ship has travelled before.

**Picardson:** You mean we're...

**Will:** ...Lost in hyperspace!!!

**Yar:** Eeeeeeeeeek!

[All look up at the screen to see a giant ship approaching. DATA appears on the bridge]

**DATA:** WARNING WARNING! DANGER, WILL CRUSHER!

**Picardson:** Why it looks like a...

[Suddenly a face appears on the screen]

**Alien:** Arrr, me maties. You be trespassin' in Borg space. I'm Cap'n Tucker, the meanest Borg Pirate you'll ever meet. Prepare to be boarded and scuttled! Arr.

**Troi:** Aaaaiiiee! We're doomed!

[Fade Out]

**Narrator:** Tune in next week to see the efforts of the space ship Enterprise as it tries to escape the dangers of outer space, and find its way back to Alpha Centauri.

[Quick shot of First Officer Riker tapping his foot and

looking at his watch]

Even if Picardson and his crew escape the Borg Pirates, they must still face the wrath of the Vegetable Continuum. C kidnaps Captain Picardson and sends him to a space zoo, while a mysterious alien tries to lure Doctor Troi into destroying the ship.

**Alien:** Pretty, handsome, pretty, Dr. Troi. Make ship go boom!

**DATA:** DANGER! DANGER!

[Fade out, roll credits]

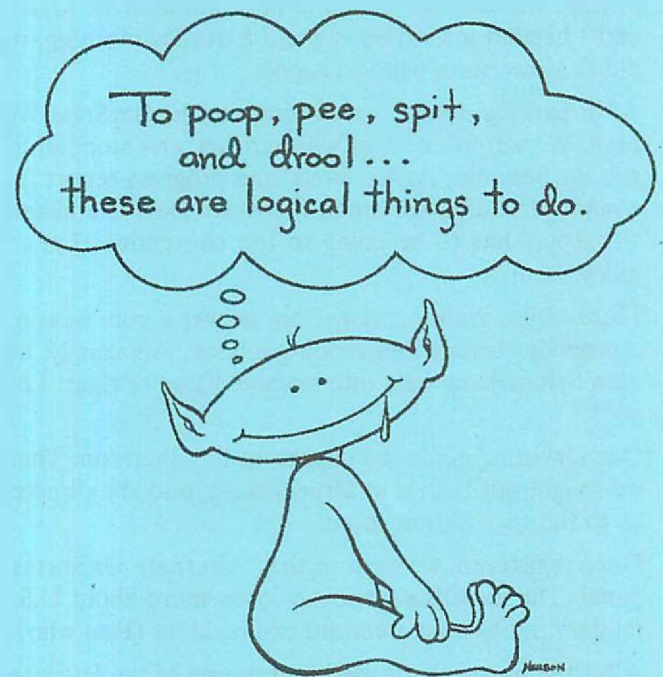


Illustration by Ingrid Neilson

## Bits and Pieces of Boskone XXVII

The Leepers' article was originally distributed in rec.arts.sf-lovers on USENET

### A Neo's Look at Boskone XXVII

Mary Sughrue-Yacino

I had never attended a con before. Neither had my brother, Matt. We'd heard rumors, though, about weapon-wielding fans dressed as orcs and Klingons. So, although my coworker, Laurie Mann, had repeatedly assured me that no weapons were allowed, as Matt and I headed toward Springfield Saturday morning, we didn't know quite what to expect.

After parking the car, we walked into the BayState West Mall. We weren't sure of where to go, and stopped to get our bearings. As I scanned the progress report for a map, Matt elbowed me in the ribs. "Hey," he hissed. "That guy has to be going to the convention. Let's follow him!"

I looked up. Walking away from us was a man wearing a propeller beanie and reading a book. Amazingly, he didn't stumble or walk into anyone. "You're right! Let's go!"

Our unwitting guide led us over to the Sheraton. There we sought out Laurie at DragonsLair, and she directed us to the registration room.

Once registered, we went to the "Alternate Universes" panel. The panelists obviously knew more about U.S. military policy than a certain ex-president (Ron who?).

After the panel, we headed over to one of the Huckster's rooms, where I bought books by some of my favorite authors, including Judith Tarr and Esther Friesner. I hoped to get both of them to sign the books after the "Palace of Passion" panel.

The "Palace of Passion" was hilarious! The panelists and some fans took part in an allegory about Love, Virtue, Lechery, and so on. The older gentleman [Solomon Lichtenberg] who volunteered to play Beauty hammed it up like a pro. This panel was a great way to end our experience as a couple of neos.

After the panel, I walked out of the room right behind Judith Tarr. I thought, wow, this is the perfect opportunity to talk to her. However, I couldn't make myself ask Judith or Esther to sign my books - I felt like I'd be bothering them. Oh, well. There's always Boskone XXVIII...

Evelyn C. Leeper & Mark R. Leeper

### Hotels

They had finished the construction that made travel between the Tara and the Marriott so difficult last year, so the easiest way was out the door and across the street. The only problem with this was that it was very cold and windy and unless you carted your coat around with you it was not inviting. The seating space in the hotel areas near the meeting rooms was less than last year, but still sufficient, and fans when necessary will sit on the floor anyway.

### Dealers' Rooms

Some people said there were too many books in the dealers' rooms. Impossible! Well, it is true that some of the dealers feel that there may be more book dealers than a 1000-person Boskone (which this was) can support, but no one seems to want to be the one cut out, so they'll just have to live with it, I suppose. They could always pull themselves out if they were losing money. I found out later that the dealers' room is mostly books because a certain percentage of the space is reserved for book dealers, and that in addition, they pay a cheaper rate for the space.

### Art Show

I got to the Art Show only once, and found it again of little interest. They seem to have turned into a combination of bad art for sale and good art marked NFS (Not For Sale), which someone has pointed out seem to be mostly large advertisements for the print shop. It is nice that the print shop has some affordable art, but it used to be that the originals were affordable.

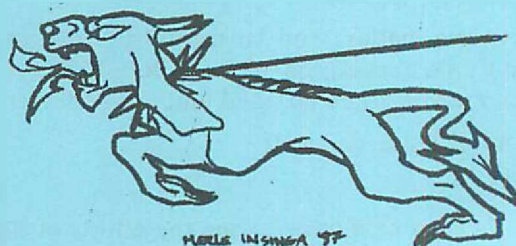


Illustration by Merle Insinga



Writing About the Unthinkable  
James Morrow (mod), Bruce Coville,  
Kathryn Cramer, Patrick Nielsen Hayden

This panel was a sort of a counterpoint to the midnight panels where the panelists tend to be thinking about the unwritable. Here instead was a discussion of catastrophe and Armageddon in science fiction. James Morrow, who moderated, opened the panel with three discussion questions:

1. What is the morality of writing about a serious subject such as the Apocalypse "for fun and profit?"
2. Why is there an almost sexual fascination with Armageddon?
3. In the light of recent events in Eastern Europe, has nuclear war lost its place as a theme of science fiction?

It was these three interesting questions that the panelists proceeded to ignore in the discussion. Cramer made the observation that almost by definition there is something optimistic about Armageddon fiction. After all, these stories pretty much have to be told by survivors. She also discussed how each generation thinks about disasters differently. Two decades ago the common perception was that the major disasters threatened us all. The view in fiction was that the whole world would buy it. Today we have grown used to the threat of disaster and we think more in terms of how to protect ourselves individually. Rather than worrying about the dam breaking and what can be done to stop it, people now think more in terms of finding a plot of land on high ground. Back at the turn of the century the literature did not look so much at survival at all but at the effects and horror of the disaster. There, with descriptions of disasters, were punctuated with images of screaming women carrying dead babies. There is far less of that in current fiction.

Coville picked up on the need to have a survivor, saying that no matter how bad things get in the catastrophe story, it should leave the reader with the impression that there is some hope so as to give the reader the strength to go on. I personally disagree here since the only hope that need be present is that the disasters have not yet happened. Probably the best apocalyptic novel I can point to is Philip Wylie's *End of the Dream*, and there is little doubt that that novel ends within minutes of the end of mankind. Coville sees us as what he called the "disempowered generation." Disasters before the 1950s dealt with either anarchist plots or Martians causing the disaster. There is more of a sense now that we are all part of a machine moving to its own destruction. (I am not sure that *The Poison Belt* or *The Purple Cloud* were really happening to a more "empowered" generation.) It is no longer aliens or anarchists at fault, but we all

are in small part the people bringing about the end.

Morrow, who now has children, saw that as a need for optimism in spite of the fact that even the home, once the bastion of security, is now besieged by radon gas and electro-magnetic radiation. Still, there is some solace that the predictions of disaster are not all that accurate. In the 1970s Paul Ehrlich predicted the 1980s as being a decade of world-wide starvation. The truth was not nearly so bad.

Nielsen Hayden saw a fascinating deconstruction in apocalyptic stories. In *The War of the Worlds*, Wells wanted to show that society is vulnerable and power is transient. Nielsen Hayden enjoys seeing boring, self-important Victorians meeting screaming death by heat rays. Nielsen Hayden enjoys a sort of lyrical beauty in the destruction of Earth at the end of *The Forge of God*.

Morrow warned against writers making the reader identify too closely with the survivor, since that breeds a sort of complacency. To me a prime example would be *When Worlds Collide*, but his example was *Alas, Babylon*, a novel that he found "immoral" for this reason. Cramer, carrying on with this idea, suggested that in the really classic disasters – the Biblical stories of Noah's Flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah – the people who were killed were evil and we are the descendants of the good people who were saved. While this attitude seems less appropriate in literature that is trying to get away from ethno-centricity, it did show up in real life after the recent San Francisco earthquake. The attitude was that there is availability of information on where the fault lines lie and what the effects of quakes are on cities. The people who ignored this information were stupid and that is why they died.

With the assistance of David Hartwell in the audience, the conversation turned to why there is not a great literature of disasters. There are no really good novels written about disasters with the possible exception of Brunner. (I am surprised there was no mention of Ballard.) When the literature shifted to man-made disasters in the 1950s, it became harder to do a dramatic story about responses to the disaster. With billions of people participating in the cause of the disaster you cannot do a good story about the man who saves the world by recycling.

Cramer expressed the opinion that in the last hundred years we have started living longer but, ironically, in more fear. It may actually be more tragic to be aware of so many threats, most of which are held at bay, and finally to be gotten by one, than simply to remain unaware of them and "to be squashed like a bug." She also feels that in some ways the apocalyptic story has

to be stylistically similar to the utopian story. While they are basically opposite in their implications, one positive, one negative, they really are similar in that each must be told by someone actually in the society experiencing the fate of that society.

From the audience Hartwell suggested that we really have a need to feel that society will get either much better or much worse. He has gotten complaints for teaching and recommending 334 by Thomas Disch. It describes a future society neither much better nor much worse than our own.

The apocalyptic story is one in which the proceedings cannot be described objectively, Cramer suggested. In a real apocalypse there is no way for the main character to remain detached. Coville added that readers prefer that the narrator not remain detached anyway. Readers will want to know how things looked and felt during the Apocalypse. People want to see the effect on the individual. After the San Francisco quake, the first thing people wanted to know was what was being in the quake like. Someone in the audience said actually people first wanted to know how many were killed. After that, wanted first-hand descriptions of the experience and pictures of the quake.

Finally, Morrow discussed the emotional impact of the apocalyptic novel. Real despair, he said, is in seeing no choices. For this reason he does not like *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, which he thinks "does not have the pain."

#### Screaming Queens: Gay Characters and Themes in Horror

Franklin Hummel (mod), John Dumas,  
Christopher Fahy, Stephen Owens

The panel started by saying that there seemed to be a dearth of gay characters (and lesbian characters – in this article I will use the word gay as applying to both sexes) in horror fiction. However, there seemed to be a split between the 10%-ers and the 40%-ers, i.e., those who said that 10% of the population is gay, and those who said 40% is. The discrepancy is due to imprecise definitions: according to Kinsey 10% of the population are entirely gay (6 on the Kinsey scale), but 40% are gay or bisexual (4 through 6 on the scale, I think). At any rate, one doesn't find even 10% in horror fiction, so perhaps this is a moot point.

There was acknowledgement that there are a lot of characters in horror fiction whose sexual orientation is not known. (Quick, how many Jewish characters are there in horror fiction? Not many that you can name, yet how often can you tell anything about a character's religion?) From the audience, Kate Pott said that several recent horror novels seem to deal more

with the annihilation of sexuality than of any particular orientation (Iain Banks's *Wasp Factory* and Dean R. Koontz's *Whispers*).

Some interesting problems arise if you do have gay characters in horror fiction. Sending a succubus to tempt a gay man seems as if it could have comic possibilities (I keep hearing *The Fearless Vampire Killers*' "Oy, do you have the wrong vampire!"), and an incubus might get an unexpected reaction from a lesbian. There was, in fact, discussion of whether succubi and incubi are merely manifestations of hermaphroditic beings and hence a succubus visiting a gay man would appear as an incubus. At any rate, there is certainly enough material for several stories here.

Of course, it was recognized that having gay characters in horror fiction has its own pitfalls. If you make the gay character the villain, you run the risk of being accused of being anti-gay (or homophobic, depending on the critic's word preference). On the other hand, making the gay character the victim could be construed as "gay-bashing," so the author must walk a fine line. The author is on much firmer ground, of course, if s/he makes the gayness of the victim irrelevant to his or her victimhood, rather than the reason for it. Another way out of this dilemma is to set the entire story in the gay community; then rather than have to decide which characters are gay, just make them all gay!

Several examples of horror fiction having gay characters were cited: Tom Reamy's "San Diego Lightfoot Sue," some of Stephen King's works, and Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (though the last is considerably subtler than the other two). Jeffrey McMahan's *Somewhere in the Night* is an entire anthology of gay horror fiction. In films, one finds several in which gender-switching is used: *Frankenstein Created Woman* and *Doctor Jekyll and Sister Hyde* are perhaps the best known.

#### Random Fannishness

On the way in, the conversation turned to Esotericon, a convention focused on religion and the occult in science fiction and fantasy. Barbara (or Kate, I forget which) said that Katherine Kurtz had founded a Michaelian order, which Mark heard as a "microwave" order. So the next thing we knew, Mark and Kate were chanting the new mantra of the order, "A-man-a" (or alternatively, "I-wan-na A-man-a"). This was followed by the singing (to the tune of the guards' song in *The Wizard of Oz*) "A ne-o is com-ing!" and the decision to found "Noreascon First Fandom," consisting of those people who attended Noreascon 1. (Well, it's limited to only about 2100 that way.)

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## Luau in North Hawaii (a/k/a New York) Pam Fremon

(Laurie asked me to write a piece on the Hawaii in '93 party at Lunacon. Since she wasn't there, she won't know how much of this was true.)

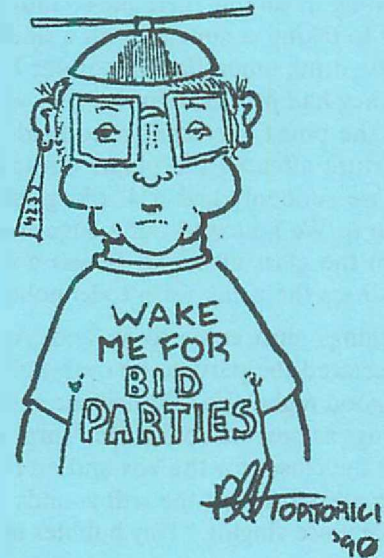
*[Don't you know my spies are everywhere?]*

Yes, I went to Lunacon, the New York regional con held at the Tarrytown Marriott. And being more than a little crazed, I agreed to help run the "Hawaii in '93" party. In the late afternoon on the day of the party, Ruth Sachter and I set off to meet Ruth's party supplies contact, in the Mysterious East sids of the Bronx. Ben "Indy 500" Yalow drove. The place, calling itself How-ah-yah How-ah-yah Hawaii, sported some of the strangest items we'd ever seen. From the ceiling hung dozens of leis made of all kinds of flowers. I'd never seen a Pillsbury lei before. The walls were adorned with Pacific island woods, ceremonial glasses, table decorations, surfboards, wrecks of old ships (bound from San Francisco to Hawaii, we were told, and lost off the coast of Long Island), and much more. A man in a Hawaiian tuxedo greeted us. "Aloha."

"Hello," said Ruth. "Are you the person in charge? What is your name?"

"Aloha," he said again. Mr. Aloha showed us his wares. Restraining our eager credit cards, we placed a simple order (throwing in a tapa tablecloth which I really liked), and then took a tour of the shop while it was being packed. We peeked into a side room where the floor had been dug out and a luau was in process. The dish appeared to be one of the local varieties of wildlife, the Road Hog. The dinner guests ate off of license plates. We wished we could stay, but we had lots to do. Ben carried the nearly-bursting little box of party supplies out to the car and back we went.

At the Lunacon hotel we had a wonderfully large room for a party. A hardy crew of volunteers (or pineapplephiles) went to work decorating the room. One person (can't remember who, sorry; I'd have to look my file of mug shots, er, volunteer lists) stood by the door as a bouncer, politely telling eager party-goers that we weren't open yet, and pushing the door closed every time it oozed open. While I didn't say to what extent the door was to be kept closed, I do remember wondering why Ruth always quickly had help every time she said, "I need a hand over here."



*Illustration by Phil Tortorici*

The decorations were stunning. How the HHH ever got them in that little box I don't know. There were honeycomb pineapples, honeycomb parrots, honeycomb fish, honeycomb monkeys, honeycomb bananas, honeycomb surfers, honeycomb cliff divers, and honeycomb volcanoes with honeycomb lava pouring out. Over by the sales table we set up the little honeycomb Sheraton Waikiki and Sheraton Princess Kaulani hotels on the honeycomb Waikiki Beach. As the party went on, our East Coast bid treasurer, Sharon Sbarsky, showed prospective presupporters how people could fly into Honolulu Airport with a little honeycomb plane and then take a little honeycomb bus (or taxi) to the hotels – only about 30 honeycomb minutes away. (Like I said, HHH supplied everything.) Over in one corner of the room we set up the pineapple field, and behind that, the sugar cane field. Just add water and poof! The whole thing enlarged and quickly grew. The extra pineapples came in handy when our own supply ran out. The sugar cane field was very tall and impressive. For a moment we thought it would break through the ceiling to the next floor, no doubt causing the people upstairs to raise cane. The small fry loved it, playing hide-and-seek in it and taking frequent sugar breaks. They learned quickly how to snap off the cane (which grew right back, of

course) and played with the empties. This may have been the first con at which sugar cane, outside the party room, was banned as a weapon.

There were a few glitches. The tapa tablecloth, when we spread it out, appeared to be a tapdance tablecloth. (They must have misheard us over the noise in the shop.) We threw it in the closet with the leftover items. For a while we couldn't figure out why several party-goers were complimenting us on our rhythmic-sounding closet. But we're used to taking comments with a smile. Then there was the little drink umbrella. One of our helpers had left the drink they had just fixed in the area where we were setting up the pineapple/sugar cane fields. Whatever growth mixture affected the plants also affected the drink, for we suddenly had a 4' tiki glass with a 3' umbrella in it. We hollowed out a sugar cane and fans drank from the glass all night. It was a big hit, but thank goodness the drink wasn't alcoholic.

All good things must come to an end. At some wee hour we declared the party to be over, and bade the last attendees good night. We refolded the honeycombs and packed things as best we could. One surprise came when we opened the closet for the box and on rummaging for wrapping material, heard the soft sounds of a ukelele and a gentle voice singing "Tiny bubbles in the wine..."

"Don Ho! We were looking all over for you when we were setting up! Well, it's too late to use you now; into the box with you until the next party," we said.

"Not so close to the tablecloth," he begged softly as we closed up the box. "It throws off my rhythm." (The pineapples made cleanup a lot easier. In the end, we just grabbed one, pulled off the top, counted to three and hurled it, closing the door behind us as we left. Supposedly the room was suitable for Babysitting the next day.)

And as we left, we thought of the mysterious Mr. Aloha and wondered why he kept saying his name. It wasn't that noisy in the shop. Maybe it's his mantra. Maybe it should be ours?

*[Pam, I believe everything you said. Except for one outrageous remark. I've been to Lunacon with a child and I know they've never had real Babysitting.]*

## How to Reach Our Contributors

*[I've misplaced several addresses over the last few days, so this list is not as complete as it ought to be. Contributors with lost addresses can be written to c/o Proper Boskonian, and I'll see their letters/zines are forwarded.]*

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# Mass CONfusion

Laurie D. T. Mann

A Cross Between an Editorial and Local Convention Notes

Here it is, early April, and there have already been about eight cons so far this year in Massachusetts. And how many cons are scheduled for the rest of the year?

Two (Gaylaxicon and NotJustAnotherCon), maybe three (if Lexicon, which moves around a lot, winds up in Massachusetts).

In many ways, it's nice to live in an area with such a variety of cons to choose from. I came very close to attending my first Creation back in January, because I thought my nine-year-old would enjoy it. About the only reason I didn't was because I had a lot of Boskone work looming in front of me. So it's also frustrating to have eight cons in a relatively small state in the first three months of the year.

I wish we could come to a "meeting of the minds" on the issue of scheduling cons in Massachusetts. It would make it easier to attend more local cons, if only they were a little more spread out. Some of the cons, particularly Boskone, Arisia, and Readercon, are competing for many of the same pros. To have these three cons in the same six-week period probably made it hard for people to decide which con(s) to attend.

## Upcoming New England Conventions

- ★ Arisia 2  
PO Box 2334, Pittsfield, MA 01202-2334  
A young generic convention held in Boston in February. Jack Chalker is the next GoH.
- ★ Boskone 28  
Box G, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139  
The oldest con in New England, Boskone features the best art show and most extensive program around. NESFA sponsors Boskone, which is being held in Springfield, February 15-17, at the Marriott and Sheraton Tara Hotels. Boskone's GoH next year is Mike Resnick, Artist Guest is Ed Emsh, and Special Speaker is Brian Thomsen. Memberships are \$28 until 1/11/91.
- ★ Codclave  
c/o NESFA  
Codclave is a small relaxacon held by NESFA each winter.

- ★ Gaylaxicon '90  
PO Box 1052, Lowell, MA 01853  
Gaylaxicon is "a Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention for gay people and their friends." It will be held July 20-22 at the Tewksbury/Andover Holiday Inn, Tewksbury, MA. Melissa Scott is the GoH, Hannah M. G. Shapero is the Art GoH. Memberships are \$20 until June 30, and \$25 at the door.
- ★ Lexicon  
c/o NESFA  
Lexicon is a small relaxacon held by NESFA each summer.
- ★ Lunacon  
c/o Lunarians  
The New York City regional con, will be held in Stamford, CT next spring.
- ★ NECon  
Box 3251, Darlington Branch, Pawtucket, RI 02861  
NECon is a fantasy & horror sercon held in Bristol, RI each July.
- ★ NotJustAnotherCon  
RSO 352, University of Massachusetts,  
Amherst, MA 01003  
Annual fall con held on the UMass campus. An extensive film program is the highlight of the con.
- ★ Readercon 4  
P.O. Box 6138, Boston, MA 02209  
Readercon "puts the focus squarely on literature," and "gives it the kind of treatment that a significant art form deserves." It has a serious, intelligent program. Readercon 4 will be held from July 12-14, 1991, at the Worcester Marriott. The GoH is Thomas M. Disch. Currently, the membership rate is \$22.

Other local cons include an annual Creation, an SF con at Brandeis, a new gaming con held for the first time this spring in Fall River, and probably other small cons I'm missing. Please send me additional con listings. Are there any cons in other New England states?



Illustration by Alexis Gilliland

### Con Ramblings – Readercon 3

Readercon 3 was a fine little con. I love Readercons because I get the chance to do something I rarely do at local cons – schmooze. I do not work on Readercon, I just go, listen to people, talk with people, and embark on extended dinner expeditions. Where else would I get to discuss movies extensively with Esther Friesner, Janice Eisen, and Ken Meltsner? Where else would I get to go and actually talk about the craft of writing with other writers of varying experience levels? Where else would I have the time to sit at a table with Ellen Kushner and her extensive array of friends; and where else could I actually talk to fellow USENETter Peter Trei? Where else would I go and not care (too much) that dinner took almost three hours? This is usually a crisis at a Boskone, but at a con you're just attending, it's almost fun!

Readercon only did two things wrong – they scheduled their Meet-the-VIPs party for 11pm on Friday, and they started some of their program items on the hour, and others on the half hour. A few complained about Readercon being over-programmed. Readercon had about 450 warm bodies, and typically ran 2 main tracks of program, 2 readings, and a discussion group at all times. I don't have a problem with this amount of programming at such a small con; it's part of Readercon's charm.

I also have fond memories of this Readercon because I participated in my first writers' workshop. Yes, my "baby" was bashed in front of about seven people, but I think this particular baby became much stronger as a result.

Next year, Readercon is going to the Worcester Marriott, since the future of the Lowell Hilton is dubious. The Worcester Marriott is a wonderful location for a mid-sized con. There are a number of good restaurants within walking distance (I've already volunteered to put together their restaurant guide, which I hope to call *The Whole Worcester Catalogue*). There are also a number of neat little "side trips" you can take in Worcester, like to the Higgins Armory, the Robert Goddard Memorial, and Spag's. Worcester is 45 miles southwest of Lowell, making it a little easier for those coming in from the Mid-Atlantic.

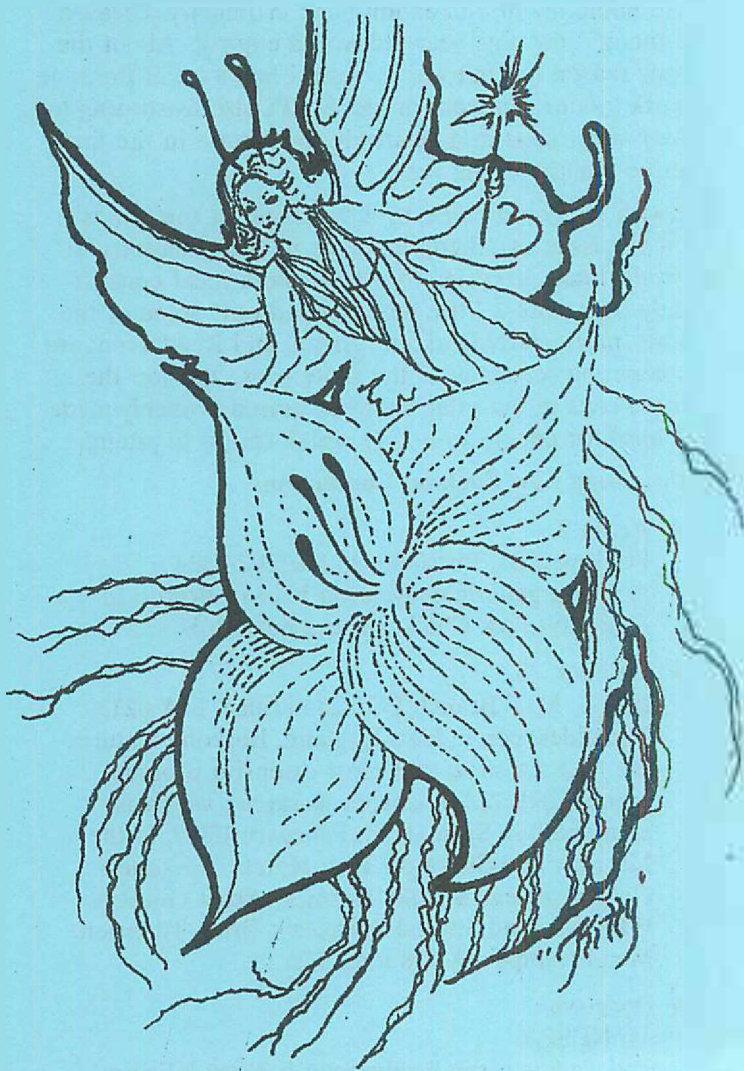


Illustration by Kitty



# The Latest from NESFA Press

## *Sung in Blood* by Glen Cook

*Sung in Blood* by Glen Cook is an original short novel published for the first time by NESFA Press. This book features a cover by Boskone XXVII's Official Artist, David A. Cherry. *Sung in Blood* is published in a limited edition of 810 numbered copies. The first 200 copies are slipcased and autographed by the author and artist. The book is printed on low-acid, long-life paper with a high quality binding. The boxed book sells for \$30.00, and the unboxed sells for \$15.00.

### Other Items from NESFA Press

<i>An Epitaph in Rust</i> by Tim Powers (Boskone XXVI, 1989)	\$15.00
<i>Up There and Other Strange Directions</i> by Donald A. Wollheim (Nolacon II, 1988)	\$15.00
<i>Early Harvest</i> by Greg Bear (Boskone XXV, 1988)	\$15.00
<i>Intuit</i> by Hal Clement (CactusCon, 1987)	\$15.00
<i>Glass and Amber</i> by C. J. Cherryh (Boskone XXIV, 1987)	\$15.00
<i>Between Two Worlds/Messages Found in an Oxygen Bottle</i> by Terry Carr/Bob Shaw (ConFederation, 1986)	
<i>Late Knight Edition</i> by Damon Knight (Boskone XXII, 1985)	\$13.00
<i>Pastiche</i> by Kate Wilhelm (a sentence game for Boskone XXII, 1985)	\$5.00
<i>Dickson!</i> by Gordon R. Dickson (L.A.con II, 1984)	\$13.00
<i>A New Settlement of Old Scores</i> by John Brunner (ConStellation, 1983)	\$8.00
<i>Compounded Interests</i> by Mack Reynolds (Boskone XX, 1983)	\$13.00
<i>Up to the Sky in Ships/In and Out of Quandry</i> by A. Bertram Chandler/Lee Hoffman (Chicon IV, 1982)	\$13.00
<i>The Men from Ariel</i> by Donald A. Wollheim (Boskone XIX, 1982)	\$13.00
<i>Unsilent Night</i> by Tanith Lee (Boskone XVIII, 1981)	\$10.00
<i>Tomorrow May Be Even Worse</i> by John Brunner (Boskone XV, 1978)	\$4.00
<i>Viewpoint</i> by Ben Bova (Boskone XIV, 1977)	
<i>Concordance to Cordwainer Smith</i> by Anthony R. Lewis	\$6.00
<i>The NESFA Hymnal</i> edited by Joe Ross (150 filksongs)	\$12.00
<i>The NESFA Hymnal, Vol. 2</i> edited by Jane Wagner (100 filksongs)	\$8.00
<i>If I Ran the ZOO Con</i> by Leslie Turek (the Smofcon 3 role-playing game)	\$6.00
<i>NESFA Indexes</i> , most years from 1966-1988	\$5.00-\$10.00

#### New Items

NESFA propeller beanie, blue & white, with brim	\$7.00
NESFA shield pin	\$3.50
<i>Proper Boskonian</i> 27	\$2.00
Noreascon III pins	\$3.50
Noreascon III glasses	\$6.00

Subscribing memberships in NESFA are currently \$15.00. Join NESFA and get *Instant Message*, our semi-monthly newszine, and *Proper Boskonian*, our semi-annual clubzine (How recursive can we get? Douglas Hofstadter would be proud!). And Boskone memberships are always for sale. Memberships for Boskone 28 are just \$28.00 until 1/11/91 - higher at the door. For more information on Boskone 28, see page 43.

Massachusetts sales tax (5%) is collected on all NESFA sales items; clothing and memberships are non-taxable. VISA, MasterCard and personal checks (with two forms of ID) are accepted.



BOOK FOR KIDNIN

