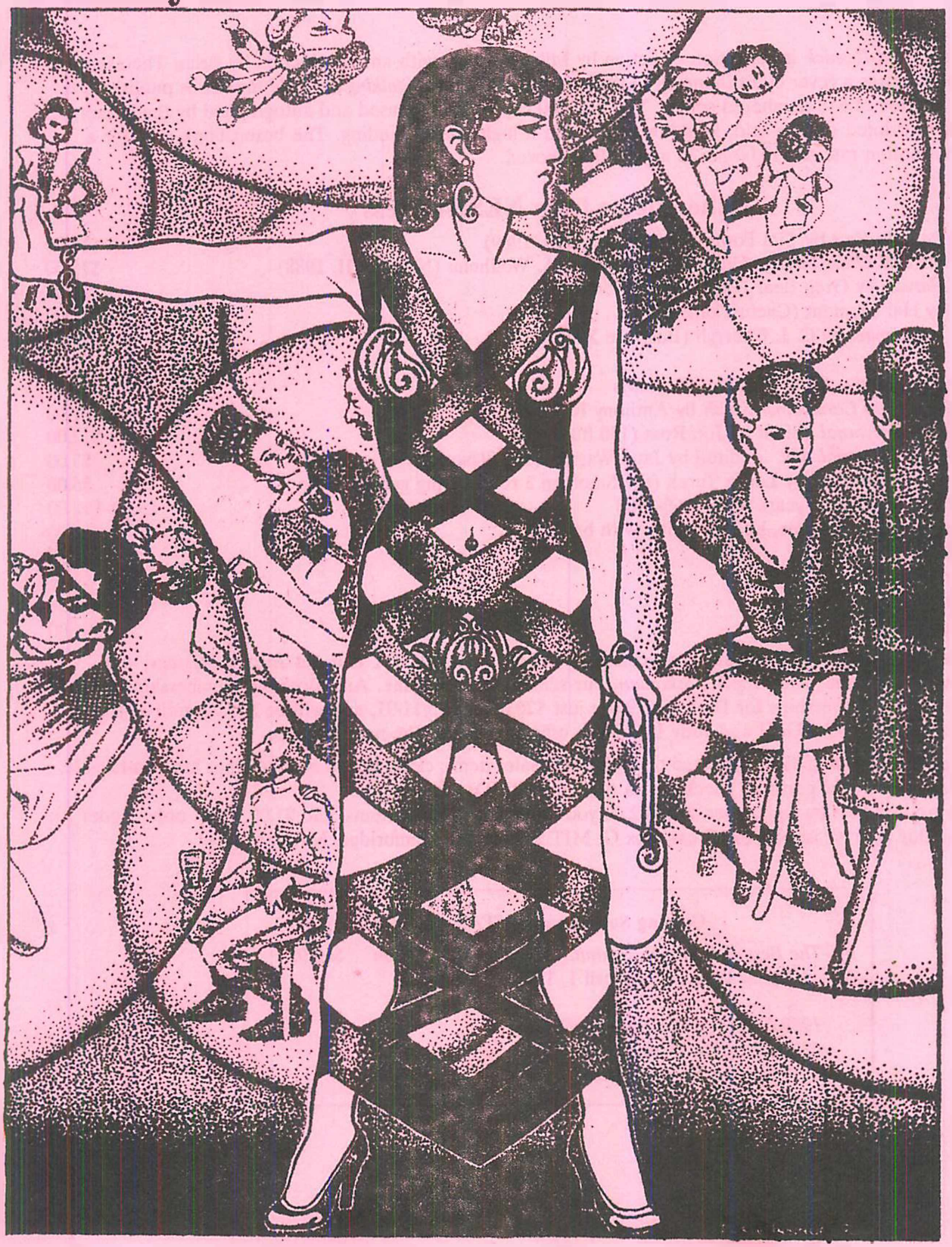
Proper Boskonian

February 1991



The Latest from NESFA Press

Stalking the Wild Resnick
by Mike Resnick

Stalking the Wild Resnick is collection of fiction by Mike Resnick, with an introduction by Brian Thomsen. This book features a cover by Boskone 28's Official Artist, Ed Emsh. *Stalking the Wild Resnick* is published in a limited edition of 810 numbered copies. The first 200 copies are slipcased and autographed by the author. The book is printed on low-acid, long-life paper with a high quality binding. The boxed book sells for a special convention rate of $16.00 boxed and $9.00 unboxed.

Other Items from NESFA Press

An Epitaph in Rust by Tim Powers (Boskone XXVI, 1989)	$15.00
Up There and Other Strange Directions by Donald A. Wollheim (Nolacon II, 1988)	$15.00
Early Harvest by Greg Bear (Boskone XXV, 1988)	$15.00
Intuit by Hal Clement (CactusCon, 1987)	$15.00
Glass and Amber by C. J. Cherryh (Boskone XXIV, 1987)	$15.00
Guide to Recursive SF by Anthony R. Lewis	$9.00
Concordance to Cordwainer Smith by Anthony R. Lewis	$9.00
The NESFA Hymnal edited by Joe Ross (150 filksongs)	$12.00
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NESFA Indexes, most years from 1966-1988	$5.00–$12.00
NESFA propeller beanie, blue & white, with brim	$7.00
NESFA shield pin	$3.50
Proper Boskonian	$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. And Boskone memberships are always for sale. Memberships for Boskone 29 are just $26.00 until 3/11/91, and will be ~~$28~~.00 until at least 7/1/91. Jane Yolen is our GoH and Jody Lee is our official artist for the next Boskone. 29

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.
All items are available by mail order. Add $2.00 you order five or more items, and $1.00 if you order under five items. Our address is: NESFA Press, Box G, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139.

Coming Soon from NESFA Press

The Best of James H. Schmitz, edited by Mark Olson $18.95
Publication Date: April 1, 1991

1989 NESFA Index to Short Fiction
Publication Date: Summer 1991
Price: To Be Announced

Proper Boskonian 28

February 1991, "Back to Boskone"

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 02139-0910.

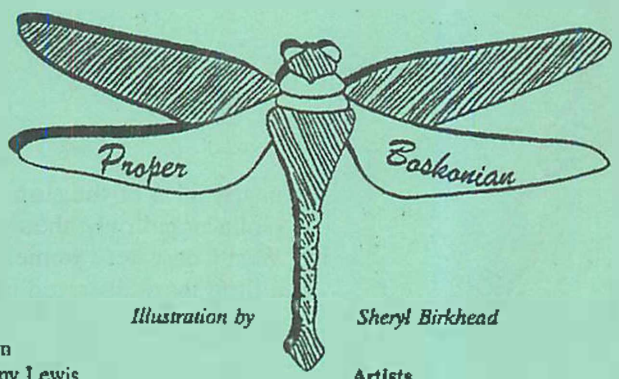

Illustration by Sheryl Birkhead

Editor: Laurie D. T. Mann
Copy Editors: George Flynn, Tony Lewis
Book Reviews: Mark Olson
Mimeography: Claire Anderson

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Important Announcement

Contraption is again publishing a calendar to benefit the Charlie Card Fund. To raise money for United Cerebral Palsy, they have published the 1991 Fantasy Art Calendar. The calendar features the art of Sheryl Birkhead, Heather Bruton, P. L. Carruthers-Montgomery, Colleen Doran, Tom Dow, Brad W. Foster, Linda Leach Hardy, Teddy Harvia, April Lee, Peggy Ranson, Laurel Slate, Diana Stein, Gale Tang, Sylvus Tarn, Ruth Thompson, and Robin Wood. It features convention dates, holidays, and astronomical information.

The calendar is available for $6.00, including postage. Please make checks payable to The Charlie Card Fund, and mail your requests to P.O. Box 2285, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. All revenue, less the cost of printing and mailing the calendars, will be donated to United Cerebral Palsy.

The Charlie Card Fund is named for the son of Orson Scott Card, who has cerebral palsy. Please note that this is not a fund raiser for the Card family, but for the organization that has helped them cope with Charlie's illness.

Why You Are Getting This

- ☐ You contributed! Yay! Thank-you!
- ☐ You LoCced
- ☐ You are mentioned somewhere in this zine.
- ☐ Please contribute in the future.
- ☐ We trade, or we really ought to.
- ☐ You provided moral support.
- ☐ Sheer whim.
- ☐ You're a NESFA member.

Artists

Ads

Official Notices

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. Fannish ads are accepted on whim. Try me and see.

This really isn't the "Winter of '74 Issue."

Editorial
by Laurie D. T. Mann

Illustration by John Osborne/Phil Tortorici

Welcome to *Proper Boskonian* 28!

Last time, *PB* came out in May, and I promised the next issue in November. Well, here it is November 11 and I haven't done much on it so far. Why not, you ask? It's a long, complicated story, and unless I start pubbing a perzine again, I won't go into it here. I'll just chalk it up to being highly unmotivated for a number of months. However, I'm starting to be motivated again, and I have almost enough material for an issue, so I hope this will be in the mail by the end of February.

I owe a few more thank-yous on the last issue of *PB*: thanks to the collators of *PB* 27: Tony Lewis, Rick Katze, Pam Fremon, Claire & Dave Anderson, Kelly Persons, LuAnn Vitalis, George Flynn, Mark Olson, Sarah Prince, and Mike DiGenio. I forgot to acknowledge Mark's extra services as CW Beane liaison and post office agent for the last issue of *PB*.

I thank all the contributors to this issue, particularly Claire Anderson, for the mimeography and paper-buying.

In the last issue, long-time fan Harold Zitzow contributed "New Tax Law Changes." I regret to report that Harold died last year. He'd been in fandom long enough to be a member of First Fandom, and was well-known for his "I am not James Blish" T-shirt. I never knew Harold all that well, but I liked him, and I appreciated his work on Boskone and Noreascon. He is survived by his wife Virginia, and daughter Liz.

Oh, and a late observation on Jon Singer's sushi piece. I've been eating more sushi lately, and notice that nearly 50% of the sushi chefs back here are women! (John noted only about 5% of the sushi chefs on the West Coast were women.) Maybe Japanese woman are a little more liberated back east?

Focus

In the last issue of *PB*, I said I wanted to emphasize the more fun aspects of fandom. I plan to steer clear of the more controversial aspects of fandom, at least here. Still, I found myself really wanting to write a response to Harlan Ellison's long diatribe on fandom that appeared in the August issue of *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*. I'd collected responses from a bunch of people in `rec.arts.sf-lovers` on USENET, but finally decided to drop it. If you'd like, you may consider the back cover of this zine to be an appropriately fannish response to Ellison's essay.

I want to briefly address one fannish controversy, namely the continuing trend in fandom for people not to vote for the Hugos, but to bitch mightily about what winds up on the ballot. If you look at the published statistics, only about 14% of all potential voters bother to nominate or vote. If the Hugos really represent the views of fandom, it behooves us **all** to read, nominate, and vote.

What We Did on Our Summer Vacation

Vacations Past

In 1968, the summer I was eleven, my parents took our family cross country by train. That was the summer I really got the yen to travel. We stayed in four states and two Canadian provinces in a month. We missed the Democratic National Convention in Chicago by a few weeks, but we saw other evidence of '60s culture, like a commune next to the Pacific in central California and the memorable Nehru jacket Dad bought with his slot machine winnings in Reno. We traveled by train since Mom was terrified to fly.

Of course, we wound up being in the middle of a train wreck in the Canadian Rockies.

No, I'm not kidding. To escape the dangers of flying, we took trains and wound up in a train accident. A one-ton boulder from a landslide ripped through our train one morning, killing one woman and injuring eight others. The train derailed beside a lake. Fortunately, we were only a few hundred yards away from a highway. We emerged from the wreck shaken but otherwise unscathed.

And my mother? She still prefers cars and trains to planes. She has since been on a plane once. But that's a story for another time!

Vacations Present—Westercon in Portland

In the tradition that my family set back in the '60s, Jim (my husband), Leslie (our then nine-year-old daughter) and I went out West for two weeks in July 1990. Being fans, our trip coincided with the Portland Westercon, and we were not afraid to fly. It was the first West Coast con for any of us, and the first trip West for either Jim or Leslie. We spent two terrific weeks on the West Coast.

We spent almost a week in Portland. We flew out on the fourth of July, spending a forgettable hour in the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport en route. Why go from Boston to Portland via DFW? Because it was about the only flight that hadn't already sold out. The nachos at the airport were pretty good.

I'd never flown over Texas before, and just outside of DFW I noticed something intriguing. From 20,000 feet up, you could see clusters of giant black dots on the landscape, as if someone were playing Othello with a mighty big board. After seeing a couple of hundred of these things, it finally dawned on us that each dot represented an irrigated field, with the irrigated areas making huge circles on the ground. The receding Great Salt Lake is also a fascination from the air. You see large buildings and parking lots and docks miles away from the water.

We got to the Red Lion Columbia River just after 1:30 pm. We were impressed by the lovely painted woodwork in the lobby of the hotel.

Westercon, which ran in two adjacent Red Lion Hotels, earned the motto "It's in the Other Hotel" early in the con. Small program items, the green room, the club house, and the art show ran in the Columbia River, while the huckster room, main program, special events, registration, and operations all ran in the Jantzen Beach. It was a good ten-minute walk to go from the art show to the huckster room. Fortunately, the weather was nice and warm most of the weekend, and you did not have to cross a major thoroughfare to get from one hotel to the other. I know I had a good time at Westercon, but between jet lag at the con and travelling after the con, I'm amazed by how little I remember of it.

The first night was pretty mellow. A few of us went to the BBQ at the Columbia River, but it was not worth the time. Leslie went to bed pretty early, and I forced myself to stay away for the fireworks over the real Columbia River (as opposed to the oft-before-mentioned hotel), which were best viewed from the other hotel. At about 12:45 am EDT (9:45 for the westerners), a huge barrage of fireworks exploded over Portland and Vancouver (Washington). I dozed off only once or twice. In addition to the long, "official" fireworks, spectators across the river shot off a lot of small fireworks of their own. I put myself in bed after the show, too exhausted to even contemplate the presence of parties that night.

I was up early Thursday, and helped with green room move-in. The green room was in the basement of the Columbia River, not far from the barber shop. Things were rather chaotic, partially because it was early in the con and not all the green room staff had showed, and partially because Patty Wells, in addition to co-chairing the con, also ran Program. She spent most of the morning racing between the two hotels, working with her husband Marc to get the program PC going, and serving as general trouble-shooter.

One of the neat things about the Portland-Seattle area is the large number of interesting fen in that region. I met Marci Malinowycz, and heard her plans to edit a fanzine that would discuss con programming from the attendees' viewpoint. I'd met Dick Pilz & Roz Mailin in their wonderful zine *Renaissance Fan*, but tasting their cooking in person was a real treat. We also enjoyed seeing Dave LeVine and Kate Yule, and joining them on a worthwhile Chinese dinner expedition one night. Other people I know we spent time with included Jane Hawkins, Luke McGuff, Wilma Meier, Alexander and Laurel Slate, Vernor Vinge, and Janice Murray.

After a long day of green room work, the cruise down the Columbia that evening was very relaxing. I renewed my acquaintance with Greg & Astrid Bear, who now have two little Bears to contend with. It was fun to see the multi-million dollar-homes built almost on the water, and wonder if we were going to be deluged on the water by the black clouds that followed us back to the dock (we weren't).

Next, we went to opening ceremonies. Portland conventions have a tradition of weird opening ceremonies, much like those for Minicon. The Portland committee did a retrospective of some of their favorite frivolities. Since Westercon was officially opened, there must have

been parties that night. I remember wandering into Operations a few times, where Jim was working and where people like Westercon co-chair John Lorentz, New York fen Ruth Sachter, Seth Breidbart, and Ben Yalow hung out. Still jet-lagged, I crashed early.

On Friday, we took the shuttle bus into downtown Portland and visited the legendary Powell's Bookstore. It was the second largest bookstore in North America, and the largest west of the Mississippi. It was in a series of interconnected buildings with twelve-foot ceilings, in an older section of Portland. It was crowded with mundane shoppers and fen the day we were there. We found thousands of books we didn't own, but we only bought a few of them.

After Powell's, the next Portland tradition we experienced was Bogart's. Bogart's is an old bar with a dark wood interior and lots of Humphrey Bogart memorabilia inside. Bogart's also has a wide variety of microbrewery beers. There are dozens of microbreweries in the Portland area, so we got to sample only a few.

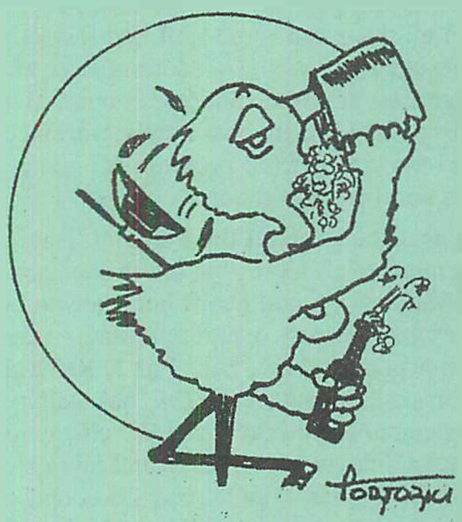

Illustration by Phil Tortorici

One memorable aspect of Westercon was the club house, run by the afore-mentioned Roz & Dick. While most of the Westercon parties were in the "other" hotel (the Jantzen Beach), the club house was run in a luxurious suite in the Columbia River. The suite was good-sized, adjacent to the pool, and had a bathroom-to-die-for with a large Jacuzzi. This type of suite is apparently not all that rare in Red Lions, but it's almost unknown on the East Coast.

The club house tended to be quiet and was open odd hours in the morning and late in the afternoon. Dick had samples of the wines, beers, and hard ciders he brewed at home. I fell madly in love with perry, a pear cider that's very dry. I've never seen it sold anywhere, so if any of you know where I can buy some, please let me know!

Aside from the incredible quantities of interesting foods in the club house, Westercon also threw a chocolate tasting there. For $3.00 a ticket, I was told I would be offered more chocolate than I could eat. As an ardent chocoholic, I didn't believe it. I was wrong. I didn't even come close to sampling everything they had.

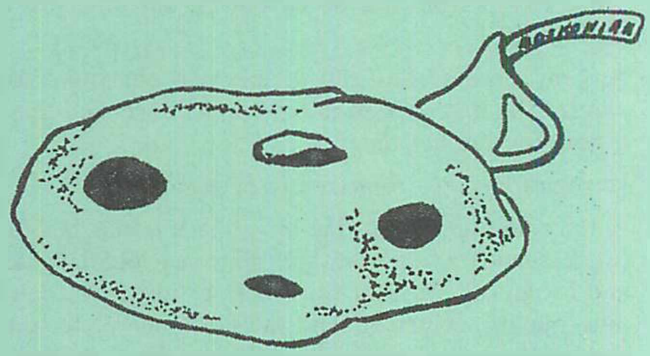

Illustration by Sheryl Birkhead

In between working in the green room, I spent some of Saturday at a writers' workshop. I've been writing fiction, on and off, for nearly twenty years now, and got my first rejection letter almost seventeen years ago. The Westercon workshop was my second writers' workshop, and I learned quite a bit. The story that I had critiqued at the workshop has only been rejected once since, so maybe there's still some hope for selling it.

Saturday evening was spent helping set up the Hawaii in '93 party. We plastered balloons on the walls. Lex Nakashima bought a six foot killer whale and put it in the Jacuzzi, along with some dry ice. Unfortunately, when Leslie crawled into the Jacuzzi to help us out, she stepped on the whale. Since it had become very brittle from the dry ice, it deflated. Fortunately, the party did not likewise deflate.

Sunday was pretty mellow. We swam in the pool for a while, and went out to the pizza place across the street for dinner. The con suite was pretty raucous, but I met Taras Wolansky for the first time, and saw Joyce Scrivner for the first time in ages. Later, we wound up in a long, relaxing dead dog in Art Widner's room, sitting on the balcony overlooking the tennis courts and talking to Tami Vining and Laurie Edison.

Astoria

Monday, we picked up our rental car and drove to the Oregon coast. After spending a week with two roommates (Leslie and Aron Insinga), we'd arranged to spend Monday night in a B & B in Astoria in a suite,

so Leslie would have her own room for the night.

Astoria is an interesting town, built on the hillside beside the Columbia River. The Columbia is less than a mile across in Portland, but it's about three or four miles across at Astoria. An impressively long bridge connects Oregon and Washington at that point. The houses are decidedly Victorian, and tourism appears to be the major business. It's nicer than many tourist areas on the East Coast.

Monday afternoon, we drove from Astoria out to Seaside, a spectacular beach on the Pacific. Seaside is a long, broad, sandy beach, with mountains at either end of it. We played in the water for a while, did our laundry (an important activity when you're away for two weeks!), and had dinner in a lovely hotel overlooking the beach. Then we returned to Astoria and went to bed. Even though *Kindergarten Cop* was being filmed at about the same time we were there, we didn't hear about it until after we'd left.

Mt. Rainier and Mt. St. Helens

I've never liked the idea of living in the mountains. Dad grew up in a small Vermont town "in the heart of the Green Mountains." Whenever we visited his parents, the mountains made me feel very claustrophobic. However, when I went to to Seattle in 1987, I was very impressed by the view of the mountains from Seattle, particularly the view of Mt. Rainier. So we spent part of our trip out west in the mountains, including two nights 5,000 feet up on Mt. Rainier, at Paradise Inn.

Mt. Rainier is over 14,000 feet tall, making it one of the tallest mountains in North America. It's a dormant volcano, and it's been quiet for at least five hundred years. The road going up the mountain varied from being in dense woods, to being on an exposed mountainside. We stopped to appreciate the waterfalls and the incredible views from the mountainside.

Paradise Inn was built at about the turn of the century. The lobby has the look of a big camp lodge, with a big fireplace and old, sturdy wooden furniture. The sleeping room was nothing to write home about, and despite its secluded view I wished the bathroom window had a curtain!

Dinner at Paradise Inn belied its rustic surroundings. The main dining room had linen, flowers, fine china, and hotel prices. The menu was limited but good.

After dinner, Jim and I took a little walk up the mountain while Leslie read a book. As we came back, we almost ran into a few deer. We went back and brought Leslie to where we'd seen the deer, but they'd vanished by the time we got there. We later heard that a few kids were actually chasing the deer, and their parents weren't stopping them! While Leslie never saw a deer, she made friends with marmets the next day.

We walked across the parking lot to the visitors' center, and saw the sunset from the terrace there. The shadowy sunset pastels glinted off the snow fields of the surrounding mountains, until everything turned purple. As we returned, a few brave souls were setting up their telescopes in the parking lot. I say brave because, while it hit 80 each day when we were on the mountain, it was only about 30 at night.

The next day, I relaxed. We hiked a little onto the snow fields just above the hotel, then I returned to lounge on the hotel terrace and work on my critiqued story. Jim and Leslie were far more ambitious than I—they spent hours hiking further up the mountain. Leslie had fun playing in the snow in her shorts.

Jim and Leslie made it back early in the afternoon, before an awesome thunderstorm struck the mountains. The afternoon grew dark, windy, and full of lightning. Since Paradise sits on an exposed face of the mountain, the view of the lightning hitting the trees across the valley was breathtaking. And even a little scary when some of the trees burst into flames. None of the fires were close to the inn, and most of them eventually were put out by the intermitent rain.

Except for one, and this one was closest to the inn. It was a few hundred yards up the mountain, about fifty feet away from a sidewalk in a valley. The winds kept whipping the flames up faster than the rain could put it out. Eventually, two forestry service helicopters flew up the mountain, dumping hundreds of gallons of water scooped up from a pond in the valley.

We spent the next day driving to Mt. St. Helens. On a clear day, we saw Mt. St. Helens from Portland. Driving down from Mt. Rainier, we didn't see the volcano because there were other mountains between the two. After a particularly late, hearty breakfast, we reached a town that was the "last tourist trap before Mt. St. Helens." We looked at the ash sculptures, post cards, and T-shirts, but only bought snacks for lunch. While at a convenience store, we ran into a bunch of college students wearing yellow rain coats. The students were out fighting one of the fires started by the previous day's lightning strikes. The storm had launched nearly 100 fires all over central Washington.

When we left the little town, we drove through wilderness for a while, and eventually reached the US Forest Service booth for Mt. St. Helens. Not long after that, we finally started to drive up hill, and we noticed that the trees started to thin out ever so slightly. The sides of the road were bordered by ash, rather than by sand. We drove uphill through the trees for a few more miles,

and then I almost drove us off the end of the earth.

The trees disappeared. A vast wasteland lay before us.

The sudden change in scenery almost made me miss the abrupt right the road took. I just made the right, and finally saw Mt. St. Helens even though it was still eight miles away. No documentary I'd ever seen about the eruption of 1980 ever made clear how far away from the mountain the destruction went.

So we took the very windy road to an area, about three miles from the summit called Windy Ridge. There was no guardrail, so I drove very carefully. While the area is completely devoid of grown trees, there are lots of bushes, flowers, and a few saplings growing in the "blast zone." There's nothing for miles, other than scenic parking areas, a BBQ shack, and a two shattered cars off to the side of the road that were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

When you reach Windy Ridge, you get a nice view of the volcano crater and Spirit Lake. The lake is still clogged by thousands of trees. Sometimes herds of elk and deer on the plain around the lake, but there were only a tourists on the plain that day.

Mt. St. Helens steams. I hadn't expected that. Sometimes, it steams quite a bit. It's tall enough so there's a snow field on the mountain top. I think the park ranger said up to 100 people a day still climb the mountain. While it's been reasonably quiet of late (except for an ash eruption a few months back), Windy Ridge was about as close to the mountain as I wanted to get.

One mistake we made in taking this trip—we neglected to buy binoculars. Binoculars are a must if you're taking a mountain trip. Or as we discovered a few months later—a whale watch.

We stared at the bleak and fascinating surroundings for hours. People who protest clear-cutting never mention how natural clear-cutting is much more destructive than human clear-cutting. As bad as the destruction from Mt. St. Helens is, the area is clearly starting to come back. And it's not close to being the most destructive volcano in North America. Thousands of years ago, when California's Mt. Shasta erupted, it destroyed an area **ten times** the size of the blast area around Mt. St. Helens.

We finally drove back to the forested area of Washington State. We stayed in a cheap but large room in a new motel. Jim and Leslie went out and did laundry while I crashed for a while. After an extremely good, leisurely dinner, we bought a six-pack and watched the steam rise from Mt. St. Helens. We sat on a plastic picnic table in front of the motel and drank beer to the sound of timber trucks.

The next day, we drove up to Seattle. I fell in love with Seattle in August 1987 when I spent a week attending a conference there. Jim fell in love with it this summer. I gather I committed a fannish sacrilege by suggesting to some Seattle fans that they might want to bid for a Worldcon some day, since Seattle has many downtown hotels and new convention center. Let's just say they weren't real receptive. Seattle is simply splendid.

We splurged Friday night and spent the night in the Hilton downtown. It had a closet-sized room, but lovely furniture, and a tiny refrigerator with $3.50 beers and $1.00 candy bars. We walked all over Seattle. People who visit Seattle in the sunny summer are the ones who fall in love with it and want to move there. I know I'm one of them. I've never seen rain in Seattle, but I believe the people who tell me about the monsoons.

We made the mistake of taking one of those lunch tours of the harbor. The trip across the harbor was fun (for the twentieth time on the trip, I regretted not having binoculars), but the food was awful. It was clear enough to see Mt. Rainier to the southeast, and the Olympics to the west.

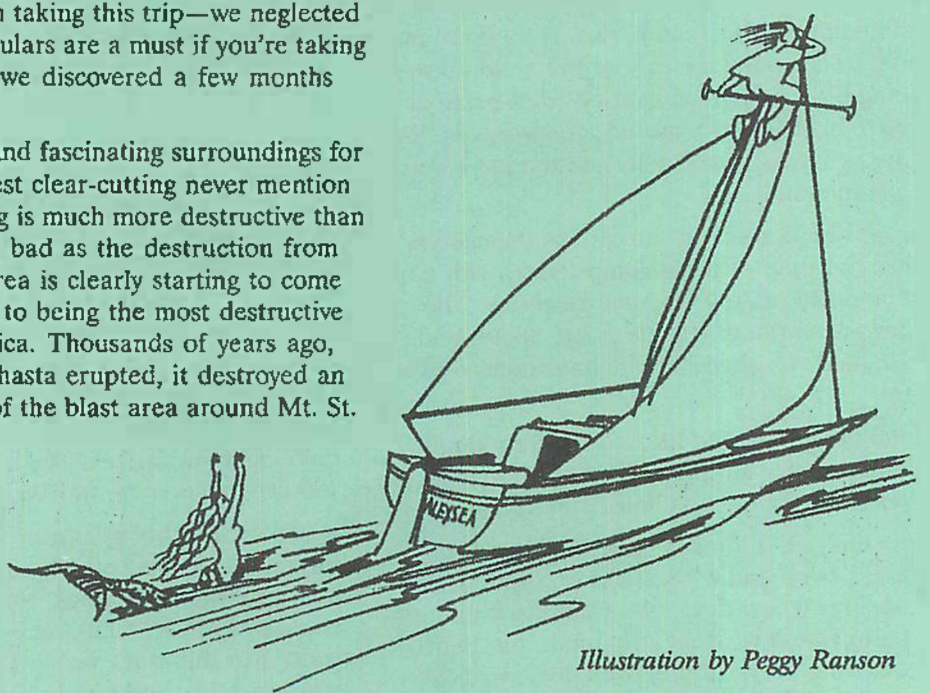

Illustration by Peggy Ranson

After the water trip, we walked up the street and went to the Aquarium. The Seattle Aquarium is very interestingly designed. It also had some unexpected exhibits, like the one about the Seattle sewerage system.

We went to the markets down at Pike's Market, a traditional tourist trap. I wanted to take Jim and Leslie to this bizarre little place that was closer to the Kingdome than most of the other tourist shops and was shocked to find it had moved into the main tourist area. It still had the Indian mummy, totems, and other West Coast oddities. But it was lacking some of its charm.

I'd left a message on Suzle Tompkins and Jerry Kaufman's answering machine, suggesting that they meet us at five at Ivar's. As we approached Ivar's, we heard Jerry calling us from behind. We got a harbor side seat and feasted on seafood. Suzle met us later. New Englanders who rave about Legal Sea Foods probably would enjoy Ivar's. While the menu isn't as extensive, the food is excellent, and the decor is a little livelier than your typical Legal, which tends to look like something out of a Yuppie daydream.

Jim and I had plans to have a night on the town, Leslie being of an age to be left alone in a hotel room without major trauma. We decided to go out to the Clarion party, partially to see some of the folks we'd met at Westercon, but partially because I'm fanatical about Pat Murphy's writing and she was going to be there. (No, I don't **think** I drooled on her when I met her . . . :-)) It was a little awkward at first, because we didn't recognize anyone. Eventually, that changed and the party turned out to be lots of fun. I liked seeing folks I'd met at my Westercon Writers' Workshop, like Vonda McIntyre and Michael Scanlon (the workshop organizer).

We were in Seattle on a doubly-auspicious Saturday—a food fair called "A Taste of Seattle" was going on at Seattle Center, and we were invited out to Greg & Astrid's annual summer party. We spent the morning going up the Space Needle, eating, going into the Children's Museum, eating, going on some rides, and eating some more. Properly gorged, we lumbered to our car, drove across Lake Washington, moved to a cheaper hotel in the 'burbs, checked in, and drove to the Bear's house in rural Washington state. They own a wonderfully modern, airy house with a large deck on a quiet pond. Leslie spent much of the time listening to Greg's lecture on pond water. Greg has some wonderful "toys," including a good microscope that he has connected to his TV, so you can see an amoeba magnified to be 25 inches across.

Sunday was our last full day in the Seattle area. We found a good breakfast place, and eventually stumbled over a really neat mall. In the Northeast, the malls tend to all be very similar, with a long central court and stores connected to the court. *This* mall was almost square, and you needed to pass through some stores to get to other ones. The food court had different sorts of restaurants, including an Indian, a Cajun, and, of course, at least one expresso bar.

We spent the afternoon at Amy Thomson and Ray Takeuchi's wedding. It was the most fannish wedding I've ever been to, and the only one that was part Shinto. I'm not sure what Ray's relatives thought of us, but I suspect every fan there had a wonderful time.

It was about six when the reception ended, and I just didn't want to go back to the hotel yet. That would be like saying our vacation was over. The weather was still bright and clear, and looking down the hill at Puget Sound, I suggested that we take the ferry over to Bremerton. So we queued up for the trip and drove onto the ferry with a few minutes to spare. We got one last look at Mt. Rainier from the water, and a closer look at the other side of Puget Sound. While Bremerton is nothing to write home about, the trip to Bremerton was quite pretty.

We grabbed a sandwich when we got back to Seattle, and then drove back to our hotel. *SNIFF*

The next day, we arranged to meet Marci Malinowycz and got a short tour of Microsoft. Jim is a Microsoft devotee, and in the off chance we ever do move to Seattle, that's where he'd like to work. Microsoft exists in an ever-expanding series of interconnected buildings. I think each was only about 50,000 square feet, much smaller than the 200,000-sq.ft. building we work in at Stratus. There are trees and gardens and ponds and ducks in a huge center court of the buildings. Each building had its own "themed" cafeteria, like the one that sold just pizza and sandwiches. Each worker had a crammed office with multiple work stations.

We spent too much of that next day experiencing Route 5, the main north-south route on the west coast. As much as we loved the area, we hated Route 5. The road isn't in the best condition, and many truckers drive the road like they are driving sports cars, not huge lumber trucks. We are happy to report we made it back to Portland alive.

End of the Line

We checked into the Motel 6 east of the airport, took Leslie swimming, then drove back to town to find a Mongolian BBQ restaurant. I had a memorable Mongolian BBQ at Minicon, and had heard there were a number of these restaurants in the Portland area. We found one and we feasted.

Mongolian BBQ looks like an all-you-can-eat salad bar,

except there's a huge, mushroom-shaped grill at the end with a chef. We piled slivered frozen meats, fresh vegetables, and a variety of oils and seasonings on our plates and handed them over to the chef, who grilled them. This restaurant even had a chart over the bar, explaining how to mix the sauces to get pedestrian or wildly hot results.

We took one last drive around Portland, then went back to the motel. *SNIFF*

The flight home the next day was uneventful, except for a rocky landing in Chicago. It was very windy that afternoon, and the plane swayed dramatically from side to side as we approached O'Hare. At least one person spent the landing throwing up in the bathroom, and at least one little old lady nearly had hysterics. The flight crew was very professional, though I saw at least one turn pale during one of the sways.

The last leg of the trip was pretty, as we flew East during sunset. New England at night is very pretty from 20,000 feet. We went home, we collapsed, and now, six months later, I've finally finished this trip report!! (January 10, 1991)

Cheers!

Illustration by Ingrid Neilson

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Microprogramming: The Lost Episodes

by David E. Romm

Microprogramming is an idea which was sparked by Gary Farber and Patrick Then Hayden at Suncon: if I remember correctly, they came up with the name and the concept of doing little bits between panels. But everyone was too busy and nothing materialized. In 1979, when I moved to Mpls and got involved with Programming at Minicon under David Emerson, the idea really took off. I was also inspired by the idea in Chip Delany's *Triton* of Micro Theater: Elaborate productions designed to affect one person. Encouraged by Rick Gellman (for a long time Mpls' only true SMOF), Microprogramming evolved quickly into many oddities. I like to call it "The recreation of vaudeville," but it is much more (and much less!) than that. It is, among other things, conceptual art in its purest form: what is now called performance art. As such, almost any Microprogramming event tends to get performed once, and then forgotten in the swirl of Minicon. I generally define "conceptual art" as "Something more fun to describe afterwards than to live through." Being Fan GoH at the last Minicon set me to recollecting some of my favorite Microprogramming events, and this article is a continuation of my editorial in *Rune* 80.

The theme for the 1983 Minicon was "Backward into the Future." I ordered lollipops with the stick emblazoned with the theme. We ran the convention backwards: Thursday night was the Dead Dog Party, Closing Ceremonies stared things off on Friday, we went through the con until Opening Ceremonies on Sunday, and then had Pre-Con Parties on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. I knew it was going to be too conceptual to get a big laugh, but at the very first Microprogramming event of the 1984 Minicon, I held the Organizational Meeting for the previous Minicon. (Fortunately, we decided to go ahead with it.)

One of the more elaborate productions occurred during an Art Auction. I asked Joan Hanke Woods if I could auction off the rights to all her future works. "No!!!" was her initial response. When I explained it was all in fun, she agreed. Rick Gellman took over the auctioneering from Rusty Hevelin. Rick gave a long introductory speech about auctioning Joan's work, with the proceeds going to the Mid-Atlantic Fan Fund so we could send one deserving fan half-way across the Atlantic Ocean.

While Rick was talking, Rusty (who had seen Rick and me conspiring) came back to where I had planted myself at the edge of the crowd and whispered, "What's going on?"

At this point, Rick finished his speech and started the auction. "All right, how much do I hear for the rights to the future works of Joan Hanke Woods. C'mon, folks, let's hear it."

The audience sat in stunned silence. I had no time to explain it to Rusty. "One hundred thousand dollars!" I yelled. To Rusty, I whispered, "Bid against me."

"What?"

"Bid against me!"

Rusty yelled, "Umm, one hundred ten thousand dollars."

"One hundred twenty thousand dollars!"

Minicon audiences are quick and smart. This was all the incentive needed to incite a wild, fun-filled bidding spree. I eventually won (because it was rigged) by bidding seven years worth of the Gross National Product of the U.S. (Theoretically, if I ever come up with the cash, I could give it to Joan (minus Minicon's 10%) and own the rights to all her works from then on. Of course, then I would be a prime candidate for MAFF . . .)

While I like to repeat the best events, some Microprogramming is topical, and therefore I can't use them for too many years. This one went over well for quite a while.

Between panels, Rick Gellman and I went to the front table and talked to each other.

"How is your future looking?"

"Not so good. My psychohistorian isn't sure about many future time lines and the ones he is sure about don't look so good for me."

"My psychohistorian is Hari Seldon, and Seldon says . . . "

The first time we did it, I had a few shills leap up and cup their hands to their ears. The audience caught on and did likewise almost immediately. I never used shills after the first time.

"Consult Hari Seldon for all your future history needs. Hari Seldon is Mulish on the Galaxy."

The first time I tried this topical event was the most conceptually pure. During 1979-1981, Minicon's con suite was one floor above the last elevator stop. You'd have to get out into the hallway on the 20th floor and walk up to the party.

On the first floor, the elevator filled up with fans. When the doors closed, I announced. "OK, this is an Official Microprogramming Event. See, here's my Department Head Badge. When the doors open, we're going to say in unison 'We are the elevator that says 'NIH'!' Let's try it..." We had time for a rehearsal or two before the elevator stopped on one of the middle floors. As the doors opened, the entire elevator full of fans exclaimed, "We are the elevator that says 'NIH'!" There was no one there. A fan got off.

"OK, that was good, but at the next stop, let's really hear it!" A few floors up we stopped and we cheered, "We are the elevator that says 'NIH'!" There was no one there. Another fan got off.

As we approached the top floor, I said, "This time for sure!" Together we shouted, **"We are the elevator that says 'NIH'!"** There was, alas, no one there. In later years, however, I've heard from fans who were in the con suite who heard us, that lonely day, and wondered.

In general, I regard Opening and Closing Ceremonies as Microprogramming events. Opening Ceremonies included the introduction of the notables, announcements, and other stuff. The first couple of years the other stuff was general mayhem, with a Mardi Gras parade and flash paper and other festive things welcoming fans to Minicon. Starting in 1981, the "other stuff" became a SHOCKWAVE live performance. SHOCKWAVE is the first science fiction radio show I produced with various other radio people and/or fans since 1979. We really go all out for Minicon. The last three have been broadcast live (simulcast!) on KFAI 90.3 FM. The most recent one was our tenth, and something of a retrospective, "Amongst the Best of SHOCKWAVE Live!: Vol. III." We have tapes of all of them, and even sold scripts for the last one! My favorite introduction of notables had Alice Phoenix translate the Toastmaster, Robert Bloch, into sign language.

Closing Ceremonies is generally an excuse for the Assassination of the MN-STF president, a tradition established by Denny Lien. I usually don't have to do an awful lot for that, except to make sure that it gets done and make sure the stage is set up properly. I recent years the event has gotten larger and larger, with the various GoHs showing up and occasionally speaking and us performing leftover SHOCKWAVE bits (when you're doing a live broadcast, you always write extra material Just in Case).

Well, there's lots more to write about: helium balloons, throwing 25lbs. of dry ice in the Jacuzzi, Brian Westley hanging upside down in the elevator, Nostradamus predictions about Minicon, retroactively declaring other people's events to have been Microprogramming, the drum jam in the elevator, the Thought Police, the world's longest back rub line, et.c. But I won't. Let me end with one of the first, and one of the purest examples of Microprogramming events.

Theodore Sturgeon was our Pro GoH in 1979, and he was scheduled to do a reading. The panel before the reading was a fannish one, with Jerry Kaufman (co-Fan GoH for 1991) and others. I discussed an idea with the panelists and Ted before we went ahead with it. As the time for the panel to end was coming up, David Emerson played a song on the piano. The panelists got up and started going around the table. I took one chair away, and David stopped playing. The panelists scrambled to sit down. Minus one disappointed member, they continued to talk for a minute or two. David started playing again, the panelists went around the table, and I took another chair away... When only two panelists were left, Ted joined the line marching around the table. I took two chairs away and carefully timed when David should stop. The closest person to the chair left. Ted scrambled to the chair and calmly started his reading. He was interrupted only by the wild applause from the audience.

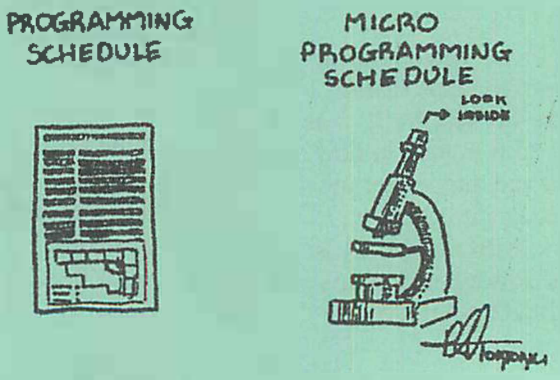

Illustration by Phil Tortorici

ConFiction Reports
by Joe Mayhew & Henk Langeveld

One More Rijsttafel and It Would Have Been a Very Round Trip Indeed

by Joe Mayhew

When Rick Katze called to inform me that I was a Hugo Nominee in the Fan Artist category, I decided that I really ought to go. How could I pass up such a neat opportunity to strut around and make an ass of myself? As it turned out, I attended ConFiction as a representative of the Library of Congress, which had just put me in charge of developing its Science Fiction collection.

The time zipped by and soon it was August 19th and I reported to BWI with my two bags of luggage and the three carved walking sticks I had done for the Art Show. The KLM security folk seemed oddly concerned about my walking sticks. I said I didn't want to check them as baggage, as they were hand-carved artworks. The clerk was concerned as to whether they might be used to take over the airplane.

I asked whether they confiscated the crutches of cripples or little old ladies' canes. They referred it to higher authorities, and soon reported that I could, indeed, carry them aboard. The baggage checkers let me through with only small concern for my calculator wrist watch, and before long I was waiting for the flight and chatting with some other fen who would be on the same plane.

I had scheduled a side trip to England before the con. When I got to British customs, they made me empty the bag that I was carrying because the pair of pliers I was carrying in it set off their metal detector. The customs inspector was suspicious of the little cane stand I had, as it was made of coat hanger wire and dowel and perhaps had that jerry-built look of a part of a homemade bomb. I also had 3 or 4 carving gouges in the bag. However, once I explained that I was an artist, the customs people nodded their heads at each other knowingly and let me pass.

Advice: don't pack pliers.

Illustration by Joe Mayhew

Once I got to Holland, I decided to take the Spoorwegen (railway) to The Hague. When I got to Rotterdam, I discovered the next town was not The Hague and it seemed a good idea to change trains. Fortunately the next train going back north had The Hague Centrum station as its terminal and so even I couldn't mess up. Transferring to the streetcar line No. 7, I actually got off at the right station in Scheveningen.

It is only a few blocks from the trolley line to the Bel Air Hotel, where I was to stay. However my bags felt like the sins of the world by the time I staggered into the Bel Air. The Bel Air is a tall, American-style hotel which serves a Dutch-style breakfast, and managed to keep up with the usual fannish excesses.

ConFiction, the 48th World Science Fiction Convention, was held about two blocks away at the Congresgebouw (pronounced Con-hhrres-hhe-buw), a modern-drab structure with touches of pretension but mostly practical in form. Spirits restored, arms rested, I strode in, King of the SMOFs, Hugo Nominee, Representative of the Library of Congress, Recommending Officer for Science Fiction, Auctioneer for the World SF Con Art Show, BNF, etc. Of course, no one had the least idea of my eminence, and I was really too bushed to strut, so I settled for just making an ass of myself in quiet ways.

ConFiction had little lapel rockets for Hugo nominees as well as special nominee ribbons. Davey Snyder of Boston had, at ConFiction's request, produced an amazing assortment of ribbons. By the end of the con some of the SMOFs and several kids had assembled more ribbons than a regimental flag.

ConFiction had printed a number of my cartoons in its souvenir booklet, including the one showing highly decorated US Army general glaring enviously at a Noreascon III fan with a wide bevy of ribbons. Reality at ConFiction made my jest pale indeed. Tim Illingworth and others looked like traveling Maypoles for all the ribbons fluttering from their chests. I had only three: Hugo Nominee, Program Participant, and Artist.

I registered three walking sticks in the Art Show, and I used so little table space because of cane stand (about 4" x 4") that, combined with my being auctioneer or something, they didn't charge me for the space. Arjay Kimmel (Len de Vries's American wife) and Len had set up for a larger show than occurred. It was a small show with mostly continental European artists represented. Jim Burns was there, however and had his cover for the recent reprint of Bradbury's *The Illustrated Man*. He also had a cover rather unlike anything he had done before, aqua, yellow and blue predominating, figures of an evolving egg to bird in a semicircle in the foreground. I regret that I didn't write down the title, as it was the best piece I have seen by Jim. Arjay had several East European artists for whom she was acting as agent represented in the show. Most had little apparent training but showed promise.

The show, however, did very little business. So little, in fact that the Saturday night auction was cancelled and there were only 10 pieces in the auction. They had Jack Chalker and me auction off some pieces for charity which had no bids. None of my three canes got a bid and so I gave one to Len, another to Josepha Sherman and the third to a sweet, goofy kid named Marc Potters who was helpful in the show.

I only saw one panel; I was on it. I was in the green room when Joe Haldeman came over and drafted me for something called "Homo Pacem." Until we sat down at the speaker's table none of us knew what the panel was to be about. It turned out to be about whether man will ever outgrow war. Poor Joe, they always stick him on things like that. It worked; we got the audience involved, and with the Iraq crisis and the British Faulklands experience, there was a good buzz.

Mostly, I moved about meeting publishers, editors, writers, and others to tell them about the SF program at the Library of Congress. It seemed that almost anyone I sat down with turned out to be one of the people I had come to talk to and so I made a lot of contacts.

Naturally I got to the Hugo ceremony. I invited Hal Clement (Harry Stubbs) to join me as my guest. Mrs. Stubbs didn't want to go. C. Howard Wilkins, U.S. Ambassador to The Netherlands, spoke before the awards were given out. It turns out he is actually an SF reader and either was carefully briefed or is somewhat a fan. I went over to greet him, after the ceremony, to give him my card and to tell him Library of Congress is also becoming an SF fan. Afterward I learned that I had caused a small security panic by doing so among the con security, not with the Ambassador's. I explained to some officious Brits that while the US Legislature was not always fond of the Executive Branch, that neither the Ambassador nor I were likely to engage in fisticuffs.

Afterwards I attended a Losers' party sponsored by Chicon V. They gave me an embroidered Hugo as a consolation prize. Stu Shiffman finally won the Fan Artist Hugo after about 11 nominations. I still felt honored to have been nominated and was glad for Stu. I had expected Teddy Harvia to win but had hoped Merle Insinga would.

Len de Vries gave me a pleasant tour of den Haag in the middle of the night. There is a square moat in front of the Parliament building. When we reached it from the still streets, I saw a pair of swans in the moat. There is something near-to-holy about swans. Len took me to a bar near the Gefangerport and we had a Trappist beer each. It has a surprisingly fruity flavor.

Up until 3:30 each night, by the official end of the convention I was ready to go **home**. My flight back was not until Friday and so I stayed on at the Bel Air until Wednesday morning. Monday I slept most of the day and at night went with Josepha Sherman, Rick Katze, and some others to a restaurant with a superlative rijsttafel in Scheveningen. There were some 62 other fen at the restaurant. Josepha had eaten there before and word had gotten out.

On my flight back to the USA I was given a seat with extra knee room, which was very nice, but it was across the aisle from four toilets. Seven hours and

forty-five minutes listening to the banging of toilet doors can teach you a lot about human nature. It was relentless. Some of the same people were in and out eight or nine times during the flight!

The plane landed in Baltimore at 4:00 PM. Fortunately I had the next three days off to recuperate. Mostly I used them to sleep.

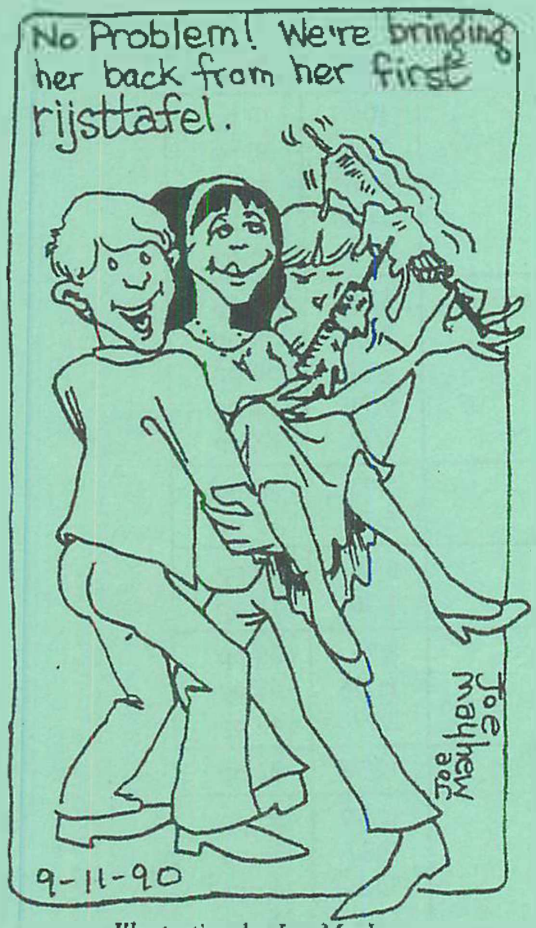

Illustration by Joe Mayhew

Stuff That Legends...

by Henk Langeveld

[*Henk is a Dutch network contributor who posted some amusing con stories while the con was in progress.*]

When I left the charades game, it had been running for 14 hours continually. You may not know this, but we're trying to set a record. I understand that the mob would move over to the Bel Air Hotel when the Congresgebouw closed at 3 am.

I joined a few filkers who were sitting in the PWA hall (the main auditorium), when suddenly the lights went out, and all of the filkers had to find their instruments and papers in the dark. A building staff employee then came in to tell us to leave the hall immediately. When people complained that they could not find their stuff in the dark, they got no reply. I later talked to the guy, and apparently he had nothing to do with the lights going out. That was done by the building technical crew who were going home, and did not know anyone was still in the hall.

Still, all this goes to show, that as with the bards of old, one should never arouse the anger a filker, as within 25 minutes a new filk song was born, on the tune of "Waltzing Matilda" (chorus):

One minute warning,
One minute warning,
One minute warning,
Is all that we need.

Illustration by Teddy Harvia

After the Con

The dead mouse party lasted from 9 pm to 6 am, when the hotel manager asked us to clean up the room. I returned to work this morning, and I feel like I'm walking on air. Slowly but surely, I'm descending into mundania.

The '93 bidding was a surprise with Phoenix eliminated before Zagreb. At the business meeting they started with "Eliminated during the first round were 'none of the above' and write-ins... other than Hawaii."

There was some controversy about a teddy bear that was not allowed to vote, because the ballot form had to be signed by the voting member.

Proper Boskonian History
by Tony Lewis

Proper Boskonian is the general fanzine of NESFA. The name was suggested by Dainis Bisenieks. Other proposed titles for this zine included *The Fenway*. It is ostensibly out on a quarterly basis, but, in reality, has only done slightly better than annually. It contains writing, art, book reviews, and the like from both members and non-members. All issues have been 8½" by 11". Issue 0 was dittoed; all subsequent issues have been mimeographed or offset.

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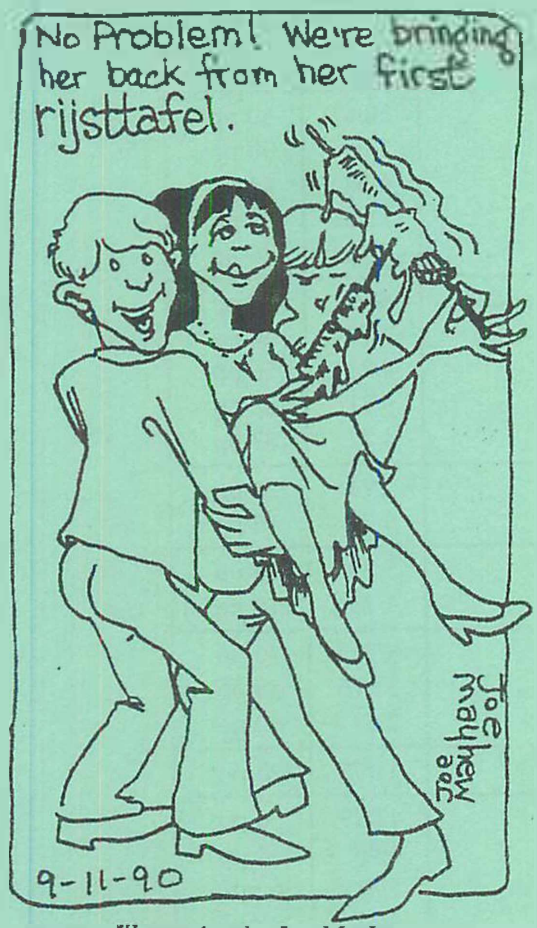

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Book Reviews
by Mark Olson
APA:NESFA

The Price of Admiralty by John Keegan

I've always been interested in naval warfare (ever since reading the Horatio Hornblower books), but this is the first book I've read which discusses the middle level of things: above ship-to-ship tactics, but below grand strategy, what Luttwak (see below) calls "theater strategy."

Keegan looks at four classic battles: Trafalgar, Jutland, Midway, and the Atlantic.

In Keegan's view, Trafalgar was the quintessential battle between wooden ships. Nelson employed novel (and risky) tactics and won a complete victory. Keegan looks at previous sailing-ship battle tactics and contrasts them with Nelson's (and finds them wanting). (It's interesting that the British Navy abandoned Nelson's tactics not long after his death. Were they too dangerous to use or just too new?)

Jutland (WWI) was the only major battle between dreadnoughts, and it was indecisive. The Germans had built up the High Seas Fleet on the Baltic and North Sea to the point where it could challenge the Royal Navy. (Luttwak and Keegan both discuss the basic German error of trying to outbuild the British – it didn't work, and was one of the major sources of the hostility which resulted in WWI.) The situation was that the High Seas Fleet – contrary to its name – stayed in port because the British had moved their fleet to the Orkneys, where it could block off the exit from the North Sea. For the Germans to actually get to the High Seas, they had to defeat the Royal Navy. (In other words, a blockade where both fleets stayed in port most of the time.)

German tacticians were convinced that they could beat the British and finally ventured forth. Due to incompetence on both sides, nothing much fundamental happened. (The biggest event wasn't even noticed at the time: in a skirmish early in the war, the Germans had lost a major ship due to a shell exploding in a turret, and the resulting flash penetrated to the magazine, thus blowing up the ship. They spent the next two years fixing their ships so it wouldn't happen again. The British had the same flaw, but didn't become aware of it until Jutland – by good luck, the Germans never realized that British ships were blowing up too easily; had they known they might have pressed the attack.)

The upshot of the battle was that nobody won, but the Germans lost -- the battle was indecisive, but the Germans never again tried to put out to sea. The British won a great strategic victory from the tied battle.

The battle of Midway is Keegan's choice for the example using aircraft carriers. It's too well-known to be worth discussing in detail. Both Keegan and Luttwak feel that the Japanese defeat at Midway was not so much the issue as the basic question of why they were even fighting at that end of the Pacific. Luttwak goes so far as to say that the attack on Pearl Harbor was a strategic blunder of such proportion that nothing the Japanese could do thereafter made any real difference. Since they never had the forces to attack the US directly, and could not possibly survive a war of attrition with the US, they were lost as soon as they forced the US wholeheartedly into the war.

The battle of the Atlantic is the battle of convoys and submarines. The German High Command thought that it could close off the Atlantic and starve Britain into submission. The Germans failed.

What's interesting here is the description of convoy tactics, the experience of being attacked at night by a U-boat wolfpack, and the counter-measures the Allies took. (It was not pleasant.) A significant part of the problem for the Allies was that there was an "air gap" between North America and England where anti-submarine planes could not operate. While the U-boats operated everywhere, especially in the early days of the war, they were at their most powerful in the air gap, where they could cruise on the surface with impunity. (Until quite late in the war, submarines preferred to attack on the surface and dive only to avoid attack – and they never cruised far underwater.)

The development and building of lots of escort carriers (small aircraft carriers designed to escort convoys and perform anti-submarine warfare rather than to fight other surface ships) ultimately doomed the U-boat, but not before Britain was nearly blockaded. It was a "damned near-run thing."

Highly recommended.

Strategy by Edward Luttwak

Luttwak is probably today's premier writer on matters strategic. Rather than being about some particular country's strategy (he's also written *The Grand Strategy of the Soviet Union*), this book is a general book on strategy at all levels. It suffers some since it is relentlessly general – more specificity in examples would have made it easier to follow. (Where he does get into specific examples, it's fascinating.)

Luttwak's main thesis is what he calls the "paradoxical logic of strategy." He claims that if the paradox isn't there, it isn't really strategy. The paradox isn't easy to define in a few lines, but I'll try.

In strategic situations you are dealing with an alive, alert, and responsive enemy. Your actions inevitably produce a counter-action aimed at further reaction. In fact, the more effective any stroke of yours is, the more likely it is that it will eventually be turned against you. There's nothing magic about this – the more effective your stroke, the more necessary it is that the enemy respond and the more resources he throws against it. Luttwak gives a nice example from WWII:

The British generally were ahead of the Germans in radar development. At one point they put radar on their bombers to detect German fighters. This was marvelously effective, and the bombers often knew about the approaching fighter before the fighter knew about the bomber. Naturally the Germans had to respond, and did so by building radar detectors. (It's much easier to detect radar aimed at you than to detect the bounce-backs of your own radar.) Now the fighters had the advantage – any bomber which used its radar advertised its presence. (This see-saw continued: soon the British built equipment which operated at higher frequency than the Germans could detect, etc. It continues today. Electronic warfare is a potent technique, but it acts entirely against the enemy radars and enemy anti-radars, and the like.)

> [*Ed: Early in the second phase of the Gulf war, we see how potent electronic warfare has been! Mark wrote this review back in 1990.*]

Luttwak analyses several other real-world examples: Anti-tank weapons and their effect on a Soviet invasion of Germany; The WWII German Panzer blitzkriegs; the pre-WWI German-British battleship race (see Keegan, above); and the strategic nuclear standoff. In each case, he comes to some interesting conclusions by applying his paradoxical logic

Some of his discussion seems a little dated now that the Soviet empire has pretty much collapsed (he directs much of his analysis towards the pre-1989 situation in Europe), but the general conclusions and all of the specific detail remain quite solid.

Luttwak seems quite put out at the idea that mere technological innovation can have any real impact on conflict. He devotes most of one chapter to fulminating against the notion, which gained supporters after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, that cheap, one-man anti-tank weapons had obsoleted the tank. Luttwak makes a convincing case that it ain't so (and, I notice, that armies still use tanks), but I think he goes too far. While gadgetry probably has small effect in the very long run, it can certainly end a war. (Consider Keegan's book, above. The escort carrier ended the Battle of the Atlantic, while a technical weakness in British dreadnoughts might well have turned Jutland into a British rout.) I'd say that he's got a good point in that we usually badly overestimate the effect of gadgets (Luttwak's paradoxical logic certainly does operate), but I also think he's overstated his case.

Recommended, but don't expect an easy read.

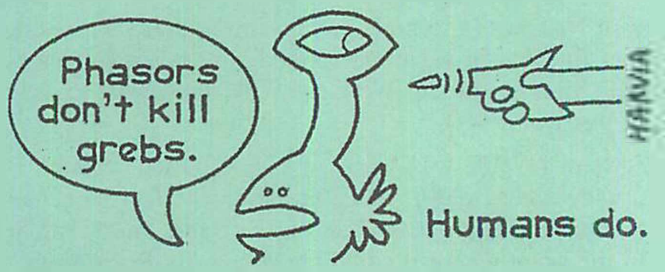


Illustration by Teddy Harvia

Astounding Days by Arthur C. Clarke

A good book, but a dull book. Clarke has done the second half of his autobiography here (the first was *Ascent to Orbit: A Scientific Autobiography*) by sitting down in front of a complete set of *Astounding* on microfilm and paging (so to speak) through the issues and talking about the memories they bring up. It's very disconnected, and some topics are skipped over while others are delved into in excessive detail. (For some reason, Clarke doesn't talk much about the period after roughly 1960. His given reasons is that he had pretty much stopped reading *ASF* by then, but that's really an inadequate reason for stopping his autobiography.)

Nonetheless, it's fascinating reading.

A History of the English Language by A. C. Baugh and T. Cable

At least among Western languages, English's mongrel history is unique – while the other languages have had

their infusions of foreign words, none have had so many as English. And therein lies its unique strength (and its greatest weakness, since English's orthographic weirdnesses make sense if you remember that most of those spellings made perfect sense in the words original language).

English begins as the Germanic language of the Saxon invaders of England in the 500's. It's a typical Germanic language with all the attendant inflections and genders and the like and with a strictly Germanic vocabulary. Essentially nothing was retained from the native British (Welsh is a descendent of their language) and very little from the Latin spoken by the upper classes. Over the next few hundred years, Anglo-Saxon (Old English) evolved pretty much like the other Germanic languages, though it may have picked up a bit more Latin influence than most. The big events were the Danish and Norman invasions.

The Danes conquered most of eastern England (the Danelaw) in the period 900-1050 AD and held and settled it. More importantly, the Normans conquered England in 1066 (one of the two Memorable Dates in history) and in a few years replaced the entire upper class of England with an imported French-speaking aristocracy. For two hundred years, French was as important as English. During these years, Old English lost the complex apparatus which the Continental languages retained and began to approach Modern English. At the same time, perhaps half its vocabulary wound up deriving from Danish, Latin or French.

By the later Middle Ages, English – pronounced oddly, but recognizably our language – was again the language of everyone (except the lawyers). Over a period of about 400 years, English evolved more than the Romance languages evolved since Cicero's time.

Perhaps the most interesting section of the book chronicles attempts from Elizabethan times through the early 1800's to control the growth of the language. In the 1600's many writers complained about the frequency of introduction of foreign words into English (you'd be amazed at a list of words thought to be hopelessly foreign then), while the 1700's seemed more into trying to set up an English Academy in imitation of the French Academy which was just beginning its crusade to stifle the French language. Thank God they failed.

Journey Through Genius – The Great Theorems of Mathematics by William Dunham

Most of you have probably heard of Mortimer Adler's "Great Books" method of teaching the liberal arts – read through Adler's collection of the great books of Western Civilization to become well-rounded. Dunham provides a similar tour of mathematics.

Dunham selects about a dozen theorems which he feels are important enough to be called "Great" and presents them in a considerable historical and biographical context. (This is worth the price of the book right there.) The last theorem dates from the 1880's.

It's quite remarkable, but he manages to present them in such a way that I could comfortably follow the arguments in each case. He doesn't water them down (though he ignores complete rigor when it would detract from following the main line of thought).

The Great Theorems:

Hippocrates' quadrature of the lune
Euclid's proof of the Pythagorean Theorem
Euclid and the infinitude of primes
Archimedes' determination of circular area
Heron's formula for triangular area
Cardano and the solution of the cubic
Newton's generalized binomial theorem
The Bernoullis and the harmonic series
Euler's theorem on infinite sums
Euler's refutation of Fermat's conjecture
Cantor's 15th second diagonal theorum and the non-denumerability of the continuum
Cantor's proof that there exist an infinite number of different infinities

The Cuckoo's Egg by Clifford Stoll

This one's a real winner. If you are at all interested in computer networks (or follow the national news), you've probably heard about the events behind this book. A few years ago, a German "hacker" broke into many military computers by dialing in (through a circuitous route) to LBL computers in Berkeley. He was caught though the efforts of one of the people at LBL and turned out to be a genuine KBG spy. *The Cuckoo's Egg* tells the story of how Stoll detected, traced and eventually caught the guy.

This may sound like a fairly specialized and dry account, but it isn't. To start with, Stoll writes well. He goes into enough technical detail to make the book solid, but the technical stuff really isn't what the book is about.

The real story here is how Stoll changed over the course of a year as he—an astronomer-turned-computer programmer and typical Berkeley semi-hippie and definitely anti-establishment type—dealt with the Pentagon, the CIA, the FBI, and the NSA (not to mention Ma Bell).

This is an excellent book, worth reading by everyone. Highly recommended.

Forgotten Scripts by Cyrus H. Gordon

I'm indebted to Tony Lewis for bringing this one to my attention. Gordon has written one of those books at just the right level to be interesting. This one's about how ancient, forgotten languages are deciphered.

Gordon pretty much limits himself to the ancient Middle East, Greece, and Crete (though now that I think about it, I'm not sure there were any old enough literate civilizations elsewhere). The use of the term "decipherment" was deliberate; many of the techniques for reading forgotten languages are essentially identical to decryption.

The scripts discussed include Egyptian, Old Persian, Sumerian-Akkadian, Hittite, Ugaritic, Cretan (Linear A and B), and Ebla.

Anyone who has read H. Beam Piper's excellent story "Omnilingual" knows that a bilingual—the same text in two different languages or two different scripts—has been a requirement of every successful decipherment. (The story hinges on the difficulties in deciphering Old Martian, the language of a race that died thousands of years before the first Earth man got to Mars and which has no linguistic links of any sort with any human language. The language is cracked when one of the archaeologists recognizes a periodic chart of the elements and realizes that the physical science of a technically advanced race is itself a bilingual.)

In the real cases discussed by Gordon, progress was made only when a bilingual was found (*e.g.*, the Rosetta Stone), but progress also has been made based on linguistic similarities, or cases where the language was already known but the script in which it was written was completely different.

The book contains many illustrations, and it was nice to see samples of some of the scripts. I do find the notations used to render some of the languages in Latin letters to be complicated, but I suppose there's little alternative. I did find them quite hard to follow.

The Atlas of Natural Wonders by Rupert O. Matthews

I got this as a birthday present from my parents. It's a coffee-table book that I'd have never thought of buying for myself. It's quite nice. The author (a Brit) has put together a large book with four illustrated pages on each of about 50 natural wonders world-wide. For each, the first pair of pages is in color, and the second in black & white. The book is about 50% pictures. There's also a map or two for each.

The selection is idiosyncratic. I don't see any real pattern to what is included and what is left out. There is a pair of appendixes at the end which list perhaps 100 more sites, but they are also curiously incomplete. I'm also not impressed with the maps, since they frequently fail to show places mentioned in the text!

All gripes aside, there are some beautiful pictures of some very interesting places.

Venice: The Hinge of Europe by William McNeill

This is excellent. McNeill is perhaps the best historian-writer practicing today, and anything by him is worth reading. Many of his previous books have been on particular historical trends, and thus not confined in time and space. This one looks closely at Venice and its interactions with the Eastern Mediterranean and Europe from the 1100's, when Venice first rose to status as a Great Power until the end of the 1700's, when Napoleon extinguished it as a sovereign state.

A thumbnail sketch of Venice's history: When the great schism occurred between Eastern and Western Christianity in the 1000's, Venice remained in close contact with Byzantium, primarily because it was usually on the outs with the Pope. This was a period when Byzantium was beginning its long decline and the West was rising.

In the turmoil of the times, Venice was able to get exemption from customs duties in the Byzantine Empire, and in the course of about 40 years, used its lower costs to drive out all competing merchants. For several centuries, Venice dominated trade in the Byzantine Empire. During that period (roughly the High Middle Ages) it was one of the Great Powers.

Venice was an unusual society: a city-state ruled by a working nobility. The nobility had the sole right to participate in government and also pretty much controlled trade. (At this stage, the nobility consisted of one or two thousand families out of a city population of only 100,000. It wasn't a particularly tiny minority.) It ruled most of the islands of the Eastern Mediterranean, a decent chunk of north-east Italy, and the Dalmatian coast. (At one point it had conquered most of Greece and pieces of the Balkans, too.)

Venice's fall began when the Turks conquered Byzantium and created a more vigorous empire. Contributing factors were the Portuguese explorations around Africa (which diverted spice trade away from the Mediterranean, the northern European development of the nation-state) which doomed city-states to lesser power status; the opening of trade between Poland and the West (which diverted badly-needed Polish grain from the Black Sea routes to the Mediterranean;, the general collapse of the Mediterranean population and farming and the Catholic Counter-Reformation (which strengthened the remaining Italian states).

When Napoleon approached Venice with his armies in 1797, the Doge and Grand Council abdicated without a fight, ending a thousand years of empire.

One of the more interesting little notes was that Genoa maintained a major trade in alum from the eastern Mediterranean to Flanders and even built specialized ships as bulk alum carriers!

This isn't just a history of Venice, it's also an excellent history of the Orthodox Church and the Turkish empire. These three entities can never be completely separated.

Excellent. Recommended.

Mask of Command by John Keegan

John Keegan is a noted military historian. A previous book, *The Price of Admiralty*, describes the evolution of war at sea by looking at several great naval battles. The *Mask of Command* looks at the evolution of military leadership by looking at four great leaders:

> Alexander the Great, the Duke of Wellington, U. S. Grant and Adolf Hitler.

Keegan looks mainly at the changing role of the heroic in military leadership. In Alexander's time, the leader was heroic: Alexander was in the forefront of every battle, in the thick of the fighting. His men would be led no other way. Keegan terms the Duke of Wellington's style anti-heroic. While the Duke was often exposed to enemy fire, he basically kept out of it as much as he could. Unlike Alexander whose best fighters were his long-time friends and companions, the Duke of Wellington took a decidedly standoffish position with his troops. He was an aristocrat and they were "the scum of the earth."

Grant's leadership is termed "unheroic." Grant was a small-town man and he commanded his armies in a small-town way. He was a skilled graduate of West Point, but he had a group of cronies from his home town with whom he met and talked. He stayed entirely out of the fighting, generally commanding from a few miles behind the front—though in a couple of cases, he was right up there rallying the troops when things got rough.

Hitler is judged to be false-heroic. Hitler, like most men of his generation, had served in World War I, in the trenches on the Western front. Hitler thereafter viewed himself as a military hero (in fact, his behavior in WWI was nothing to be ashamed of). But during WWII, he persisted in pretending he was a heroic leader in the mold of Alexander, sharing his troops and perils when in fact he never approached the front and rarely saw soldiers. Even after he took direct control of the army, he commanded by personal control of the generals. (In an interesting aside, Keegan mentions that Hitler had an enormous appetite for details and read and remembered manuals on military equipment so that he often could discuss, quite accurately, the detailed outfitting of any battalion in the field. And not just what they ought to have, but what each particular battalion actually had. The effect of this was that Hitler was impervious to criticism from his generals. If they ever appeared to be making a point that he disliked, he would turn the discussion to some obscure point of the Mark 23 torpedo. When the general couldn't follow the discussion, Hitler would dismiss the whole conversation.)

An excellent book.

Ancient Roman Religion by F. C. Grant

At one time or another as we were growing up, each of us has gotten interested in Greek and Roman Mythology, and probably has wondered how anyone who isn't a primitive could have believed that sort of thing. *Ancient Roman Religion* does a good job of answering that sort of question, and the answer is complicated.

The basic point is that the gaudy myths of Bulfinch's *Mythology* and the like are derived from, but not part of, the Roman religion. If you go back to prehistoric times in Italy or Greece, the farming tribes living there had collections of Indo-European gods which they probably believed in literally. These gods were probably better thought of as spirits of nature, and most of them were related to the important issues of children, farms, and death. It is unlikely that there was any elaborate theology, though there were undoubtedly myths and stories passed on orally.

The Greeks and Romans developed separately: The Greeks went in for deliberate mythologizing. Hesiod and successors took the oral myths and developed them into better, more systematic stories (still believed-in, most likely), and then as philosophy grew in Greece, the stories were elaborated and exegesized into the amazing edifice we remember today. Whether anyone still believed literally is doubtful.

The Romans went more in the direction of ritual compulsion of the gods. Central to the Roman religion was the idea that a proper ritual carried out in perfectly complete detail was effective, even if the people carrying it out did not understand it. The Romans had colleges of priests who were responsible for performing innumerable rituals. For example, the Arval Brethren (a college of eight or so priests) would each year perform a ritual which involved sacrifices in designated locations of specific animals on three successive days. Certain words were repeated, or a particular song was sung by 27

children of senators both of whose parents were still living.

It's hard to decide what to call this sort of thing. By our standards, it sounds like a high-church superstition. The Romans were not so much interested in worshiping the gods as in getting them to do what they wanted. The Roman gods were decidedly not transcendent!

When the Romans conquered Greece, they absorbed the Greek religious ideas and more-or-less added them to their own. (The Roman religion was incurably synecretist.)

Probably the closest thing either had to our notion of religion was the major philosophical schools: the Stoics, the various flavors of Epicureans, and the Pythagoreans. These were all highly-evolved ethical/moral systems. In the end, the Roman and Greek religions were many layers thick, all nominally observed but equally all impossible to reconcile.

I'm particularly fascinated by the Roman love of rituals and their insistence on precise form. If a priest stumbled on a word, the whole ceremony would have to be started from scratch. The invocations were worded just like a legal document. It might contain a statement that if any part of the ritual was invalid, only that part of the ritual was invalid and not the rest; that if the god did not accept the sacrifice as a gift-offering, the god should accept it as a expiation-offering; that if the offering was brought to the altar missing some of its parts, it should be treated as if it were whole, etc. The Romans also had a temple to the Unknown God, since they didn't want to take the chance that there was some powerful god out there whom they didn't know about and who might take offense. It is remarkable. The more legalistic fans would feel right at home.

Ultimately, the combination of synecretism where the addition of any cult was welcomed and the realization that the philosophical systems (the Stoics and the rest) found the gods embarrassing to include and yet still needed the supernatural proved the pagan religion's downfall. Christianity provided a religion which successfully included Greek philosophy as an integral part of a supernatural system.

It's interesting to imagine what might have grown out of the old Greek and Roman religions if they had somehow survived. (I doubt this would have happened even without Christianity.) I imagine that they might have evolved into something like modern-day Hinduism.

I should mention the book. What Grant has done is assemble about 250 pages of translation of passages of ancient writers and inscriptions dealing with the Roman religion. He puts them in their proper place historically, since they run over 600 years and the nature of the religion changed significantly in that time. It's an opportunity to see what the people of the day felt.

Elementary Particles and the Laws of Physics by Richard Feynman & Gerald Weinberg

Feynman and Weinberg, both Nobel Prize winners, both distinguished theoretical physicists, each presented a Dirac Memorial Lecture at Cambridge University. The lectures were aimed at an audience roughly at the first-year graduate student level. Technical, but not overwhelmingly so. They both had the same topic, "Elementary Particles and the Laws of Physics." Since "Particles and the Laws of Physics," was Dirac's main study, and both attacked it from their own points of view. Their basic point was the same: that fundamental physical law is closely related to the existence and nature of elementary particles.

Feynman's lecture looked at developments in the last forty years in Dirac's own special topic, the nature and existence of anti-particles. In essence, Feynman uses mostly qualitative reasoning to show that the combination of relativity and quantum mechanics forces the existence of anti-particles; *i.e.*, any theory which contains the symmetries of relativity and which is consistent with QM must predict anti particles.

I'm always impressed by Feynman's handwaving—there is no doubt at all that when he died, the world lost the master. "Handwaving" has a pejorative ring, and rightly so. Many people substitute handwaving for thought or explanation. Feynman actually knew what we was talking about, and his handwaving was his way of teaching the central issues while ignoring the superficial. (For all of that, he makes it seem so easy. I've read a Feynman explanation, thought to myself "Of course! How obvious," and only later realized that I understood nothing.

In this case Weinberg's talk was the more interesting. His thesis is that whatever the ultimate laws of nature are, they can't be arbitrary. He believes that we will discover the ultimate laws by discovering that there is only one formulation which satisfies all the symmetries: to be fundamental, a law must have the old Galilean invariances and relativistic invariance as well as newer symmetries like gauge invariance. He shows that his own theory (for which he received his Nobel) is still full of arbitrary constants, and he ends with speculations about future directions towards ever more symmetric (and, hence, less arbitrary) theories.

Perhaps the most fascinating item in the book is Weinberg's discussion of QED, the most fabulously successful theory we have. QED (quantum electrodynamics) predicts

the electric and magnetic properties or matter more accurately than our best experiments can measure (experiment and theory agree within the experimental error). Weinberg shows the Lagrangian of QED, an infinite series of terms, and notes that all but the first three terms are trivially small and hence ignored to get QED's marvellous accuracy. The kicker is that it is possible to make order-of-magnitude estimates of the size of the ignored terms, and you discover

- they are much smaller than our experimental errors (so the good agreement should not be surprising), but
- they grow as energies grow and should be dominant at the "Grand Unification" energy.

So QED isn't all that good after all, but is in a sense a classical approximation to the true theory just as Newton's laws are a classical approximation to Relativity.

It's a good book, but not as good as some of Feynman's. I suspect that Feynman didn't really edit his contribution. Recommended.

SPQR by John Maddox Roberts

For some reason mysteries set in ancient Rome are popular these days. I hope it continues. *SPQR* is unique among those I have read in that it is set in late Republican Rome, just after the deaths of Marius and Sulla, but before Julius Caesar rose to power. The old order is dying, there is too much wealth in the Empire for the republican ways to survive, but nobody is really willing to admit it. The book *The Education of Julius Caesar* does a great job of bringing those days to life.

The detective is a young aristocrat who follows a murder and its convolutions right to the end, no matter who is responsible. He runs into Cicero, Pompey the Great, Crassus, and Publius Claudius/Clodius. and his sister. It's plausible both as a mystery and as something which might have happened in 75 BC Rome. (I didn't have so much of a feeling that the people were all displaced from the 20th century as I have had with some other books.)

I'll not detail the plot, particularly since the taste of Republican Rome which it gives is more important to me.

For some reason, *SPQR* has been showing up in the SF section, but it's purely a mystery. Recommended.

The Mac Is Not a Typewriter by Robin Williams

Sarah Prince told me to buy this, and I don't regret it. Essentially, it is the "secrets of the typesetting masters' as applied to the Macintosh (though it's relevant to any decent typesetting software).

Williams' thesis is that far too many people who use the Mac treat it like a typewriter and inappropriately follow conventions developed for the typewriter. She spends the rather thin book discussing the items, trying to explain what real pros do and why, and suggesting what to do on the Mac.

I've been doing many of these things all along in my apazines (minimal typeface variety; use a serif face for the body and a sans serif for display, use distinct right and left quotes and apostrophes, etc.), but I've followed a number of additional ones starting here.

I disagree with only one of her recommendations: She follows the old typographical convention of putting periods inside quotes even when the sense of the sentence requires them outside. I refuse to do this and will place the punctuation where it makes sense, not where it looks good. (A number of style books now counsel abandonment of the old style, also.)

> [*Ed: I believe in keeping the comma inside the quotes. I don't want to get into a religious argument here, but the Chicago Manual of Style still counsels this practice.*]

The book is well-written, though brief. By and large, her comments are well-illustrated. She makes it clear that her suggestions are for someone who wants to go beyond novice, but that a true master will violate them on occasion. It's ironic that she, herself, breaks the rules in the book. (For example, on the page facing her statement that display text should be sans serif, a new chapter starts with—you guessed it—a big, serifed title. Highly recommended.

The Shape of European History by William McNeill

McNeill is the dean of American historians and, I'm told, one of the few who can write large-scale history and still be regarded as a real historian rather than a popularizer or writer of textbooks.

His introduction (the first chapter) talks about the lack of an organizing overview to the contemporary view of history. Victorian and earlier historians had no doubt that the task of the historian was to detail the events which resulted in the rise of the most perfect civilization yet and to investigate how that advancing civilization and the advance of liberty went hand-in-hand. Since then, this world-view has been challenged and defeated by a combination of increased sophistication showing that the advance of liberty is not inevitable, and the general loss of confidence in the West.

McNeill wrote this book to try to develop a new synthesis of history and to show that there are organizing patterns, without making the mistakes of the past. I'm not sure whether he succeeded—the book certainly presents history cleanly and more scientifically than the old

model, but it is also more complicated. We know more today, and it's harder to have a simple theory which accommodates it all, and more complicated theories, while more true, are often less convincing.

He feels this is necessary since without it, history becomes just a jumble of dates and names, and the purpose of historical research is little more than a job. His view of history is strongly economic in the larger sense: not just the flow of trade or money, but the flow of people and resources in a larger context. It might best be described as ecological. McNeill is acutely aware of the connections which tie everything together.

For example, the general decline of the Mediterranean after the Italian Renaissance stems from a combination of factors, but the biggest may have been the development of heavy ocean-going ships by the Atlantic powers (England, Holland, France, Spain, etal.). Just as in ancient times, Italian dominance survived only as long as there was wealth flowing to sustain it. Once Italy lost its mercantile advantages, it lost its favorable balance of trade, too, and thereafter declined.

I'm always impressed by the clarity of McNeill's writing and the evident love he has for history—it's not just a job for him.

Six Armies in Normandy by John Keegan

Keegan is one of the most significant military historians of our time, and here he's writing about one of the most interesting military campaigns of WWII. Most of you have probably seen the movie *The Longest Day*, a classic film about the Normandy invasion (Keegan seems to like it and thinks it is quite accurate, by the way). The movie, long though it is, is only a small part of the start of the invasion.

The book begins with a beautiful introduction by Keegan telling what WWII was, from his vantage point, the best war ever. He was a young boy, about six at the start of the war, and was evacuated from London with his whole family to the west of England. (Many children were evacuated, and his father, a civil servant, was sent to oversee the evacuees' education in one county.) To him the war was a long vacation in the country far from the bombs and an endless stream of exotic strangers—British Army and later American Army. His introduction is worth the price of the book.

I have always tended to look back at WWII and see how its outcome was inevitable once Britain had survived the Battle of Britain and the U.S. Navy had won the Battle of Midway. Each of these (and they occurred early in the war) were the high water marks of an Axis power. Once the Japanese and Germans had advanced as far as they would, American industrial might and population doomed them. Yet the Normandy invasion didn't happen for 2½ years more. Why? Mainly because the Germans had done a very good job of building Fortress Europe, and a large-scale amphibious landing against that sort of defense had never been tried.

The Longest Day nicely shows the difficulties getting ashore and starting inland, but there was much more to it than that. Between the initial breakout from the beaches and the Liberation of Paris was more than two months, much of it spent breaking out of Normandy.

Here as elsewhere, Hitler was one of his own worst enemies. He spent enormously trying to contain the Allied armies in Normandy—too much so, since when the German armies did break, they had little to fall back on.

Incidentally, the "six armies" are the British, US, Canadian, Polish, French and German. (There was a very sizable Polish contingent, most of whom hoped ultimately to fight their way back to Poland, but few ever made it back—most chose to settle in England after the war when it because clear that the Russians would not welcome back the Free Polish military.

One of the most interesting parts tells of the near-comedy of the Liberation of Paris. De Gaulle desperately wanted to lead the liberation, but his troops were not particularly close. In the end, Eisenhower moved them out of position to advance on Paris. Half of De Gaulle's forces were black or Arabs from the French colonies. They were dismissed and sent back to Africa rather than be allowed to enter Paris.

Another part of the comedy was that Paris wasn't exactly defended and it wasn't exactly undefended. The German commanding general was prepared to defy Hitler's orders to burn Paris, and was willing to surrender, but insisted on more than a token defense.

Silliest in some respects (though possibly of great long-term impact) was the political battle between the various factions of the resistance over who would be in charge of the rising. De Gaulle's representative manouvered successfully to prevent the Communists from occupying power before De Gaulle could get there. Keegan describes them politicking as an army advances on Paris.

The World Beyond the Hill by Alexei and Cory Panshin

I can see why this won the Hugo—it's the most readable and interesting history of SF I've ever read.

I have quite a few cavils, however. To start with, the Panshins get quite a few historical details wrong. I didn't make a list, but it seemed to me that whenever

they talked about items in general history (as opposed to the names, places, and dates within SF) they made mistakes or repeated old mistakes which are lovingly passed on from popularizer to popularizer.

I also have some considerable doubts about their thesis, which seems to me tries to divide the history of SF into the Age of Technology, the Age of Science, and the post-SF age. The Age of Technology ran through Hugo Gernsback up to the ascension of John W. Campbell as editor of *Astounding*. The Age of Science then ran to the late 40's, and the modern, post-SF age started in the 50's. Sorry, I don't see that at all. I see a completely continuous evolution—even Campbell's first few years, the period of fastest evolution the field has ever seen, was still a continuous building upon what went before.

The book stops in the late 40's, though I get the impression that they plan to go on in a later volume. They seem to be leading up to some sort of conclusion that the current age in SF is dominated by some sort of New Age consciousness. Bah.

Illustration by Joe Mayhew

The subtitle of the book is "SF and the Quest for Transcendence," which is very much to the point (I see no real difference between "transcendence" and "Sense of Wonder"). I do think that they somewhat overdo it, though. I don't know either of them but I wonder if we aren't seeing a bit of the over-age hippie phenomenon here. Nostalgia for the good old days of the 60's? For all of that, it's a very good and very readable history of the field. It spends rather too much time (though still interestingly) at the beginning on Wells and Verne and the like, but eventually comes to the Golden Age. That part is fascinating indeed. There's a lot of new-to-me material here about Campbell, Asimov, Heinlein and others. (The Panshins' appear to have gotten quite a bit of material from Asimov, which they acknowledge.)

Incidentally, Heinlein still comes off a stinker. One thing it did for me was impel me to re-read some of the classics. There's a nice follow-up to the book in one of the recent *NY Review of SF's*: Budrys wrote in to the *NYRSF* some months back complaining that the Panshins had ignored Hubbard, whom Budrys considered one of the three greats of the period. Alexei Panshin replied with a long essay examining Hubbard's standing in the field in every way possible: reader polls from the period, critical assessment of his work, inclusion in anthologies, etc, and found him well down in the second rank in every case. Poor Budrys—I once respected him. Back to the book. If you have not done so already, go out and buy it and read it. Highly recommended.

Illustration by L. Halliday Piel

Neglected Authors
by Ben Yalow

Fredric Brown

Fredric Brown can best be described as the O. Henry of SF. During his career, from its beginning in the 40's until his death in 1972, he was unmatched in his ability to write short (and short short) stories. He was noted for the twist ending, frequently for a grim effect. While his novels were often considered weaker than his shorter work, some of them, especially *What Mad Universe* and *Martians Go Home*, are still major classics in the field. His short story "Arena" was later turned into a *Star Trek* episode.

Besides his career in SF, he was a major mystery writer. He won an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America for *The Fabulous Clipjoint* in 1947, and *The Screaming Mimi* was turned into a movie in the fifties.

Major works include:

What Mad Universe An alternate-universe space opera. SF editor Keith Winton is transported to the imaginary world of a teenage SF fan's imagination, and tries to survive a space opera. The novel can be read on many levels, since it's both a space opera and a commentary on fandom. It's also lots of fun.

Martians Go Home A billion little green men invade the Earth. They do no damage (directly), but they can't be destroyed, can't be chased away, and are generally obnoxious to everyone around.

Short story collections:

The only collection currently in print is *And the Gods Laughed* from Phantasia Press. It contains the stories from *Honeymoon in Hell* and *Nightmares and Geezenstacks*. Other collections include *Angels and Spaceships* (paperback as *Star Shine*) and *Space on My Hands*. A *Best of Fredric Brown* collection was issued by Del Rey and the SF Book Club in 1976.

As for individual stories, pick up any anthology – you'll find lots of great stories. Many of the ideas which are now considered to be cliches were first found here – many more cleanly than by later imitators. It's also not easy to summarize a gimmick story, so I won't even try. My favorites include "Puppet Show," "Come & Go Mad," "Letter to a Phoenix," "Something Green," "The Star Mouse," "Knock," "The Angelic Angleworm," "Nightmare in Yellow," "Answer," "Experiment," "Jaycee," "Unfortunately," "Contact," "Bear Possibility," and "The End."

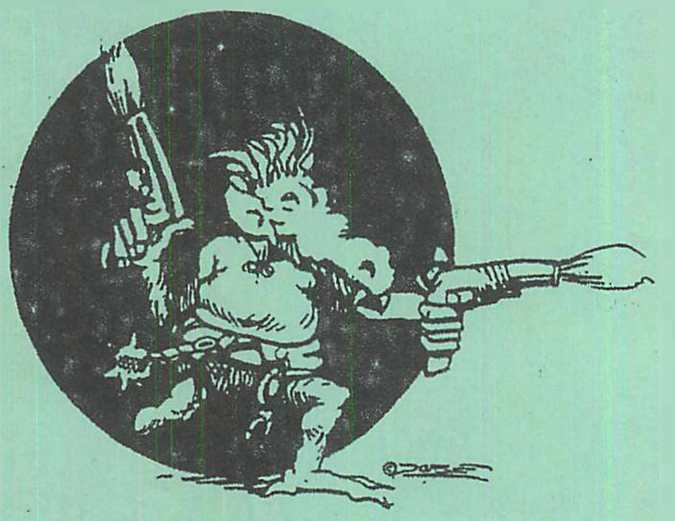


Illustration by David C. House

Letters, We Get Letters . . .

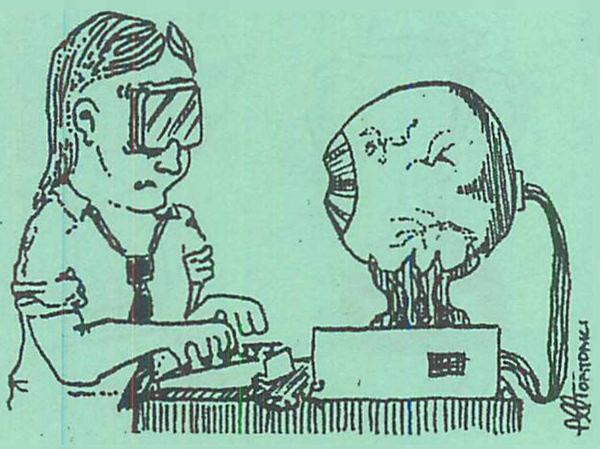


Illustration by Phil Tortorici

Phil Tortorici
May 7, 1990

Thank you very kindly for using the art I sent to you. I am flattered (truly) to be included in such artistic company.

[*And thank, you, Phil, for sending me the toons, and for being the first contributor to 28!*]

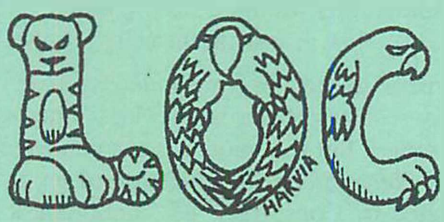


Illustration by Teddy Harvia

Teddy Harvia
May 10, 1990

Merle Insinga's animal letter titles were wicked. Joe Mayhew's alternate Hugo spread was overkill, perfect for the topic.

Arthur D. Hlavaty
May 28, 1990

This loc, alas, goes to you in the traditional form of type on paper, as I am not yet plugged into the world of E-mail. (Though while this zine was sitting in my PO box, I was appearing in a Disclave panel discussion of E-mail.) I can see that E-mail will make pubbing far more pleasant, though. A job description which largely comprises typing other people's writings has little appeal to many of us, though you may recall that in my early fanpubbing days, I had a fairly massive lettercol produced in that fashion.

[*Indeed! Arthur used to publish a digest-sized loczine, back in the "olden days."*]

I am tempted to suggest that only E-mail accessibility would inspire the publishing of an article on the preparation and eating of uncooked aquatic matter, a subject at once as tiresome and as squamous as anything in the works of H. P. Lovecraft. But I do realize that some do not share my reasoned appraisal of this topic; besides, if anyone can discuss such a topic tastefully, yet interestingly, it is Jon Singer.

"Neglected authors" is an excellent column topic. Fredric Brown would be my first choice for such a column. (*Martians, Go Home* was the first SF book I thoroughly enjoyed, and no one was better at the short-short.

The topic of computer viruses interests me, and I was hoping Evelyn Leeper would be able to report some positive aspect to it. Alas, it still appears that most virus activity comes from nothing more edifying than the all-too-prevalant human desire to pee in the common water supply.

I thoroughly enjoyed Leslie Turek's "My Life as a Faned." I am glad to see the current prevalance of good fanzine history like that and much of the material in Dick & Nicki Lynch's *Mimosa*.

Ellen Kushner
May 27, 1990

...especially enjoyed Singer's typically thorough yet charming Sushi Roundup—**and** your kind reference to self & pals on p.44. I also think E. Leeper writes real well—she did the pre-Worldcon reports, didn't she?

[*No, she didn't. But that's an idea the next time there's a northeastern Worldcon, right, Evelyn? Evelyn?* ...]

Jane Yolen
June 1, 1990

Dear NESFA,

You know how proud and honored I was to receive the Skylark at the last Boskone. In fact I set it up on my kitchen table. It was the first thing visitors noticed.

On the Wednesday after Boskone, I was coming downstairs, all dressed up to go to Smith College because I was receiving the Smith Medal given to "Outstanding Alumnae" when I smelled something very odd. Racing into the kitchen, I discovered that the sun streaming through the picture window and through the magnifying glass on top of the Skylark Award had set my good coat on fire.

I doused the flames, sat for a minute shuddering, called my husband, then called Bruce Coville, who had made the speech at the award ceremony. "I guess," I said to him, musing a bit, "I guess I had better put the Skylark where the sun never shines."

There was a long moment of silence between us.

"I didn't say that!" I said abruptly—and hung up.

Perhaps there should be a warning label on the Skylark Award.

(Signed) Concerned Citizen and Award Winner

[*We use this bit of white space to remind our gentle readers that the Concerned Citizen and Award Winner can now add "Boskone 29 GoH" to her list of aliases. Jane Yolen will be the GoH at the 1992 Boskone.*]

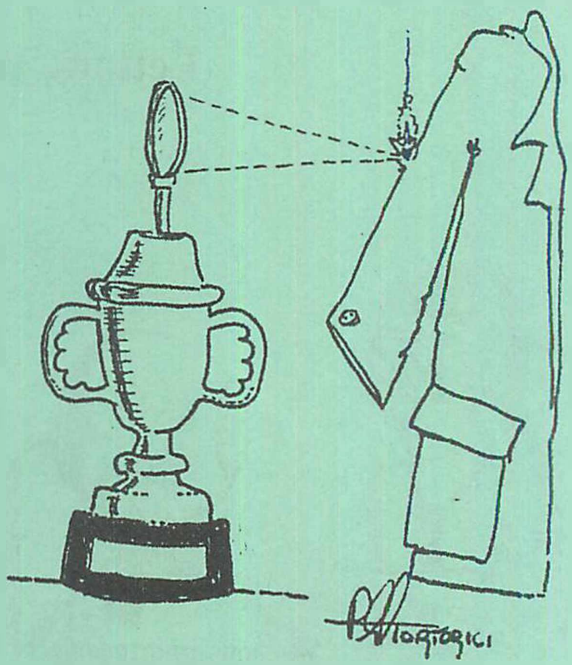


Illustration by Phil Tortorici

Dave Langford
6/2/90

Poets have been mysteriously silent on the subject of cheese*–G.K. Chesterton

* and sushi—Dave Langford

The Fall of '73 issue, eh? That was when I went to my first convention, and I distinctly remember not seeing copies of *Proper Boskonian* being passed around the real fans (and sternly withheld from crummy neos like that Langford). Now at last the mystery is solved...

It was a surprise to see *The Dragonhiker's Guide* reviewed in the murky recesses of this issue. No, it's not a second book of parodies, but the issue is much confused by the existence of *Platen Stories*, a collection of my fanzine stuff published by Conspiracy '87, containing a long rant about SF clunkers circa 1982-84 (climaxing with, of course, *Battlefield Earth*; this particular essay is called "The Dragonhiker's Guide" etc. etc. When asked about this bibliographic complication, the author shuffles off to the bar muttering about some titles being too good to waste. And speaking of cumbersome titles, copies of "The Transatlantic Hearing Aid"–my TAFF trip report, in which Noreascon II is seriously implicated–are quite possibly still available if I can find the bloody cardboard box upstairs somewhere.

Your awesome reviewer is pretty kind to *Dragonhiker*.

To my shame, I never really believed the small press Drunken Dragon would carry the whole thing through, especially after they'd sat for about two years on the rough material and brilliantly missed their planned publication date for Conspiracy '87. The incentive to rework the stuff and give it that final gloss polish just wasn't there, until one day I opened the envelope and reeled back at the site of the proofs--too late! The Drunken Dragon supremo Rog Peyton now keeps talking about a second volume. Any ideas for authors deserving of the accolade will be welcome.

Walt Willis thought I'd like to see a copy of the disk containing a draft of his sequel (written with James White) to *The Enchanted Duplicator*. It's a bit like being a fan reviewer at the time when the celestial chariots brought an early copy of the New Testament to one's door, while from the clouds an apologetic voice of thunder says "I do hope it's up to the standard of Part 1."

The Neglected Skiffy Authors section is a good idea; I've always had a sneaking fondness for Schmitz myself. When I took it upon myself to rediscover the works of Britain's very own Philip E. High, I'd have sent you the piece had you been publishing at the time – but alas, I had to make do with the *The New York Review of SF*, whose editors thought my title too insensitive and raunchy, and changed it to "On High." Personally, I much preferred "Highballs!"

It is too early in the morning to think about sushi. (This condition persists until about 12 noon, when it becomes too late in the day to think about sushi.) However, it's interesting to **read** about sushi, as one might read an H. P. Lovecraft passage concerning blasphemous feasts of unclean viands adrip with luminescent ichor. Excuse me, I have to visit the toilet.

Robert Bloch
6/6/90

Many thanks for #27! What a pleasure to read such interesting material—and encounter the names of people I so fondly remember from Boskone.

Mark M. Keller
6/18/90

Thanks for sending me a copy of *Proper Boskonian* 27... I have an extended review of Raymond Moody's *Life After Elvis*, anecdotes of Americans who saw visions of the King in the years 1978-1979 after he supposedly died. Just what *PB* needs?

[PB gladly welcomes your art and uchronia-writing, but we're avoiding printing reviews of fantasy. Hey, you could always try Amazing, now that it's risen from the dead again, just like Elvis!]

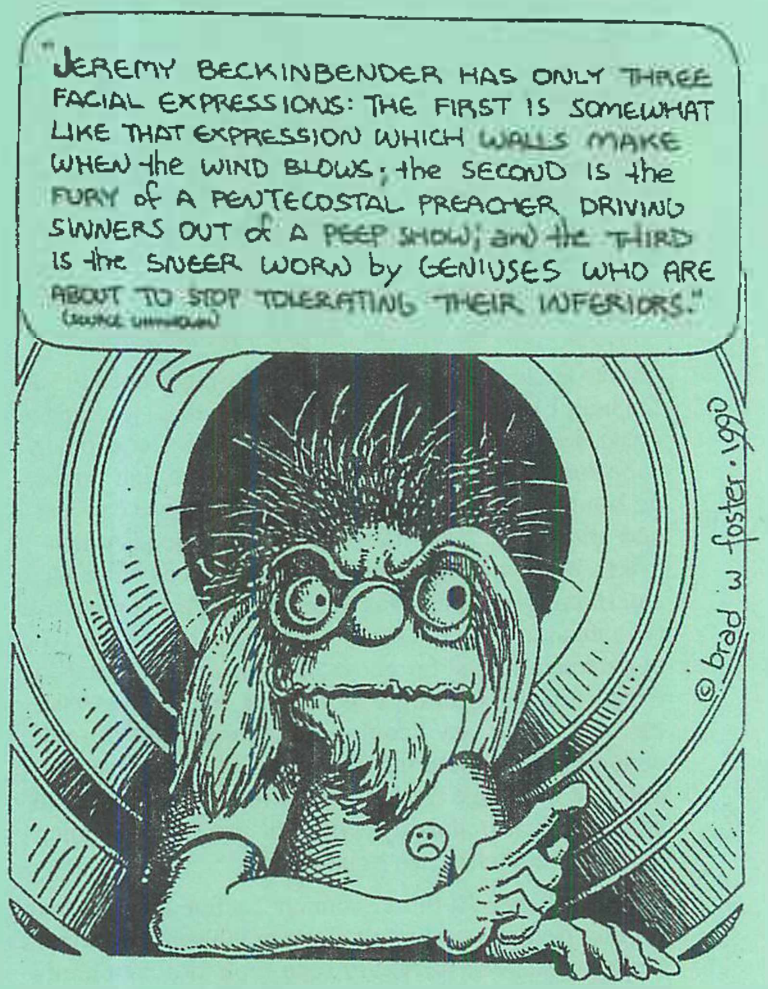


Illustration by Brad W. Foster

Mike Glicksohn
6/30/90

Thanks very much for sending me a copy of the rejuvenated *PB*! I've got several older issues in my fanzine collection, but I don't think I've seen a copy in several years. #27 is certainly an impressive-looking publication that reads very well indeed and I offer you hearty congratulations on producing a very fine fannish genzine. You've got a good feel for layout and design, and while the artwork may not rank with the very top work published in fanzines, it's all competently handled and seems to fit with the mood of the issue. All this (plus much better than average writing) combines to

produce an issue that gave me as much enjoyment as I'd had from a genzine in a long time. I do hope you can produce equally fine issues on a regular basis over the coming ~~months~~ years!

Your editorial makes you seem an ideal candidate for my own contribution to the vast world of fannish philosophies, namely $(IF)^3$. It stands for "If Fandom Isn't Fun It's Futile" and is a hell of a lot easier to say than FIJAGDH! You may consider yourself a fully paid-up card carrying member if you like, but this wondrous privilege does carry with it a heavy responsibility: You must endeavor to have fun in all your fannish activities, and when an activity ceases to be fun and becomes an onerous chore then you must abandon it. Are you woman enough to handle that?

[*Gee, I don't know, but I'll give it my best shot!*]

I know far less about sushi than Jon Singer does (what the hell, I know far less about *anything* than Jon Singer does), so I thoroughly enjoyed his article. Occasionally Jon slips into a tone of implied arrogance that might be annoying coming from anyone else but we can just nod and think, "Oh, it's just Jon being Jon," which makes it acceptable. And he certainly does write an entertaining and informative article. He has a great eye (and memory) for the sort of details that raise this type of personal writing far above the mundane and make it the sort of fanzine fare I thoroughly enjoy. I just wish there was some way I could actually make use of some of Jon's information, but I'm afraid that's impossible: until the mortgage rates go down the closets I'll get to eating sushi is boiling up a bowl of rice and imagining there's some lovely raw tuna on it!

The "Neglected Authors" column is a fine idea, although I found Ben's treatment of Campbell absurdly sparse. Perhaps someone in NESFA can look at a couple of my own favorites: Daniel Galouye and Daniel Keyes, both non-prolific and, I think, under-appreciated.

I missed Noreascon III but I think I can tell Richard Newsome why you don't find old fanzines in hucksters' room: because the market for them is so small you can make a lot more money displaying and selling jewelry, buttons, movie junk, and folksong tapes. (And even books if you want to get totally radical!)

Much enjoyed Leslie's fannish reminiscence, in large part because I never realized she was much of a fanzine fan. It was quite a shock to realize that her initial activity in fanzines may well predate mine, although we obviously followed different paths after that First Contact. I was particularly amused at her description of how primative fanzine publishing was in those days when dinosaurs roamed the primordial fannish swamps, since the method she went on to describe is precisely the method I used earlier this year to publish a long-awaited (at least by me) issue of *XENIUM*. "Primitive," eh? Excuse me while I drag my knuckles along the ground and beat my hairy chest.

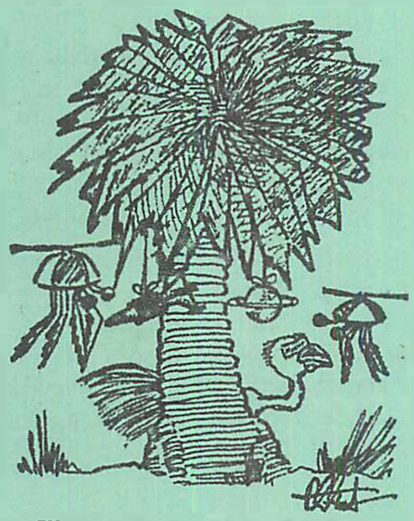


Illustration by Phil Tortorici

Good book reviews: similar to the column in Geri Sullivan's *IDEA* that Jon and I have been a part of. I have far too much SF waiting to be read as it is and I can't possibly stay abreast of all of the new writers coming onto the scene so page after page of reviews of SF books I've never read by writers I've never heard of doesn't do much for me. I found your selection of reviews more interesting, even if I probably won't ever have the time to read any of the books being discussed.

The Baty Roast was probably delightful if you know Kurt and/or have any knowledge of their computers or of their circuits. Since neither situation applies to me, I regret the material failed to entertain. Still, that's exactly the nature of a genzine and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Odd that in their discussion of the Boskone panel on apocalyptic fiction the Leepers make no mention of *The Stand*. Having just re-read the 1150-page revised updated edition, I rate it one of the best armageddon novels I've never read. Is it that King is considered too much of a best-seller or not enough of an SF writer perhaps?

Supporters of the Hawaii bid might like to know that their campaign bore at least some fruit: their mailing outlining the process for a write-in campaign arrived the day before I sent off my ballot, so I bumped Zagreb to second place and wrote in Hawaii. I somehow doubt they will win but I'm certainly rooting for them wholeheartedly.

[*Most of you probably already know this, but, for those who haven't heard, Hawaii placed second in the race*

for the '93 Worldcon. The '93 Worldcon will be held in San Francisco.]

Brad W. Foster
7/3/90

Nice ideas and attitudes in your editorial comments. I think the single line of "Fandom is supposed to be fun!" says it all. My own amount of participation in fandom goes up and down, depending on how much time I can devote to it, but I always do it 'cause it's fun to do. I mean, where else can an artist do such weird illos and find an audience for it? I love it!

I thought the "Star Trek: LOST Generation" parody was hilarious! Makes ya wonder when someone is going to try and do an updated version of *Lost in Space*—what a bizarre concept!

Also way-cool lettering designs for the cover logo by Merle. I did a little monster alphabet myself a few years back, it's a fun thing to work a theme around.

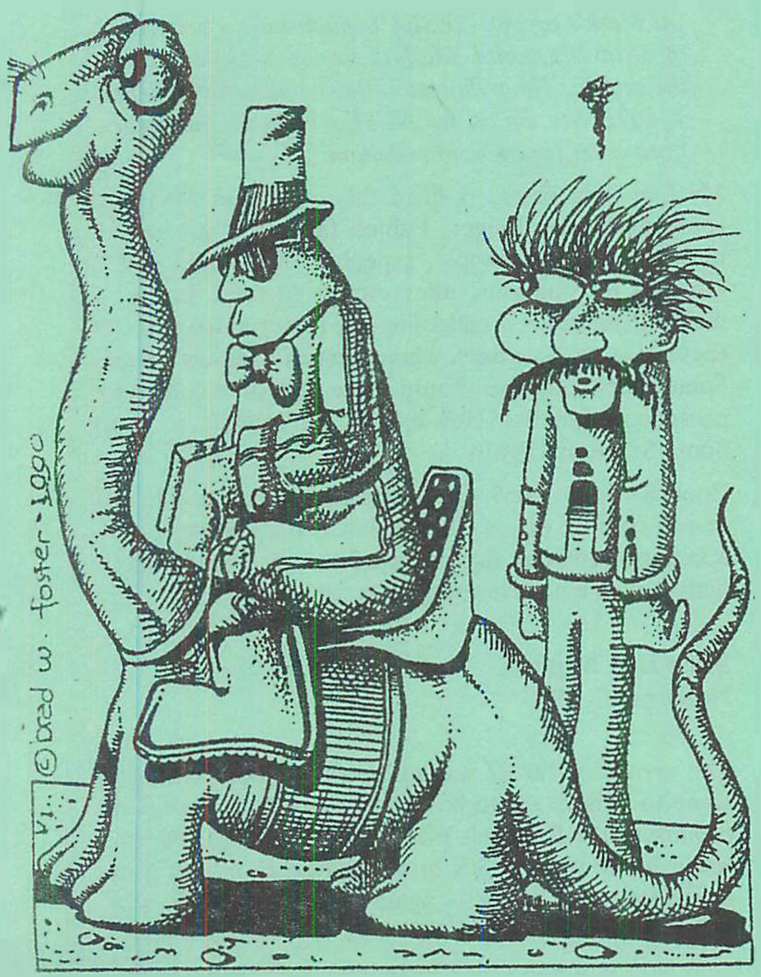


Illustration by Brad W. Foster

Harry Warner, Jr.
7/21/90

It was just like the good old days, to receive a new issue of *Proper Boskonian*. (Well, almost like, because I seem to remember a The having been in the title back then, which seems to have become lost or censored by now.) It's an excellent issue, in which I can only find one editorial blunder of any consequence: your announcement that locs must arrive by October 1. Loc writers are slothful, indolent creatures who often degenerate into laziness when they discover they have months and months in which to do their thing, they are apt to suffer augmentation of their bad habits. Witness how long it has been between my receipt of this issue and the current act of creation of this loc.

[*Gee, Harry, it was only about two months. That's not bad at all, especially seeing it's taken me almost another* four *months just to get this issue moving!*]

I remember feeling envious and wistful while reading Jon Singer's monograph because my decomposing stomach would curl up and die completely if subjected to sushi. I can't even drink water full strength nowadays, and when I must dilute that simple liquid, you can imagine how careful I must be about what I eat.

The Neglected Authors feature is an excellent idea, one which I hope you'll continue. I thought Mark Olson's summary of James Schmitz's science fiction was good. But I'm not sure John W. Campbell, Jr., could be viewed as a neglected author, in view of his fame. And if he does deserve the category because most of his fame came from his editing, then he deserves a longer article about his fiction. There is no mention in these few paragraphs of such things as his delightful Penton and Blake series in *Thrilling Wonder Stories* or the early novels which were finally published decades after they were written.

The Noreascon memories were good, particularly in view of the fact that so little has been written in fanzines about this Worldcon. If attendance had totaled 7200, I wouldn't dare hope every person present had written up his or her impressions for publication, since my eyes tire rather easily and they would feel the strain of trying to read all those con reports. But every article I've seen about this con has contained information not to be found in other published sources, indicating that some sort of a compromise between just a few and completist con reports is advisable.

Leslie Turek's memoirs are also quite valuable for both entertainment purposes and for the preservation of fan history. I hadn't known, for instance, that WTBS sold its call letters to Ted Turner. Come to think of it, he

sort of wasted his purchase price, because today he calls his satellite channel TBS, reserving WTBS for his conventional broadcast television station on channel 17 which can be picked up within 50 miles or so of Atlanta.

You might be criticized for publishing a review of a book about the Thirty Years War which has no real relationship to fantasy or science fiction or fandom. But I'm quite interested in the mundane topic because that conflict is supposed to have played a major role in the course of events that led to the settlement of this part of Maryland: a couple of generations after the conflict had ended, much German-speaking territory was still so devastated from the effects that huge quantities of impoverished inhabitants fled to the New World and eventually settled down in this area after wandering inland from Philadelphia or Baltimore, where their immigrant ships had docked.

Illustration by Ingrid Neilson

Alexander R. Slate
8/20/90

I would have to take issue with you on one thing, I would not call *M3P* a genzine. While an excellent fanzine and my personal favorite for the Hugo, it was not a genzine, it was more of an issuezine (Gee, I just coined a phrase!). As for *Rune*, that's a very underappreciated fanzine that should come out more often than it does.

Neglected Authors: I agree with Mark Olson a lot more than I do with Ben Yalow here. I have enjoyed the Schmitz stories, having read them first in *Analog* before buying the books. I wouldn't necessarily say that he is neglected, if my memory serves me right (which it unfortunately often doesn't) someone reprints at least some of his books every couple of years. Campbell (Stuart) was an okay author, but he never really grew and blossomed as did many of the writers of that period, or as did many of the writers that he "coached" as the editor of *Astounding*.

> [*At Mark's urging, NESFA is publishing a collection of Schmitz's stories. Mark is serving as the editor on the project. The publication date is planned for April 1, 1991. See the ad for NESFA Press on the inside front cover for more information.*]

My Life as a Faned: I liked this piece and wish it could have been longer. I think faneditors are very underappreciated people, especially those who edit fanzines for clubs or other groups of fans. Leslie makes it sound as if collecting the material for some of these fanzines was easy, when most of us know better. Somewhere someone should come up with a course for prospective faneds, "How to Beg, While Holding on to Some Sense of Dignity."

Book Reviews: Mark Olson has come up with a book review column with a unique flavor. It's not every day a fanzine runs one that includes so much other than fiction, on such an interesting array of topics.

Brian Earl Brown
November 2, 1990

The arrival of *PB* 27 was quite a surprise. I'd long come to believe *PB* to be one of the great unfulfilled promises, like Reagan's pledge to balance the budget within three years of his first administration. I'm glad to see someone trying — again — to publish *PB* on a regular basis.

I do wish you good luck in finding the format of *PB* that you like. Developing an agreeable mix of material, and more importantly finding fans who write the sorts

of things you want to publish, isn't easy. This seems particularly so since your list of favorite genzines doesn't include any of what I'd call the great genzines. Of course with years between issues of *Mainstream* it is hard to get a sense of what Jerry and Suzanne are trying to do with their zine. Oh well. *Pirate Jenny* has its moments, but Pat Mueller was in better form with *Texas SF Inquirer*. *Rune*, as so often is the case, is a clubzine in search of an identity itself. *Fosfax* and *M3P* are both highly specialized fanzines, and *Lan's Lantern* is a joke. The genzines I've admired most over the years have been *Mainstream*, *This Never Happens*, and *Pulp*. There are other zines, but *Raffles*, *Genre Platt*, and Fred Haskell's *Rune* are all pretty ancient history now.

[You also forgot Jerry 'n' Suzle's Spanish Inquisition, Don D'Ammassa's Mythologies, Bill Bower's Outworlds, Mike Bracken's Knights and a few other wonderful zines from the late '70s. I disagree **strongly** *with your opinion on Lan's Lantern. I think it's gone from being an enjoyable genzine to being a focused retrospective on many old-time writers. I prefer the genzine, but I appreciate the effort that Lan puts into the retrospectives. My favorite zines of 1990 were Mainstream, Geri Sullivan's Idea, Dave LeVine & Kate Yule's Bento, and Dick Pilz & Roz Mailin's Renaissance Fan. I* **loved** *the December 1989 issue of Rune, but I didn't see a new one in 1990. Likewise, the last Pirate Jenny Pat published was back in 1989. *SIGH* Personalzines have been popular recently. I've received Dennis Virzi's charming Uncle Oswald's Journal, and Leah 'n' Dick Smith's* **long** *epistle on the "joys" of home ownership.]*

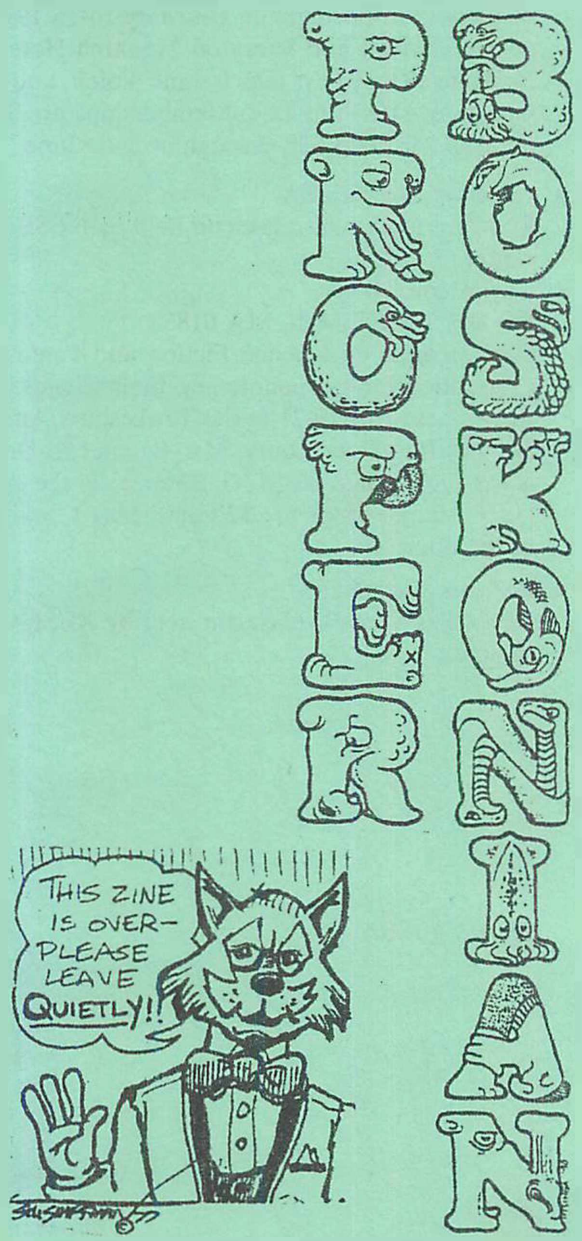
I've never known what sort of articles I wanted to publish in my fanzine until I'd seen most of them, so I know how difficult it is to find a "voice" for one's zine. I suppose one should try to build on a base of SF. Not necessarily short reviews — a dire art form — or anal-critical essays, but something that does remind us why we all are here. I've rarely found articles like that, but that's my problem. God knows why you chose to open this issue with Jon Singer's article on Sushi chefs.

[A combination of loving sushi and Jon Singer's writing. This zine is for anything that interests fans, and not just for discussions of SF.]

I did like Mark Olson's short pieces on neglected authors. There have been many fine, or at least pleasant, writers in SF whose careers were quickly forgotten. James H. Schmitz is typical of this kind of B-writer. It was nice seeing the short synopses of a couple of his novels. A nice touch would have been a quick bibliography, perhaps with the Telzey stories marked. I was surprised to find that Leslie Turek had more of a pubbing background than expected. It's had to imagine a time when having an IBM Selectric was status! Joe Mayhew's two pages of redesigned Hugos was a lot of fun and featured some very clever ideas.

Sad to say — it being a commentary on my misspent youth — but I really enjoyed "Star Trek: The Lost Generation." I remember *Lost in Space* all too well. I watched it every week, and hated every gaffe and faux pas, as I did with *Star Trek*. It's hard to believe that *Star Trek* has gone on to become a cultural icon but I noticed that *Lost in Space* has never quite become a Forgotten TV show either. Rather, it has become a cherished item of Bad Cinema.

[WAHF: Anatoly Paseka, Amy Thomson]



Mass CONfusion
by Laurie D. T. Mann
Local Convention Notes

Upcoming New England Conventions

★ Boskone 29
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 14-16 1992, at the Marriott and Sheraton Monarch Hotels. Boskone's GoH next year is Jane Yolen, and the Guest Artist is Jody Lee. Memberships are $26 until 3/11/91, and $28 through at least June.

★ 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 19-21 at the Tewkesbury/Andover Holiday Inn, Tewkesbury, MA. Samuel R. Delany is the GoH, Hannah M. G. Shapero is the Art GoH. Memberships are $20 until May 1, and $25 at the door.

★ Lexicon, c/o NESFA
Lexicon is a small relaxacon held by NESFA each summer.

★ Lunacon
c/o Lunarians, PO Box 338, NY, NY 10150-0338
The New York City regional con, will be held in Stamford, CT, March 9-11, 1991.

★ 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.

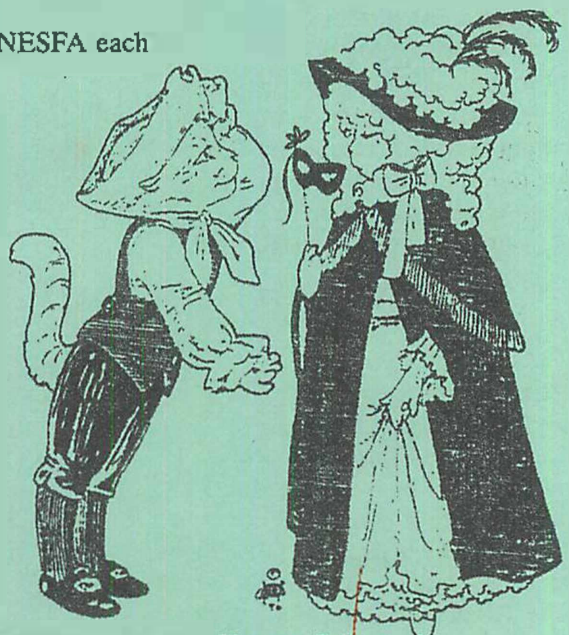


Illustration by Mary Hanson-Roberts