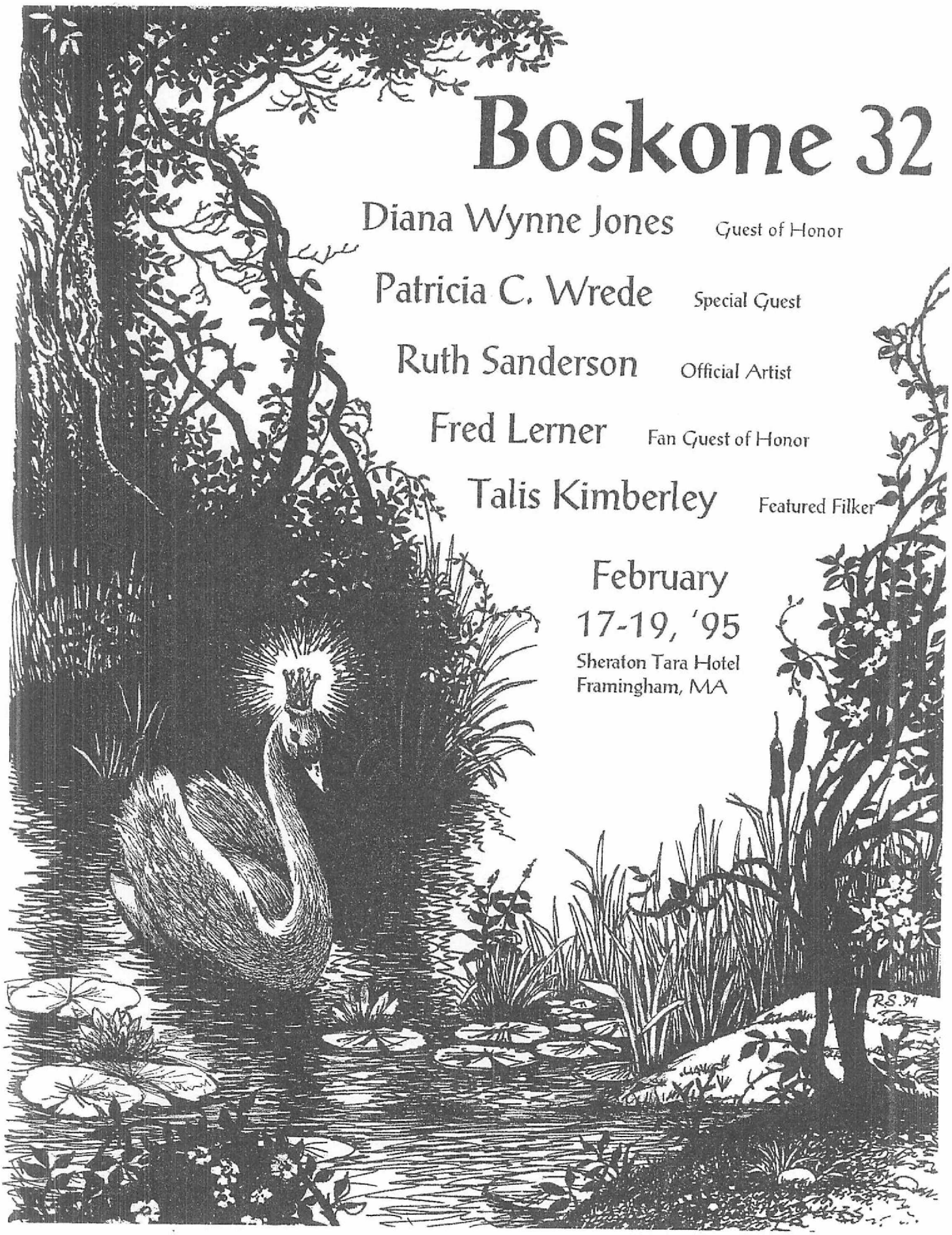
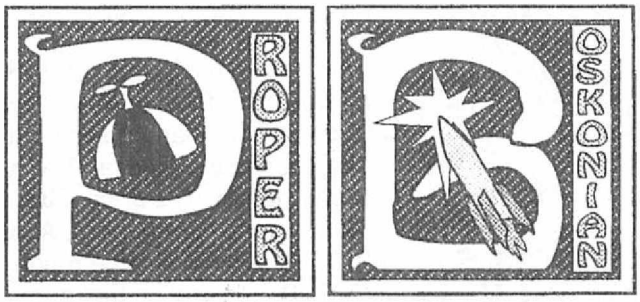
POEZ 33

BOKEN


Boskone 32
Diana Wynne Jones Guest of Honor
Patricia C. Wrede Special Guest
Ruth Sanderson Official Artist
Fred Lerner Fan Guest of Honor
Talis Kimberley Featured Filker
February
17-19, '95
Sheraton Tara Hotel
Framingham, MA
R.S. '94



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December 1994

Proper Boskonian is the semi-annual genzine of the New England Science Fiction Association. Send all contributions (writing, art, LoCs) to: *Proper Boskonian*, c/o NESFA, Post Office Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203.

Editor: Kenneth Knabbe
Proofreader: George Flynn FN

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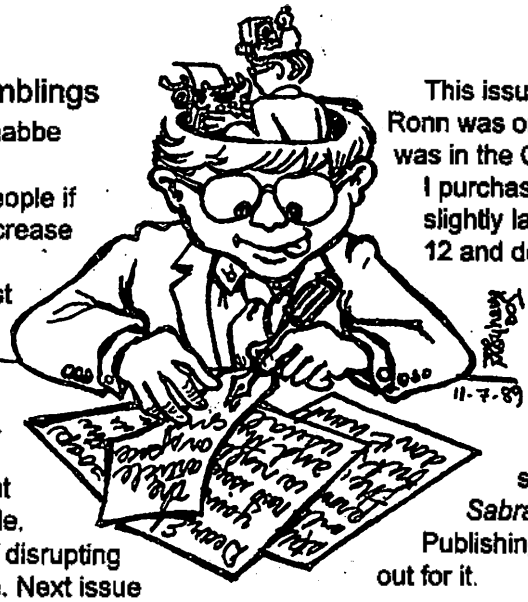
Official Notices

This zine is available as part of NESFA membership ($16 a year for subscribing members); or for a contribution of writing, art, and/or LoC; $3.00 per issue; trade and/or editorial whim.

PB 34 is scheduled to be out in late May/early June. Reports on Boskone, and ideas (material preferred) on what author to highlight next are most wanted, but as always, other material is welcome.

Editorial Ramblings

by Kenneth Knabbe



Last issue I asked people if they wanted me to try and increase the frequency of publication. Between that time and August first, I received some art, and a person who said he was doing a piece for me told me it would not be ready. The only other response I received was a concern about maintaining a regular schedule.

I have no intention of disrupting the June/December schedule. Next issue will be like the last one: A Boskone report, an artist highlight (Merle Insinga), Hugo recommendations with reviews, a short story by George Phillies, and material from all the registered bidders for the 1998 Worldcon.

Subject to my being reappointed editor of *PB*, the December 1995 issue will have a Worldcon report, an author highlight, and a piece of fiction. The other two pieces are open.

I would still like to add an August issue. This issue would include all the material I receive that does not fit into my idea of what the other two should be like. I would include the art that I have received that is not science fiction or related to NESFA. This issue would be more like the ones done by Laurie Mann and Joe Rico, more chatty and experimental. Possible pieces include: game reviews (*Doom* and *Magic* are popular, my favorites are *Hack* and *Titan*), science fiction in the electronic media, a sf crossword puzzle, and the sf club section from *The Whole NESFA Catalog*. The issue would be smaller and would not disrupt the regular schedule. This would be a chance for me to break the "mold" I am establishing for the other two.

The only way this will happen is if people write and approve of the idea.

One of the positive results of my planning two issues in advance, is the cover of this issue. At Readercon I asked Joe Mayhew about doing the cover. Joe asked what I had in mind. I was working on Mark Leeper's article and had it handy. I gave Joe a copy. At ConAdian, I showed Mark the result. We are both very pleased with what Joe came up with.

I have available the short story done by George Phillies that is scheduled for next issue. Any artist who is interested in doing illustrations based on it should let me know. I will be glad to send them a copy.

This issue's back cover is by Ronn Sutton. Ronn was one of the local artists whose work was in the ConAdian art show. At ConAdian, I purchased the original. The original is slightly larger. The area of the art is 7½ by 12 and done in red pencil. According to Ronn, it is the rough for an illustration that appeared in *On Spec* #17. Ronn says that he rarely goes to sf conventions. Most of his work is in the comic book field. Ronn has a comic that should be appearing about now, *Sabra Blade* #1 published by Draculina Publishing. If you like his work, keep an eye out for it.

Next issue I need to be able to announce what author to highlight in next December's issue of *PB*. Of the suggestions I have received so far, I am considering Zenna Henderson and Henry Kuttner.

In the most recent issue of *Niekas*, several people mention that while they were glad NESFA will be bringing Zenna Henderson's People Stories back into print, they would like to see her novels available again.

There has also been interest within NESFA about doing a book of the work of Henry Kuttner.

Either would be a good choice on whom to highlight next. You can help make the choice by sending me material about either, or another author if you want me to choose someone else.

Most of the material for this issue's highlight of C. M. Kornbluth came from five people. I would really like more people to write, even if it is just one short review. I can only publish what people send me. I will write more myself, but more of you readers need to get involved.

One way to become more involved is by entering the short story contest. The inside back cover has a flyer. The winner is guaranteed publication in a future issue of *PB*.

This past September Merle Insinga handed me a folder with a lot of her art. While Merle has not been doing art as long as Joe Mayhew, there is definitely enough available to make next issue an all-Insinga art issue. I have a few ideas on how to arrange her art into a sort of retrospective like I did for Joe.

Anyone who has suggestions on whom to highlight after Merle, please let me know so I can contact the artist.

A TRIP TO BALTICON
as recounted by Joe Mayhew
One Year, 4 Aliens showed up on the Balticon program: Xdotz 14-72 Wugle, a big Smof from the planet Wipy; from the empire; S'Kohwnsan from égregia and Gordon Schnarr from Toronto, Ont.. While Gordon was not the only Canadian at the Con, he was the only one on a panel.
was recruited for the Baltobid Pirates
S'Kohwnsan was bidding
égregia in '38
the first locally sponsored E.T. bid for the WorldCon
FAUCH the
egoboo
Eh?
Xdotz was, of course, speaking Fanzene, an idiom more or less native to Earth's postal system.
OOPS! I guess only their Priests speak it now.


They taste awful!
Greg Feeley and Darko both ripped it apart but it SOLD!
..the Hubble space 'scope or dinosaurs. It was co-author S'Kohwnsan who insisted on all those cats.
I should put more cats in my Trek novels ...for Greg
KEMP
DUFFY
Gordon becomes a roommate of GIRLS!
with 8 costumers...
...who sewed all night
At the masquerade
Xdotz generally agreed with the Vampire M.C.
S'Kohwnsan's editor kept her busy in the bar.
In the morning they ripped off my clothes and had their way with me


PUT OUT MORE CATS
PUT OUT MORE CATS KEMP & S'KOHUNSAM
S'KOHUNSAM
KEMP
AUTOR
So Corflu was my major Fanac until I took up my new fan act. I still pub an ish. Wanna LOC my 'zine?
SWIPE IN
The story I'm going to read was rejected 37 times before Ellen Datlow bought it for Omni - 9 of them from fanzines - each time I got a critique, I rewrote it - so nearly everyone's already read it.
Schnarr
Hey, Gordon, I hear you finally got laid!
the filkers already have a song about...
"Gordon's first 8"...
Do you like Lime Jello, Gordon?
WITT
ROSSE
Perez
Schnarr


They're up in her room doing a one-shot.
She's got him cranking her Gestetner.
(36) Buffy, It's not (38) just a print, (45) I know it's an un-numbered (50) mechanical (60) photo-offset of no (65) real merit (70) but Buffy, this is (80) WAR!
Don't bid on that Print!
My name rhymes with "Triage."
what does it mean?
"Luke Skywalker"
Are you the Kwisatz Haderach?
No. Obviously that's Gordon Schnarr.
Gordon said that we could auction these off for DUFF: → the Down-Undies Fan-Fund!
Oh, Gordy, Your jockys are gonna be a fannish myth!
It was really great meeting you at last. Let's plan on making Balticon next year.
1-17-94

ConAdian 1994

Con Report by Evelyn C. Leeper

ConAdian, the 1994 World Science Fiction Convention, and the 52nd World Science Fiction Convention, was held September 1 through September 5 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The attendance was at one point announced as 4156, but later recalculated as somewhere around 3500. (The higher figure was for people who bought attending memberships, as opposed to people who were actually attending [a.k.a. "warm-body count"].) In any case, it was pretty small for a North American Worldcon. (Last year's attendance in San Francisco was 7642.) It was actually kind of nice to have a small, laid-back Worldcon, though I understand that many people who might have attended were unable to get flights into or out of Winnipeg at a reasonable time and price.

Facilities

The convention center was large enough that the gathering areas never felt crowded. But while some of the rooms were too large for the audience, others were way too small. The alternate history panel on Thursday night was packed (due to lack of any real competition, it seems); there were probably about 120 people in a room with seating for 100, and people said they left without being able even to get near the door, much less get in. This was also true later with such panels as "Designing Diseases" and "Creating an Internally Consistent Religion." On the other hand, at the same time there were much larger rooms standing idle or almost empty.

And let's just say that having filking, comedy skits, or (Ghod help us!) bagpipe players in rooms next to panel items without *really* good sound-proofing is a bad idea.

The Hugo and masquerade facilities were very good. It was stadium seating (banked) rather than ballroom (flat), so unless someone really tall sat in front of you, you had no problem seeing the stage. (At the Hugo ceremonies, the audience may have had a better view of the proceedings than the nominees: we were seated in non-banked seating directly in front of and below the stage.) A large projection screen also helped people to see what was going on. There was no appreciable line for either ceremony.

The one item I felt was missing was a clock, or better yet, clocks. It would have been very helpful to have large clocks strategically placed: in the dealers room and the art show, over the information desk, and in the hallways outside the programming rooms.

Registration and All That Stuff

Registration was so fast it was over before I knew it. Well, okay, not quite, but the only reason we had to stand in line when we arrived at about 1:30 PM Thursday was that the "L" was slightly to the right of where the actual line was. Everything was pre-bagged to make it even faster. It's true that we had to go to the Green Room for our program participant material, but that was right nearby and also very fast. The speed may have been a function of the light attendance, or maybe it was just better organized. [The only reported registration line was Wednesday night. KK]

The badge holders were very large and came only with clips, meaning that if you wanted to attach them to a T-shirt you had to clip them to the collar and then they tended to poke you in the chin.

The newsletters did list program changes and parties, but were frequently late. Friday's 10 AM newsletter came out about 2 PM, but the evening one came out in time for the party list to be of some use. Saturday and Sunday were slightly better, but not by much. Luckily there was a master schedule with the changes written on it posted in the central area. The jokezine scooped the main zine on the Hugos, and had other interesting information besides, leading one person to say that they thought the real zine was supposed to be informative and the joke zine funny, rather than the other way around.

Program Books

The registration bags included the Souvenir Book (with nine short stories as well as the usual articles, artwork, past Hugo and Worldcon listings, and so on), the "Canadian Speculative Fiction" issue of *Prairie Fire* ("A Canadian Magazine of New Writing"), a restaurant guide, the program guide, and a "Passport to the Universe" for collecting stamps and stickers, listing parties, and generally serving as a pocket-sized book to jot down notes in. The program guide included a pocket program of sorts. The center sheets were schedules for each day, with Thursday's innermost, so you could detach one double sheet at a time, and have in addition to the schedule a program grid, a map of the convention centre, a map of Winnipeg, and extra program notations. The program book also had brief descriptions of the program participants and an index of panels by participant.

As before, I had pulled a copy of the schedule off the Net before the convention. This year was slightly

better than last year: the Net copy was posted fifty-two hours before we were leaving for the airport instead of last year's thirty-six hours.

Green Room

The Green Room was not open before evening panels, which seems to imply that the convention planners had a somewhat different idea of its purpose than I did. If it is to serve as a gathering place for panelists to discuss their topics, it is needed in the evenings as well as during the day. The Program Book, however, described it as a place for panelists to get away from it all, not that there was that much "all" to get away from. Coffee was usually available (there was a brief shortage on Sunday morning — I think they underestimated the effect of Saturday night), and chips, raw veggies, and small cakes throughout. (There were also electrical outlets where I could plug my palmtop in and save battery power. This may become a more common request, and I heard some people talking about providing Internet hookups at future cons!)

Dealers Room

ConAdian was five times the size of Boskone, but the ConAdian Dealers Room (a.k.a. the Hucksters Room) was only about twice as large as the one at Boskone. And the proportion of book dealers was very low, maybe about a quarter of the dealers. Apparently the customs broker who was supposed to help American book dealers get through customs lost his bond, so most American dealers couldn't be bothered going through all the hassle.

Art Show

I find that I have less and less chance to get into the art show these days, due to my compulsion to attend panels. I did pop in for five minutes to see the Hugo nominees, and Steve Hickman's space stamps look even better in the original, which they managed to borrow back from the United States Postal Service. Every other time I had a free hour, the art show was closed. Because Rosh Hashonah started at sundown Monday night, many convention-goers were leaving early Monday, so the convention had pick-up on Sunday as well as on Monday. [I found the art show quite small (about the same amount of art as at Boskone), but the quality was high. The customs difficulties caused many U.S. people to not display/buy art but I saw several Canadian artists I had not seen displaying art before. KK]

Programming

ConAdian appeared to be very lightly scheduled — it had only 287 program items (though this count doesn't include events such as the Hugo ceremonies, or films or videos). ConFrancisco had 492 program items; MagiCon had 420, Chicon V 520, ConFiction 337, and Noreascon 3 833 (all not counting films or autograph sessions). ConAdian also had 24 autograph sessions and 24 readings, and 74 (!) filking items. (Previous convention counts probably included their filking tracks.) This convention also scheduled more lightly at dinnertime, because I actually could eat dinner every night without missing something I wanted to see. One reason for the smaller program is of course the smaller attendance.

However, the programming *process* left some people quite unhappy. On the surface, it looked fine. Potential program participants were sent a questionnaire asking, among other things, for suggested program items. The second mailing had a list of all the suggestions and asked participants to check out which they were willing to do. Unfortunately, apparently no culling or combining of similar topics occurred between these two, and the result was that there were 46 items listed under "Gay/Lesbian" (often with very similar subjects) and only 13 under "Television & Films." This did not reflect the final mix at all, but left at least one major media person somewhat irked at what he saw as a shoving aside of media. (This might explain why the media presentations from the studios were less substantial than at other conventions.) And looking at the list, I can say with a fairly high degree of certainty what happened. As the items were suggested, they were numbered sequentially. So the ones I suggested had sequential numbers, followed by the ones Mark suggested. 39 of the 46 gay and lesbian items are sequentially numbered, so I suspect that they were suggested by either one person or two or three people who sent in their forms together. (And they no doubt expected that this long list would be somewhat edited.) They weren't, and the result was that this "track" had more proposed panels than any other track except "Science Fiction" — more than "Space Exploration," more than "Fantasy," more than *anything*. While the final program had a reasonable balance in all tracks, the initial list may have generated some doubts as to the focus of the convention.

Given that it's impossible to see everything at a Worldcon, I will cover just the programming I attended, with a few comments on a couple of other items.

Panel: Genre Crossing
Thursday, 3 PM
Joe Haldeman (mod), Adrienne Foster,
Peter J. Heck, Ron Sarti

Description: When is an SF story not an SF story? At some point one of the panelists said that "genre" was defined as a "category of art distinguished by definite style, form, or content." This is probably useful to keep in mind.

As might have been expected, this spent a lot of time talking about marketing. In fact, there were really only two questions discussed: is there something antithetical between some pairs of genres, and how do you sell a genre-crossing novel?

In regard to the first question, someone cited Paul Di Filippo as having listed the attributes of the various genres. For example, in science fiction there are no gods, humans are not special in the universe, reason rules, and so on. Fantasy reverses these. Horror is a form of fantasy, but can seem rational, and the special place humans have is a bad one. However, the panelists also noted that these rules are not iron-clad; Arthur C. Clarke in particular has broken them often:. "The Star" and "The Nine Billion Names of God" are both science fiction stories with a god or gods. (Well, I might argue that "The Star" is ambiguous.)

Isaac Asimov also wrote about the difficulties of mixing genres, in particular science fiction and mysteries. The problem there is that in a mystery (at least of the type he was describing), one needs to give the reader enough information to solve the mystery him or herself. This means that the solution can't be based on some new science fictional concept or invention: you can't have the criminal caught because the chair in the room is actually a shape-shifting alien unless you've laid enough groundwork for that.

More time was spent discussing marketing. Foster says she can't sell her Gothic mystery novel because no one knows how to market it. Heck claimed that science fiction romance gets marketed as science fiction, but Foster contradicted him, and from what I've read in *Publishers Weekly* Foster is right. Many of the romance publishers are coming out with special lines of time travel and even alternate history romances, but they are marketed as romances.

Heck gave as a possible genre-crossing example setting a "Star Trek" story in the Old West. But he said we need to ask if the story actually adopts Western elements, or simply keeps only science fiction elements in an Old West setting. Most "Star Trek" genre-crossing pieces are what were later called cop-outs. (Another example would be the use of various genre settings for porno novels: they don't actually adopt the elements of the genre they are imitating.) Of course, as was noted, "Every reader reads a different book."

Haldeman said that in genres in general, details count (since they are often what defines the genre). So if you like science fiction details, you might like police procedural details. Indeed, there is a greater cross-over to mysteries than any other genre by science fiction readers. As cross-genre works, there are the "Lord Darcy" books by Randall Garrett (alternate history fantasy police procedurals). Straight mystery authors popular with science fiction readers include Carl Hiaasen, John D. MacDonald, and Arthur Conan Doyle.

In vampire horror historical fiction, we have Barbara Hambly's *Those Who Hunt the Night*, as well as a fair number of Nazi vampire stories.

Our mode of reading may also make a piece seem to be cross-genre, at least in some sense. Anne McCaffrey's "Pern" books are science fiction but seem to be read as fantasy. R. A. MacAvoy's *Tea With the Black Dragon* is fantasy, but reads more like a science fiction novel. Somone in the audience asked about Stephen King, especially his "Gunslinger" series; Haldeman replied that you can't ignore King but you can't generalize from him either. One of the panelists noted that Dean R. Koontz is another author who is to some extent his own genre, though I might claim that is more a statement about marketing than about the novels themselves. Here again we see the panel veering into the discussion of marketing and away from the discussion of art.

One reason that King and Koontz are their own marketing categories is that people seem to buy books primarily based on author. Heck cited a survey by Tom Doherty of Tor Books which showed that the factors in determining book purchases by readers are, in descending order of importance: author, word of mouth, cover material, reviews, and other.

Haldeman thought that King will be read in the future as a recorder of the mid-20th century, much as Dickens is read as a recorder of 19th-century English society.

According to the panelists, one reason that hard science fiction may be less involved in genre-crossing than "softer" versions is that hard science fiction needs more words to do its story properly, so there are fewer left with which to build another genre. This is true of other media as well: Mark Leeper talks about how the original *Highlander* consisted of fantasy, sword-fighting, and rock music. When the American distributors wanted the film shortened, it was the fantasy that got cut.

Another reason one doesn't see hard science fiction crossed with horror or fantasy is that, as was suggested in the initial description, there is something

antithetical there. Hard science fiction fans want facts, not ghosts. Or as someone clarified, "It's not that we don't like ghosts, but we want them in fictional universes, not the real one."

One genre that wasn't mentioned until nearly the end of the hour is the mainstream literary novel. In this sense I might say that John Crowley and Jorge Luis Borges are in this genre and also in fantasy (though not in science fiction per se). Yes, it's true that Borges wrote short stories rather than novels, but I think the person naming the category was just being sloppy, in much the same way people talk about the Hugo for Best Prozine Editor instead of Best Professional Editor (as in this year's Hugo ceremonies).

I asked about the fragmentation of the market into an ever-increasing number of smaller genres. If genres are defined by how things are filed in Barnes & Noble (for example), then it seems as if a new genre is being created every few months: African-American literature, women's literature, gay and lesbian literature, etc. The panelists agreed that there were new genres in this sense, and that it did create problems, although none addressed the issue of readers becoming ever more compartmentalized and narrow in their reading from seeing just a narrow range of books in their section of primary interest.

Haldeman wrapped up by saying that his theory is that there are two ways to entertain people: give them what they expect, or surprise them, and that cross-genre pieces primarily work by doing the latter. (He also plugged his upcoming novel *1968*, a "literary novel with science fiction fans as characters.")

Panel: SF Origins
Thursday, 4 PM
Bradford Lyau (mod), Arthur Kyle, David Kyle, Jean-Louis Trudel, Ariane Von Orlow

Description: Are we running the Chicken and the Egg theory again? How did SF begin?

Well, it seems as if to some extent, this question is just a fancy way to get into the old argument of what exactly is science fiction. Lyau claimed that the problem with this topic in particular is that we have a Garden of Eden complex — we want one single source.

At least some of the panelists contended that science fiction as a genre emerged from a background, that of the Scientific Revolution, which also saw the birth of the modern novel and various other art forms. (One assumes this applies mostly to the West; the Japanese novel dates back almost a thousand years.) Arthur Kyle thought that arguing too much about where science fiction started might lead us to lose sight of what it is. David Kyle emphasized that we couldn't have science fiction without a technological background to support it, but said that lately "science fiction has been over-shadowed by fantasy; fantasy rules the roost." Part of that technological basis is also the idea of change, as he explained later. In the 19th century, change became standard. For example, sons could follow some occupation other than that of their fathers.

Trudel saw science fiction as "a social phenomenon, an idea, an artform." He pointed out that Cyrano de Bergerac did a lot of what Swift did — used fiction to disguise the actual targets of his attacks. Both wanted to say things about what was going on around them, but attacking people and ideas straight out was too dangerous, so fiction — especially science fiction or fantasy — provided a safe cover.

Von Orlow returned to the idea of a technological basis for science fiction, and said that since science as we know it started in the 17th century, science fiction could go back that far. In addition to the usual progenitors (Cyrano de Bergerac's *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon and Sun* [1657] and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* [1726]), she also mentioned Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1638). This led Trudel to note that Lucian of Samosata (2nd Century C.E.) was the first author to say explicitly that what he was writing was fiction (even though the title of his work was *True History*). And the use of a demon for getting to the moon in Kepler's *Dream* (1634) was not all that different from the use of faster-than-light travel today, just couched in the terms of the time.

Some other ideas were discussed. For example, science, and hence science fiction, deals with humanity's relationship to knowledge and what we can and can't know. The Western scientific view is much more inclusive about what we can know than, say, that of an Eastern mystic. Does this make science fiction a purely European concept (including of course European-derived countries as well)? The consensus was yes, unless you want to extend science fiction to include myths.

The term "science fiction" was of course invented by Hugo Gernsback. Jules Verne called his works "imaginary voyages"; H. G. Wells called his "scientific romances." "Fantasy" might be appropriate, but is not as constraining as "science fiction." In regard to the implied connection of "science" and "science fiction," which is not always there, Lyau said that "science fiction" was a term we were stuck with, much as we have the term "Romantic Era" to describe a period that has little to do with what we think of as romance.

Brief mention at the end of the hour was made of early science fiction in other forms, particularly in

music with Delibes's *Coppelia* (1870) and Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffman* (1881).

Recommended further reading on early science fiction includes the first two chapters of Neil Barron's *Anatomy of Wonder,* Russell Freedman's *2000 Years of Space Travel* (a young adult book, but quite comprehensive), Sam Moskowitz's *Science Fiction by Gaslight,* and Brian Aldiss's *Trillion Year Spree.* Aldiss, like most literary historians, lists many "noble ancestors" but still says that modern science fiction began with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Mary Shelley also wrote *The Last Man* (1826), which Bantam is reprinting in October.

Panel: Should SF Have Rivets?
Thursday, 5 PM
Ken Meltsner (mod), Maia Cowan, Bart Kemper, Jonathan V. Post, Allen Steele

Description: Everything in life and beyond has a structure, but must we know the "science" behind every facet of existence?

The panelists started by asking the question, "Has old hard science fiction held up well under our changing knowledge of science?" And their answer was, "Yes and no."

As elaboration, Steele said that he recently re-read Wilson Tucker's *Year of the Quiet Sun,* written thirty years ago, in which people are sent to the future, but it was the future of when he wrote the book, so it's our past. Or rather, it's not our past. What holds up in the book, according to Steele, is not the history, but the science: the time machine. On the other hand, Poul Anderson's *Brain Wave* is dated technology-wise, but the central idea holds up. Post recommended a book on the physics of time travel in science fiction (he thought it was by someone named McVey, but I suspect he was thinking of *Time Machines: Time Travel In Physics, Metaphysics, & Science Fiction* by Paul J. Nahin). Post also summed up many people's view on out-dated science in his description of E. E. Smith's work: "Its rivets may have been rusty, but they're real rivets."

Cowan said she was all in favor of science, but she was not enthralled by "fascinating explications of angular momentum." Kemper felt that it was important at least to be accurate to current knowledge, but Cowan felt that even that was not necessarily required. And Steele seemed to agree that this may be an unnecessarily stringent requirement when he suggested that if up-to-date science were so important, books should come with an expiration date on the cover ("Do not read after January 1, 2001"). Post observed, "If the pace of science continues to accelerate, writers will not be able to keep up, and science fiction will become a branch of history."

Maybe because of this, short-term hard science fiction has largely been replaced by techno-thrillers. (Oddly enough, Tom Clancy, the acknowledged master of this field, says, "I don't think I'm an SF writer, because I don't know that much about science.")

Cowan insisted that science in a story should have a point, which led someone to ask just what was meant by "rivets" anyway. Someone defined rivets as "lots of explanations of science"; someone else said it's when science is one of the characters. Post said that "Melville had wooden rivets," and pretty much everyone agreed that whatever rivets were, Melville had the whaling equivalent.

Both Post and Steele suggested that "rivets" could sometimes be footnotes or, better still, hypertext. But rivets sometimes serve a plot function: use them early to convince your reader you know what you're talking about, and it's easier to slip something through later. Someone has called this the "Fleming Effect," since Ian Fleming used it in the James Bond novels to establish realism.

If you really like rivets, there are a lot of them out there. Larry Niven's *Ringworld,* Isaac Asimov's *Nemesis,* and just about anything by Hal Clement are full of rivets.

Someone said, "People will forgive a lot if it's a good book," which led Janice Eisen (in the audience) to observe that it's easier to forgive outdated science that outdated sociology. The example she gave was the book in which "space housewife meets space husband at door with space martini." Unfortunately, this got everyone off on a tangent about the perceived domination of the field by men, and how it is seen as a male preserve.

When the panel finally got back on track, the panelists were asked for their favorite rivets. Post liked the nine-month voyage to Jupiter in Arthur C. Clarke's *2001,* for which he saw Clarke's calculations in the margin that showed that length of time was right. Cowan liked the attention to biological and sociological rivets in Donald Kingsbury's *Courtship Rite.* Steele liked Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon,* especially the first chapter. Kemper liked *Starship Troopers,* especially after having been in the paratroopers. (I have a fondness for H. Beam Piper's "Omnilingual.")

For "unfavorite" (or missing) rivets, Cowan mentioned Michael Kube-McDowell's *Exile,* which postulated a society in which women held all the property, but men were the ones educated, etc. "How did the women hold onto the property?" she had asked Kube-McDowell. "Magic" was his answer

(somewhat facetiously, one supposes). Steele mentioned Dale Brown's *Silver Tower*, in which there is a very accurate space station, with no artificial gravity, in which one character picks up, drinks from, and then sets down a cup of coffee.

Panel: Alternate Histories
Thursday, 9 PM

Evelyn Leeper (mod), Ginjer Buchanan, Glenn Grant, Philip Kaveny, Allen Steele, Harry C. Stubbs

Description: If you could change one event in the past, how would today's history change? What are the rules of alternate histories?

[Thanks to Mark, who took copious notes at this on his palmtop, and then downloaded them to mine.]

Everyone introduced themselves. Steele is a writer who has written some alternate history stories (notably "Goddard's Children"). Grant is a reviewer, writer, and editor; he never wrote any alternate history stories, but he did review *The Difference Engine*. Stubbs (Hal Clement) had an even more tenuous connection to alternate histories — he just reads the stuff. Kaveny is an author, and is interested in alternate histories as an analytic tool. You all know who I am, or if you don't, this con report will probably tell you.

We had a whole list of questions sent to us before the convention — questions which we had in turn suggested. The one I chose to start with was, "What is the appeal of alternate histories and why are they so popular?" Steele thought that there was a basic appeal in seeing what might have happened if things had been different, in part because we see dividing points in our own lives: almost being hit by a car, choosing one school over another, and so on. His favorite Civil War story, for example, was about when Lee wrapped his cigars with his battle map and then left it behind at the campground, where Union spies found it.

Grant felt there were three aspects to the appeal, which he described as "funny, weird, and scary." It's funny because you can play with irony: what if Keats were a computer hacker? It's weird because seeing history differently is inherently weird. It's scary because you can see how easily things could be different: a bolt missing on the *Enola Gay* could result in a different plane with a different bombardier, etc. (a reference to Kim Stanley Robinson's "The Lucky Strike" and also Robinson's "A Sensitive Dependence on Initial Conditions"). Steele used his own story "Goddard's People" as an example: what if the German rocket program had gone in a different direction?

Stubbs thought part of the appeal of alternate histories was that they get great arguments going. They also give people the ultimate excuse: "with so much in play, it wasn't my fault." Of course, the reverse is also true: every little thing you do and decision you make can have vast consequences.

Kaveny's view was that alternate history is the "bastard stepchild of history." He doesn't feel that the cigars had any real effect on the battle. But mainstream history gets you thinking things occurred this way out of necessity, and alternate history shows this is not true: we need causality. And it reminds us that perhaps our analysis is not as good as we thought. Kaveny also mentioned that much of the military discussion on the Internet is about alternate history.

Returning to the appeal of alternate histories, I said that there seem to be two categories of people who like alternate histories: the optimists, who want to read about how things could be worse; and the pessimists, who want to read about how things could be better. The example I gave was Mark Olson's observation that French alternate histories tend to be those in which things are better — for one thing, everyone speaks French.

Buchanan said that the whole game of science fiction is "What if?" If I make this change, what will happen? She added that if you have read Susan Shwartz's "Suppose They Gave a Peace," you realize that things may turn out the same anyway.

I then asked the panelists the question that always seems to get asked: what are the classics and what do you like, and why? Buchanan said that she had thought no one could improve on Ward Moore's *Bring the Jubilee*, but Harry Turtledove's *The Guns of the South* topped it. I said that I knew Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* was well thought of, but it did little for me. (Dick wrote it using the "I Ching" to plot it, which explains a lot. Dick later talked about how the "I Ching" would lead you along and then betray you.) Stubbs liked L. Sprague de Camp's *Lest Darkness Fall*, because of the way the protagonist used technology to try to prevent the Dark Ages; he loved the details (the rivets, to hearken back to another panel). Grant couldn't think of one, because alternate history wasn't his favorite genre, but he did say that *Interzone* has them frequently. Buchanan also mentioned Benford's *Hitler Victorious*, which reminded Grant that there was a recent issue of *Asimov's* which ran not one, but two, stories about alternate worlds in which Fidel Castro became a baseball player.

William Gibson and Bruce Sterling's *The Difference Engine* was mentioned by Grant as having one of those ideas so great (that Babbage could have actually built his machine), that when he heard it he said, "Oh, God, this would be wonderful." Steele said he also liked this book, and that the people at

Scientific American had built Babbage's machine and it worked. Steele particularly liked the scenes describing the huge machines.

Steele said, however, that the book that really "got" him was Michael Moorcock's *Behold the Man*, and it was all the rest of the panelists could do to keep him from giving away the story. He thought it took a lot of courage for Moorcock to write about Jesus and the Crucifixion, though today's readers may not realize it. I noted that other writers have done it (Joe Lansdale, Brad Linaweaver, Kirk Mitchell, and Frederik Pohl, among others), but they don't dive into it the way Moorcock does. (Actually, one may ask whether *Behold the Man* is an alternate history, or just a secret history, but it is almost always listed as alternate history.)

I filled in the gaps by listing various classics the others hadn't: Randall Garrett's "Lord Darcy" stories, H. Beam Piper's *Lord Kalvan of Otherwhen*, Keith Roberts's *Pavane*, and Norman Spinrad's *The Iron Dream* (which Steele said he had always enjoyed, because it "pulls off a hat trick"; with a premise of being a science fiction novel written by Hitler, "It is definitely a sick pleasure, with a lot of sick shit"). I noted that a made-for-cable movie of Robert Harris's *Fatherland* will be on HBO this fall. Len Deighton's *SS-GB* was another "What if Germany won the war?" book.

Someone mentioned the Leo Frankowski books, which Kaveny said he hated but read passionately. I said that I thought the first one interesting, but got pissed off with his treatment of women.

Someone asked how you defined alternate history, since all fiction contains things that didn't happen. I immediately claimed this person must have been talking to Mark (Leeper), since that was what Mark was always saying (when he wasn't saying that chaos theory invalidates most alternate history stories). Steele responded that alternate history is a deliberate attempt to rework history. I gave the example that we know Rhett Butler was fictional, but nothing about his existence or non-existence affected society's history. There must be changes on a macro-level for it to be alternate history.

Grant claimed that all science fiction becomes alternate history eventually, because the science in it will prove implausible or there will be other historical diverges. Alternate histories, on the other hand, will remain as valid as when they were written. I said this seemed to be saying that alternate history stories will last forever, and Steele talked about an upcoming story of his, "The Tranquil Alternative," set in an alternate 1995, and how he didn't have to be as concerned about it being outdated right away.

I then asked for quick questions. The problem with this is that you get a lot of non-questions. "What about history that has never happened, where Russia [*sic*] never lost astronauts?" Okay, what about it? Someone in the audience mentioned Robert Sobel's *For Want of a Nail*, a detailed history of North America which assumes Burgoyne won the Battle of Saratoga. It even has ten pages of bogus bibliography. (Grant claimed he used to do bogus bibliographies on papers in high school, but that is like comparing a child's drawing to a van Gogh.) I've seen it only in hardcover and have no idea why someone hasn't reprinted it. (Buchanan, however, thought it was dull.)

Asked what they liked to see (or wanted to write) in an alternate history, the panelists responded with a variety of answers. Kaveny was interested in the High Middle Ages. I said I particularly liked stories centering around a change in religious history (such as John M. Ford's *The Dragon Waiting* or Poul Anderson's "In the House of Sorrows"). Buchanan said that the problem with alternate histories in which you kill Hitler is that there will be someone else to take his place.

Steele said that two years ago at MagiCon, he heard about Resnick's plan to do *Alternate Outlaws* and asked (or was asked) to do a story. He then forgot, and nine months later Resnick called him up and said, "Where's the story?" Steele asked how long he had — he had two weeks. So he did research on Jesse James, and said the crash course approach was terrific, like being in college. "You find your mind going in directions it hadn't gone before." I added that I like to run off and read about periods after I read alternate histories based on changes in them. Buchanan agreed that a good alternate history or time-travel story will teach you something. (Of course, you have to be careful to know what changes the author has made in history, or you might end up "learning" that Lee won at Gettysburg.)

Stubbs said that one of the questions suggested was, "What if the anti-fire people had won?" He said it has been written: they died of cold, and the pro-fire people came along after them. In other words, history converged.

Someone in the audience asked what would be the most disturbing changes we could choose. Kaveny said he has seen the Tank Trap Memorial, and keeps thinking about what might have happened if the Germans had got to Moscow. Buchanan agreed that it would be some scenario in which the Axis had won, and Steele said most people seem to choose one that has something to do with World War II. Buchanan responded that she could handle the South winning the Civil War, but not Germany winning World War II. Stubbs also said he would have taken a change in

World War II personally, because he would have been killed had the Germans won.

Grant cited an amazing tourist photograph taken in Utah, with a big chunk of meteor in the sky, which would have hit Alberta had it not burned up. He had also heard of a meteor that hit outside of Montreal, which, if it had been a bit larger, might have wiped out the city. Steele said one of his ancestors was the New Jersey delegate who signed the Declaration of Independence; as he put it, "I wouldn't be here if we had lost the Revolution."

Parties
[reported by KK]

Most parties were in either the Place Louis Riel or the next-door Sheraton (about three blocks from the convention center), but a few were in the Holiday Inn which was on the way between the convention center and the Place Louis Riel. I never made it to the Holiday Inn. Most of the 1998 bidders were in the Sheraton, while the 1997 bidders had *large* rooms (almost the size of the main program room at Boskone) on the top floor of the Place Louis Riel. The 2001 bidders and the Con Suite were also in the PLR.

The Con Suite was in a large function room on the ground level and was decorated like a party. (Balloons and streamers and a very festive atmosphere.) There was good food (fruit, pizza, cold cuts) and many types of liquid. The place always seemed to have people having fun in it whenever I went by.

Thursday night was when the PLR had elevator trouble. After the first one got stuck, the hotel finally assigned employees to elevator duty. After asking two people to get off, the hotel person started the elevator. At about the sixth floor it too broke down (yes, I was in this one). When the elevator repair people came, they started working on the one stuck longer. About 38 minutes later, the one I was in got fixed. All this time we joked with the hotel person about how he was our hostage and made him listen to a bunch of bad jokes. He was probably more glad then we were when it started moving again.

I did manage to visit both 1997 bid parties before going to the Boston in 2001 party (in my suite). Everyone who was not scared off by the elevator problems was having a good time.

Panel: Debunking Pseudoscience
Friday, 10 AM
Jack Nimersheim (mod), George Flentke, Keith G. Kato, Hayford Peirce, Howard Scrimgeour, Susan M. Smith

Description: Most SF writers knowingly use pseudoscience. Where do we draw the line?

It's probably worth listing the panelists' credentials for this panel. Nimersheim writes for computer magazines. Flentke has a Ph.D. in biochemistry and is doing research in the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Wisconsin. Kato has a Ph.D. in experimental plasma physics and is on the research staff of Hughes Aerospace. Peirce is a science fiction writer. Scrimgeour is a veterinarian. Smith has a Ph.D. in biochemistry and is an assistant professor in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Wisconsin.

The panelists seemed to agree from the outset that to be acceptable in science fiction, pseudoscience must at least be consistent. For example, Asimov's psychohistory is pseudoscience, but it has an internal consistency. (I am reminded of the panelist at Boskone who was using a psychologist's definition of psychohistory — using psychology to analyze the motivations of historical figures — and couldn't figure out what the rest of us were talking about until we realized the confusion and sorted it out.) The panelists also cited creation science as pseudoscience, but were less forgiving of it.

Someone described pseudoscience as having "the trappings of science without the verisimilitude." Someone else claimed, however, that every science has passed through a pseudoscience phase. This got people talking about how science is done. For example, it used to be that when someone discovered something, he or she would search the literature and often find that someone else had already discovered this, but no one had read the earlier work. There was some question as to whether there would be less of this phenomenon with the more rapid information exchange of today, but I suspect that the limiting factor is what people can assimilate, not what can be published.

Kato pointed out that sometimes bad science is just bad experiments; my understanding is that this about sums up the problems with cold fusion.

This led to a discussion of Velikovsky. Some people said that when Velikovsky's book *Worlds in Collision* came out, scientists either didn't respond to it at all or just called Velikovsky a crank. But others said that there were in fact responses that addressed Velikovsky's claims and showed how ridiculous they were, but no one was interested in those. It was only later, when Carl Sagan attacked Velikovsky, that people started hearing this sort of response, and then only because Sagan was a celebrity.

This led to the question: who should get the blame for pseudoscience? The three candidates seem to be the public, the media, or pseudoscientists themselves.

Certainly when the media covers the pseudoscientists but not the rebuttals from real scientists, they are partly to blame. But the public seems to have developed the attitude that "if science can't prove it's wrong, it must be right." And while some pseudoscientists genuinely believe they have arrived at their conclusions through scientific analysis, others are more interested in promoting their political, social, or religious agenda.

According to the panelists, one key to recognizing a pseudoscientist (as opposed to a real scientist who is working on the fringes of science) is that the pseudoscientist won't back off in the light of contradictory evidence.

This got people off into a discussion of peer-reviewed articles, fueled by someone in the audience who had several of his articles rejected by peer-reviewed journals only to achieve success elsewhere. I can't say with certainty that peer review is better or worse than editorial review, but for an example of the latter, I will point out that Richard Adams's *Watership Down* was rejected by twenty-six editors before someone at Penguin finally decided to take a chance on it. It would appear, therefore, that there is anecdotal evidence on both sides, although I grant there are (or at least should be) different guidelines applied to non-fiction than to fiction. Maybe the reason pseudoscience is so popular is that people are trying to apply to it guidelines more suitable for fiction than for non-fiction: they want to believe what is sexy, interesting, or fun, not what is true.

And of course the old "water engine" idea was mentioned: did someone invent an engine that runs on water that was suppressed by the oil companies? Or as Peirce expressed it, "Is anti-gravity floating around?"

Panel: A New Look at Hard SF
Friday, 11 AM
David G. Hartwell (mod), Kathryn Cramer

Description: What is considered "hard" SF in today's market? How does it compare to what it has been in the past?

Given that this panel consisted entirely of the editors of *The Ascent of Wonder: The Evolution of Hard SF*, you might expect that this would be a discussion of that book as much as of hard science fiction in general, and you would be right.

The book got started, apparently, because Cramer didn't like what she perceived as military science fiction replacing real hard science fiction as what was called "hard science fiction." She wanted to return hard science fiction to its initial definition, which she gave as "science fiction that has science as its defining attribute," not political views, etc. (The term was actually invented by P. Schuyler Miller in the 1950s as a way of distinguishing it from the increasing amount of "soft science fiction" and fantasy that were invading the field.) The book took five years to put together, and Hartwell was not involved for the first couple or so.

During that time, an argument was raging in the *New York Review of Science Fiction* about the right way to read hard science fiction, in particular Tom Godwin's "The Cold Equations." Most people feel this is a straightforward hard science fiction story which confirms our faith in rationality, our belief that truth is not always beautiful but is always truth, our faith that truth is sublime, etc. (Or as Hartwell later put it, hard science is "about an emotional response to the sublimity of truth.") But some read it as having a subtext of "How wonderful it is to get rid of this woman!" with all the political baggage that entails.

Cramer said all this leads to the question of whether one reads hard science fiction on a literal or a metaphorical level, and that neither approach is wrong. I suspect that most hard science fiction fans would disagree, and that is why they reject Ray Bradbury's Mars from the category of hard science fiction. The "intentional fallacy" (i.e., questioning the author's intent rather than taking the text as is) aside, most readers of hard science fiction believe that when an author talks about Mars, it is (and is supposed to be) the planet fourth from the sun, not some inner warlike region of one's soul, or rural Illinois.

However, Cramer's definition, or at least her application of it, has led to some raised eyebrows. The anthology included two J. G. Ballard stories: "Prima Belladonna" (relating to Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter") and "Cage of Sand" (inspired by the *Challenger* disaster). Ballard, in fact, claims he is one of the few living writers of hard science fiction, leading many to question either his definition of "hard science fiction" or his definition of "few."

In any case, one of the purposes of the book, according to Cramer, was to tell the readers to "look for the science," so they can find it where they didn't find it before.

Cramer and Hartwell see a change in people's attitudes these days, from "techno-pessimism" to "techno-optimism." The result is that authors feel more comfortable writing about technological (hard) science fiction than they did in the 1980s.

The issue of pseudoscience arose here as well, with a question from the audience as to whether time travel is hard science fiction. (The same question is usually asked of faster-than-light travel.) The answer

was that it depends on how it is treated; it could be hard science fiction or it could be fantasy.

Cramer and Hartwell said that they often hear that "to concentrate on the science is to do it at the expense of plot and characterization." In the discussion at the genre-crossing panel, it was said that hard science fiction takes words to explain it, and that leaves fewer words for establishing other genres. Obviously it also leaves fewer words for building plot and characterization, and that was explicitly noted here as well. This is not to say it can't be done, just that it's not easy. However, Cramer and Hartwell say this is not true, and point to the works of Nancy Kress as a counter-example. They also said that this objection to concentrating on science and on the outer life of a character has in it the assumption that the presentation of the inner life of a character is "better" than the presentation of the outer life. After all, one rarely hears people say that the problem with characterization is that it does it at the expense of the setting.

Cramer spent some time talking about how her father, John Cramer, wrote the hard science fiction novel *Twister*. Apparently he told her that he was going to take some time off and write a science fiction novel — I forget whether it was six weeks or what, but it was some incredibly short period of time. She avoided telling him how ridiculous that was, which was good, because he went and did it. The novel did need some work after he submitted it, but was still on a level with many works that took a lot longer. Cramer also said when he sent the novel in, he included a huge diagram of where all the characters were at different times throughout the novel, and so on, because he thought the publisher would find this important, or useful. In other words, he wrote it the same way he wrote all the scientific papers he had written.

Once again, a lot of time was spent discussing marketing categories: that more fantasy is published than science fiction, and that media-related science fiction (TV, movie, and gaming tie-ins) is now considered a separate category. But according to Cramer and Hartwell, all the major science fiction publishers, except possibly DAW, are still looking for hard science fiction.

Also again raised was the question of why hard science fiction is a mostly male field. Hartwell replied that was because most of the authors hadn't had a sex change yet. This may seem like a flip answer, but it has a basis in the fact that authors are not re-created anew every year, but last for five, ten, twenty, or (in the case of Jack Williamson and a few others) fifty years. If one counts only authors who have started writing in the last ten years, one suspects one will come up with quite a different proportion than if one looks at the field at large. Someone else claimed that science, for whatever reason, was mostly male, and that hard science fiction authors frequently come from science. But Cramer said that while it used to seem that women were not interested in science, now she hears women saying things like "May I borrow your earring to reboot my Powerbook?"

Panel: Enhancements to Humanity
Friday, 12 Noon
Maia Cowan (mod), Glenn Grant, J. D. Maynard, Gerald D. Nordley, Mary H. Rosenblum

Description: When is the enhanced person no longer human? Where is your privacy when everybody has telepathy? Who would oppose the enhancements?

This panel started, logically enough, by defining what they meant by "enhancements." Their difficulty merely reflects the complexity of this topic in general.

The first definition given was "that which allows people to do things beyond the norm," not just to correct deficiencies. But the panelists could not decide if eyeglasses constituted an enhancement, given that the "norm" at this point was not 20/20 vision.

As the panelists said, all this was related to the question "At what point does something become non-human?" and, more practically, "At what point does something become non-human in such a way that someone can claim ownership?"

The panelists agreed that they would like to see some bio-engineering enhancements that would adapt us to our current lifestyle and environment: better eyesight, better metabolism, better memory, better control over our emotions, better immune system, better constructed knees and spine. They agreed that of these, however, the physical enhancements will come first.

But though lots of stuff sounds nice, what are the social consequences, and what if not everyone can get them? We can already see some of the results of really basic instances of bio-engineering: when people can determine the sex of their child, the proportion of males to females increases dramatically. While this may balance out when some parents realize that females are in demand, the cycle takes years to get to that point.

Will people accept bio-enhancements? In general, people fear what they do not understand. Also, one important factor in gaining acceptance will be that of allowing personal choice. The panelists agreed that the ideal future would have bio-enhancements neither forbidden nor required. Even so, some people expressed the concern that allowing people to make

unrestricted bio-enhancements might degrade the human genome. The panelists felt that while distinguishing between inheritable changes and non-inheritable changes might avoid some of this concern, as one person put it: "You have a right to be stupid." Someone noted that now we allow diabetics and others with damaging, inheritable conditions to reproduce and pass them on, and that any attempt to change this policy would result in people shouting "Nazi Germany" faster than you could blink.

It was noted that the domestication of animals was basically bio-engineering, but people either don't recognize that parallel, or are offended by it because it equates us with "lower" animals.

Is bio-enhancing just an easy out? In particular, if instead of cleaning up pollution we enhance ourselves to survive better in it, where does that leave the rest of the ecosystem? (Read Robert Silverberg's *Hot Sky at Midnight* for further elaboration on this idea.) On the other hand, everything we do to survive, from the stone axe on, is a technological fix. Where do we draw the line?

Speaking of lines, what is the dividing line between what is human and what is not? The answer to this determines our responses and actions to many things. Of course, sometimes we ignore this line and apply human standards to non-humans anyway. In the Middle Ages, animals could be tried for crimes in a court of law. Even now, animals can be deemed dangerous and ordered destroyed by a court — certainly a form of trial. What will the future hold?

But the question of who is human is of vital importance. One reason that slavery persisted in the United States, and in as brutal a form as it did, was that the slaveholders insisted that the slaves were not human. If one looks at the rules governing slaves in the Old Testament, for example, it is clear that slaves there are recognized as human, and hence the rules for their treatment were quite different from what one saw in the American form.

The standard biological definition for a species is "that which can interbreed." When discussing what is human in terms of bio-enhancement, this is clearly not sufficient. For example, a woman who has a hysterectomy is unable to interbreed with other human beings; does this mean she is no longer human? Do women cease to be human when they go through menopause?

John Varley was particularly mentioned as a science fiction author who looked at the consequences of bio-enhancements (in his "Eight Worlds" series).

Panel: Canadian SF
Friday, 1 PM

Robert Runte (mod), Glenn Grant, David G. Hartwell, Andre Lieven, Derryl Murphy, Robert Sawyer, Michael Skeet

Description: A discussion on the differences in SF from various regions of the world.

They began by citing John Robert Colombo, who in *Other Canadas* (1979) tried to list the characteristics of Canadian science fiction. He concluded that the four trends it seem to follow were:

- a polar world,
- national disaster,
- the alienated outsider, and
- fantasy rather than hard science fiction.

I should note, by the way, that in general the panel discussed what distinguished English-language Canadian science fiction from American or British science fiction. Australian science fiction wasn't mentioned, though interestingly enough many of the characteristics of current Canadian science fiction seem to apply there as well. There was some mention of French-language Canadian science fiction, but mostly in response to my question about it, and the panelists seemed all to come from the Anglophone tradition.

Since Colombo wrote fifteen years ago, today's theory is slightly different, though not all that much. Canadian science fiction has more emphasis on setting than its American or British counterparts. It frequently has an alienated outsider, and what's more, this outsider often chooses to stay outside by the end of the story. Canadian science fiction tends toward speculative fiction, magical realism, etc., over action fiction. Perhaps because of this, it also does not have a lot of "alpha-male" heroes. Canadian science fiction goes for ambiguous endings. (American science fiction is seen as going for happy endings, British for unhappy endings, and the Japanese "stop before they get to the ending," according to one panelist.)

In contrast to the American "melting-pot" myth, Canadian science fiction stresses the "mosaic" myth. (This was also expressed as Americans have everyone joining together, whereas Canadians have people seceding from a group.) I suspect the American "melting pot" myth is being replaced by the "mosaic" myth, however, so this distinction may pass away in time.

Much American science fiction is based on the idea (or myth) of the "Wild West," while Canada's science fiction draws on its form of western expansion, which involved the RCMP going first to prevent a lawless frontier from existing at all. And the RCMP was followed by what was termed "settlement by committee."

The panelists pointed out that all this was to some extent self-fulfilling prophecy, however, because when people started to compile anthologies of Canadian science fiction, they looked for stories that had just these features. Other stories that didn't fit were rejected because "they weren't really Canadian." Someone said that the *Tesseracts* anthologies used them as criteria, but that sometimes stories were selected because they conformed to them, and sometimes precisely because they *did* run counter to them.

Canadian science fiction is searching for its identity. Panelists felt there might be some parallel with regional science fiction in the United States, and I would agree that some of the characteristics of the latter include an emphasis on setting, a trend toward speculative rather than action fiction, and a trend away from "alpha-male" heroes. But then again, maybe these *are* what defines regional fiction in general.(And the panelists noted that Canadian science fiction had its regional schools as well.)

Hartwell felt that Canadian science fiction was in an "active, conscious search of what its identity can and should be, but doesn't have one yet." It draws on both British and American traditions, but on others as well (for example, magical realism). There is also a much heavier female influence — as Hartwell put it, "Canadian science fiction didn't have any founding fathers, but it had several founding mothers."

To a great extent, of course, one needs to define who Canadian science fiction authors are before one can define Canadian science fiction. What makes the trends listed self-fulfilling in another way is that many people seem to doing the reverse: anyone who isn't writing in that way is dismissed as "not Canadian." This is most common with authors who have lived in both Canada and the United States (or, less frequently, Britain). If I understood him correctly, Grant, for his anthology *Northern Stars*, defined Canadian science fiction as science fiction which was written in Canada. This sounds to me like a definition a tax lawyer would cook up. I wrote my review of the Montreal film festival entirely in Canada; does that make it Canadian writing? If Robert Charles Wilson (to name an author who is, I believe, unambiguously Canadian) goes to a convention in Detroit and happens to write a story while he's there, does that disqualify it from being Canadian? (It is possible that Grant meant that the bulk of an author's writing should be done in Canada, but even so, I question this definition. Hemingway, in spite of writing most of his works in places like France and Cuba, was still an American author.) Various authors whose categorization was a matter of dispute were mentioned: William Gibson and Spider Robinson (who were born in the United States but now live in Canada), A. E. Van Vogt and Gordon R. Dickson (who were born in Canada but now live in the United States), and even Elizabeth Vonarburg, the best-known of the Francophone science fiction writers in Canada, who was born in France.

Murphy felt that there was a new internationalization of science fiction, which presumably might wipe out or mute some of the distinguishing characteristics of Canadian science fiction.

Sawyer said that his book *Far-Seer* was quintessentially Canadian. Margaret Atwood, in her latest book, has the theme that "you must fight the land or die." *Far-Seer,* Sawyer said, also had that theme. Sawyer also mentioned his Aurora-winning story "Just Like Old Times," which appeared in *Dinosaur Fantastic*. He described *Dinosaur Fantastic* as "purely commercial," and said that this meant that "Just Like Old Times" was very Canadian *and* very American.

I asked about French-language science fiction, but about all the panelists could offer was that it was technophobic (even more so than the somewhat technophobic English-language science fiction of Canada), featured the biological sciences more, and tended to use extended allegories.

Presentation: That Krazy Kepler
Friday, 2 PM
Dr. Martin Clutton-Brock

Description: Basic Astronomy from the Past. Kepler, as performed by Dr. Martin Clutton-Brock, tells the audience how he made his discoveries, all the while battling nagging wives, drunken roommates, and stupid bureaucracy.

Dr. Clutton-Brock apparently has several of these forty-minute presentations, but he usually does them for his astronomy classes rather than for a science fiction convention. I suppose Kepler was chosen because he actually wrote some science fiction. For this Clutton-Brock dresses up in full 17th-century costume and relates the story of his life and work in the first person. It was enthralling, I probably learned a lot about Kepler, and I hope future conventions look for this sort of programming.

Panel: Bantam Books Presents
Friday, 3 PM
Jennifer Hershey (mod), Tom Dupree, Janna Silverstein, Christian Waters

Description: A slideshow and panel presentation which will preview science fiction and fantasy

publications coming from Bantam Spectra Books over the next several months, presented by the staff of Spectra.

Coming up in October are the third Jedi book by Kevin J. Anderson, *Champions of the Force;* the fourth book in Vonda McIntyre's "Starfarers" series, *Nautilus* (as well as a re-issue of the first three books with new covers, and her earlier novel *Dreamsnake*); Angus Wells's *Lords of the Sky* in trade paperback; *The Secret Oceans* by Betty Ballantine (described as "Dinotopia goes under the sea") in hardback; and Bruce Sterling's new novel *Heavy Weather* (which looks very promising). Of *Heavy Weather,* Dupree says, "If you read *Wired,* this is for you."

November must be National Paperback Book Month or something. There will be *Globalhead*, a paperback collection of thirteen Bruce Sterling stories; a paperback edition of Arthur C. Clarke's *The Hammer of God;* a paperback edition of Roger Stern's *The Death and Life of Superman* (with a new piece of artwork inside the front cover); a paperback edition of *The Multiplex Man* by James P. Hogan; Ian McDonald's *Terminal Cafe* in trade paperback; and a hardback edition of Patricia McKillip's *Something Rich and Strange* (the second in Brian Froud's "Faerielands" series).

In December is a hardback edition of Vonda McIntyre's new "Star Wars" book, *The Crystal Star,* and a paperback edition of Kathy Tyers's "Star Wars" book, *The Truce at Bakura.* Also coming is Sheri Tepper's new novel *Shadow's End,* and a paperback edition of her *A Plague of Angels.* Katharine Kerr has revised *Daggerspell,* and it is being reissued in paperback along with its sequel *Darkspell.* There is also a trade paperback of Chris Claremont and Beth Fleisher's *Dragon Moon* (illustrated by John Boulton) at US$14.95, with a special edition with autographs "tipped in" at US$50.

There will also be a new novel from Norman Spinrad, not under the "Spectra" imprint nor marketed as science fiction, called *Pictures at 11,* about a group of eco-terrorists who take a news show hostage in Los Angeles. And finally, Bantam will be reprinting *The Art of Michael Whelan,* but still in the hardback edition at a hardback price.

In January 1995 are the paperback releases of Isaac Asimov and Robert Silverberg's *The Positronic Man,* Paula Volsky's *The Wolf of Winter,* and Gregory Benford's *Matter's End* (a collection of his short fiction). Note that all Bantam's single-author collections seem to be coming out in paperback only; I guess hardback single-author collections don't sell well enough for them. Also coming is Alan Rodgers's *Pandora* (which assumes that a UFO really did crash into the Southwest desert in the late 1940's and an alien child survived).

February 1995 will see paperback editions of Michael Bishop's *Brittle Innings* and Robert Silverberg's *Hot Sky at Midnight.* The Bishop has a new cover. *Brittle Innings* is also in development for a movie.

Another February highlight is Connie Willis's new novella, *Remake,* set in a future Hollywood where you can computerize and digitize remakes so that (for example) you can remake *Casablanca* with River Phoenix and Madonna.

Neal Stephenson has a new hardback coming out in February: *The Diamond Age.* It's set a hundred years in the future and has a variety of social "tribes" (for example, there are the neo-Victorians). The plot concerns an interactive education device that gets into the "wrong" hands.

Also in February, Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee's *Rama Revealed*, Isaac Asimov's *I, Asimov,* and Maggie Furey's *The Harp of Winds* will be released in paperback.

In March we get the first book of yet another "Star Wars" trilogy, this one by Roger MacBride Allen. The first book is titled *Ambush at Corellia,* and will be in paperback. The second book should be out in July and the third in November.

Elizabeth Vonarburg will have a novel out in paperback, *Reluctant Voyagers* (translated from the original French). It's about someone in Quebec who wakes up one morning to "find everything a little bit left of reality."

Robert Silverberg will have a new "short novel" out in hardback, *The Mountains of Majipoor.* James P. Hogan will have a new trade paperback, *Realtime Interrupt,* about a programmer who finds himself in the virtual-reality town he created.

Also in March will be paperback reprints of Harry Harrison's *The Stainless Steel Rat Sings the Blues* and Robert Charles Wilson's *Mysterium.*

In the summer of 1995 there will be a hardback release of Gregory Benford's *Sailing Bright Eternity,* the sixth in his series.

Coming up in the future are a trilogy from Mike Resnick, a trilogy from Kristine Kathryn Rusch, a novel from George R. R. Martin, and a novel from Connie Willis that is a "loose" sequel to *Doomsday Book.* By the way, *Doomsday Book* is in its second paperback printing, without the perfectly awful "romance novel" cover of the first — it now has a Celtic knot motif.

And last, but certainly not least, Bantam reports that Walter M. Miller is "90% done" on his sequel to *A Canticle for Leibowitz.* Let's see ... the book came out in 1960, so it took 34 years to finish 90%, so it should

be done in another four years — plus a year or so for the publishing process.

Panel: Designing Diseases
Friday, 4 PM
Shariann Lewitt (mod), Jeri Freedman,
Ian K. Hagemann, Judy Lazar,
Perrianne Lurie, J. D. Maynard

Description: A discussion of disease and how it works to help you in your world.

The first question to ask is, "Why design new diseases in literature at all? Aren't there enough good *real* diseases?" Someone mentioned *The Control of Communicable Diseases in Man* by the American Public Health Association, which lists and describes all known real diseases. This led everyone on the panel to list their favorite diseases, apparently based on how disgusting the symptoms were.

This was followed by the panelists talking about the diseases they would design, with several jokes about diseases that would kill only lawyers. While the panelists did get around to saying that authors invent diseases because they need to make a disease do what is necessary for the story, the discussion didn't seem to be going anywhere interesting, so I left early.

Panel: Is Modern SF a Reactionary Literature?
Friday, 5 PM
Peter Nicholls (mod), J. R. Dunn, Daniel Fresnot,
Dr. Elizabeth Anne Hull, Martha Soukup

Description: Is SF currently reactionary against mainstream literary ideas, against "society's" ideas, or against itself?

The first point of discussion was whether the question of "reactionary" was being applied literarily or politically. Dunn claimed that literarily science fiction "hasn't developed at all since the 19th century." If this is true, it is reactionary in form, even if not in content. And it does copy mainstream techniques. One panelist suggested that it "needs to be rooted in the past to go into the future": that is, because the *content* is unusual, innovative, or hard to understand, adding unusual literary tricks would make the work incomprehensible. Also, the use of non-realistic forms works against the realism that science fiction (usually) strives for.

At this point Fresnot said, "If reactionary means opposed to progress, then well-done art cannot be reactionary." Since this did not seem to be in response to anything anyone else had said, I suspect Fresnot (who is Brazilian) was working against a language barrier and had to spend some time formulating responses either to earlier comments or perhaps to the questions the panelists were given ahead of time.

In any case, the panelists thought that science fiction did not have to be reactionary and could indeed be subversive. But reactionary themes still abound: manifest destiny, for example. Nicholls claimed that politically reactionary science fiction was dying out even in the 1970s. Dunn said that fantasy is taking over the real reactionary elements of speculative fiction (aristocracy, etc.). But it seems to me that Baen Books is still around, publishing lots of stuff that most people would call reactionary. Each publisher has its own character. Ace publishes fantasies and science fiction which seem to try to follow the latest trend. Baen publishes mostly two kinds of books: fantasies and war stories. Bantam is the literary publisher (their seemingly endless number of "Star Wars" books notwithstanding). DAW publishes lots of theme anthologies as well as books from their established authors, but doesn't seem to be cultivating many new ones. Del Rey publishes a lot of "crank-'em-out" science fiction and fantasy, especially in series. Tor publishes good, solid, high-quality science fiction.

The panelists said that science fiction *follows* social trends, but doesn't lead them, so in this sense it is reactionary. Dunn said that sometimes readers may be too simplistic in their appraisals of reactionary, liberal, etc. For example, he thinks Nancy Kress is both libertarian and leftist, a combination most fans think contradictory. This led someone else to observe that in North America, there is no left in the same sense that there is in Europe; what we call leftist they call centrist.

Political correctness came in for some discussion. According to Dunn, "PC can be called left-wing McCarthyism." The mention of McCarthyism and political correctness led Nicholls to say that a historian had once calculated that the United States has purges every thirty-five years (in other words, one every generation). Now we have political correctness, thirty-five years ago was McCarthyism, thirty-five years before that were the "Red Scares" of the 1920s, and so on. This recent political correctness trend affects children's publishing in particular.

Fresnot said that we remember the artists, not the politician, and as proof, asked who was czar when Tolstoy was writing, or prime minister during Dickens's time. Clearly this is not completely true. We remember Queen Elizabeth I, Napoleon, and Hitler, rather than the artists under them. Actually, this points out that a truly reactionary politician may result in *no* artists of note flourishing under him.

One reason that readers may think science fiction is more reactionary than it is, is that they don't always realize that the message "this is a possible world —

learn from it" does not necessarily mean "I want this world." One writer frequently misread this way is Robert Heinlein, whom one panelist described by saying that Heinlein was "politically extremely conservative, but socially a revolutionary." Another writer to suffer this fate is S. M. Stirling.

One other impression I got from all this is that there seems to be a philosophical connection between the left and predeterminism (or predestination) and between the right and free will.

Film: *The High Crusade*
Friday, 7:30 PM

This was a German film, though it seemed to be made with Anglophone actors speaking English. There was a bit too much low comedy for my tastes, and they left out one of the bits I liked the most, but I suppose people trying to film classic novels should be applauded for that alone unless they make a total hash of it — which this isn't. This will probably show up on cable or videotape rather than in your local theater, so watch for it there.

Panel: What Should Have Made It on the Hugo Ballot, But Didn't
Friday, 9 PM
Joseph T. Mayhew

Description: A moderated group discussion of what (or who) should have, but didn't make it onto this year's Hugo ballot.

[I didn't attend this, but two people who did said that unfortunately it turned into more of a discussion of technical details about nominating (eligibility periods, word counts, what to do about repeat winners, etc.) than a list of stuff people liked. And one of the two people I talked to was Mayhew. I suspect a topic like this needs a panel, not just one person.]

Parties

We dropped by a few parties: Niagara Falls to talk to Bruce Burdick about his trip to twelve European countries (including Albania), the @ party, the GEnie party, and Antarctica in '99, a hoax bid by two people, one of whom had been to conventions but never a Worldcon before and one who had never been to a convention before. This was certainly the cleverest party: there were marshmallows for making snow sculptures, a list of films for the film program (all set in the Antarctic or the Arctic), a scale model of the facilities (a quonset hut made of corrugated cardboard), a satellite feed to the site (the television turned to a non-channel and broadcasting snow), and a list of the "Top Ten Reasons to Vote for Antarctica in '99":

10. More down under than Down Under
9. Annoy famous research scientists
8. Cool...Way Cool
7. No mosquitos, no sales tax and no minimum drinking age
6. A lovely island in the South Pacific with fabulous white beaches
5. All those penguins can't be wrong
4. Home of the 3-Minute-Tan
3. Beat Global Warning
2. All the krill you can eat
1. Conveniently close to exciting Tierra del Fuego

Panel: Reviewing/Criticism
Saturday, 10 AM
Dean Wesley Smith (mod), Rick Foss, Ashley D. Grayson, Paula Johanson, Janeen Webb, Tom Whitmore

Description: What is the difference between a reviewer and a critic? How can you be a successful one?

Foss started off by claiming that the difference is that a reviewer does not have to learn how, in his software, to put footnotes in his article.

A more serious difference was that criticism establishes the "canon" (which may, of course, be of interest only to other critics). Also, critics engage in more of a dialogue with each other than reviewers do. Reviewers, on the other hand, "mediate" between the producers and the consumer.

Whitmore says as far as length goes, "I tend to err on the side on conciseness." This is probably another difference between reviewers and critics — critics seem much less concerned with conciseness.

Grayson mentioned that some reviews seem to be merely "reprosings" of the advertising blurb. Often when she reads reviews, Grayson says, she gets the feeling that "none of the reviewers come from the same planet, much less have anything common with each other." (An early review of Robert Forward's *Dragon's Egg* said it was a great book because it did such a good job with its orbital calculations.)

Someone in the audience asked the reviewers what they did if they got an assignment they didn't want to do. Most reviewers say they try to write mostly positive reviews, preferring to tell the reader what is good rather than spend the time warning them against a book the reader probably wouldn't have bought anyway. But a reviewer needs to write the occasional negative review, both to establish some credibility and to give the reader a better idea of what the reviewer

does not like as well as what he or she does like. Foss says he writes negative reviews only of books by big-name authors who *should* do better. Someone else said that if you don't see any reviews for a book by a major author, it probably means something negative. But it would be foolish to draw this conclusion simply because any individual reviewer chose not to review it. And even a negative review, if it gives the reasons for its negativeness, may convince some readers that they would enjoy the book.

In any case, given that there are over 1600 science fiction and fantasy books published each year, reprints and re-issues rarely get reviewed. Some publishers don't send out review copies. And most media tie-ins get skipped as well. So there are lots of reasons why you might not see reviews of any given book.

When you do see a review, however, you have the right to expect honesty from a reviewer.

Someone pointed out that newspapers, with their general book review columns, reach far more people than even *Locus*, and that critics have an even smaller audience.

As for prerequisites for being a reviewer, the panelists said that reviewers need to have a firm grounding in reality and in real life: the technophile is probably *not* the right person.

Panel: Alternate Canadas
Saturday, 11 AM

Robert Sawyer (mod), Glenn Grant, Evelyn Leeper, Andre Lieven, Derryl Murphy, David Nickle

Description: As Canada moves from crisis to crisis, can stability come from merging with the U.S.?

[Thanks again to Mark for taking the notes for this.]

I was apparently the token "United-Statesian" on this panel. (Actually, since all the Canadians seemed to refer to me as an American, I will use that designation.)

When I initially proposed this panel, I had envisioned an alternate history panel, and the title certainly implied that to some audience members, but the description seemed to deal more with alternate futures. As a result we did a little bit of each.

We started by asking one of my suggested questions: what if the Norse settlements had survived? Lieven thought that was an interesting question, in that it sort of underlined that the Norse had their equivalent of the Apollo program: "They came, they saw, they hung out, they pulled a few rocks, and they left." Because of that, of course, currently the defining aspect of Canada is between the French and the English. Norse settlements would have added a whole new culture to the mix. Grant said that disease vectors were a factor to consider in any such scenario. For example, the high densities of people in Europe made Europeans more resistant to disease. (Some also think that the Europeans' close proximity to domesticated animals built up resistance as well.) On the other hand, the high densities meant that when a disease did take hold, it would wipe out large numbers. Someone said that continued contact with Europe would have meant that the Americas would have had the Black Death sweep though them in the 14th century. I noted that since 90% of the casualties to Native Americans during the period of conquest were due to disease rather than warfare, this issue would be critical.

I put forth the theory that since the Norse came for different reasons, the resulting interfaces with the local indigenous population would also have been different. For example, because the Norse were more interested in finding fish than in sending large amounts of gold back to Europe, there might be less enslavement of the local population for mining, etc. Also, with a less "narrow" view of religion, the Norse might have been more willing to intermarry with the local population, resulting in a more homogeneous and less stratified society. Murphy also believed that based on what the Vikings did elsewhere, there would have been more co-mingling, more blending, and in general more like the "Old West." In any case, Murphy felt that history would have been "a much more violent past and a much more gun-happy future."

(Someone in the audience felt there was evidence that the Vikings of this period were Christian, which might negate some of this, but I don't believe that they were as violently evangelical as many of the other Europeans.)

Nickle felt that the problem was that Vikings were not stereotypically Canadian. On a more serious level, Nickle said that Norse cultures were not set up for long-term dealings with other cultures, but tended to just kill outsiders. The small settlement which would have been established in Canada would need "a different kind of Norsemen."

In any case, the continued knowledge of the Americas throughout Europe would certainly have resulted in other groups coming over earlier, resulting in a faster European expansion. But as someone pointed out, this earlier expansion would have meant that the invaders did not have as wide a technological edge over the indigenous population.

Since we had spent far more time on this than Sawyer had expected, we proceeded apace to my other question, "What if the invasion of the United States had succeeded?" A Canadian immediately responded that *we* had invaded *them*. This led fairly

obviously to the other half of the panel, "What lies ahead for Canada?" "Will Canada and the United States become one country?" Given our histories, we could have ended up as one country in the past; is that the future?

Lieven seemed to imply that a union was unlikely, because Americans would treat Canada as sort of a poor orphan they adopted. For example, CNN gives the exchange rates for many major currencies, but not the Canadian dollar, nor do they report on the Toronto Stock Market, even though Canada is the United States' biggest trading partner.

Lieven noted that Canadians "are historically not Americans; historically we are different from Americans. We are trying to find our own way."

One major difference is how the dividing lines within each country are drawn. In the United States, the division has traditionally been north-south. In Canada it is east-west. In fact, as Grant pointed out, there is only one highway connecting the eastern provinces with the western ones. Given the size and lack of connectivity, he's surprised Canada hasn't broken up already. Someone else said that big, centralized governments tend to fall apart. I said that this didn't seem to be true of Russia (not the Soviet Union). On the other hand, it may be that what keeps the United States together is that it is *not* a giant centralized system — there is a lot that is done on the state or local level.

But I've always liked the way Canada and the United States were a sort of special case: the border was not strictly patrolled, and you didn't need a passport to cross it. But it's getting tighter, and the European borders are getting looser.

Of course, any ideas of what might happen have to factor NAFTA into the picture. And many people seem to think that any union between Canada and the United States will be primarily an economic one. Most attempts to paste together two or more independent countries have failed. In the case of Yugoslavia, this failure was rather dramatic, but there have been many other examples: both United Arab Republics, for example.

Sawyer felt that there were serious roadblocks to an economic union. For example, Americans would never accept a two-dollar bill or a one-dollar coin. I noted, however, that since both currencies are called the dollar, no one would have to "change" to the other country's currency name. Dunn said that was okay as long as we make the United States bills look like the Canadian ones. (For the non-travelers among you, the United States has some of the most boring-looking money around. It's amazing it's as popular as it is. The fact that people will willingly trade really interesting-looking money for ours is proof that there are considerations in life besides art.)

Of course, years ago, when the Canadian and United States dollars were at par, people in the New England states would take Canadian coins as readily as United States ones. The only difference was that meters and machines were pickier.

Sawyer also felt our politics could use some improvement. Just as he said he "wanted to see a woman prime minister [in Britain], but not that one," he also "wanted to see a black president, but not Jackson."

Dunn said that in regards to an economic union, people are talking about Alvin Toffler's "Cascadia," an economic union of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. This union might eventually expand to include California and the countries of the Pacific Rim. Of course, such a move would mean even more balkanization of Canada (and the United States) than we have now. And people wouldn't want to give up everything that the central Canadian government provides (Dunn gave the CBC as an example). I assume there's something we get from our central government in the United States that we'd miss, but nothing comes immediately to mind. Dunn also said that economically we might re-align, but politically we would want to keep the same ties. (Consider the British Commonwealth as an example of this. Canada is still a member of that, but is in NAFTA rather than the EEC.)

Dunn said that high-level talks about economic union of Cascadia, including part of United States, are going on now. Grant said that other parts of the world have thought about it also.

Sawyer noted that David Brinkley once said union between Canada and the United States wouldn't happen, because no United States administration would want to bring in 60,000,000 Democrats. I pointed out that wasn't a problem with the current administration.

Grant thought that globalization was nearing its end, and we won't have a free market everywhere. He said he would not be surprised if the EEC is temporary as well. "There won't be any reason to globalize."

Someone in the audience asked about *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* by Joel Garreau, who also wrote *The Nine Nations of North America,* aligned by common interests. Grant said that one of them would immediately have the world's largest GNP.

Nickle commented that a lot of this reflects the fact that the role of nations has become radically different in the last two hundred years.

Nickle also said that while the idea of the British successfully invading the United States warms his

heart, he couldn't see that it could have lasted. As it was, the example of the American "secession" from Britain was what inspired Canada to seek independence as well. Without independence there would be a "bunch of little Canadas" and they would have been involved in World War II a lot earlier. And without independence, we would have been involved in World War I a lot earlier. As it was, we waited until millions had already died on both sides, then came in and took credit for winning it for the Allied forces. Actually, World War I was the final straw for the Canadians: they had achieved partial independence from Britain in 1867, but when Britain declared war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1914, they told Canada, "By the way, you're in it too." After the war was over Canada said, "Don't *ever* do that to us again!" and so the more complete independence of 1931 was established.

Nickle felt that the independence of Canada led to the break-up of the British Empire sooner than might have happened if the Revolutionary War had failed, since other colonies saw that independence was achievable (an existence proof, as it were).

On the other hand, independence may not be the ultimate goal. Brian Burley (from the audience) pointed out that Ireland fought to become independent of Great Britain, then turned around and joined the (then) Common Market. I suppose this is just another example of countries or areas wanting to form economic unions independently of political ones.

At some point I mentioned that I was not quite sure what a "dominion" was (as in "the Dominion of Canada"). Sawyer responded that he was still baffled by the "Commonwealth of Massachusetts." I couldn't explain that (or the commonwealths of Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Virginia either), but did say it was not the same as the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, which was *really* hard to explain.

Someone suggested that if there had been only a few small changes in the exploration and settlement of North America, Canada and the United States would be even more similar, and would be as hard to tell apart as Austria and Germany. Someone else said that you should never say that to an Austrian or a German. This led someone else to say that there was a cultural difference between Canada and the United States that Americans just don't see. Sawyer said that was true: "Our Pizza Hut is different." What I noted was that when Canadians try to define what is Canadian, they often do it in terms of being "not America" rather than from scratch.

Someone said they never heard Americans talk about separation (of Quebec). Perhaps that is true, but I observed that in the United States we have our own non-English-language area talking about separation: Puerto Rico. Of course, I think on the whole Puerto Rico is happier being part of the United States than Quebec is being part of Canada.

Regarding the upcoming elections in Quebec and whether it would separate from the rest of Canada, the Canadians on the panel seemed to think not. Grant said that Jacques Parizeau visited a bathtub factory and told them they were an example of how Quebec could go it on its own. The owner replied that if not for federal government help, the company could not exist. And Lieven said that apparently the Olympic Committee is trying to encourage Montreal's bid for the Games in the future by telling them that even if Quebec secedes, Ottawa would contribute to the cost of the Olympics.

WSFS Business Meeting
Saturday, Noon
[reported by KK]

One of the topics discussed was a possible Hugo award for music. This idea has merit. Unfortunately, the way the proposal was written, I could not tell if the intention was for professional or filk music. Many people thought that the idea should be tried out before adding another Hugo that may be unsuccessful (some feel the Best Original Artwork to be a mistake). The meeting defeated the proposal but suggested that one of the upcoming Worldcons try the idea as their special award. I encourage anyone who has an opinion to put it in writing for an upcoming issue of Apa:WSFS.

Panel: SF Films
Saturday, 1 PM
Steve Fahnestalk (mod), Myra Cakan, John M. Landsberg, Mark Leeper, Craig Miller, Michael Skeet

Description: A discussion of SF from Hollywood: The good, the bad, and the cyberpunk.

The first question the panelists discussed was, "Have science fiction films grown up or just more expensive?" Certainly there are more in number, so numerically there are more good ones, but there is not necessarily a higher percentage of good ones.

One reason for this is that science fiction films are seen as a way to break into the market, especially the direct-to-video market. Companies like Charles Band and Troma are putting out, in the words of one panelist, "a lot of trash." Leeper claimed that the top-end films are better now than they were previously, but not everyone agreed with that.

Skeet said, "Cinema doesn't lend itself as a medium to the most sophisticated science fiction." One example of this given was Robert Silverberg's

Dying Inside, which seems as if it would be impossible to film successfully. Leeper noted, however, that we should probably be comparing films to novelettes, not to novels.

In an attempt to make more money, many science fiction films are not sold as science fiction. For example, *Starman* was marketed as a romance. Fantasy seems to be much more acceptable: *Field of Dreams, The Natural,* and *Ghost* were all successful with mainstream audiences. Of course, fantasy films have a longer heritage, including the classic fantasy cycle of the 1930s and 1940s.

Miller said that along these lines, a science fiction film set in our real world with one small element of science fiction or fantasy (such as *Cocoon* or *Short Circuit*) will succeed better with audiences than a film with an entirely different world (such as *Conan the Barbarian*), which requires more suspension of disbelief. It's still a bit hard to explain why *Ghost* succeeded when *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (a very similar film) did not.

One must also distinguish between commercial cinema in Hollywood and art films, foreign films, and other non-Hollywood products. Some of the latter which were mentioned as being good were *Closetland, Wings of Desire,* and *Until the End of the World.*

Miller, in talking about Hollywood in general and *RoboCop* in particular, said, "The process of sequelization involves extracting the marketable elements," which may not be what made the first film *good.* Skeet was less positive about the first *RoboCop,* however, saying, "When you get below the surface, you find more surface," to which Miller replied, "That's better than finding nothing."

Hollywood is also into "high concept" films rather than more complex stories. In fact, the panelists noted than it was surprising how well *Back to the Future* fared, considering it had some "fairly deep science stuff."

The panelists closed by listing cliches they could do without. Leeper mentioned "barbarians on motorcycles in the future." Fahnestalk said, "cyber-anything." Skeet said there was nothing he'd rule out if it was done well. And Miller closed by observing, "There's bad and there's dreadful."

Panel: Economic/Political Aspects of Future History
Saturday, 2 PM

Philip Kaveny (mod), Briccio Barrientos, M. Shayne Bell, David Hayman, Timothy Lane

Description: Are we moving toward a global economy or just re-entering the Dark Ages?

While the panelists agreed that to ask if we were entering the Dark Ages sounded dystopic, one need only look at Bosnia or Rwanda to see that perhaps it was a reasonable question. Lane thought the key factor was whether the educational system continued to function. Bell said that we (the more affluent nations) were suffering from "donor fatigue," or the "erosion of good will." There are only so many pleas for help one can answer. I have seen this discussed elsewhere, and one explanation of the basis of the problem lies in how our morality was shaped by our limitations. That is, it used to be that individuals were limited in what charity they could perform. You could help only those in your tribe, or village, or city. The fact that millions were dying in a famine or a war on the other side of the globe was unknown to you, and so you had no responsibility. But because you did have such a limited field of action, you were deemed to have a responsibility to act within that field. Now our fields of knowledge and of action are global in scope, and individuals cannot cope with that.

Can we escape Malthus? Some people said we could handle 5.5 billion people now only because most are impoverished. Others thought this was just a distribution problem. Compounding this is the fact that a lot of the good arable land is being turned into cities instead of being farmed, and the question still remains, "What are the people at the top willing to give up?"

Kaveny mentioned Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution,* which was described as anti-Baconian and anti-"knowledge is power." Merchant claims, for example, that the land "healed itself" during the Black Death.

Politics often confuses the issue. In Idaho, land-use planning was branded as "Communism" and rejected. Then Communism fell (at least in Europe), and people decided land-use planning was okay. (The problems that arose from lack of planning may also have affected their opinion.)

Other changes are affecting our economic world. Kaveny claims, "There's a lot of useful work that needs to be done that we can't pay people to do." Whether this is because minimum wage laws have priced these jobs too high to be cost-effective, or whether labor unions prevent people from hiring non-union workers to do these jobs, or whether people have decided that these jobs are "beneath" them is not clear. A combination of all three plus others is most likely.

Someone in the audience cited the sociological theory that people naturally live in groups of five hundred, and that many of our problems come from trying to maintain larger communities than that.

Barrientos said that one factor preventing us from finding solutions is that "society likes dualities and dichotomies; everyone likes to have an enemy." No one system will win, he says. Lane hit a hopeful note when he declared, "It's certainly possible that the United States will remain stable."

Kaveny also mentioned Sandra Harding's *Whose Science, Whose Knowledge?: Thinking from Women's Lives* as an example of non-traditional thinking on these issues. And Lane recommended *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World* by Hernando de Soto.

Panel: Dinosaurs in SF
Saturday, 3 PM
Ric Meyers (mod), Richard Chwedyk, Stephen Dedman, Stan Hyde, Hayford Peirce

Description: An exploration of the recent glut of dinosaurs after being extinct for 65 million years.

The panelists suggested that dinosaurs were popular because they could deal with their frustrations; because they're no longer around (so they're safe); because their size is awe-inspiring; because they're big, fierce, and extinct; and because they're not copyrighted or trademarked. As Chwedyk expressed it, "Dinosaurs were created when God still had an imagination."

Why do we want to give dinosaurs intelligence? Dedman claimed, "Dumb characters make for boring plots." The example he gave of an author doing this with other animals was Richard Adams's *Watership Down*, which had smart rabbits. (*Shardik*, however, did not have a smart bear, although Adams did add more human characters in that work.) Hyde said that another reason we make dinosaurs smart is that we anthropomorphize everything. "Look at the fronts of cars."

Someone mentioned Harry Harrison's "West of Eden" series in which the dinosaurs did not die off, and instead continued to evolve, but humans evolved as well. Dedman pointed out that dinosaurs didn't *need* to develop intelligence, so they wouldn't have. And the likelihood of humans evolving contemporaneously with dinosaurs seems remote, to say the least.

There was, of course, the obligatory discussion of *Jurassic Park*. Someone said the whole security system they showed was ridiculous, because zookeepers *know* animals escape, a fact no one in the movie seemed to acknowledge. Most of the other points about the movie touched upon have been thrashed to death elsewhere so I won't go into them here. One fact I hadn't heard before was that more money was spent in making the film than has been spent for all of dinosaur research for the last hundred years.

I believe it was Meyers who said that *Jurassic Park* was consciously designed to be like a roller coaster: a big slow climb up to the first huge shock, then a series of ups and downs, and so on.

What is next? Well, Sony is making a movie of *Dinotopia*. (Hyde predicted a glut of dinosaur movies, but Meyers didn't agree.) But the problem with creating new dinosaur stories is that you usually can't move dinosaurs to other planets or times very well. Peirce suggested *The Dinosaur Cookbook*. Someone else said that there has already been a dinosaur pet care book.

Panel: Editing Magazines & Anthologies
Saturday, 4 PM
Ellen Datlow (mod), Gardner Dozois, Scott Edelman, David G. Hartwell, Mike Resnick

Description: If you are an editor, what's the difference between magazines and anthologies? How far should an editor go to shape a story?

The first question the panelists answered was one they say they get from people a lot: why do editors do "invitation-only" anthologies? Why not allow everyone to submit stories? The basic answer, according to Resnick, is that editors of anthologies aren't paid enough to read all those slush pile stories. The editor has a responsibility to the reader which is sometimes better filled by soliciting only from known authors. (Even Resnick admitted this was not a hard and fast rule, and one need only recall that Nick DiChario's Hugo-nominated "The Winterberry" was an unsolicited manuscript for Resnick's *Alternate Kennedys* to see why. DiChario, a Campbell nominee, now shows up regularly in Resnick's anthologies.)

I suppose I should explain that there are basically three types of anthologies: reprint anthologies, "invitation-only" anthologies, and open anthologies.

When asked how many stories an editor must solicit to get (say) thirty usable stories, the answers varied widely. Hartwell said that he needs to ask about

150 authors to get that many stories, but Resnick said that since his anthologies were so specialized that it might be difficult for an author to sell a story written for him elsewhere if he didn't print it, once he has gotten a commitment from an author on a specific topic, he won't refuse the story. This may mean working with the author to bring the story up to a certain level, or even ultimately "burying" a sub-standard story in the middle of the anthology, but he feels that in the long run this helps the authors. As he pointed out, he has edited over twenty books, and printed forty-one new authors, eight of whom made it to the Campbell ballot. Hartwell said that this nurturing of new writers was something he really admired in Resnick, and of course Resnick did make the Hugo ballot for Best Professional Editor this year. As Resnick later said, "You don't pay back in this field, you pay forward, because the guys you owe don't need it."

On the other hand, some authors are not happy with the changes editors "help" them make. Dozois told of A. Bertram Chandler, who wrote a story for John W. Campbell which Campbell helped him "improve." It went on to become Chandler's best-known story, but Chandler in later years said that he was still wistful for his original story. Of course, as someone pointed out, that was for a magazine, not a theme anthology, and editors do different things depending on the type of final product, which segued nicely into the actual stated topic of the panel.

In a theme anthology there is, not surprisingly, a theme. This theme is usually pretty specific (e.g., time travel, cats, green vegetables). A magazine, on the other hand, is looking for balance and variety in each issue within the general scope of the magazine (e.g., hard science fiction, fantasy). Dozois said that the issue of *Asimov's* that had two alternate history baseball stories with very similar premises was an exception. And Edelman said, for example, that *Science Fiction Age* has one fantasy story per issue.

The mechanics of editing are different as well. In an anthology, if a story ends in the middle of a page, that's okay; you just leave the rest as white space. Not in a magazine. Some magazines use poems, cartoons, quotes, or artwork as filler, but Datlow said that for a while *Omni* didn't do that. The result was that stories had to be a precise length, and she described trying to cut exactly 130 lines from a Stephen King novelette to make it fit. The first thing you do, apparently, is figure out which paragraph breaks you don't need. Someone mentioned that Algis Budrys once wrote an essay, "Non-Literary Influences on Science Fiction," which talked about things like this.

Although anthologies don't have this problem, they do have others. For any anthology you need a minimum number of stories, and for a theme anthology, this may be difficult to accomplish. Sometimes you have a maximum as well; Hartwell said he would have liked to add stories by Robert Forward, Joe Haldeman, and Charles Sheffield to *The Ascent of Wonder,* but it was already a thousand pages long.

Someone asked why Martin Greenberg seemed to be involved with every anthology published. Resnick explained that Greenberg sells the idea to a publisher and does all the paperwork involving rights and royalties, but leaves all the editing to his co-editor. In movie terms, I suppose one would say that Greenberg was the producer and Resnick, Friesner, Kerr, or whoever, the director. (Resnick says that Greenberg *thinks* in anthologies.) One idea that Greenberg and Resnick have been trying to sell is a sports anthology with each story about a different sport. They have found eighty-seven sports with stories about them, but can't convince anyone that a reprint anthology would sell well. They also can't seem to sell the proposed reprint anthology *Under Asian Skies,* which I suppose means that the earlier *Under African Skies* and *Under South American Skies* did not do very well.

Greenberg's fame has gotten to the point, in fact, where he does not always put his name on the cover, for fear that people will decide anyone who edits that many anthologies must be doing a hack job.

Dozois said that "putting together a reprint anthology is like arranging a Japanese rock garden." Erdman and Dozois both said that reprint anthologies were important because they prevent the loss of the history of science fiction.

Someone asked about the possibility of republishing an out-of-print anthology, but the panelists areed that an out-of-print anthology is pretty much dead. Even Greenberg probably couldn't sort out all the rights issues.

Resnick mentioned that his anthologies *Alternate Outlaws* and *Deals with the Devil* should be in the bookstores in a few days. His *Alternate Worldcons* was on sale in the Dealers Room (and sold out over a hundred and fifty copies). The latter had its origins last year at ConFrancisco when someone talking about the convention at a party said, "It could be worse." Someone else asked, "How?" and thus was born *Alternate Worldcons.* (The answer to this particular question was that Zagreb could have won, but to the best of my knowledge, at the time of ConFrancisco Zagreb was not in a war zone or under any sort of trade sanctions.)

Panel: Utopia: Who Wants to Live There?
Saturday, 5 PM

Dr. Arlan Andrews (mod), Dr. Janice Bogstad, Donald Kingsbury, Frederick Andrew Lerner, Jack Nimersheim

Description: The pros and cons of the Utopian society.

The first question to be answered is, "Who defines utopia?" The second is, "Who pays for it?" Nimersheim said it was defined by whoever is in charge. Lerner's response was, "Who does the work?" If a utopian proposal doesn't answer this question (or at least ask it), said Lerner, it's isn't worth reading. A lot of utopias, the panelists noted, rely on slave classes to do all the work. And Lerner also mentioned that there never seemed to be any shortages in literary utopias.

Also, many utopias are anarchist, even though one panelist said that the only really successful anarchies in history were fandom and the Internet. One panelist recommended *Utopias and Anarchy* by Nausick.

Another unlikely feature of most literary utopias is that they never have conflicts.

One author who writes utopian works which don't have these defects is Ursula Le Guin. *The Dispossessed,* "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," and other works by her look at all these issues.

Too many utopian stories are just reversals that don't fix anything, but just put a different set of people on top. This is particularly a problem with many of the "feminist utopias," but one sees it in real life in the Russian and Chinese revolutions.

Bogstad said that since she grew up on a farm, she didn't find the "back to nature" impulse that drives many utopias very attractive.

Another question to be asked about a utopia is whether one can leave it at will. This is the difference between, say, Resnick's Kirinyaga and Tepper's world in *Sideshow*. For that matter, if you go to a new utopia, must they take you in? Bogstad asked if a utopia was still a utopia if it interacted with the outside world, thereby supporting or perpetuating non-utopias. Kingsbury said that perhaps the ante-bellum South might be an example of this, in that blacks were "outside" the utopia, yet the utopia depended on them.

Someone noted that we are trying to build utopias all the time — we just don't call them that. But we're always trying to get more good and less bad. Sometimes we make the same sorts of errors in whose utopia it will be. Someone said, for example, that the various planned cities, houses, and so on all seem planned for mobile, agile, healthy people with no children. Lerner responded that utopian plans and utopias need to take into account how people behave. The Modernist movement in the 1920s thought that perfect geometrical designs would result in a perfect society, but oddly enough, people didn't behave that way.

Nimersheim thought that in any case "we advance through adversity," and if we eliminate adversity, we stagnate. In large part it boils down to the fact that our choices are always constrained by other people's choices; utopias are relative. On the whole, Nimersheim thought we couldn't have utopia because of human nature.

The classic literary utopias are of course those of Sir Thomas More (*Utopia*) and Edward Bellamy (*Looking Backward*). In fact, the name was coined by More.

Hugo (and Other) Awards Ceremony
Saturday, 8 PM

And the winners are:

- Novel: *Green Mars,* by Kim Stanley Robinson
- Novella: "Down in the Bottomlands," by Harry Turtledove (*Analog,* January 1993)
- Novelette: "Georgia on My Mind," by Charles Sheffield (*Analog,* January 1993)
- Short Story: "Death on the Nile," by Connie Willis (*Asimov's,* March 1993)
- Non-Fiction Book: *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction,* edited by John Clute and Peter Nicholls
- Dramatic Presentation: *Jurassic Park*
- Professional Editor: Kristine Kathryn Rusch
- Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton
- Original Artwork: Space Fantasy Commemorative Stamp Booklet, by Steve Hickman
- Semiprozine: *Science Fiction Chronicle,* edited by Andrew Porter
- Fanzine: *Mimosa,* edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch
- Fan Writer: Dave Langford
- Fan Artist: Brad W. Foster
- John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer of 1992–1993 (sponsored by Dell Magazines): Amy Thomson (*Virtual Girl*)
- Seiun Award for Best Novel Translated into Japanese: *Entoverse,* by James P. Hogan
- Seiun Award for Best Short Story Translated into Japanese: "Tangents," by Greg Bear
- Seiun Award for Best Dramatic Presentation: *Jurassic Park*
- Big Heart Award: Jack Williamson
- First Fandom Award: Everett F. Bleiler and Andre Norton

Barry Longyear (as Toastmaster) started this off with a quote from J. Danforth Quayle: "If we do not succeed, we run the risk of failure." He then did a long bit about an award for Best Rejection Letter from an editor. (I noted that he talked about the Hugo for "Best Prozine Editor," but it's actually for "Best Professional Editor," and anthology and book editors have been known to make the ballot.) Longyear quoted Gene Fowler as having said, "An editor should have a pimp for a brother — so he has someone to look up to." Eventually the award was unveiled: the "No" award, a rocket headed *down*. It was won (predictably) by "No Award."

Several non-Hugos came first. The Golden Duck Awards (for children's books) were announced The two novel-length Auroras were awarded; the other eight had been awarded earlier in the day. When Spider Robinson got up to present them, he immediately said, "And the winner is ... Lan Laskowski!"

There were the usual jokes and surprises during the Hugo awards themselves. George Barr presented the Original Artwork and Professional Editor awards, saying that although the program book called him "one of the nicest people in fandom," "These are the people whose hands I would most like to break." Steve Hickman said, "If Harlan doesn't like these stamps I can enter the plea of being self-indulgent, and that he can't fault me on."

Connie Willis got up and said, "You guys have got to stop doing this," but also claimed that George R. R. Martin said there was a move afoot to strip her of her awards because he claims she was on steroids when she wrote the stories.

Andy Porter said that last year he thought his win was a fluke, but this proved it wasn't. (He won by eight votes this year instead of by only one.) I suspect that *Interzone* may win next year (Langford certainly will).

That Whelan was defeated in two categories was a bit of a surprise. The Non-Fiction award was no surprise; Hickman's win was also by a very wide margin.

Harry Turtledove was very surprised at his win: he said at the reception beforehand that he was sure Ellison had it sewed up. Sheffield was also surprised, I think.

And speaking of finally winning one, it was nice to see Stan Robinson get a Hugo at last (this was his eleventh nomination). I suspect that the vote was more for *Red Mars* than for *Green Mars,* or perhaps for the series, but I think I can live with that.

The "always a bridesmaid, never a bride" title is now shared in the fiction categories by Michael Bishop and Bruce Sterling, with eight nominations each without a win. The runner-up is Gene Wolfe with seven. (Jerry Pournelle also has eight, but four of them were co-nominations.)

I suppose I should mention the Great Hugo Controversy of 1994. This year it was the shifting of stories from the categories into which they would have fallen had the word-count rules been "strictly" applied. However, the WSFS Constitution permits the administrators to move a story into an adjacent category if it is within 5000 words of the range of that category. So, for example, a novella of 35,100 words could be moved into the novel category (whose lower boundary is 40,000 words). What happened was that due to the "5% rule," the short story category would have had only three nominees. (The "5%" rule says that a story must appear on 5% of the ballots which nominated in that category to make the ballot.) And in fact, several longer stories that had barely missed making the ballot had more nominations than shorter ones that made it. Because of this, and because there were stories within the 5000-word boundary, the administrators decided to shift stories into the shorter categories. The result was that the winner in the Short Story category (with a theoretical upper limit of 7,500 words) was actually an 8,400-word novelette.

I can certainly see the point of the objectors. However, I think it is foolish to rail at the administrators over this issue. The Constitution clearly says they can do this. If the members of the WSFS don't want them to do this, they should change the Constitution.

[A motion was made at Saturday's business meeting that will try to correct this. KK]

Other Awards

The Auroras are the Canadian national awards. The two Auroras for novels were presented at the Hugo Awards ceremony; the others, presented earlier in the day, were:

- Best Short-Form Work in English: "Just Like Old Times," by Robert J. Sawyer
- Meilleure nouvelle en francais: "La Merveilleuse machine de Johann Havel," by Yves Meynard
- Best Other Work in English: "Prisoners of Gravity" (television series)
- Meilleur ouvrage en francais (Autre): *Les 42,210 univers de la science-fiction,* by Guy Bouchard
- Artistic Achievement: Robert Pasternak
- Fan Achievement (Fanzine): "Under the Ozone Hole," edited by Karl Johanson & John Herbert
- Fan Achievement (Organizational): Lloyd Penney, Ad Astra

- Fan Achievement (Other): Jean-Louis Trudel, promotion of Canadian SF

The Prometheus Awards, given by the Libertarian Futurist Society, were:

- Novel: *Pallas,* by L. Neil Smith
- Hall of Fame: *We,* by Yevgeny Zamiatin

The Golden Duck Awards for excellence in children's science fiction went to:

- Picture Book Illustration: *Richie's Rocket,* by Joan Anderson, photographed by George Ancona
- Children's Book, Grades 2 thru 6: *Worf's First Adventure,* by Peter David
- Young Adult Book Grades 6 thru 10: *The Giver,* by Lois Lowry
- Special Award: *Invitation to the Game,* by Monica Hughes

The Chesley Awards, given by ASFA, are as follows:

- Magazine Cover: Wojtek Siudmak, *Asimov's,* December 1993
- Three-Dimensional Art: Jennifer Weyland, "And I Am the Shining Star"
- Interior Illustration: Alan M. Clark, "The Toad of Heaven," *Asimov's,* June 1993
- Unpublished Monochrome Work: Carl Lundgren, "Impudence"
- Unpublished Color Work; James Gurney, "Garden of Hope"
- Art Director: Jamie Warren Youll, Bantam Books
- Contribution to ASFA: David Lee Pancake, and Teresa Paterson and the Pegasus Management Crew (tie)
- Artistic Achievement: Frank Kelly Freas, body of work
- Hardback Book Cover: Tom Kidd, *The Far Kingdoms*
- Paperback Book Cover: Bob Eggleton, *Dragons*

Panel: Bioethics Considerations
Sunday, 11 AM
Lois H. Mangan (mod), Genny Dazzo, Kathleen Ann Goonan, J. D. Maynard, Ross Pavlac

Description: A discussion of the ethics of bioengineering.

Pavlac said that the whole question of bioethics started with the Hippocratic Oath, which he partially described and partially read. That is, he said that the first two parts dealt with the doctor promising to worship and sacrifice to the gods and to support his teacher in his teacher's old age. He then read the part dealing directly with the doctor-patient relationship. At the time of Hippocrates, he said, the oath was quite radical.

Maynard, a practicing physician, said that the oath was interesting, but is no longer required of physicians, in part maybe because the specifics of the third part don't fit in today's society. Pavlac asked how physicians could just decide to throw out the oath without replacing it with something else. Maynard had already said that there were several replacement oaths, but based on other statements from Pavlac, I got the distinct impression that his objection was to the abandonment of the clause swearing not to perform abortions. And eventually someone asked him why he felt he could throw out the first part (regarding sacrificing to the gods), yet insist that the rest was untouchable and eternal. (He had no answer.) And indeed there was much loud argument about various people's religious beliefs. (Mangan said that she had heard several people declare that you could not be a good physician without a firm Christian background, which as a non-Christian she found personally offensive.)

When the panelists weren't debating religion, they did ask some interesting questions. Can a person in pain make rational decisions? Do you allow parents unlimited control over their children's treatment? Do you allow the government unlimited control? How do you deal with the fact that doctors are authority figures who have extraordinary influence over their patients whether they want it or not? What about designing children? What about euthanasia — who makes the decisions and how? If a disease like sickle-cell anemia is useful in combating malaria, should it be wiped out because we don't think malaria is a problem these days?

Panel: What Is REALLY Killing the Backlisting of Good Books
Sunday, 12 Noon
Joseph T. Mayhew (mod), Tom Doherty, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Robert Runte

Description: A discussion on the shelf life of books and how to keep our favorites front and center in the buyer's mind.

Backlisting is the keeping of books in print, or bringing them back into print, after the short shelf life of the bestseller.

The question was asked as to whether the lack of backlisting was particularly pronounced in the science fiction field, or occurred throughout literature, but no one ever answered it.

Many people seemed to want to blame the non-bookstore markets for this phenomenon because they carry only the latest books, but Nielsen Hayden said that rather than blame the non-bookstores we should thank them, because they are the source of new readers.

It used to be that demand outstripped supply; this is no longer true, and the sheer glut of books must certainly affect the decision to keep something on the backlist or not.

One reason Doherty and Nielsen Hayden were on the panel is that Tor is actively backlisting books and working at bringing back older works by current authors. The latter is through their Orb line, trade paperbacks on acid-free paper with larger print, a press run of under 15,000, and a higher price than a mass-market paperback.

This statement by them led to a discussion of what exactly a trade paperback was. In common terms, a mass-market paperback is the "small" paperback size and costs about US$5–7, while a trade paperback is larger, almost the size of a hardback, and costs about US$10–15. In fact, the real definition of a trade paperback is that it is a lower-priced edition, distributed through regular book distributors (not magazine distributors), and fully returnable (i.e., non-strippable). (Mass-market books are strippable; that is, if they don't sell, the bookstore can rip off the cover and return just that for a full refund while destroying the rest of the book. This saves on shipping costs but means that far more books need to be printed than are actually sold.) The size of the book, which is what most people use as a guide, is immaterial. The real reason for the different size is that when they tried making trade paperbacks in the smaller size, the bookstores didn't realize they were not strippable, and would rip the covers off and send just them back instead of returning the entire book. All British paperbacks are trade paperbacks, which helps explain some of the price difference.

In fact, Nielsen Hayden said that the existence of mass-market paperbacks is a fluke of the American magazine distribution system. Unfortunately, people have gotten used to the idea that everything will be reprinted in cheap mass-market editions, and even express resentment that publishers put out hardbacks and trade paperbacks at all. (How many times have you heard someone say, "I'll wait for the paperback"?)

Runte then told a story which demonstrated that some publishers just can't be bothered backlisting books. It seems he was trying to get a certain book on the reading list for his regional school board. To do this, the publisher had to promise to keep it in print for seven years. However, having it on the list guaranteed sales of 350,000 units over that time. The publisher who had the rights didn't think it was worth it. Doherty thought this astonishing, as Tor will print anything they think can sell a thousand copies over an eighteen-month period.

(This raises the issue of what the average press run for a hardback book is. Someone mentioned that Arkham House's press run for their John Kessel collection was five thousand copies, yet they are considered a small press, so I would guess that a thousand copies is a very small run indeed. Orb's "under 15,000" covers a wide range.)

Someone asked if "books on demand" wouldn't solve the problem of storing backlisted books in a warehouse. (There was a United States Supreme Court decision, the "Thor Power Tools decision," that declared that assets in a warehouse, including books, were taxable assets and could not be depreciated. This made storing books financially impractical, and a lot of books were pulped and went out of print shortly thereafter.) But the fact is that the printing and binding of individual books on demand is still too expensive for the average reader; services that do this now usually charge US$100 or so per book.

In addition to the Thor Power Tools decision, publishers have had other problems with the government. They are the only businesses not eligible for small-business loans from the government, because that would supposedly interfere with freedom of the press. That sounds backwards until you think about the fact that the *withholding* of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts has been denounced as censorship. Much better, reasons the government, to stay out of the publishing industry entirely.

Someone was surprised that publishers were considered "small businesses." Nielsen Hayden responded, "The combined janitorial staff of the automotive industry probably outnumber the entire publishing industry two to one." Someone else added, "And are probably better paid."

How can people encourage backlisting? Well, buy older books. If your bookstore stocks only the latest releases, ask them to special-order the books you want. If they won't or can't, use the mail-order services of the various specialty bookstores. Conventions could provide a list of the dealers in the Dealers Room who do mail order.

Someone noted that hardbacks, trade paperbacks, and mail-ordering were expensive. Nielsen Hayden responded to that by noting that most fans in the audience spend more on hotels for conventions each year than on books. As he put it, "You're hotel fans, not book fans." (A room in Winnipeg for four nights split two ways was about US$200 each. That's about 40 mass-market paperbacks, 13 trade paperbacks, or 9 hardbacks.) Of course, some people spend more in

the Dealers Room at conventions than for hotels, never mind what they spend in bookstores the rest of the year.

Panel: How We Deal with Death & Dying
Sunday, 1 PM
George Barr (mod), Connie Willis, Lois H. Mangan, Barry B. Longyear

Description: This is something that we all will do at least once in our life, but how do we really feel about it?

Barr started this by jokingly asking the panelists to relate their latest "near-death" experience, but it turned out that several of them actually had one to relate. Speaking of his own heart attack, Barr said, "I don't fear death; I fear dying. It's painful."

Hayman (who is a professional bereavement counselor) said that the major problem in dealing with death and dying is that people see grieving as a sign of weakness. Barr supported this idea, adding that men are not allowed to cry. He said that for a long time the only time he would cry was in movies, where it was dark and no one could see him.

Also, modern social structures do not allow time for grieving. Hayman says you should wait at least a year before making any major decisions, but frequently people are forced to decide sooner on a lot of major economic decisions.

Willis said that she never understood why science fiction was called an "escapist literature," because it's in science fiction where death and dying (and other "heavy" issues) are examined in the most detail with the most "what if?" questions. She gave as examples Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, Nevil Shute's *On the Beach*, and J. G. Ballard's *Terminal Beach*. By dealing with non-real situations, "science fiction catches things in the peripheral vision" that we can't deal with directly.

Someone in the audience thought cryonics was the solution, but the panelists were skeptical of cryonics in general and also pointed out that even if it worked, people had to die eventually. Barr was also bothered by cryonics in that, as he put it, "It makes death the ultimate obscenity." As Willis pointed out, in Victorian times sex was taboo in literature and death was described in great detail. Now it's the other way around. Barr also objected to the idea that only those who could afford immortality or longevity could have them.

The panelists touched briefly on the topic of immortality.

This discussion of cryonics and immortality also raised the philosophical question: is death an end or a transition? If there is something after life, what does staying here overly long mean?

Panel: Importance/Ethics of Terraforming Other Planets
Sunday, 2 PM
Roger MacBride Allen (mod), Frederick Andrew Lerner, Stanley Schmidt, John Strickland Jr.

Description: How can we justify this work to the universe?

One suspects most of the panelists were in favor of terraforming. Schmidt said, "If you really want to preserve everything, then you can't allow changes." Someone asked the anti-terraforming people in the audience, "Should our ancestors have come to North America?"

A fair amount of time was spent quizzing the audience on what level of indigenous life needed to exist before terraforming was wrong. Were single-celled organisms enough? What about ugly insects? What about cute, furry mammals?

Someone asked, "If time travel is possible, should we go back and deflect the meteor of 65 million years ago that killed the dinosaurs?"

Panel: Creating an Internally Consistent Religion
Sunday, 4 PM
Harry Turtledove (mod), R. Fletcher, John Hertz, Robert Sawyer, David Wixon

Description: Every culture must have some sort of religion to hold it together, but can it be as easy as the "Great Potato" theory?

Well, it may have started off as a look at whether religions created for stories need to be consistent, but it turned it something far more interesting: a look at how real religions develop.

Fletcher (a chaplain) started off by saying that in real religions internal consistencies develop historically, but they must be consciously developed in fictional religions, and they are important.

Wixon (who has a degree in Islamic history) felt that internal consistencies were less important, and that the single most important thing in a religion is that it be emotionally satisfying to its believers.

Sawyer then said, "Being the Canadian on the panel, I will take the compromise position," that is, that what is convincing to the reader is a range of belief and beliefs, not total agreement.

Turtledove said that religion starts simple; when it gets complex is when questions of interpretation arise. Fletcher responded that Turtledove, and indeed the panel as a whole, was falling into the trap of the Western perception of the origin of religion.

Hertz said that he thinks most fans are not adherents of standard religions in a recognizable form. There is a lot of skepticism in fandom, and that colors the opinions of this panel. The result is that we are the victims of our own prejudices, and authors rarely write believing Jews or Christians as sympathetic characters in science fiction.

Sawyer said that when he was writing the religious parts of *Far-Seer* he felt if he satisfied both Orson Scott Card (a devout Mormon) and a Muslim friend of his, he would be happy.

Wixon observed that it was difficult for the panelists to avoid talking about real religions and to stick to the fictional ones. Fletcher thought that was because most fictional religions were built from parts of real ones. For example, the Bajoran religion in *Star Trek: Deep Space 9* was a mixture of Judaism and Islam. This led Hertz to say that most science fiction television is written by careless atheists: careless in the sense that they use the piece-parts of religions without really thinking about them. Others responded that the real problem was that science fiction television was afraid of getting letters.

Someone recommended the religions in Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle's *The Mote in God's Eye* and James White's *The Genocidal Healer* as well thought out. I also think *Babylon 5* is doing some interesting things with religion.

Turtledove observed, "We believed that as scientific knowledge grows, the need for the spiritual decreases." But we have since changed our minds. Tying this in to an earlier point, Hertz said that when you describe religion as something that satisfies the emotions, you have already taken a position on religion. Religionists, he noted, say that religion is not there to satisfy the emotions.

Fletcher said, however, "You get strongly attached to what you think is the truth." This was described as "intellectual emotionalism" and can cause problems. Part of this attachment, according to Turtledove, is that "what you write will reflect yourself."

Hertz thought as long as a fictional religion was at least as consistent as we insist fictional science be, then it will work, or as he put it, "It doesn't fail on the grounds that the strings of the marionettes glitter in the sun."

Turtledove talked a bit about the henotheistic universe he created for *The Case of the Toxic Spell Dump*, henotheistic being where your god is true for you, but a different one is true for your neighbor.

In talking about fictional religions in general, Fletcher said, "Syncretic elements in religion have to be consistent with the basic premises of the religion." In other words, ideas adopted into a religion have to match up with what's there already. Turtledove gave the example of the importation of Zoroastrian dualism into Judaism (somewhat) and Christianity (wholesale). This led to a discussion of whether this dualism was in fact imported into Judaism. The story of Job is the obvious "evidence," but Hertz points out that Maimonides said that the anthropomorphism there was poetic rather than literal, and so Hertz concludes that the dualism is also poetic or metaphoric rather than literal. By showing a conflict between good and evil, he felt it was trying to send the message, "To work for good, you can't work a little for evil."

Turtledove responded that the personification of the Devil that people see in the story of Job is indeed an importation, since Job is a very late book, written after contact with Zoroastrian ideas. Hertz noted that it was interesting how new concepts (such as the Devil) seem to take on "retroactive" life of their own and are treated as if they had always been there. Or as he quoted, "We are at war with Eastasia. We have always been at war with Eastasia." It's important to learn what the party line is, he said, whether or not you believe it.

Syncretism can create inconsistencies, even in real religions, but it doesn't have to.

Another issue is whether a religion is "absolutist." Islam, for example, recognizes Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism as "religions of the Book," each with some truth. But the attitude that there may be some truth in other religions is also culturally determined.

Someone in the audience claimed that all religions, or at least all "major religions" (as the audience member put it), appeal to power, fear, or virtue. Turtledove felt this was not true of several religions, all of which happened to be non-Western, leading him to observe that most people say, "A major religion is mine: a cult is yours."

Turtledove also reminded us, "One of the things we underestimate is the strength of belief religion can inspire." We can co-exist in the United States because our theological faith is less strong, because we have science and secularism as an alternative answer. Fletcher responded that he felt that neo-paganism was a reaction, not against Christianity, but against the very secularism and atheism that Turtledove mentions.

Wixon said that one obstacle to writing about a completely new religion is that you can't write a story about a truly alien character. About the best you can do is to write about trying to *comprehend* a truly alien character.

Regarding someone's comment about televangelists, Hertz said, "If you didn't worship idols, it wouldn't be so shocking that they had feet of clay."

Masquerade
Sunday, 8 PM

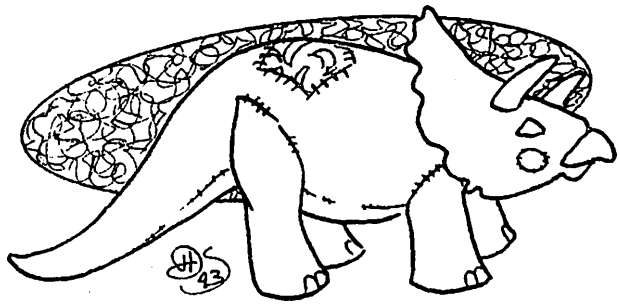
Well, the masquerade started with a Hugo presentation. It seems that Bob Eggleton, who had won the Hugo for Best Artist, hadn't been present to receive his award, but when he found out about it he was so excited he couldn't sleep and eventually decided to get a flight from Rhode Island so he could come and pick it up. They had George Barr up to do the presenting as he had the night before, and he said, "Not only wouldn't they let me have it last night, but they dragged me back here to humiliate me again. But I'm *so* nice."

As a result of all this, the actual masquerade did not start until 8:38 PM. There were only fifty costumes, but for some reason there was an intermission from 9:30 PM to 9:50 PM, making the evening even longer. (I heard the awards were not announced until after 1 AM, which is totally unreasonable for a fifty-entry masquerade scheduled to start at 8 PM. The presentations alone took until after 10:30 PM.)

Kat Connery as the Mistress of Ceremonies was very good, being able to ad lib when necessary and keep the crowd entertained. There were also several very good costumes. John Mitchell and Scott Corwin did a very good walker in "Imperial Ground Assault Forces," which was somewhat undercut by a very similar power loader in Jeff Ergeron and Stephanie Richardson's "The Bitch Is Back: Queen Alien and Power Loader." "The Borg" by Florence Achenbach, Steve Fansher, and Missouri Smith was very good. "The 19th Century League of Futurists" by Kathy Sanders, Drew Sanders, Gavin Claypool, Robbie Cantor, Laurraine Tutihasi, Len Wein, and Twilight was one of the most elaborately designed. From where we were sitting, the detail work on Gordon Smuder and Jennifer Menken's "Carousel Armour" looked impressive, but we didn't get a chance to see it up close.

Other costumes of note were Walter Thompson's "Series W.T.3"; Steve Swope, Catherine Peters, and Toni Narita's "Afternoon Matinee"; "Radioactive Hamsters from a Planet Near Mars" by Ed Charpentier, Louise Hypher, Cathy Leeson, Cindy Huckle, and Colleen Hillerup; "Festival of Change" by Eileen Capes, Katherine Jepson, and Kevin Jepson; and "Xanadu" by Nora Mai and Bruce Mai.

One criticism I heard from a few people was that there was a slide projected on the screen for the "Boston in 1998" entry, while no other entries (including a "Baltimore in 1998" entry) had slides. It turns out that anyone *could* have had a slide, but no one else asked. Unfortunately, this was not widely known, and the result was that ConAdian *appeared* to be showing favoritism toward the Boston bid.



Parties
[reported by KK]

Sunday night I ran a "Boston area party" in my suite. I had flyers from many local groups. (I apologize to anyone I missed.) Tony Lewis had brought the updated section on SF and related clubs in the area from *The Whole NESFA Catalog,* and posted it.

Among the interesting conversations during the party, was one with five people from Japan. According to them, there has never been a Worldcon bid from Japan because the hotels raise the rates to any group that uses a convention center. In addition, the hotels are unfriendly to people in costume. Unless the convention could be held in one hotel, it is not possible to have a Worldcon in Japan.

Miscellaneous

The WSFS Business Meeting passed an amendment authorizing retrospective Hugos for 50, 75, or 100 years previous to a given convention, so long as Hugos were not awarded for that year already. The motion to eliminate zones for Worldcons didn't even make it past the initial round of consideration. They passed on to Intersection a proposal to restrict Worldcons from being held within 60 miles of the NASFiC held in the voting year, to take effect starting with the 1999 Worldcon.

I used to rank all the Worldcons I had been to, but it was getting harder and harder to fit the new ones in, perhaps because the cons of twenty years ago are hard to remember in detail, so instead I will split them into three groups: the good, the average, and the below-average. Within each group they are listed chronologically.

The good: Noreascon I (1971), MidAmeriCon (1976), Noreascon II (1980), L.A.con II (1984), Noreascon III (1989), and MagiCon (1992).

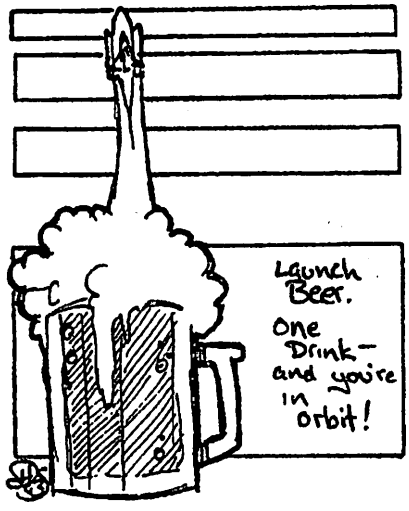
The average: Discon II (1974), Seacon (1979), Chicon IV (1982), Confederation (1986), ConFiction (1990), Chicon V (1991), ConFrancisco (1993), and ConAdian (1994).

The below-average: Iguanacon (1978), Suncon (1977), Constellation (1983), Conspiracy (1985), and Nolacon II (1988).

At ConAdian, I went to twenty-two panels, a one-man show, and a film. At ConFrancisco I went to twenty-four panels and two lectures; at MagiCon I went to sixteen panels: at Chicon V I went to twelve panels (I was a real slacker in those days!). I have probably leveled off at the two-dozen mark, so my reports will get longer only if I start transcribing every word said. (Had I not had to leave early for Rosh Hashonah, I might have gotten to a couple more panels.)

Site selection seemed a hard-fought battle, but San Antonio won by a 2 to 1 margin. 1437 votes were cast, compared to 1286 last year and 2541 the year before that. Algis Budrys and Michael Moorcock will be the Guests of Honor. Roy Tackett will be the Fan Guest of Honor. Neal Barrett, Jr., will be the "Master of Toasts." The convention with be called LoneStarCon 2 and will be August 28 to September 1, 1997. Contact address in the United States is LoneStarCon 2, P. O. Box 27277, Austin TX 78755-2277, or electronically at shiva@io.com, SMOFBBS@aol.com, 72247.2132@compuserve.com, E.COOLEY@genie.geis.com, and about half a dozen other addresses.

Next year in Glasgow!



Selected Upcoming Conventions

January 13-15, 1995
Boston Park Plaza, Boston MA
C. J. Cherryh and Jael
ARISIA '95
1 Kendall Square, Suite 322
Cambridge, MA 02139

February 3-5, 1995
Days Inn, Woburn MA
Nigel Bennett and Gillian Horvath
Dead of Winter II
The Forever Knight Fan Club
P.O. Box 128
Boston, MA 02130-0011

February 17-19, 1995
Sheraton Tara, Framingham MA
Diana Wynne Jones and Ruth Sanderson
Boskone 32
P.O. Box 809
Framingham, MA 01701

March 10-12, 1995
Holiday Inn, Taunton MA
Max Grodénchik and Robin Curtis
Bash '95
c/o Boston Star Trek Association
P.O. Box 1108
Boston, MA 02103-1108

March 17-19, 1995
Rye Town Hilton, Rye Brook NY
Poul Anderson and Stephen Hickman
Lunacon '95
P.O. Box 3566
New York, NY 10008-3566

June 9-11, 1995
TBA in eastern Massachusetts
Barry and Sally Childs-Helton
ConCertino 1995
M.A.S.S. F.I.L.C., Inc.
18 Riverdale Street
Allston, MA 02134

August 18-20, 1995
Sheraton Tara & Resort, Danvers MA
Ramsey Campbell
NecronomiCon: 2nd Edition
P.O. Box 1320, Back Bay Annex
Boston, MA 02117-1320

Cyril Kornbluth: The Man by John B. Michel
(reprinted from the May 1939 issue of *The Science Fiction Fan*)

The precise details of the conception of Cyril Kornbluth are, of necessity, an unknown secret. One thing, however, is certain. On the night he was *born*, Olympus rocked with celestial laughter. It is not too difficult conjuring up a vision of the birth chamber of the gods, the Titans sitting around a cauldron stirring up the brain and body stew and chuckling to themselves, adding now and then a dash of this, and a dash of that, Jupiter in his careless way tossing in a pinch of special grade impo-powder, Juno sipping the broth and exclaiming:

"Easy there on the glands concentrate, Apollo; throw in a quart more of the essence ala blarney, Mercury, whoa there, Diana; whoa, Bacchus. More discretion, boys..."

Little the mighty gods recked of the hell-broth that they were brewing up. Little did they suspect that in the bubbling mass before them, illuminated by its own internal fires and sparkling evilly in the dim glow of the torches atop the temple roof, lay the seeds of their own discomfiture — if not their destruction.

And on the morn a thin trail of fire sped down through the ether, crashed down to the earth and was born.

An irreverent Puck, in invisible whiskers, a thinly disguised sneer, saddened, scheming eyes, and a three-pronged iron club hidden behind the brain popped into the world.

On earth the laughter continues on and on. For at the age of maturity, Cyril Kornbluth has become a great success in the world. He is in demand as an intellectual laxative, at parties, at gatherings. Where the soiree that has failed because of his presence? Nowhere. Where is the bull-session that has fallen flat on Cyril's brow? It has never been held. Alas, alas, he is a success.

The casual meeting with Kornbluth will immediately produce the impression that he is the near-beer variety of prodigy. This, unfortunately, is true. The set of his brain-waves is of such an order that he is something of an accomplished, youthful intellectual, callow, unsure, testing his mettle in a half-hearted world, an iconoclast of new alloys in an old mold, ready, eager, and willing to smash old gods, old ideals, old notions, decayed viewpoints, equipped with a good sword of keen cutting edge and wounding point that stabs cruelly its enemies and friends. This is the Kornbluth of the afterthought, of the impression, of the flowing, unsettled lines of the revery and idea.

But the Kornbluth of everyday life, though more prosaic, is cast in no less adequate a mold. He is a poet, an aesthete of the same class as Perri, Lowndes, Barlow, and the rest of their ilk. He loves life immensely, swimming in it as one might swim awkwardly in a bathtub, splashing the overflow boisterously, carelessly, drenching everybody within reach with the saturating humor and the bulk of life, caring not a whit for the pain he inflicts. Consciously or unconsciously he knows that his own personality provides the necessary cushioning that catches the ego of his opponent or the object of his attack-play, toppled from an artificially gained thousand-mile height by a blast of cold, dampening air from the Kornbluth lungs that seem to have a definite connection with his think tank.

Kornbluth's prime attitude is to preside. He sits *over* things, not in the sense of taking command or of directing the play but as a sort of milquetoasted Falstaff glancing amusedly at the scurrying rush and bustle, paring off in endless rows thick slices of satirical comment, calling for immediate torture and execution of all culprits present, wielding a scalpel of remarkably tempered qualities on the puffed-up pretensions and expanded notions of the blow-hards.

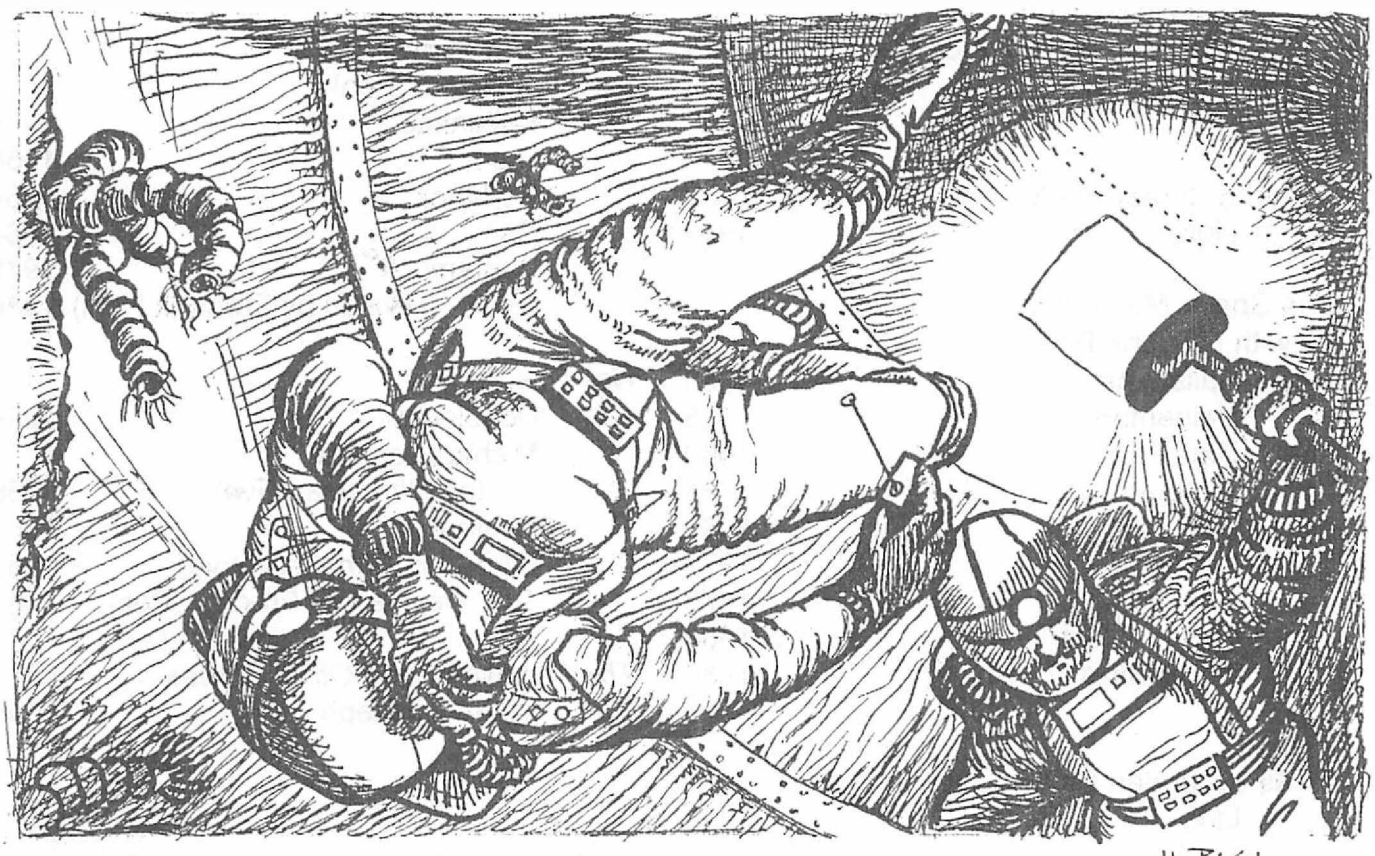
Yet, it isn't these virtues alone — and what else could they be in the atmosphere of sham and fakery, shoddy deception, and veneer-hidden decay that is the intellectual life of bourgeois culture — that provides for myself and for many other of his friends his greatest attraction.

That is Kornbluth himself as a personality in totality, a Rabelaisian radiator and refrigerator giving off a beautiful frothed ice-foam and steam-heat combined. As merely a body he is interesting. His face is like a modified version of Diego Rivera's, with touches of Picasso and Ernest Hemingway. His small, somewhat piggish eyes amuse me. His gestures are childishly restrained and delicate. They make one think of Bacchus balancing a wine-maiden on the tip of his nose. He is big, blocky, ungraceful with the grace of awkward youth.

Intellectually the man is broadened far beyond his years and experience. Litterateur, student of languages, of the science of etymology, his tastes express themselves in a voracious digestion of the printed word, art, modern culture, and in poetry. Poetry reflects his soul. He writes endlessly, somewhat voluminously in poetry. To date, it has been, in my opinion, insufficiently circulated. Through the pages of *Le Vombiteur, Futurart*, and other such publications he has reached a small audience, appreciative, to be sure, but one hardly large enough to be worthy of his talents. He is not a great poet in the sense that Lowndes, for instance, is an accomplished, finished master, for he is still developing, still evolving style, method, and form. The fact of his being somewhat of a prodigy makes this inevitable, but already it is of mature proportions. Basically aesthetic, he expresses that aestheticism in sardonically tragic lines, grasping always for outlines and shadows, never substance and reality. And in that poetry his reflection grows clearer as the picture of a man sipping experience through a pipette which he has fitted with stops and gadgets for shutting off the obscenely bitter and sweet infusions.

He thrives on praise, on criticism, on attack of the same mettle he dishes out. But he is inclined to vomit back adulation. He demands proportion, honesty, understanding of the subject, perception of criticism.

For on that point, one can offer neither half a crown nor a kingdom to a Puck.



The Books of Cyril M. Kornbluth

Takeoff
- Doubleday 1952
- Bantam Pennant 1953

The Naked Storm
as by Simon Eisner
- Lion 1952

Gunner Cade
with Judith Merril, as by Cyril Judd
- Simon & Schuster 1952
- Ace 1957
- Gollancz 1964
- Penguin 1966
- Dell 1969
- Tor 1983

Outpost Mars
with Judith Merril, as by Cyril Judd
- Abelard 1952
- Dell 1954
- Galaxy Beacon (revised as *Sin in Space*) 1961
- Four Square 1966

Half
as by Jordan Park
- Lion 1953

The Space Merchants
with Frederik Pohl
- Ballantine 1953
- Heinemann 1955
- Digit 1960
- Penguin 1965
- Walker 1969
- Gollancz 1972
- Del Rey 1978
- J. Goodchild 1984
- St. Martin's 1985

Valerie
as by Jordan Park
- Lion 1953

The Syndic
- Doubleday 1953
- Bantam 1955
- Faber 1964
- Berkley Medallion 1965
- Sphere 1968
- Equinox 1974
- Avon 1978
- Tor (revised by Frederik Pohl) 1982

Search the Sky
with Frederik Pohl
- Ballantine 1954
- Digit 1960
- Rapp & Whiting 1968
- Penguin 1970
- Bantam 1977
- Baen (revised by Frederik Pohl) 1985

The Explorers
- Ballantine 1954

Gladiator-at-Law
with Frederik Pohl
- Ballantine 1955
- Digit 1958
- Gollancz 1964
- Pan 1966
- Bantam 1975
- Baen (revised by Frederik Pohl) 1986

Not This August
- Doubleday 1955
- Michael Joseph (as *Christmas Eve*) 1956
- Bantam 1956
- Digit (as *Christmas Eve*) 1957
- Tor (revised by Frederik Pohl) 1981

The Mindworm and Other Stories
- Michael Joseph 1955

A Town Is Drowning
with Frederik Pohl
Ballantine 1955
Digit 1960

Sorority House
with Frederik Pohl, as by Jordan Park
Lion 1956

Presidential Year
with Frederik Pohl
Ballantine 1956

A Mile Beyond the Moon
Doubleday 1958
Macfadden 1962
Manor 1972

The Man of Cold Rages
as by Jordan Park
Pyramid 1958

The Marching Morons and Other Famous Science Fiction Stories
Ballantine 1959

Wolfbane
with Frederik Pohl
Ballantine 1959
Gollancz 1961
Penguin 1967
Garland 1975
Bantam 1976
Baen (revised by Frederik Pohl) 1986

The Wonder Effect
with Frederik Pohl
Ballantine 1962
Gollancz 1967
Panther 1974

The Best SF Stories of C.M. Kornbluth
Faber 1968

Thirteen O'Clock and Other Zero Hours
Dell (as by Cecil Corwin) 1970
Robert Hale 1972

The Best of C.M. Kornbluth
Doubleday 1976
Ballantine 1977
Taplinger 1977

Critical Mass
with Frederik Pohl
Bantam 1977

Before the Universe and Other Stories
with Frederik Pohl
Bantam 1980

Venus, Inc.
(This book contains *The Space Merchants* by Pohl and Kornbluth and *The Merchants' War* by Frederik Pohl)
Doubleday 1984

Our Best: The Best of Frederik Pohl and C.M. Kornbluth with Frederik Pohl
Baen 1987

His Share of Glory
NESFA (March) 1995

For those interested, a list of the stories scheduled to be in *His Share of Glory* is included immediately following this bibliography. Frederik Pohl has done the introduction, and the book is scheduled to be out by the end of March 1995.

Much of the information used in preparing this bibliography was derived from *Cyril M. Kornbluth: The Cynical Scrutineer,* published by Galactic Central. Kornbluth is just one of 34 authors Galactic Central list as having a complete bibliography available for. The Kornbluth publication is 39 pages. For information write to: Gordon Benson Jr.; P.O. Box 40494; Albuquerque, New Mexico 87196.

The Cynic

An entry for *Proper Boskonian* by Timothy P. Szczesuil of 17 Pequot Road, Wayland, MA 01778-3507, HomePhone:(508)358-4233, WorkPhone:(508)779-6711 ext.2035, Internet address: archon@world.std.com.

First I'd like to thank Ken for highlighting Cyril M. Kornbluth in this issue of PB. For those of you who do not know me, I'm editing a collection of the Complete Short SF of C. M. Kornbluth for the NESFA Press, to be titled *His Share of Glory*.

In Harry Warner's *A Wealth of Fable*, he quotes Forrest J Ackerman as saying: "I should describe him as the pinnacle of all that is cynical. He is immensely amusing. He insulted me constantly. I like him." Forry is, of course, quite correct; CMK is cynical, amusing, and more. He has a clarity of vision and economy of verbiage which is liberally colored with his cynical humor. Quite simply, he is one of the best short story writers I've ever read.

In deciding to publish a CMK collection, there was the matter of how much of his quite substantial work to include. He wrote many short works (most using pseudonyms), novellas, and novels. His brilliance, in my opinion, shines most brightly in his shorter works, where his focus (and wit) is as sharp as a scalpel. In looking at (or more precisely, reading) the short stories, I thought that every one possessed those elements which I greatly enjoy. As a result I found myself loath to deprive readers of this collection of any of them. So I went for a complete collection of his solo stories. I also feel that a collection presented in chronological order offers the reader a chance to observe the maturation of a excellent writer. The stories appearing in this collection are listed below.

Kornbluth also collaborated extensively throughout his career. He wrote most often with Frederik Pohl, but also with Robert Lowndes, Judith Merril, Donald Wollheim, Richard Wilson, and Dirk Wylie. To attempt to include collaborative material (most of which is very good) in what will be the NESFA Press's largest book to date, would have been overwhelming. A list of Kornbluth collaborations is presented on the next page.

I mentioned to Fred Pohl at ConAdian that I would like him to write an introduction for our collection. I was still quite surprised to receive it less than two weeks later.

His Share of Glory
scheduled story list

The Advent on Channel 12
The Adventurer
The Adventurers
The Altar at Midnight
The City in the Sofa
The Core
The Cosmic Charge Account
Crisis!
The Dead Center
Dimension of Darkness
Dominoes
The Education of Tigress Macardle
The Events Leading Down to the Tragedy
Everybody Knows Joe
Fire Power
Forgotten Tongue
Friend to Man
The Golden Road
Gomez
The Goodly Creatures
I Never Ast No Favors
Interference
Iteration
Kazam Collects
King Cole of Pluto
The Last Man Left in the Bar
The Little Black Bag
The Luckiest Man in Denv
Make Mine Mars
The Marching Morons
Masquerade
The Meddlers
The Mindworm
Mr. Packer Goes to Hell
MS. Found in a Chinese Fortune Cookie
No Place to Go
The Only Thing We Learn
Passion Pills
The Perfect Invasion
The Remorseful
Return from M-15
The Reversible Revolutions
The Rocket of 1955
Shark Ship (*also* Reap the Dark Tide)
The Silly Season
Sir Mallory's Magnitude
The Slave
The Song of Rockets
That Share of Glory
Theory of Rocketry
Thirteen O'Clock
Time Bum
Two Dooms
The Unfortunate Topologist
Virginia
What Sorghum Says
With These Hands
The Words of Guru

List of Cyril M. Kornbluth Collaborative Stories

Byline C. M. Kornbluth and Frederik Pohl:
Best Friend
Critical Mass
The Engineer
A Gentle Dying
The Gift of Garigolli
Gladiator-at-Law
Gravy Planet
A Hint of Henbane
The Meeting
Mute Inglorious Tam
Nightmare with Zeppelins
Nova Midplane
Old Neptunian Custom
The Quaker Cannon
Wolfbane
The World of Myrion Flowers

Byline C. M. Kornbluth and D. A. Wollheim:
Interplane Express

Byline Martin Pearson (with D. A. Wollheim):
The Embassy

Byline Arthur Cooke (with E. Balter, R. W. Lowndes, J. Michel, and D. A. Wollheim):
The Psychological Regulator

Byline Paul Dennis Lavond (with Frederik Pohl):
Callistan Tomb
A Prince of Pluto

Byline S. D. Gottesman (with Frederik Pohl):
Before the Universe
Best Friend
The Castle on Outerplanet
Mars-Tube
Nova Midplane
Trouble in Time

Byline S. D. Gottesman (with Frederik Pohl and Robert W. Lowndes):
The Extrapolated Dimwit

Byline Robert W. Lowndes (with R. W. Lowndes and D. A. Wollheim):
The Martians Are Coming

Byline Cyril (M.) Judd (with Judith Merril):
Gunner Cade
Mars Child
Sea-Change
Sin in Space

Byline Paul Dennis Lavond (with Frederik Pohl and Robert W. Lowndes):
Einstein's Planetoid
Exiles of New Planet

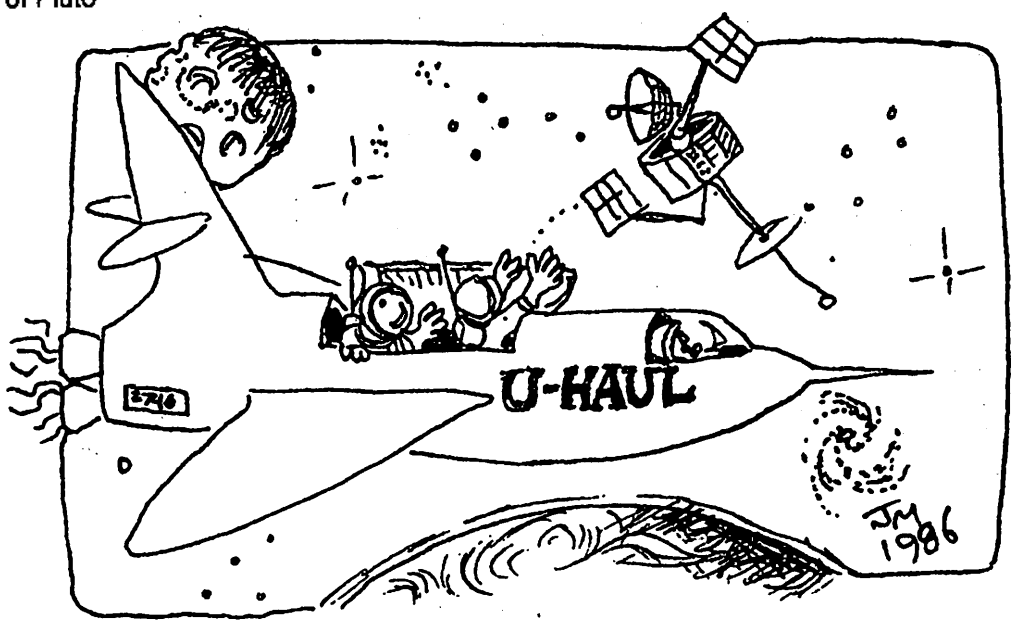
Byline Cecil Corwin and Martin Pearson (D. A. Wollheim):
The Mask of Demeter

Byline Scott Mariner (with Frederik Pohl):
Cure for Killers
An Old Neptunian Custom

Byline Ivar Towers (with Richard Wilson):
Stepsons of Mars

Byline Dirk Wylie (with Frederik Pohl & Joseph Harold Dockweiler):
Vacant World

The bibliographic information was gleaned from the following publications: *Index to the Science Fiction Magazines 1926 – 1950*, comp. by D. B. Day, Perri Press 1952; *Index to the S-F Magazines, 1951 – 1965*, comp. by E. S. Strauss, MIT Science Fiction Society 1966; *The Index of Science Fiction Magazines 1951 – 1965*, comp. by N. Metcalf, J. Ben Stark Pub. 1968; Ken Johnson; and lastly, the best C. M. Kornbluth bibliography available currently is *Cyril M. Kornbluth: The Cynical Scrutineer*, by Phil Stephensen-Payne and Gordon Benson, Jr., available from Galactic Central.



Reviews by: Tim Szczesuil

The following are either CMK classics or my personal favorite stories. The reviews appear in no particular order.

"Thirteen O'Clock"
More fantasy than SF, this tale follows the adventures of Peter Packer of Braintree, Mass., through the rather silly magical world of Ellil in an attempt to overthrow the ruling sorcerer and "his gang of half-breed demons." Lots of fun.

"Mr. Packer Goes to Hell"
Related story of Peter Packer's grandfather's equally amusing descent into the nether regions.

"The Rocket of 1955"
One of the best short-short stories I've ever read. Kornbluth at his early best. Concise narration of a con man and a rocket (surprise!).

"The Little Black Bag"
Who hasn't seen the *Twilight Zone* episode? Well, anyway, this story involves a doctor's black bag from the future which finds its way to a washed-up MD on skid row and an avaricious street girl.

"The Silly Season"
CMK draws upon his experience as a wire-service writer in this tale of a hoax story that gets way out of hand.

"The Marching Morons"
Another tale of a con man (OK — a real estate agent) who is put into suspended animation by a dental accident. He wakes up to a world where the average IQ is 45 and the minority "smart" people have their hands full keeping things going. The con man makes a deal: if they make him dictator, he'll solve their population problem. A typical wry Kornbluth tale. This story has a line which appears elsewhere in SF: "Would you buy it for a quarter?"

"The Luckiest Man in Denv"
A story of conspiracy and double-dealing among arcology-like buildings at war, where people's status is ranked by the floor of their residence. Sharp as a scalpel.

"The Altar at Midnight"
New Spacer meets Old Spacer in this well-crafted short story. Kornbluth again shows how well he understands how people really are.

"Time Bum"
A very short story of crime and punishment in the fourth dimension.

"Shark Ship" (also "Reap the Dark Tide")
The sole heirs of civilization are communities on futuristic arks in this novelette. The story revolves around one ship which is forced to return to land, and what society has devolved to. Again, well written with a humorous surprise ending, which characterizes many of CMK's stories.

"The Meddlers"
A short-short about weather control and central planning.

"Gomez"
A somewhat predictable, but still enjoyable, story of the discovery of a natural math genius and his manipulation by the authorities.

"The Slave"
Excellent story of alien abduction and human exploitation as the motive power of the alien space ships. This tale follows a human agent as he overcomes the aliens. The first part of this story was recycled by CMK in the novel *The Syndic*.

"The Education of Tigress Macardle"
In the future, in order to qualify to reproduce, parents must care for a robot with all the disagreeable attributes of new-born infants: crying at random periods, required feeding, and almost constant effluent discharge from both ends of the robot baby. They are actually doing this in some high schools today!

"That Share of Glory"
Possibly Kornbluth's best work. This is the adventures of a "Herald" or translator from the "Order of Heralds," whose guiding principles are from Machiavelli's *The Prince*. In his first assignment the young protagonist must use every scrap of psychology, sociological history, and ingenuity to perform his duties. A riveting tale. If you haven't read this, I pity you.

The Other Stories
The stories reviewed here are by no means my only favorite CMK stories. It's been over a year since I read many of the stories in the collection, and I've forgotten some of the best parts. I'm sure I'll get to know them better as I copyedit.

Cyril Kornbluth's Pseudonymous Paperbacks

by Richard Newsome

The Naked Storm, by "Simon Eisner." New York: Lion Books, 1952. Lion #109. 25 cents.

Half, by "Jordan Park." New York: Lion Books, 1953. Lion #135, 25 cents.

Valerie, by "Jordan Park." New York: Lion Books, 1953. Lion #176. 25 cents.

Sorority House, by "Jordan Park." New York: Lion Books, 1956. Lion Library #97. 35 cents. Co-authored with Frederik Pohl.

The Man of Cold Rages, by "Jordan Park." New York: Pyramid Books, 1958. Pyramid G368. 35 cents.

In addition to the six novels he wrote in collaboration with Frederik Pohl, the two novels he wrote with Judith Merril as "Cyril Judd," and his three solo science fiction novels, Cyril Kornbluth also published five pseudonymous, non-sf paperback novels between 1952 and 1958. Two were "noir" suspense thrillers, and the remaining three were marketed as mass-market soft-core sex novels, although they were mild even for the time and would scarcely raise an eyebrow today. They were never reprinted and scorned (needless to say) by libraries, so it is quite difficult to locate even a reading copy of any of the five today.

The Man of Cold Rages, published in the same year as Kornbluth's untimely death, is a revenge-driven noir thriller about an artist named Leslie Greene whose wife and son are killed by South American gunmen making their getaway from the murder of an exiled political dissident. The dissident is one of the leaders of the resistance to a banana-republic dictator named General Serrano. Greene is dazed and tormented by the sudden loss of his family, but when he learns that Serrano is responsible for their deaths he finds a new, all-consuming purpose in life: he will go to South America and kill him.

Arriving in South America, he makes contact with the anti-Serrano underground while arranging to be introduced to General Serrano at the Presidential Palace. Two plot complications ensue: the underground does not want him to kill Serrano, and he finds himself falling in love with a pretty young woman, one of the dissidents.

Meeting Serrano and playing upon his vanity, he is commissioned to paint Serrano's portrait. This allows him to stalk his prey at close range, while meeting obstacles in the form of Serrano's ever-present bodyguards and his suspicious security chief.

The closer he gets to his goal, the more Greene finds his single-minded desire to kill Serrano diminishing. Serrano himself turns out to be on one hand a ruthless, amoral ogre whose sexual appetites run to young girls and sadism, and simultaneously a brilliant, lonely dreamer who admires Greene's work and befriends him. Meanwhile, the Gandhian head of the underground is willing to make any sacrifice to convince Greene to give up his quest, since the premature assassination of Serrano will, he believes, trigger a bloody crackdown on the dissidents, who are unprepared for all-out war with the government. And Greene finds himself dreaming of returning to America and living a nice middle-class suburban life with the young woman he's fallen for, rather than dying a martyr to the revolution.

Having gotten his protagonist into a complicated plot situation framed by unresolvable moral conflicts, Kornbluth struggles with the ending, as he usually did in his longer works, but manages to find a resolution.

Along the way Kornbluth carefully paints the scenery: the rundown artists' colony in Chicago where the action begins, the expensive tourist hotel in La Paz and the seedy slums nearby where Greene ventures to meet the resistance, the dictator's palace, and the headquarters of the secret police. As in "The Marching Morons" he slows down the plot with digressions into the fine points of portrait painting and glass engraving (in "Morons" it was pottery making), descriptions of the cathedrals, bars, and bordellos of La Paz, and discourses on the political history of La Paz and the pacifistic theories of the underground leader.

As required by the constraints of the pulp paperback formulas of the 1950s, there are the two or three obligatory mild sex scenes, two sadistic beating/torture scenes, and a couple of oblique mentions of sexual perversion. This was the standard Lion Books formula, although Kornbluth published this book with Pyramid. By today's standards it is tame stuff, although it may have seemed like quite a steamy read at the time.

The prose style is authentic Kornbluth:

> Black-uniformed men were everywhere. They were young, hard, polished. They had their own set of slightly inhuman mannerisms, a way of walking that made one of them alone seem to be marching in ranks, a rigidity of the neck, a set and sneering calmness about the mouth. These were their professional deformations like the tailor's stoop and the bowlegs of a cowboy. They weren't decent cops like my Sergeant Menafee, and their cold, square building wasn't a place to take your troubles, like the crumbling brownstone Headquarters. They were in the oppression business, and humanity was dirt to them. An artist could read that in their faces, and maybe anybody could.
>
> One of them, calmly sneering, took charge of the piece of dirt called Leslie Greene, and conducted it to a waiting room on the first floor of the barracks. The floors were softly carpeted and the furniture was costly modern hardwood. The barracks, in short, was a combination of Madison Avenue office building, in its executive area, and flossy Miami Beach hotel in its living area — which was as it should be. On the pampering of the young blacksuits rested the power of Serrano. Probably by now they actually believed, in the Hitler-Jugend fashion, that he was The Inspired One, a kind of living God who always decided right and against whom any disloyal act was an obscene atrocity to be wiped out in blood.

Sorority House was written in collaboration with Frederik Pohl, under Kornbluth's "Jordan Park" pseudonym. It smacks heavily of Fred Pohl's style and interests (formal mathematics, for example). Arnold Hano, chief editor at Lion Books, explained the publisher's notion about this sort of book thus: "He would much prefer that we began every Lion Book with some woman standing in front of a mirror admiring her breasts" (Paperback Parade #15). Needless to say, this story about a sorority at a small women's college should have provide ample opportunities for this sort of thing, which Pohl and Kornbluth don't even begin to take full advantage of. The back cover blurb gives you a notion of what sort of book Lion thought they were getting: "The girls of Lambda Lambda Lambda...Joy — who thought study didn't pay, when there were easier ways to get good grades from a professor...Kathryn — who came from the wrong side of the tracks, and was fair game for anyone who knew it...Clara — who knew all about mathematics, but forgot that two and two could add up to trouble...They burned their candles at both ends, and the glow was magnificent — until the whole campus threatened to go up in smoke."

However, it's simply a campus soap opera with six or seven plot threads running in parallel. What little sex there is is mostly implied. It's rather obvious, formulaic stuff and not up to par for either author, although it has its moments. The style is simpler and the plotting more melodramatic than their best work; and the violence is less violent and the sex less sexy than the Lion imprint would entitle you to expect. Pohl never wrote anything else for Lion, so I would speculate that Kornbluth, who had already sold them three novels, signed the contract for this one, couldn't deliver it on time, and Pohl finished it in exchange for the remainder of the advance that was due on delivery. Based on Lion's usual practice, Kornbluth would have either submitted an outline or let Hano hand him an outline that he agreed to write to (Hano and his assistant Jim Bryans frequently worked out the plots in advance and gave them to the writers). This was Kornbluth's last book for Lion.

The Naked Storm was another Lion Books title, under the pseudonym "Simon Eisner." It is a disaster novel about a snowbound train, having a lot in common with the disaster novel about a flood that Kornbluth and Pohl collaborated on for Ballantine, *A Town Is Drowning*. As in *Sorority House* there are an ensemble cast of characters and a panoramic range of subplots, without a main protagonist or a main plot thread. The first few chapters take place in Chicago, where the Kornbluths lived for a few years after the war, and one of the settings, a rundown radio news wire service, is based on the news service where Kornbluth worked. In *The Naked Storm* the seedy wire service turns out to be a cover for an illegal, mob-run gambling operation:

> "I can add two and two," Foreman said. "I still don't like it. I'm getting out of here." He started for the door, but the man with the grocer's face was standing there.
>
> The beefy man said, "Like hell you are, kid. You got the wrong idea."
>
> The man with a grocer's face caught Foreman a terrific blow in the belly, without seeming to try hard. The newsman collapsed on the broadloom carpet, doubled up and crowing harshly. The two men who looked like brothers moved in. One of them picked Foreman up and held him under the armpits. The other slugged his right fist into the newsman's midriff again and again, expressionless.

Foreman rocked and grunted under the blows, powerless to do anything except feel the exploding fire of each deliberate piledriver slam.

The room was a red haze before him when he heard a voice: "That's enough, kids. That's enough, you queer sons of bitches! Leave him alone, I want to talk to him."

He was dumped on a leather couch and a glass of icewater splashed into his face. It jerked him upright, staring.

"Take it easy, kid," the red-faced man told him. "I want you to see some pictures." He snapped his fingers and one of the men who looked like brothers snickered and pulled from his inside breast pocket a parcel of snapshots. Foreman was quite sure they would be obscene pictures, wild though the thought was, from his manner.

They were obscene only in a certain sense. The first showed a drowned man with many stab-wounds in him. There were crabs eating his face away. The man with the photographs, in a somewhat high-pitched voice, delivered a running commentary.

"This one with the ice pick. Ice-pick isn't good because wounds like that swell shut with the congestion and decomposition gas forms in the body cavities and it floats up...This one was with the razor, which was better but still not the answer...This one was the cleaver. You see what a bad Wop did to him. A bad Wop is the worst thing to have working on you there is...Blowtorch...This is another blowtorch but the people had more time. Three hours, somebody told me...Battery acid, this one — "

Foreman looked and listened in a dull comprehension that he would do exactly what these people wanted.

After looking at all the photographs he told them that.

Foreman comes together with the rest of the cast of characters (a rug salesman, a Democratic Party committeewoman, a lesbian novelist) on a train bound for San Francisco. The train becomes snowbound in the Rockies, and quicker than you can say "Donner Party" the passengers are all at each other's throats.

Kornbluth sticks close to the Lion formula: sex & sadism, in light doses. The scene Arnold Hano described as the ideal opening scene for a Lion book (see above) actually appears in this book, in what is perhaps a somewhat tongue-in-cheek version, on page 24: "Slowly she rose and went into the bathroom to undress. Dress, knitted slip moulding her, 32 bra, B cup — she squared her shoulders and squinted in the too-high medicine chest mirror. They were quite all right, she assured herself grimly..."

The Naked Storm is quite readable as long as you don't expect it to be too much more than a good quickie suspense potboiler. The writing is conscientious if unspectacular, and the story-lines are well thought out.

Valerie is a poor man's knock-off of *Forever Amber*, with a heavy dollop of witchcraft thrown in. ("Not since Amber...not since Scarlett O'Hara...has there been a woman like... Valerie," the cover blurb enthuses.) It is a short book, about 42,000 words.

Valerie is set in Cairngorm Castle in Scotland in the year 1512. The protagonist, Valerie Trenent, is an ambitious and pretty young scullery wench who is determined to sleep her way to the top. When her plan to seduce a wealthy merchant backfires, she is offered an alternative route to success: to enroll in a secret coven of witches that meets on a nearby mountain at night, and achieve her goals through magic and the intercession of The Black One.

She joins the coven, not without some trepidation. With their aid she soon becomes the mistress of a wealthy estate, and comes into conflict with the king's witchfinder. Meanwhile a love interest develops between Valerie and the young laird of the castle.

Kornbluth displays here, a bit self-consciously, a good deal of period lore: "She thrust a pine splinter into the fire and darted from wall to wall touching off the flambeaux until the gloomy old room was washed with pleasant orange-yellow light that twinkled off the polished wooden trenchers set at each place. That was all the setting. Napkins were for dukes and kings. Spoons of horn and wood were for eating porridge. Forks were unknown, and each diner supplied his own knife — the same one he wore in his woolen sock; it would do equally well to fight off an outlaw or slice the beef."

Kornbluth is sometimes said to have been highly knowledgeable in the field of witchcraft and the occult. The portrayal of medieval Scottish witchcraft here is straight out of Margaret Murray's classic *The Witch Cult In Western Europe*, which laid the groundwork for the modern neo-pagan revival of wicca. *Valerie* takes a politely skeptical view of the reality of witchcraft; by the end of the story everything turns out to have a purely mundane explanation. The Black One turns out to be a man in a horned mask, curses take their effect aided by

mundane poisons, and the ecstasies the coven experience at their sabbat are induced by the hallucinogenic ointment they smear on themselves.

Overall, *Valerie* is a slightly dullish performance, marred by expository lumps and missing Kornbluth's usual fleet wit.

Lastly, there is *Half*, a highly-charged story in which the protagonist is a hermaphrodite, raised as a male, who decides to become a woman. Probably based on an idea or outline from Hano, *Half* was Lion's attempt to cash in on public interest in the Christine Jorgenson story with a novel about a man who undergoes a sex change. Kornbluth approaches the topic with gusto, setting the story in Chicago around the beginning of World War II. Young Steven Bankow's torment provides the occasion for plenty of vintage Kornbluth nastiness:

> There won't be any more of *that*, Steven thought. Now whatever I am, I'm not a man. They've cut it out with a scalpel and tossed it into a tin bucket and it went out with the garbage. That's the end of eighteen years of Steven Bankow. Am I supposed to cheer?
>
> With horror he thought: God! God! What have I let them do to me? My manhood's lying somewhere on the city dump, decaying and feeding maggots!
>
> What have I given up? What have I let them make me into?

Along the way he takes the time for a light sprinkling, here and there, of good Kornbluthian satire:

> Mrs. Lieber showed up on schedule, a pouter pigeon of a woman, with many chins and a soft accent, faded almost to nothing after thirty-five years in America. "Hello, Steven," she said gaily. "Bankow? That sounds something like a Jewish name, doesn't it?"
>
> "Bankowski," he said flatly. "Polish."
>
> She threw up her hands. "Ach! Poor Poland. Terrible to think of. Invaded by the Russians. Thank God the German Army stood ready to stop them or they would have swept to the English Channel."
>
> That wasn't the way Steven had heard it, but he said: "Yes, ma'am."

As a novel, *Half* is structured as a *bildungsroman*, a young man's coming of age — with "man" in quotes because young Steven has the great-grandmother of all gender identity crises. The story begins with Steven's birth, continues through scenes of his childhood, and begins to develop the major plot threads as he makes his way through high school, joins the army, marries (without consummation), becomes a severe alcoholic, and finally makes the decision to hunt for a medical solution.

Half is the best of the five and easily stands comparison with Kornbluth's science fiction stories. The carefully researched medical detail in this story of what was, for the time, highly experimental surgery almost elevates it into medical science fiction. Kornbluth could often be stiff, unlively, and didactic in his novel-length work; here the rawness of the theme keeps him at the same high pitch he was able to maintain with such ease in his short stories. *Half* exemplifies the sort of good, gritty read that other Lion Books authors like Jim Thompson and David Goodis were known for.

"Two Dooms" by C. M. Kornbluth

reviewed by Mark L. Olson FN

A young physicist at Los Alamos in the early days of the Manhattan Project is entrusted with important calculations to determine if the proposed bomb design can work. He is unsure about the value of the project and about its rightness, and often goes on long hikes in the hills to think about it. When his results turn out positive, he must face the dilemma of whether or not to report them. If he reports *yes*, then the bomb project gets more resources and accelerates. If he reports *no*, then at a minimum it will be delayed while alternates — which may not exist — are sought after, and it might even be canceled so that the critically-needed resources it is consuming might be used elsewhere. And it's his decision.

He wanders off into the hills to visit an old Hopi Indian he's gotten to know on his rambles. The Indian turns out to be a shaman and, seeing the physicist's distress, offers to share some of his sacred mushrooms, which the shaman assures him will let him "see clearly." There's a little discussion of the lack of tenses in the Hopi language and how it's all like relativity theory, and then he eats them and drifts off.

When he awakes, the place is deserted. He heads back to Los Alamos and finds it an abandoned ruin. He hikes to town and is captured by the Japanese. It the course of the story he eventually travels (as a prisoner) to German-occupied Chicago, witnessing Americans enslaved in the Japanese territory west of the Mississippi, and Americans of Eastern European descent being herded off to concentration camps in Chicago (the Jews are already long gone).

In this world, the US never developed a Bomb, and the invasion of the Home Islands in 1946 produced the feared million casualties, as the Japanese defended their homeland with the same suicidal fervor with which they defended some of the islands leading up to it. American public opinion begins to turn against the invasion, so troops and weapons are rushed from the occupation of Europe to end it quickly. More casualties in Japan, and in the terrible winter of 46-47, revolts break out across Europe. In Germany, Nazis revive; in Eastern Europe, everyone rises against Stalin; and in England, the Labour government is unable to stop the civil unrest of a population which thought the war was over.

In time, the US, left alone, collapses, and eventually resurgent Axis armies conquer and divide it.

The physicist manages to escape and make his way back to New Mexico, find more peyote, and return to his own time. He returns to Los Alamos ready to give the go-ahead, sure that he's doing the right thing.

"Two Dooms" is a good story, but I have two complaints.

The minor one is that I don't believe that there was any real chance — even in a non-nuclear world — of the Axis winning. It's conceivable that we might have failed to conquer Japan, and it's probable that there would have been enormous casualties in attempting to do so without nuclear weapons, but both Japan and Germany had been flattened, and America was stronger at the end of the war than all the combatants on both sides together had been at the start. There is simply no way on Earth that the lack of the Bomb could have resulted in a short-term Axis victory. (Conceivably in the long run Fascism might have gained power again, but that's another story entirely.) The worst plausible possibility would be a US withdrawal into isolation, leaving a devastated Japan and Europe to recover on their own, with unguessable long-term consequences.

My major gripe is in the application of the essential point of the story: that the young physicist, knowing the horrible consequences of his deciding against the atomic bomb, is more justified in making the opposite decision. This is true enough, but it sheds no light at all on the decisions actually made by the real people involved.

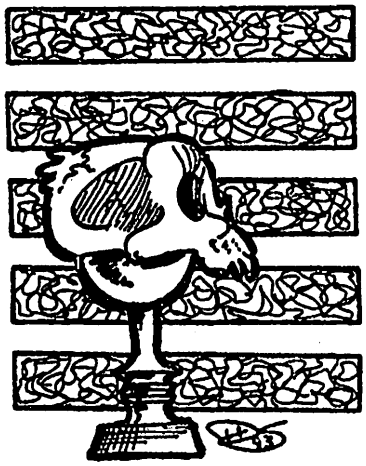
The rightness of developing the bomb has been debated for fifty years and brings up some serious moral questions. (E.g., does a specialist of any sort have the duty to withhold his expertise from the public if he believes it will be misused? Does he have the right to arrogate that decision to himself? Does a specialist have the knowledge to make an informed decision? Do we judge a decision by its intentions or its consequences?)

"Two Dooms" appears to discuss these questions, but it's really a cheat. In the end, the decision to make and use the atomic bomb was made by men who had no knowledge of the future. They had to judge based on what they knew and what they could surmise, and on what they could project. The knowledge upon which they relied was necessarily incomplete, as it always is in real situations.

Those real people in that situation, and real people in any situation, can only be judged based on what they knew and how well they used it. (Judging the past by today's presumably more advanced knowledge and morality used to be called Whiggism and is now called PCism. It's a particularly shallow and arrogant historical view in either case.) I think that "Two Dooms" short-circuits the real issue.

Nonetheless, I think it's an excellent story. It does an excellent job of portraying the fears of the day — the alternate post-war world is believable and

scary — and the dilemma facing the Manhattan Project physicists. And it's a good story with some real tension.

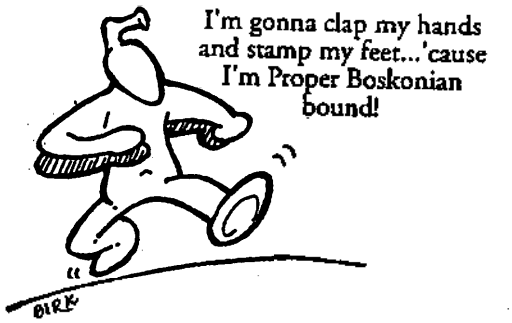


"The Advent on Channel Twelve"
by C.M. Kornbluth
Review by Joe H. Michaels

There's something to be said about four-page stories.They're short, and they put the author's ability to write a tight, concise concept to the test. The particular story in question is a barbed television satire which deals with clueless TV executives, ratings, pop culture, and rising interest rates, all in the space of four pages.

All in all, an entertaining read. It successfully illustrates the often inane reasons for putting certain, no-less-inane content on the air. Poopy Panda, the main character of a successful kids' show, is transformed from a benevolent-uncle type to a Mussolini-like dictator, not merely *urging* the kiddies to buy the sponsor's products, but *commanding* them to, in responsing to pressure from the New York banks in the wake of rising interest rates.Sound familiar?

If you're interested in a brief sci-fi read, as I was that day, read "The Advent On Channel Twelve." It's short-attention-span fiction.



Contributors to *PB* 33

Sheryl L. Birkhead, 23629 Woodfield Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20882
Galactic Central c/o Gordon Benson, Jr., P. O. Box 40494, Albuquerque, NM 87196
Anna Hillier, 18 Spring Street, Lexington, MA 02173
Evelyn & Mark Leeper, 80 Lakeridge Drive, Matawan, NJ 07747-3839
Joe Mayhew FN, 7-S Research Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770
Joseph T Major, 4701 Taylor Boulevard #8, Louisville, KY 40215-2343
Joe H. Michaels, 61 Frank Street, Worcester, MA 01604
Richard Newsome, 281 Flatbush Ave. #1-B, Brooklyn, NY 11217
Mark L. Olson FN, 10 Shawmut Terrace, Framingham, MA 01701-5942
George Phillies, 87-6 Park Avenue, Worcester, MA 01605
Halliday Piel, 1455 Beacon St., #36, Brookline, MA 02146
Diana Harlan Stein, 1325 Key West, Troy, MI 48083
Ron Sutton, #50-2845 Cedarwood Dr, Ottawa Ontario, Canada K1V 0G6
Timothy P. Szczesuil, 17 Pequot Road, Wayland, MA 01778-3507

In addition: I received two pieces of art from Alice Lewis, a piece from Mark Rich (he is working on a book about Kornbluth, I used the profile instead), a letter from R Laurraine Tutihasi acknowledging the issue of *PB* 30 I sent over one year ago, and a fanzine in trade from Donald L. Franson.

THE GOLEM IN LITERATURE by Mark R. Leeper

Back when I was ten or eleven years old I used to get monster-movie bubble gum cards. They usually had familiar stills from monster movies. One, however, puzzled me a bit. It looked like a human-shaped furnace with glowing eyes and a disproportionately big fist. It was labeled simply "The Golem." There was no explanation as to what the Golem was. Since I usually recognized what was on these cards, I filed in the back of my mind that there was something called a "Golem" that I wanted to know more about. It didn't occur to me to look in a dictionary any more than it would to look up "Godzilla." Dictionaries never have the really interesting words!

A month or so later my parents were going to a Yiddish play put on at the Jewish Community Center. It was called "The Golem," and was written by H. Leivick. Now I knew darn well that my mother did not go to plays about monsters that looked like human-shaped furnaces with glowing eyes and disproportionately big fists. She saw *Bride of Frankenstein* when she was growing up and decided on the spot that any story with a monster was stupid. It had to be just a co-incidence of name, right? Well, my parents came back from the play and told me I would have liked the story..."it was weird." It was about a rabbi who made a man out of clay. At this point I realized that the bubble gum card and the play were somehow related, and even more surprising, this monster was somehow a Jewish monster.

I did some research into golems and discovered that they are indeed creatures of Jewish folklore that have been the subject of monster movies. (Incidentally, there turned out to be one other traditional Jewish monster, a dybbuk. It is a possessing spirit, not too unlike the one in *The Exorcist.*)

There are apparently several golem stories in Jewish folklore, but I have found nothing but fleeting references to any golem legend other than "The Golem of Prague."

The story is set in Prague in the 16th century. The Jewish community is threatened by blood-libels — claims that they were murdering Christian children and using their blood to make matzoth. (Actually, Jewish law strictly forbids the consumption of any blood at all.) A Christian who murdered a child and planted it in a Jew's house could report the Jew. The Jew would be executed, and his property would be split between the Christian who reported him and the government. Clearly the ghetto needed a very good watchman.

Rabbi Judah Loew used information from the Kabbalah — the central book of Jewish mysticism — to learn the formula by which God first made man out of clay, and with the help of two other pious men built a man out of clay and brought him to life. The final step of this process was to place God's secret name on a parchment and place it in the forehead of the Golem.

Loew's Golem was between seven-and-a-half and nine feet tall and had tremendous strength, but had a very placid and passive disposition when not under orders to act otherwise. He also lacked the one faculty that only God can give, the power of speech. Because this giant was passive and mute, people in the ghetto assumed he was half-witted, and the word "golem" has also come to mean "idiot."

One story about the early days of this Golem was probably inspired by "The Sorcerer's Apprentice." The Golem was told to fetch water, but was not told how much. The result was a minor flood. This tendency to do what he was told to do, not what he was expected to do, has endeared the Golem story to computer people like Norbert Wiener. It may also be part of the basis of Asimov's robot stories.

At night the Golem guarded the ghetto, catching all would-be libelists red-handed. He single-handedly ended the possibility of successfully blood-libeling the Jewish community. Loew then got the Emperor to end the practice of letting blood-libelers profit from their actions. When the Golem was no longer needed, Loew removed the parchment, returning the Golem to being a statue, and the statue was laid to rest in the attic of the synagogue.

A popular variation on the story has the Golem rebel and become an uncontrolled monster before being stopped and returned to clay. It has been speculated that Mary Shelley patterned *Frankenstein* on this story.

The Golem has appeared several times on the screen, though only once in an English-language film. The first cinematic appearance was in *Der Golem* (1914) with Paul Wegener in the title role. The story deals

with the modern discovery and re-animation of the Golem. This was apparently a lost film until it was found again in 1958. It still is almost never seen.

Wegener returned to the role in a second German film, also called *Der Golem* (1920). This film is loosely based on "The Golem of Prague." The Jews are portrayed as being weird magicians who live in a strange expressionistic ghetto. In fact, the early parts of the film seem to presage the anti-Semitism that was soon to engulf Germany. The images of the Jewish community are not all that different-looking than those of propaganda films of the following years.

One of the most interesting touches of the film is the subplot of Prince Florian. The beautiful Prince Florian wants to save the rabbi's daughter from the destruction that is to come to the Jews. However, Florian is so unctuous and disgusting that when he is killed by the Golem, the viewer is more relieved than shocked, and perhaps that is just what was intended. In any case, the Golem is able to avert destruction of the Jewish community. Then the Golem's own love for the rabbi's daughter is denied and he becomes a dangerous monster, only to be destroyed by a child's hand. The rabbi then praises God for twice saving the Jews of the ghetto.

Wegener may have also made a lesser known German film, *The Golem and the Dancer*, in 1917. The actual existence of this film has never been established. A French-Czech film called *The Golem* was made in 1935. Harry Baur starred in the story, which was done much in the style of a Universal horror film. The story deals with another tyrannical attempt to destroy Jews. Through much of the film, the rediscovered Golem remains chained in a tyrant's dungeon. Just when things are at their blackest, the Golem comes to life and destroys everything, once again saving the Jews. This film will be discussed in more detail later in this article.

A number of Czech comedies have been about the Golem, including *The Golem and the Emperor's Baker* (1951). In this, the Golem ends up as an oven for the baker.

The only English-language Golem film I know of is a British cheapie called *It!* (1967), with Roddy McDowell. A psychotic museum curator who lives with the corpse of his mother acquires the Golem of Prague and uses it for his own purposes. In the end, the Golem survives a nuclear blast that kills his master, and he quietly walks into the sea.

This article will cover all those books about the Golem that I have read, plus additional information on the Golem in plays and film.

The Golem by Gustav Meyrink (Dover, 1976 [1928], $4.50*)

*The Dover edition also includes *The Man Who Was Born Again* by Paul Busson.

This is not actually a tale of the supernatural, in spite of the title, though at times the strange things that happen border on the supernatural, and the events are all overshadowed by the legend of the golem.

Athanasius Pernath is a Christian living in the Jewish quarter of Prague. He is interested in the golem legends, particularly the Golem of Prague, but as someone comments, everyone seems to be talking about the Golem. Pernath's own personality seems to parallel that of the Golem — he seems to have little will of his own, other than that of altruism. Much of the book is really just observation of the inhabitants of the ghetto, until Pernath becomes embroiled in a crime that another has committed.

This is not light reading, any more than Camus's *The Stranger* is. It has a plot, but more important is the character's introspection, the truths the character is learning about himself and the characters around him. Time and again Pernath returns to the legend of the Golem in his thoughts as his life patterns itself after the Golem's. He is used by many of the characters, some well-meaning but needing help, others selfish, and his wish to set things right is his only reward. In essence he is a human golem.

Meyrink found writing the novel almost as bewildering as it is for the reader to read it or the character to live it. Somewhere towards the middle (Everett Bleiler says in the introduction to the Dover edition), Meyrink lost track of the multiplicity of his characters, and needed a friend to graph them out geometrically on a chess board before he could proceed. The result is not one, but many stories intertwined, which adds to the difficulty of reading the novel, but also gives a number of views of the Jewish ghetto in pre-World War II Prague. This is not an entertaining novel, but it is worthwhile to read.

The Golem by H. Leivick (in *The Dybbuk and Other Great Yiddish Plays*, Bantam, 1966, $1.25)

This is one of the most famous plays of Yiddish theater. H. Leivick (actually Leivick Halper) re-tells the story of the Golem of Prague, but in more obscure and symbolic terms. To be frank, the play probably requires a closer reading than I was willing to give it (if not actually seeing a production). It is a long play, written in

verse, that requires study and an investment of time rather than the quick reading I gave it, so these comments should be taken as first impressions.

Certain concessions had to be made to dramatic style. The primary concession was that this Golem speaks. A mute character in a stage drama would be little more than a mime, and Leivick wanted to get into the character of the man-made man. That he certainly does, more successfully than any other version of the story I know of. In spite of the Golem's stature, he is troubled and fearful. In following the rabbi's orders, he is usually as fearful as any normal human would be. He is reluctant to go into dark caves at the rabbi's bidding. He is stigmatized and lonely.

Much of what is happening in the play happens on a symbolic and metaphysical plane. Dark figures, never explained, appear and carry on abstract conversations. I think that the style of the play can be exemplified by stage directions like "the brightness of invisibility begins to glow around him." Even the stage directions are obscure! I will leave this play for others to interpret.

The Golem of Prague by Gershon Winkler (Judaica Press, 1980, $9.95)

Winkler's book is in two parts: an introduction and the story itself. The story does not start until page 75, so the introduction is a major part of the book and deserves separate comment. Part of the reason is not what the introduction says about golems, but what it says about Winkler.

In Winkler's description of his occupation, he says that he "teach[es] Torah weekly on Long Island, primarily to young Jewish adults with minimal Jewish knowledge and identity, and he has also been helping young Jews return from 'Hebrew-Christian' and Far Eastern movements."

He begins his introduction with an attack on what he calls "sciencism." The latter is apparently a belief, fostered by scientific reasoning, that leads one to be skeptical of the existence of God and miracles. As an example, he says, "For more than fifty years, the museum's exhibition of a stooped, ape-like man helped many people in our culture to overcome their guilt over the rejection of G-d and the idea of Creation... In 1958, the Congress of Zoology in London declared that the 'Neanderthal Man' was really nothing more than the remains of a modern-type man, affected by age and arthritis... Nevertheless, these scientific errors were never expressed to the subsequent generations of school children. Such a public revelation would have been outright 'heretical.' It would have destroyed the absolute authority of science and left humanity with no alternative explanation for the phenomenon of existence but G-d."

Winkler has a section on "Making Golems" in his introduction. He rambles for sixteen pages on a few golem legends and references to the ineffable name of God. On the actual subject of the section, he has only the following helpful words to say: "It is not within the scope of this overview to discuss the mystical mechanics of *The Book of Formation* and how to use it to make golems. Readers are advised to study day-to-day Judaism first, before investigating its profound mystical dimensions. After many years of having mastered the down-to-earth aspects of the Torah, on both the practical and intellectual level, one can then examine books like *Derech Hashem*... which discusses the interactive relationships of the natural and supernatural, and the role of the Divine Names." If that was all he had to say on the subject, it is not clear why he tried to tantalize the reader by having an extensive section promising to tell more.

The introduction also includes a picture labeled "Monument to the Maharal's [Loew's] Golem standing at the entrance of the old Jewish sector of Prague." No further explanation is given. This would be an impressive sight if it were not obviously a picture of a knight in Teutonic armor. Anyone who recognizes German armor would not be taken in by this fraud perpetrated by a man trying to convince us of the superiority of his religious views.

In short, I am less than impressed with the introduction.

As Winkler gets into the main text of the story, he editorializes less but there is still a strong undercurrent of didactic lecturing in his writing. The story of the Golem of Prague is broken into short stories extolling the values of a good Jewish education and traditional Jewish values. The real common thread of these stories is Rabbi Judah Loevy (a.k.a. Loew). In many of the stories the Golem itself is the most minor of characters. The stories are really about the mystical wisdom and power of the rabbi.

In these stories we see no end of evils caused by not giving a Jew a proper Jewish education, or by a young Jewish woman marrying a Christian. The vehemence with which the Christians want to convert Jews verges on the incredible. In one story, the duke wants so much to win one Jewish woman to Christianity that he is willing to marry his only son to her. The two do indeed fall into love, but the bride-to-be decides she cannot betray her family. Eventually the two marry, but only after the duke's son converts to Judaism.

In this version of the story, the Golem is much less monstrous, and apparently indistinguishable from a flesh-and-blood human. Yet as the story requires, he seems to have strange magical powers. In one story he can see a soul hovering over a grave; in another he has an amulet of invisibility. The stories start to lose interest, as the Golem has too many powers, all bestowed on him by Rabbi Loevy.

Oddly enough, the only character of real interest is the arch-villain Father Thaddeus. From "the green church," as it is called, he hatches plot after plot against the Jews. By turns he is charming and then vicious and ruthless — whatever is called for in his anti-Semitic plots. The depth of his hatred is never fully gauged by the reader until he cold-bloodedly murders a young (Christian) child in order to frame the Jews for ritual murder. After Thaddeus dies, the stories have a marked drop in quality. Rabbi Loevy himself is the paragon of Jewish learning and knowledge. In investigating crimes, his first question is always the one that leads to the solution. Paragons make very dull characters, and since his thought processes are arrived at only through religious knowledge far beyond that of the reader, he never becomes a comprehensible character.

Winkler clearly loses steam in his story-telling in the second half of his tale, but the first half is worth reading far more than the introduction or the second half.

The Sword of the Golem by Abraham Rothberg (Bantam, 1970, $1.25)

Of the various re-tellings of the story of the Golem of Prague, this is certainly the most readable and the most enjoyable, though perhaps not the most faithful to its source material.

The Golem in this version is, for the first time, a believable three-dimensional character. He doesn't just walk, he talks, he feels, he loves, he hates, and if pushed far enough, he kills. Instead of being broken into short stories of threats against individuals in the Jewish community, this novel is one continous threat and eventual riot against the Jews. The Golem in all this is not a protective angel sent by Rabbi Low (the spelling in this version) who is just an extension of the Rabbi. The Golem sympathizes with the Jewish community and considers himself to be Jewish, but he has free will and his own reasons for doing what he does.

Another reason this is the most enjoyable version is that for once even the anti-Jewish Christians are portrayed as more than just thugs. There is more than one debate between Rabbi Low and Brother Thaddeus, the chief instigator of the anti-Semitism. Of course, to the reader it is clear that Thaddeus loses the debate, but the reasons for what he does come much clearer than in any other version. One could almost stretch it to the point that Thaddeus is a sympathetic character. He at least believes that his hatred of the Jews is well-founded in Catholic doctrine, and his arguments for anti-Semitism do come out of a twisted idealism, rather than just selfishness as other versions of the story indicate.

This 1970 novel is dedicated "most of all to the great Leivick, who breathed new life into the Golem's clay." But I feel I can recommend the book more highly than the play. In fact, this (which was the last major Golem work I read) is the most satisfying and the only one I recommend as a novel.

The Red Magician by Lisa Goldstein (Pocket, 1983, $2.95)

Of late we have seen fantasy novels set in a number of historical cultures. It is a pleasant change from having them all set in Celtic Britain, Medieval Europe, or some never-never land. Classical China, for example, was used in Hughart's *Bridge of Birds*. Australian Aboriginal mythology is the basis of Patricia Wrightson's trilogy *The Ice is Coming*, *The Dark Bright Water*, and *The Journey Behind the Wind*. Goldstein sets her story in the Jewish villages of Eastern Europe, just before, during, and after the Holocaust. The story is of a mystical rabbi who really can work miracles, and of a traveling magician who has foreseen the future and arrives with warnings of what is to come. A conflict begins between the two that will go on for years. We see the story from the viewpoint of Kicsi, a young girl infatuated with Voros, the magician.

The Red Magician is too short and simple to be considered an adult fantasy, but it is more sophisticated than most juveniles. Goldstein has a feel for Jewish folklore and life in the Eastern European Jewish communities. *The Red Magician* is a fantasy that will be quickly forgotten. It will probably be read mostly by Jewish fantasy readers. (I think that *Bridge of Birds* will be read by a much higher proportion of non-Chinese.) It is a simple but well-written story that should not disappoint most of its readers. Rate it +1 on the –4 to +4 scale. Oh, and as for a golem, there is one, but it is only a minor plot element.

The Tribe by Bari Wood (Signet, 1984, $2.95)

This was the first of the works reviewed here that I read. It gave me the idea for this article. When I was growing up, I wanted to write a horror novel about a golem. I had a whole story plotted out, but it was never

be, it was not clear what we were seeing. Still, with the Eastern European cast and the Klezmer music, the play is thick with atmosphere. It was worth seeing.

Julien Duvivier's *The Golem* (1936)

Films about golems are unusual, though there had been two made in Germany previously starring Paul Wegener. One of them is a lost film, but the other is considered a classic. Since that film was made, a tide of anti-Semitism had risen in Germany. In 1935 the Nuremberg Laws institutionalized German state anti-Semitism. About the same time this film, a French and Czech co-production, was being made with veiled anti-German and not so veiled pro-Jewish sentiments. The film has interest as a political document as well as a fantasy film. For many years this has been a rare film, but this year it is starting to become available on videotape.

The time is the 17th century in Prague. Rabbi Loew, who created the Golem, is dead, but Rudolf II is still emperor. The troubled Jewish community is now led by the young Rabbi Jacob, student and friend of the late Rabbi Loew. Rudolf's tolerance of the Jewish community has lasted about as long as the life of Loew. Now he is reinstituting persecution, albeit warily. His dreams are still troubled with visitations of the Golem, and he will not rest easy until he possesses it and is sure the Jews cannot reanimate it. He is willing to torture and kill to get his hands on the magical statue. All his attempts to confiscate it fail until one night it just appears in his palace, still stone-like and inanimate. With the Golem under his thumb, Rudolf safely returns to persecution.

Except for the metaphor of its politics, and perhaps not even that at the time, this is not a film of extreme subtlety. The film-makers were primarily interested in getting their idea across. The feeding of Jews to lions is probably anachronistic, but it is an image that the audiences could probably find meaningful. The writers obviously felt very strongly about the film's message, and were neither shy nor particularly subtle about expressing that message. When somebody tries to warn the Jews, "Your brothers are in the hands of murderers," it is clear that the message is meant for more than the characters in the film. When the emperor calls himself a friend of Jews while torturing one, the analogy may break down slightly — at least the Nazis admitted their motives toward the Jews — but still it is clear that it is another dig at the Third Reich. The burning of the Jewish ghetto also seems to be a very contemporary image in the film. The motto of the film, often repeated, is "revolt is the right of a slave." The French film-makers do not say the French will come to the Jews' aid if they revolt, but it definitely affirms their right.

Julien Duvivier directed the film as a somewhat fancy costume drama, perhaps to attract a wider audience in the bleak days of the late thirties in Europe. In a Golem film, of course one of the main considerations is the design of the Golem itself. Ferdinand Hart is perhaps one of the least imaginative visualizations. It looks more or less like a statue of a large bald man. The reasons for toning down the horrific aspect of the Golem are again likely to be political. If the film is supposed to instill a sense of solidarity with the Jews, it would not make sense to have them be the creators of monsters. The script then seems intentionally to build suspense about the appearance of the Golem. He is not shown on-screen until well into the plot, and only at the end of a suspenseful sequence of a night-time walk through the big empty palace. Disorientation and insecurity on the part of the emperor are often created with a tilted camera.

Harry Baur as Rudolf II is goggle-eyed and insecure. He was at the time a familiar actor, I believe. Charles Dorat as Rabbi Jacob is young and handsome, but his performance is not particularly inspired. Finally there is Ferdinand Hart in the title role as the mystical statue. What can you say about a role that for most of the film requires you to stand absolutely still, then in the inevitable climax for this sort of film suddenly in the final reel turns into Machiste. The role requires more broad shoulders than depth.

I would say that the film is less a work of art, and more a piece with some entertainment and an artifact of a dramatic period of history. Nevertheless, as someone with a particular interest in golem legends, I am very pleased to see this particular film, usually only available at campus showings, now on videotape.

written. Now, unfortunately, Bari Wood has beaten me to the punch with *The Tribe*. Sadly, it turns out to be more a murder story than the real pull-out-all-the-stops horror story I had envisioned.

The story starts with the mystery of why one barracks of Jews at the Belzec concentration camp was given very special treatment. They were not only left alive, but in addition, the SS gave them the best food available. They were eating canned sausage while the SS were eating garbage.

Flash forward to the present, when five blacks who mug and murder the son of one of the survivors of that barracks are themselves brutally murdered. The story then tells in boring detail about the affair between the murdered Jew's widow and the black police inspector who was a close friend of her husband's father.

Any given paragraph by Wood is clearly written, but this story seems to jump back and forth in time with disconcerting rapidity. The legends that this story was built around have a much greater potential than the story would indicate. The whole story is preparation for the final few pages, when the characters finally get to confront the evil that until that point they had only heard about second-hand. Like too many contemporary horror novels, there is too much writing without enough worthwhile story. If you want to read a novel about the Golem, this is not the one to start with.

Golem by Moni Ovadia

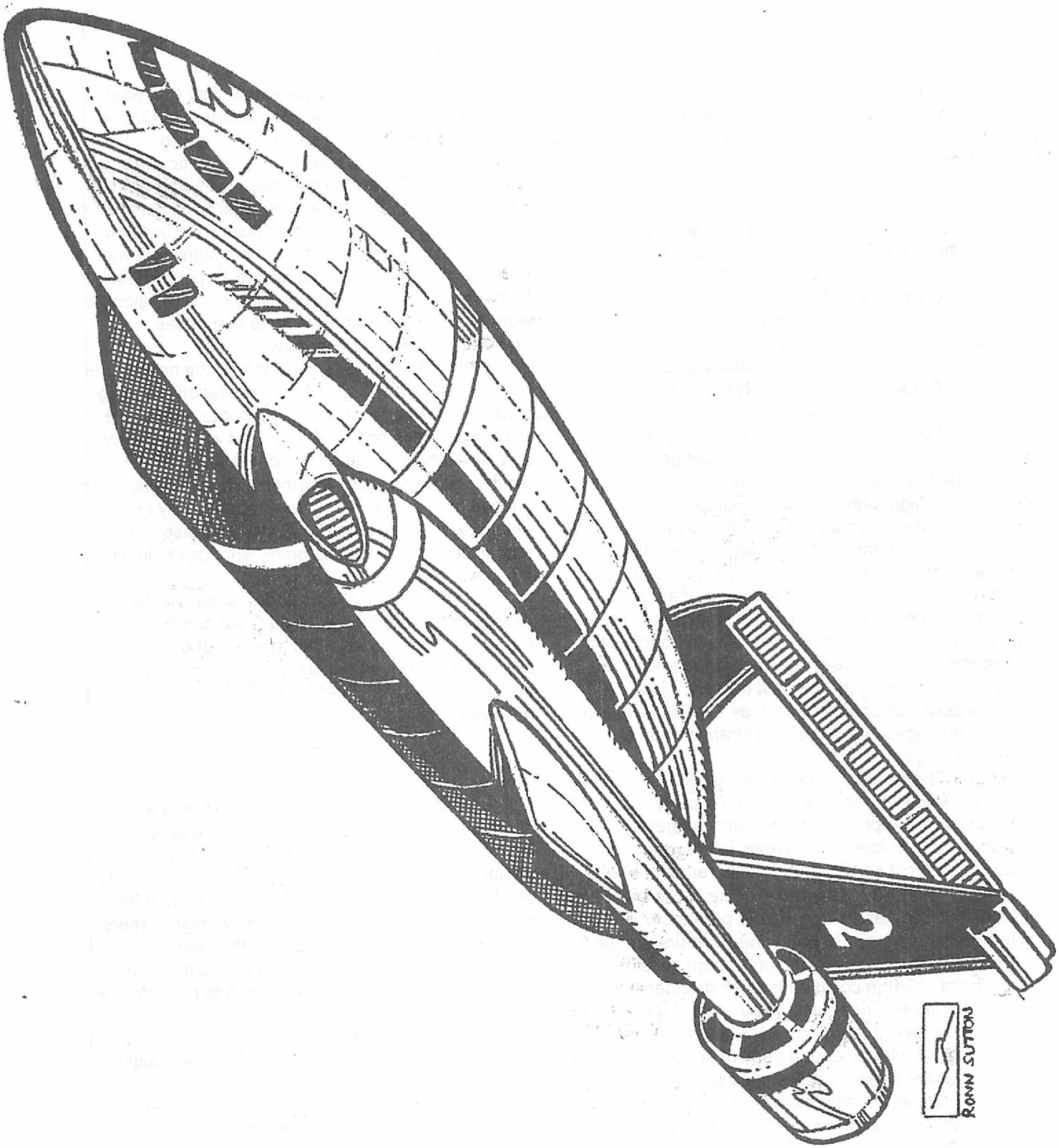
Performed March 12 through March 22, 1992, at La Mama Theater in New York. The play was actually a production of Art Artificio, a theater company of Milan, Italy. It had previously been performed in Milan and Berlin before coming for this two-week run in New York. Ovadia not only wrote the play, he stars in it. Somehow this is reminiscent of small-town theater companies. A small group of friends is responsible for everything you see or hear. The play also bears the credit "Dramaturgy and Mise-en-scene by Daniel Abbado and Moni Ovadia." No director is listed, so I rather assume that directing is included in "dramaturgy."

As the play opens the stage is black. The house lights pick up a wisp of fog, and from it comes a man dressed in the shabby clothing of an Eastern European Jew. He sees the audience, laughs, and identifies himself as the Wandering Jew. (Now this is a bit peculiar. The Golem is a figure from Jewish folklore, but the Wandering Jew does not really fit into Jewish folklore. He really is a Christian creation to explain away Jesus' claim that some of those who were hearing his words would still be around at the Second Coming. The Wandering Jew is the listener that will still be around at the next Coming, but that can only be true if he is nearly immortal.) The Wandering Jew starts talking to the audience about golem stories. A golem is a statue brought to life by mystical means. The Wandering Jew considers just about any story in which a non-living figure is brought to life. He includes *Frankenstein*, *Rocky Horror*, *E.T.* [*sic*], and *The Terminator*. He also includes what he considers the greatest of all golem stories... *Pinocchio*. (Well, this *is* an Italian theater troupe. To my mind it is a moot point if these are golem stories or not. My rule is if you don't know you are making a golem, you aren't.)

The Wandering Jew then proceeds to tell the story of the Golem of Prague. The story proceeds in three languages: English, Yiddish, and Hebrew. When the proceedings are not in English, they are translated into English by a synagogue assistant who looks like a Yeshiva student who, in turn, looks like a pipe cleaner with a knot at the Adam's apple, his most prominent feature. He both interprets for the audience and takes part in the action. The story that is told is once again how the Golem is created and how it drives away the enemies from the ghetto. Then it starts killing children and has to be destroyed. Most of what the Golem does we are told about rather than seeing. We do see the Golem, but as a sort of mockup that cannot actually be made to walk. The Golem stands at the back of the stage through the whole play, but it is usually hidden by a translucent black screen. We can see the Golem only when he is lit. The appearance of the Golem is both accurate to the legends and more horrifying than he has ever been portrayed in films. He appears to be seven or eight feet tall with long arms. Somehow it may be reminiscent of the mutant from *This Island Earth*. The body looks almost like a rock pillar, but it also seems humanoid, albeit deformed. At the top is a head that looks like a skull, rendered very roughly in stone.

The stage design is equally strange. It is somewhere between expressionistic and Dali-esque. On the left there is one strange stairway that goes no place but tapers to a point. On the right there are a series of pointed and rounded arches that lead to another stairway. Taking part in the story as the people of the town, and also providing the music, is a nine-piece Klezmer band playing a score by — who else? — Moni Ovadia.

Visually then the stage is very well rendered and gives the play a dreamlike quality. The storytelling is the play's weakest aspect. The program provides a "guide" to explain what is happening. It should have been more obvious without benefit of the guide. There is, for example, a recreation of the Sorcerer's Apprentice story, but it is done in a sort of wordless dance not unlike ballet. Even knowing what the story was supposed to


RONN SUTTON

Detour by George Phillies

The chief purser looked down his long, aristocratically patterned nose at the child in front of him. He knew he should remember who she was, but the pressure of ongoing catastrophe had stripped that memory from him. Still, she was smartly dressed; her parents must be important people. "I suppose," he said, "you could ask the sailing master for permission to aid the crew. That decision is his alone to make. However, you should remember that he is a busy man, and very tired. Please do be a good person, and don't use too much of his time. Just follow the blue guide-arrow. I'll key the locks so you can cross to the crew decks." He nodded and smiled a dismissal.

Barbara Marshall-FitzRyan bent her head slightly in reply, then backed out through the door. At last! At last she had an entree to the engineering sections. The personnel on the passenger decks might be too opaque to recognize her talents, but surely the flight crew would be more astute.

Three days ago, the flight had been a pleasant if unplanned introduction to the Solar Federation. The interstellar liner was certainly comfortable, especially for someone of ascetic temperament spending an Outer Reach salary in Federation currency. She had not wanted to visit the Federation. Outer Reach/Federation relations had been deteriorating for the past century. Alas, "unforeseen labor difficulties,", as the Ophiuchi High Lines apologetically put it, had stranded her in mid-passage.

The assistant purser had known her homeworld. He graciously detailed a component of ship security to protect her. He also suggested a few places, not obvious to a traveler, which she should avoid. She told herself that the differences between her and them were hard to see. She had a slight edge in height, sureness of stride, and perhaps a noticeable elegance of dress; her rigid preference for long-sleeved blouses would only seem eccentric. A few older children could sense her strangeness, but between life-extension and population stability there were very few children. Besides, she thought, Federation children were a pack of spoiled brats with the collective curiosity of a small kitchen appliance.

On well-settled planets, disease was virtually unknown. Plagues were the bane of places newly settled by man. On a starship, totally isolated from biological contamination, an epidemic should have been impossible. When passengers began collapsing around her, she revised her thoughts on that question. She said nothing, but credited her good health to her Outer Arm biochemistry.

Most of the crew were sick. She had offered to help. The chief physician, in a desperate effort to understand why his passengers were falling unconscious, kept from death only by temporal stasis, wanted baseline data on clinically well persons. Did he need a technician? She was, after all, a very quick study. No, he wanted her as a subject. Barbara was forced to explain that she might be healthy, but was definitely not a Federation baseline sample. Outer Reach genegineering had changed her hemoglobin's Bohr curve, speeded her immune responses, modified the myosin in her muscles,...

Improving one's genetic line, the norm in the Outer Reach, was illegal in the Federation. Sensing the man's revulsion, she decided not to emphasize the extra dyes in her color vision, let alone the very extensive changes which let her metabolism synthesize organooptic polymers. The chief physician shooed her from his office, too distressed by her deformities — she thought of them elsewise — to recognize her as a human being who might aid him in his work.

Perhaps, she considered, she could help to fly the ship. She did have Flight Guild certification. Persuading anyone to let her speak to the engineering crew, who usually were cloistered from the passengers, had been more difficult than she had anticipated.

* * * * *

Sailing Master Hamilton's cabin was a work of art. In one corner, water tinkled over a copper lattice-sculpture. A wall was lined with bookshelves, an antiquarian's delight. Barbara reached one corner of a hand-woven orange and coral carpet, met his glance, and introduced herself. "I have flight papers," she said. "I should be able to help the crew."
He looked back, smiling gently. "I'm afraid the sort of papers you'd have aren't really going to help. Where are you from, though? Newholme?"

"Outer Reach. Cymbeline. And these,"as she pulled her flight certificates from her purse, "ought to be more than enough."

He stared in surprise at the packet before him. "Oh, Outer Reach. That explains your date of birth, doesn't it? And from Cymbeline. So you have a private pocketcalc, in where you can't lose it." He tapped his skull.

"It's hardly a pocketcalc. It's not separate from me. We solved that problem, so I'm as much in o- as n-mind." She abruptly stopped talking. Good Federation citizens thought mind enhancement was

an abomination. In Federation space, her life was at more than nominal risk from religious fanatics. She'd said more than she intended, not that the techniques which enhanced her neuronal mind — the n-mind — with a massively parallel organooptic processor — the o-mind — were secret. However, there was no need to emphasize that the o-brain lurked not in the skull but in the chest cavity, using the lungs to maximize cooling capacity.

She glanced over his library. O-mind borrowed control of her eyes, optimizing focus at the visual periphery, where its detectors were located. For the barest shade of an instant, n-vision blurred; despite careful re-engineering, the eye's lens had noticeable spherical aberration. The instant past, o-thought scanned the recorded image, storing each title, binding style, and place on the shelf. By the time she glanced back at the sailing master, n- and o-memories both knew his interests and hobbies: ocean sailing, ocean navigation, philosophy of reason, and history of science. All very interesting, she thought, but affording no clue as to how she might reason with the man.

Hamilton was still looking at her papers. Waiting for an old-line human to read simple documents, consuming precious minutes rather than microseconds, was irksome. "Very well," he finally said, "you'll spell the engineering officer on the bridge. I'll transmit the ship's engineering specs to your cabin library, all three terawords of it. I suppose you'll have it down pat tomorrow?"

She caught the cynicism in his voice. Learning a ship well enough to fly it took an old human months. "Ten minutes," she snapped, "to full integration. Less if your indexing is any good. Much less if the documentation is well written. Besides, you guys stole — excuse me, reverse engineered — this ship from the OR Canopus class, which I've flown. Your control layouts are identical, ummh, remarkably similar, to ones I know." She smirked. O-mind chided n-mind: pulse and blood pressure were up, implying a lack of n-balance. Hamilton's eyes went toward the ceiling. The inability of Federation engineering to match, let alone exceed, Outer Reach designs had been notorious for decades.

"The entire document?" he questioned. "It can't be read that fast! The screens won't display it. And how much longer until your real mind has it down, as opposed to a library?"

"Your pocketcalc uses datacable, not viewscreens, doesn't it?" O-mind caught the first premonitory tremor of a nod. "Which I have." She pulled up a sleeve to expose her forearm. Black circles marked optical interface ports, where an extension of her o-brain lay almost exposed to the open air. He flinched, ever so slightly. "I'm not a carrying a pocketcalc. You look things up on a calc, but my o-mind is as much me as my sense of smell." O-mind chided n-mind more harshly, n-mind protesting that Hamilton had read her papers, thus knew how much she differed from old-line *Homo sapiens*. "Do you have doubts? Or will you trust me with a bit of your ship?"

Hamilton shook his head. "Your papers are clear. Oh, on the way up, please stop by the kitchen. The captain and pilot are hungry, but a serving robot without human escort can't enter the flight decks."

* * * * *

On the bridge, Captain O'Bryan glared listlessly at his datapanels, too tired to think until the engineering officer interrupted his reverie. "Sir? There's an uncharted turbulence line, level six or seven, dead ahead. We can avoid most of it, but we'll hit one or two vortices in the next ten or twenty minutes." O'Bryan's displays flashed to light as the engineer transmitted the information to him. On the screen, the turbulence bank was a shimmering mass of blue: slight distortions in the fabric of space, waiting for the ship's drive fields to stir them to a frenzy.

"Can we avoid?"

"It's very large, sir. We'd lose at least ten hours. I don't see how it could have been missed. This area was extensively surveyed before the new route was approved."

"Surveys! At least the old Conquistador-class scouts had windows, so you could see what you had run into. Compute a path around it. And alert the crew!"

O'Bryan leaned back and stared at the star display. Thanks to the ship's physicians, most of the passengers were already in stasis. The rest could be shielded. The crew, spread over the length of the ship, were a separate problem. For healthy men, the turbulence would be appallingly unpleasant. For men drifting toward unconsciousness or cardiac arrest, things would be far worse. He was between a rock and a hard place. If he went through the turbulence, he might be left with too few crew to fly the ship. If he lengthened the voyage to go around, no one might survive to pilot the ship at voyage's end. Neither choice gave him certainty of reaching safety.

There was a clatter of cups as the robot set his dinner down beside him. The noise was a welcome intrusion into his gathering gloom. He could put the ship into orbit someplace, put everyone into stasis, and hope for rescue by the Survey Fleet before engineering failure or privateers did them in.

On this side of the rift, that approach was foredoomed.

"Sailing Master?" Bryan peered haggardly through the transceiver at Hamilton. They had both been on active duty for three days. Chemical substitutes for sleep were wearing a bit thin. "Suggestions?"

"I sent you an additional person, qualified to fill the engineering post. A search of the files of every male passenger found two private pilots, both of whom have already volunteered to aid us, and a dozen persons with restricted and double-restricted licenses."

"Mr. Hamilton." The Captain's voice was shrill. "I must check with Dr. Kiyamura. No, you go and speak to him. You know how he is over a transceiver. He must be told that — despite his ethical doubts — he must get volunteers for forced revivification. We can't keep on going if we lose any more officers. We'll have to bring some back from long sleep. I know some people will d... will be irreversibly terminated — friends of mine, even— but what else can we do? We are responsible for the passengers." Hamilton nodded briskly.

The engineer glanced up at the captain again. "Ready for course change," he said. O'Bryan surveyed his domain. The serving robot and its escort were out of the way. Helm and engineering consoles were manned — all you really needed to fly the ship. He nodded. The bridge's full-field visual displays snapped into place, blocking his sight of the room. Background sounds faded to silence. When he spoke, a voice-to-text converter would present his officers with a written image of his orders. They might fail to hear, or be momentarily distracted; the orders remained in place, waiting to be read when the officer could focus his mind properly. While maneuvering, only in the direst emergency did bridge officers hear each other's voices.

On the display, blue threads of light crept toward the ship's prow. O'Bryan gritted his teeth. He hated even low-level turbulence. The deck shuddered. His skin felt heat and cold and jabs of pain — his nerves responding to the turbulence around them. The deck seemed to sag infinitely far down, then snapped back into place. He knew that his thoughts were still strictly rational, but the roller-coaster movements of the deck persisted, destroying his concentration.

O'Bryan's task was to monitor his crew. They really flew the ship, with him figuratively at each of their shoulders. Were they doing what they should? Was the ship responding properly? Automatic controls made space flight possible, but a level of human judgment was needed. And judgment was needed now! The turn was too sluggish, taking them deeper and deeper into the turbulence.

"Engineering!" he called. "We're losing drive phasing. Mengler! Straighten us out, will you? Mengler!" The captain tensed, relaxing only when the ship again answered to her helm. He had almost shouted, not that Mengler could hear him. For a moment he had been afraid that a key officer had fallen to the plague.

The captain's voice-to-text converter came to life. "Mengler(?) disabled: turbulence plus plague/Yamamoto syndrome. Passenger Marshall-FitzRyan/warrant engineering officer via sailing master/A level engineering papers/request clarification." O'Bryan blanched. Who was FitzRyan? He couldn't recall a passenger with engineering certificates. Whoever it was, he did have valid papers. The safety interlocks would have protested the presence of an unlicensed operator. The ship was turning again. FitzRyan must know what he was doing.

"Are the controls familiar?" asked O'Bryan through the voice-to-text converter.

"I had time to study them. Your drives were lifted from the Canopus-class giant scouts, which I've flown. It makes life much simpler."

The helmsman slipped in a few sentences of his own. "Canopus is an Outer Reach survey vessel. From an engineering standpoint, we're functionally identical, just bigger and slower."

"You're Outer Reach?" O'Bryan asked FitzRyan.

"Correct." FitzRyan's words formed on the heads-up display. "The controls match your engineering specs. I wasn't sure the manual was totally up-to-date." The captain's estimate of FitzRyan's judgment went up appreciably. FitzRyan had done the absolute minimum possible, given that it was definitely not desirable to fly straight into a turbulence line. Having done the minimum, he had the sense to ask for further instructions. O'Bryan wished the turbulence would come to an end, so they could talk like normal human beings.

Barbara was as unhappy as the captain. Taking over a duty station on a new ship, without asking leave of the captain first, was at least bad form. There had been no obvious alternative. There was no command station at which someone could replace Mengler — no station that was manned, anyway. From where she had originally stood, the heads-up displays were blurs of light, through which she had seen Mengler slump back from the controls. She had reached him as quickly as the bridge's robodoc. Recognizing their predicament, she took over his post. The captain didn't seem to object.

The controls did match the manuals. If only the manuals were decently organized! Keeping the drives balanced, while simultaneously restacking the manuals into chain-accessible form, pushed her o-mind toward its limits. The engineer had used his personal computer programs to control the ship. Though he was dead, she couldn't access his programs; the ship's own programs didn't match the engineer's modifications of the drive tuning. She had to run a full simulation of the ship's drives, relying on manual gauges for input.

The displays remained focused for Mengler's eyes. To her, they were slightly out of shape, leaving her with a growing headache. Her o-mind could filter the images and remove the distortions, but that sort of processing in real time demanded too much o-brain power. The turbulence shuddered and swirled around her. She wished she could sit; the engineer's body was very much in her way. He was too heavy for her to move by herself, at least with one arm; her other hand hovered over a touchpad. Until the robodoc finished, she couldn't even stand comfortably. She had to stretch over Mengler's body to reach half the controls.

Indicators paled from amber to white. The turbulence receded. O'Bryan yawned, ridding himself of cramps in his back. The heads-up display vanished. He would have to thank FitzRyan, whose competent intervention had prevented a real mess from developing. He looked over to the engineering console, where the robodoc was still loading poor Mengler into a stasis shell. Next to it stood a girl, perhaps ten or eleven, if tall for her age. Where, he puzzled, was passenger FitzRyan? And how had a child gotten onto his bridge? Damn the security computer! And double-damn its alleged programmers!!

She glanced up at him, blue-green eyes sparkling over her smile. Her hair was the finest of spun gold, which gleamed as though a fragment of the sun itself lay trapped within. With almost military precision, she wore a royal blue pantsuit laced with bronze piping.

"Young lady," he asked, not quite harshly, "what are you doing by those controls? Those aren't toys, after all."

"I turned your ship, remember? After your engineer conked out?" Her voice had a childish trill, but gave no sign of the expectant nervousness O'Bryan expected from someone her age.

"Will you please come here?" O'Bryan noticed he was speaking to her in the tones he usually reserved for an adult, not the child that she obviously was. Her stride as she approached the captain's console was vigorous and assured. No, thought O'Bryan, you're treating her as an adult because of her clothes. She's well-dressed; most modern children look slightly scruffy, no matter how much their parents make them dress up.

She pulled an envelope from an inner vest pocket. "I believe these are in order," she announced as she handed over the document.

O'Bryan managed to avoid choking. "Well, why don't you sit down?" he stammered, gesturing at an acceleration couch. He held a set of flight certificates. He could have believed a white packet, J level or equivalent, representing an ability to read datapanels with moderate accuracy. From its color, the rose-garnet case in his hand represented a set of senior flight licenses, presumably belonging to the girl's father. Did she think that the papers magically gave her the skills of an adult? Then again, whoever had been at the controls had known what he was doing. The controls should have ignored her touch. She could have handled the controls only if the safety interlocks had failed. What had happened?

He dropped the certificate into a scanner. Anyone could decode it; the encoding key was a secret of the Flight Guilds. O'Bryan leaned back and pursed his lips. The hologram was the girl's; scanners confirmed that the papers were hers. Data plates spelled out her name and ratings in black formal script. "Barbara Marshall-FitzRyan," he read, "A-level pilot clearance, master singleship pilot, engineering A level/Canopus class,..." This, he thought, is ridiculous. How can a ten-year-old have this background? Through the corners of his eyes, he noticed a tight grin on her lips. He shook his head again.

"Are you really that bothered," she began, "that I'm a woman?"

"That hadn't even occurred to me. If you'll forgive my bluntness, though, how did an eleven-year-old, Outer Reach or not, manage to earn all these papers?"

"All...what?" Her face flushed slightly. She hadn't expected his question. "Things are a bit different on Cymbeline." She looked for comprehension in his eyes. He had vague memories of genegineering experiments, but breeding brighter children didn't explain her. To fly a ship you needed masses of empirical knowledge, not just a talent for logical extrapolation.

"We practice first as well as full extension," she said. "I'm a bit older than twelve."

"Oh," responded O'Bryan, "of course." He should have recognized the obvious. Extension treatments blocked aging, so he could expect centuries of mature good health. The Outer Reach used extension twice. Full extension, after people grew up, prevented old age, even as it did inside the

Federation. First extension, applied reversibly to children, separated their physical and mental maturation. In the Outer Reach one aged emotionally, acquired a profession, and then — quite literally — grew up. The founding fathers of the Outer Reach believed they had eliminated the problems of adolescence, by postponing physical adulthood until mental and emotional growth had occurred. The Federation, when it thought about the question at all, was convinced that the Outer Reach had spawned a race of sexless, passionless intellectual robots. The Outer Reach rejoinder, that the Federation confused romantic love with unrestrained lust, was the most tactful of the slogans that now paralyzed diplomatic relations between the two nations.

"You turned a ship cleanly, with unfamiliar controls, even after we hit turbulence. What more can a captain ask of his engineering officer? But..." he hesitated.

"Yes?" she smiled again.

"I don't care how old you are. You don't get A-level clearances without emotional maturity. But turbulence — most kids your, ummh, physical age — and that's what counts, isn't it? — would be out cold from a jolt like that."

"It wasn't that bad! I've manned duty posts in unshielded force-eight storms. It's in my papers. It's mostly a matter of being tough with yourself; I suppose that most Federation children are never asked to be that way."

"That's for sure. Most of them are never asked to do anything. Especially anything that looks like work. But thank you again for stepping in when you did. We were in a spot of trouble, or close to." O'Bryan strained to show enthusiasm. For all her good looks, her ageless serenity grated against his sensibilities.

"You're welcome," she continued. "I wasn't sure you'd approve. But I could hear you talk to engineering. And I could see what we were drifting into." She forced a wider smile. "Look, if you need an extra engineer, I'd be happy to do something. I spoke to the sailing master already. And I've sailed before under worse conditions than these. I'd asked the purser earlier, but he said the sailing master had picked the passengers he wanted."

O'Bryan shook his head. "If I recall Mr. Hamilton's words aright, he only looked among the male passengers. An unfortunate oversight, that, though not unnatural in the Federation. But one which ought not be repeated. So welcome on deck. You've heard my helmsman, Mr. Murchison, though I prefer my bridge deck to know each other's first names."

"The name's 'Clyde' to friends, especially those in a storm." The helmsman, a lanky young man with shocking red hair, grinned broadly.

"'Barbara' is good enough. Though I ought to take another look-through on the controls." She waited for the captain's nod. As she turned her back, O'Bryan gave Murchison a firm thumbs-up sign. Murchison grinned stiffly. O'Bryan saw the look in Murchison's eyes. The helmsman wasn't quite comfortable with his new crewmate yet. Not surprising, considered O'Bryan. There'd never been a female bridge officer on the ship, let alone one on first extension. O'Bryan hoped that Murchison didn't know the rumors about Cymbeline and genegineering. If you believed all the nonsense in the tabloids, Cymbelines were inhuman monsters with superstrength, instant reflexes, and implanted supercomputers. Knowing well Murchison's thought processes, O'Bryan excused himself briefly. The ship's course was now clear, at least for a while. Letting Murchison and FitzRyan talk would ease Clyde's discomforts.

"This can't be your first flight, then, Barbara?" asked Murchison.

"Hardly, Clyde. I had my maiden flight twelve, no, thirteen years ago. And I was old then for such a thing, at least by our standards." She could feel his discomfort. "I've been in my share of sticky spots. Two with Guild inquiries afterwards." She saw him frown at that remark. "Came out with commendations in both of them." He nodded in admiration.

"That's good. That's very good. I mean, Barbara, if the captain seemed cold, it wasn't intentional. He just didn't think you might have proper flight papers. Especially not with the level you do."

"Is being a woman that strange, Clyde? I'd thought that there were female officers in the Federation."

"Well, there are several. I've even met one. But Barbara, you keep saying 'woman.' That's not the problem. We know the Outer Reach has first-line female officers, like your nameline. It's how old you are — I mean, how old you look. He's never seen first extension. And it upsets him. I've at least seen it, though the notion didn't sink in too deep."

"I'm not that short, and definitely not that fragile. I can take more turbulence, or more acceleration for that matter, than most grown-ups. I have, though I don't enjoy it any more than anyone else."

"What's bothering the Captain — and I've flown with him for years, I know what he thinks — is your age. He doesn't see"— Barbara could tell that 'he' meant 'I' — "how you could take being locked up

in a little girl's body. Don't you miss not having boyfriends?"

"Clyde, I've got plenty of friends." She giggled softly. "Oh. He's worried about that sort of friend. No, Cymbeline isn't so different from Earth. I'll have them in time, I suppose. But I don't think about it now, or miss your — his grownup urges. First extension is relaxing. A chance to grow up without getting distracted. What did you mean 'namelIne'?"

"'Nameline'? — after whom you were named — the way I was named after the Murchison — 'Spike' Murchison of volleyball fame, some centuries ago. Oh, that's right, Outer Reach inherits surnames, doesn't it, so one of your parents was Marshall or FitzRyan. So you weren't named after *the* Marshall — Marilyn, Commodore Marshall — I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that."

"Apologies accepted. But you were right. She's my Mom."

Murchison said nothing for a time.

She stared at the meter panel in front of her. "Are there unlogged calibration factors hidden someplace? Your engineer was using programs I can't access, not while he's in stasis. The computer data panels and the hard-wired meters don't match. We should have constant speed. The meters claim we're losing a light a second. That doesn't make sense."

"Agreed." Murchison paged the captain. "To slow down that fast, we'd need to be heading straight at a star. But the screens are dark." He waved at the ceiling display, which showed only distant faint points of light.

"We're still slowing down. The backups to the acceleration compensators went to stand-by. Computer denies it, but the hardwire lines say we did. What are those backups, anyway? The manuals were a bit vague."

"On the bridge? There's an acceleration compensator on each crew position. If the main compensators fail, you stay at one gee. The space between our posts loses acceleration shielding, so on the rest of the bridge there's a five- or ten-gee gravitational field. If you stay at your post, you feel nothing. If I leave my post, and head towards you, I get about three paces, hit uncompensated acceleration, and — pow! — instant pilot pancake."

Barbara shook her head. "There must be a star in front of us. The drive fields are polarizing."

"But there's nothing there. And the scanners would show anything dark and dense."

Barbara slipped an ellipsoidal coverplate off her porthole. "Dead ahead," she announced. "Magnitude minus six absolute. And the other stars don't match the ones on the display. It must be as messed up as the datapanels."

"Clyde," snapped O'Bryan, now back at his post. "Cut the ceiling display. Let's see what's really there."

"Done." Murchison tapped at his keypad. The starfield displayed across the flight deck's domed ceiling did not change. "There seems to be a slight hangup here." Murchison tapped again and again at his keypad, all the time staring in disbelief at the ceiling.

"Why is the display still on?" asked O'Bryan.

"That's it. The datapanels say the display is off. Yes, I see it, too. But the computer says it isn't there, and gives me error messages when I try to turn it off."

"Pull the plug," suggested Barbara. "We're losing five lights a second. Internal gravity, without compensators, would be eight gees now."

O'Bryan reached to the intercom. "Hamilton! Report to the bridge! On the double!"

Sailing Master Hamilton's face appeared on a transceiver plate. "Not possible, Captain. I'm sealed out of the engineering spaces. And the intercom was dead until you called me." His face blurred into static snow.

O'Bryan leaned confusedly back into his acceleration couch. If only the sailing master were here to point out the obvious. Nothing in the Board of Trade regulations had prepared him for this. Frozen in indecision, he looked at the other people on the bridge. He and Murchison perched like birds on their individual flight consoles, suspended well above the main flight deck. Fifteen feet below him, Barbara pored over her meters and data panels, trying to find a rational interpretation for their situation.

After a silence, Barbara turned and fixed O'Bryan with her eyes. "Captain," she half whispered, "if you want to dump your computer completely, I can hold the hyperdrive steady on manual."

"Dump it? All the way? No, let me think. Meanwhile, let's cut the display directly. The connectors are inside your console."

"Check." She dropped to hands and knees, then disappeared behind a bank of dials and meters. O'Bryan looked around, wishing that the ship would fix itself. He had been awake for three days. To reach a real decision, something he had not had to do on an engineering issue in several years, brought him to an agony of indecision. The display above him flickered, blanked out, and was replaced with real stars, which shone wanly through the transparent cabin ceiling. Dead ahead, shining bright through reflections of cabin lights, a single star obstructed their path. But where had it come from? Their plotted route showed

no star there. And why hadn't the image intensifiers revealed it? Nothing made sense, even if you assumed that the liner's computer banks were in as bad shape as its crew.

"Clyde, let's go to manual. I just hope the lower decks aren't thoroughly confused, too."

"That will not be necessary." A voice from behind whirled both officers in their seats. The voice belonged to a stranger perched on the rear balcony. "You have no further need for your ship, so I am taking control at this time."

"You'll what?" shot back O'Bryan. "Young man, this is a very poor time for jokes. We have an ailing computer, and a crew too sick to fly the ship." He tried to figure out who he was addressing. The shadows and backlighting hid the intruder's face.

"We do not jest." The intruder turned on another bank of lights, revealing a black uniform with silver trim. "I am Archdeacon Rupert, and this ship is now given over to the service of Aruble, Lord of the Upper Dark."

"Oh, God! A Chaos lunatic. Don't you people know that you're all dead?" Murchison shook his head.

"Lord Aruble?" O'Bryan was sure that he faced a drunk, somehow smuggled into the flight deck. "You've got to be joking. Those stories were all twentieth-century fairy tales."

"One ought not expect the Unenlightened to recognize that the Prophet wrote His works while under Divine Guidance. This is of no consequence. We are in control, and I will direct the final course adjustments. Pilot!"

"You can jolly well join your master!" Murchison dove for a cabinet. The air around him sizzled. He screamed and fell twitching to the deck.

"Well shot, von Morwitz!" Rupert's gaze remained fixed on the captain.

"Thank you!" A second intruder, clad in white and gold braid, stepped into sight on the balcony. "The passengers are sealed out from the engineering spaces, awaiting your tender mercies after we rendezvous with the *Obliterator*. I have dealt with the untermenschen below in a final manner. Only the three crewmen here remain alive in the engineering spaces."

"Three?" Rupert shrank back in sudden fear. "I found only two on this deck."

"The third cowers under an acceleration chair. You!" von Morwitz snarled. "Stand up, you coward! I have you in my sights. Stand, or I'll fry you where you hide."

Barbara peered around the edge of her couch. When she heard the commotion, she had tried to sneak back into the room, only to find herself staring down the muzzle of a weapon. What was it? Not a machine pistol or a disruptor. The barrel was too wide for any weapon that she knew. Shaking with fright, she tried to stand.

"That is a crew person?" asked Rupert. "Isn't it a little ... small?"

"No one else is on the bridge," answered von Morwitz. "Security displays say that the final crew member is at her exact physical location. Can I help it if untermenschen machines cannot distinguish adults from children?"

Rupert glared at O'Bryan. "Our course is precomputed. Your remote controls are entirely adequate for the simple maneuvers we will now perform. And you might be in the way. Join now the Upper Dark!" There was a flicker around O'Bryan. He fell soundlessly to the floor.

Barbara leaned over and gagged. Her blood roared in her ears. "Little child," she heard distantly. "Little child, you should be strong. They didn't suffer very much. The true suffering is yet to come."

"Yet to come?" asked Barbara, forcing herself to stare at Rupert.

"Yes, oh yes. Later! Later will be the True Suffering for your fellow passengers." A beatific glow crossed Rupert's face. "Well, Eric, let's finish this. Congratulations!"

"Yes," answered von Morwitz. "Congratulations. And hail Aruble!" His final words lacked conviction.

"Hail the Leader!" Rupert grinned at his response, then moved to the helm. "All on course. You pulled our program bubbles form the ship's computer?"

"Every one. The data panels now show reality, not the illusions they displayed until moments ago. The life support now distinguishes your plague virus from standard air additives. We approach our destination, and the ship now accepts only our orders. You see?" He pointed at a data panel.

"Yes, but why would her name appear on this command roster at all? Surely the Solar perverts do not employ children in their crews?"

"Some emergency failsafe," answered von Morwitz. "I think everyone on the bridge is listed automatically. But she's at the bottom, so she can't do things as long as we're here." He looked up. "You! You are Barbara, *nicht wahr*?"

"Yes." Her voice quavered. She knew she was facing a pair of terrorist lunatics, complete with unknown weapons, bizarre costumes, and phony European accents. She tried to sound like a petulant ten-year-old by faking the whine of an ill-mannered Inner Arm brat. "Who do you guys think you are?

Don't you know it's against the law to carry guns on a passenger liner?"

The white and gold uniform quavered with laughter. "I am Erich von Morwitz, commodore of the Faith's invincible space navy, and this is my comrade-in-arms Michael Rupert. Now, what is a little girl doing up here with all these old men?" He gestured at the bodies around him.

"The, the, Captain O'Bryan said I could help, as long as I was very, very careful to do exactly what he said — and never, ever touch any controls, no matter what, unless he said to. You don't want me to do that, do you? I was afraid he might ask me to do it— it's too complicated, and I'm afraid."

"A wise set of orders! You will not touch any controls, is that clear?" he barked.

"Yes, yes, I'd never do that. But please, can I sit down, I..." She affected lapsing into tears.

"Go ahead. But face me! And no monkey business, or it's the end for you!" Von Morwitz made a slicing gesture across his throat. Barbara dropped into a chair and covered her eyes, pretending to cry. The pirates' conversation was entirely audible.

"We are on course," announced Rupert. "Decelerating as per plan. Only the overhead display is malfunctioning."

"That we can live without," responded von Morwitz. "Security backups are working, keeping the sailing master and his men out of the engineering spaces."

"Then you have another ship, and we have a gift to offer to the Upper Dark!" Rupert gestured at Barbara.

"Gift? You won't hurt me, will you?" She knew very well what Chaotics would do to her. Their God wanted pain, so its servants had bloody altars, instruments of torture, and mind-control drugs to forestall unconsciousness or insanity among the sacrifices. If the pirates would talk, they might give her some clue as to how she could get off the bridge, reach a pinnace, and escape.

"Hurt? We only cut the throats of old men. For a pearl like you, my dear, the end will be far more exquisite, far more brilliant." Rupert looked upwards in prayer.

"It is perhaps a shame to waste her," von Morwitz remarked blandly. "From her hair and eye color, and her height at her age, she appears to be ideal genetic material, suitable for breeding future generations of naval officers."

"The deal," snapped Rupert, "is that the navy gets the ships, while the clergy get the passengers, especially the young, the beloved of Aruble."

"True. The clergy receive the final benefit of the young. I merely suggest that, even as the clergy make temporary use of our ships, the fleet receive the temporary use of her body. Strictly for reproductive purposes, of course." Vvon Morwitz, without denying his partner's claims, continued to probe for a chink in Rupert's armor.

"Of course," grumbled Rupert.

"How old are you?" snapped von Morwitz at Barbara.

"Thirteen," she answered. And then some, she added to herself. The older the better, for this argument. If the fools she faced could be persuaded to view her as a walking embryo tank, she was prepared to play along, at least for now. Anything for time!

"You see, Von Morwitz? At her age, she should have blossomed. She hasn't. She must have defective genes!" Rupert glanced at the helm. "Two hours to rendezvous. Meanwhile, the trash in the passenger compartments...?"

"I was spying upon them. They know nothing. They think only that their captain is sick." Von Morwitz eyed Barbara again. She smiled, wishing she had some idea how to make the smile more seductive. N- and o-memories returned a complete blank on the question. Until this moment, the question had seemed too disgusting for extended consideration. He smiled back.

"Who's this Leader fellow?" she asked. "Is he is a good guy?"

"Who is the Leader?" He pointed at his shoulder patch, which merged lightning bolts, fleurs-de-lys, bumblebees, and scarlet stars. "Of the Totalitarian Front, of course. You have heard of us, haven't you?" She nodded weakly.

"Go ahead," said Rupert. "Convert her to the True Faith. It is too rare that Our Lord in the Darkness is offered a member of the Action Arm."

Von Morwitz ignored his partner's jabs. "The Front seeks to revive the common political philosophy of those great twentieth-century leaders: Stalin, Napoleon, Takamura, and Hitler! — as revealed in the True Faith of Aruble. We almost won in Europe, some decades back, but the traitors in our midst had no sooner gained a parliamentary majority for the Front than they voted us out of our own party."

"Well," said Rupert dryly, "you were the Democratic Fascists."

"Didn't Hitler kill people?" asked Barbara. She really wasn't sure. She remembered the names as belonging to the remote past, someplace between Elizabeth I and Victoria III. Hadn't Takamura been Shogun of California? The pirates seemed to have two factions. Could they be persuaded to fight?

"Your schoolbooks," responded von Morwitz blandly, "are contaminated by twenty-third-century

lies invented by the Caliph of Jerusalem. All competent historians agree, and it has been scientifically proved, that Hitler was a great humanitarian."

"After twenty centuries," countered Rupert, "a good historian can prove anything. That is why the Faith is so strong. Only a true religion, such as ours, could survive so long without change."

Barbara leaned back. They were crazy, but they had the ship and its security systems. Her ploy in claiming an age of thirteen hadn't gone well. They might have been more interested in someone younger. All she had now were her bare hands. In an action novel, she could swagger seductively between them, get them each to put an arm over her shoulder, and then take them both out with a single two-handed karate chop. She knew she was stronger than they expected, but not that much stronger. They both had a hundred pounds on her, were armed to the teeth, and probably had body armor. She stared at the consoles around her, as if amused by the pretty lights. The ship was still slowing down, with acceleration compensators close to maximum power. She tried to question them again.

"You guys must be real clever. Did you invent the death ray, too?"

"In fact, it is my own invention, and a very clever one," answered Von Morwitz proudly. "It's a drive turbulence generator. When I shoot, the target gets hit by twelfth-level turbulence. Even behind a wired control panel or a ship bulkhead, you get level-eight force, enough to knock out the teeth. The real secret is how to control where turbulence happens. The weapon creates a spherical zone in which turbulence can occur, then uses microwaves to beam power. Where there are microwaves, there is turbulence, elsewhere there is no turbulence."

"Microwaves? Are those like submillimeter waves?" She hoped he wouldn't notice how astute the question was. The weapon's operation was clear enough, but what wavelength was he using for power transmission?

"No, no, a fraction of a centimeter, hence the muzzle design. The waves diffract and leak around corners. With old-fashioned materials like sheet titanium, I can shoot someone around even three corners. In a ship, the scattering is diffuse, so I can fire without getting a ray back in the face. Though the ray is less clever than my sabotage of the computer banks. The crew thought they were on course while they headed in a completely wrong direction. In all their displays, only the turbulence lines were real. The rest was illusion. Now, no more, I am busy."

He's a dunce, she thought, like everyone else in the Solar Federation. A lot of ego, no common sense, and no tolerance for pain. I can take force-eight turbulence all day, if I want. I could take force twelve for a few seconds, I think, if it would do any good. All I need is a plan, and maybe some sort of screen. What does my knowledge do for me then? I might be able to walk their guns down, but they hardly need any weapons to take me out. She thought some more, waiting for clues to fall into place. To take the role of an amazon princess from some hero tale was impossible. Perhaps she could pretend to be an innocent pretty little girl. They seemed to like gold-braid uniforms; her cloth-of-gold gown would be the perfect match.

A half-hour passed. The pirates seemed to have relaxed. "Mr, ummh, Archdeacon Rupert? If I'm going to meet Aruble, couldn't I please be a little better dressed? My mother always says clothing counts a lot on first impressions."

"Daughter, I am delighted that you appreciate the honor about to be bestowed on you." His enthusiasm sounded genuine. "But where can I find you clothing?"

"It's in my cabin. But a robot could fetch it, so I wouldn't have to leave you alone. No one would ever notice a robot."

"Well, all right. After all, it is for the glory of Our Lord of the Upper Dark."

* * * * *

Hamilton waited below, unable to modify the course of events. The pirates hadn't noticed that the captain's transceiver was still active, so that Hamilton could watch the tableau on the bridge. He chafed at confinement to the observer's role. The package might give them a chance. A fool would try to smuggle a bomb onto the bridge. Security scanners would catch that every time. But he could use the box to send Barbara a message. The manual controls behind her were still operative. If she vented the bridge deck to vacuum, both she and the pirates would die. The security systems would then admit him to the engineering spaces. It was an unpleasant fate for Barbara, but the ship's doctor's firm specialized in clinical reincarnation. He could even promise her a physically mature body instead of the husk in which she currently lodged. Surely she couldn't enjoy being denied the pleasures of adult life? In any event, her chances of being brought back from the dead were excellent.

Von Morwitz made a show of scanning the parcel, then let Barbara step into the ready room to dress. She slid the box open cautiously, half-afraid that someone had indeed managed to smuggle a bomb, despite von Morwitz's precautions. The box

held the expected dress and, at the extreme bottom, an envelope. She desperately wanted to tear it open and read, but caution forbade that step. Von Morwitz was doubtless using the security monitors to watch her change her clothing, and not just to see if she was about to smuggle a machine pistol onto the bridge, either. The note, she concluded, was best used as a bribe to lull her captors' suspicions of her. She knotted her kerchief over her head, spent a few moments checking in a mirror, and stepped back onto the bridge.

"Well, do I look better now?" she asked. She heard Rupert's breath as an indrawn hiss. Her gown was scarlet, heavily woven throughout with cloth-of-gold. Cuffs, collar, stockings, and gloves glittered in the light. A full kerchief hid the top of her head, its metallic sheen accenting her hair. Around her neck ran a gold chain, stamped in heavy square links ending in a massive sunburst. The ruby it framed burned brilliantly. Rupert nodded appreciatively.

"Lord Aruble will be highly pleased that you wear his colors," he said.

"Thank you. I'm glad he'll like it. But what should I do with this note I found? I'm sure it wasn't there when Mommy packed everything. Besides, the outside isn't in her handwriting."

"What does it say?" Rupert had his gun out. Von Morwitz waited to see how Barbara would explain the missive.

"I didn't think you'd want me to read it. I didn't want to get into trouble with you," she answered.

"Very clever," said Von Morwitz. "Neutral paper. To the scanners it looked just like the box. Let's see it." He paused to read the contents, then laughed. "It says they hear us, see us, know what we're doing, and can't get in to stop us, so they want you, little girl, to kill both of us. They even tell you how, with enough detail that you could almost do it. Of course, letting all the air out of this room would kill you, too, but they promise you a new body: a grownup one if you want." He looked thoughtful for a moment. "Such dolts they are! They must think we are complete idiots who take absolutely no precautions at all. Even if you did it — and I'll kill you the instant you try — it wouldn't kill us, only you."

"Hush!" countered Rupert. "They hear us, remember! No need to advertise exactly how thorough our precautions have been." Rupert wishedVon Morwitz would stop boasting. There were still only two of them. If the sailing master and friends could enter engineering, matters might become rather sticky. "Why," he asked, "why did you actually give us this note? And don't bother to lie. Unless you want to feel the sting of my weapon, that is. I have a verifier pointed at you."

"I want you to trust me," she answered. "I'm not, I'm not for sale for the price they want to pay. And I don't want to die."

"Well, Michael," said von Morwitz, "the verifier confirms her words. Do you want also her oath signed in her own blood? Her friends told her to go kill herself, painfully at that. Why should she want to help them?"

"Yeah, real friends," she chimed in. She fumed at Hamilton's casual suggestion that she should save his ship by dying. Sacrifice in the course of duty was one thing, but she was a passenger. And Hamilton's comments about reincarnation practically told the pirates how old she really was. They hadn't killed her yet because they still thought she was only a little girl. It didn't make sense for Hamilton to offer a little girl an adult body. Or would a child from the Solar Federation want to grow up all at once?

She looked at the note again, then threw it dramatically into a disposal chute. Hamilton really had given her a choice of body ages afterwards; they were willing to bring her back as a child or an adult. From the omissions, she concluded, they weren't willing to — or couldn't — bring her back in first extension; nor, she knew, could they restore her o-brain. She wasn't sure whether becoming an adult was better or worse than being turned back into a child. In either case she would lose the clarity and insights of her o-mind, at least until she reached Cymbeline again. A child's body and incompletely developed brain really couldn't hold even her n-mind; for a time, they would act as a gentle soporific. On the other hand, an adult mind would come with new sets of emotions and desires, with which she had never learned to cope. Passions! How could people in the Federation stand up to their lusts with little more than a child's set of thoughts and restraints? With that stress, you would go out of your mind or spend all your time... Of course, Federation adolescents supposedly did act like that. It sounded pretty terrible to her. How could you grow up if you had no time to sit back and think, without your body providing any distractions?

It didn't really matter. She had her own plan to execute. The pirates most likely assumed that her gown was woven from metallized plastic, not from masses of real gold. The extra weight was noticeable, but for once the material had an entirely practical use.

* * * * *

"Five minutes to rendezvous," noted Rupert.

"Can I see your friends yet?" asked Barbara. She stuck her head into the porthole, in the same motion sliding the porthole cover back under her

acceleration couch. She knew it was too soon, saw nothing, and drifted back into her seat.

"One of the real emergency lights is blinking," she said helpfully.

"Which one?" asked Rupert. His data panels showed nothing. Had Von Morwitz's program adjustments all been removed from the computer banks?

"Right here," said Barbara, pointing at the console with one arm. She leaned forward to read the label, her body screening her left hand from the pirates' sight. "It says 'Drive Int, interf,..." pretending not to know the word. Not looking down, her o-mind counted off switches on the panel to her left, opened a safety cover, and pressed the tabs underneath.

"Just the *Obliterator* coming up," said von Morwitz. "Nothing to worry about. We just see a little drive interference."

"Yes," said Barbara, "That's right. This emergency light!" She slapped at the light. N-mind braced itself for a moment of pain. O-controlled motions were almost a hundred-fold faster than their n-counterparts, for the tenths of a second it took them to exhaust local metabolic reserves, but even genegineered muscles rebelled against being driven so quickly. O-mind momentarily took complete control of her hand, setting her nerves on fire as it splayed her fingers. In a few instants she struck a half-dozen widely-spaced switches, all by seeming accident.

"Don't touch those," screamed Rupert. "Sit down! Eric, she cut off helm power. I can't see what we're doing."

"I'm sorry. I'm real sorry," whined Barbara. "I was only trying to help. Should I put it back? I think it was one of these." She affected confusion again.

"No, sit down. Eric, go fix it!" Obediently, von Morwitz rose and started down the stairs.

You cut the acceleration compensators, she thought. Once he's away from his post, he hits six gravities. That's a fifteen-foot drop for his head, and impact momentum scales as the half power of the acceleration. Call it a forty-foot- equivalent fall, with a half-ton pushing him.

"What?" Von Morwitz clutched at the railing, lost his hold, and fell face forward down the stairs, ending with exaggerated quickness in a backshattering flip into the deckplates. Okay, thought Barbara, now if number-two idiot will please run to his friend's aid, we'll be done the easy way.

"Eric?" called Rupert. There was something odd about what he had just witnessed. He tossed a stylus across the room. It glided lazily through the air, reached the field boundary, and slammed deckwards at six gravities. Rupert paled, then looked piercingly at Barbara.

"That was no accident, was it?" he asked. "You know how to use some controls, don't you? Hamilton's detailed orders were all just a ruse to fool us, except for his crack about 'not overestimating the gravity of the situation.' Well, you live by those controls, and now you will die by them. Die! Die! Die!"

She turned her back and started throwing more switches. The helm was nominally without power, but Rupert had ways around that. She had to isolate him completely, and let Hamilton into engineering.

The beam from Rupert's weapon took her in the back. She knew what to expect, but was confident that her gown contained a better mesh than any set of control cables. The blast from the weapon was a spray of ice scouring her skin. It leaked around corners, through gaps in the weave, numbing her wrists and the back of her neck. She kept tapping at two keypads. As soon as she finished, Rupert would be trapped, unable to affect the ship's maneuvers

. His weapon struck again and again. It was like standing in a blizzard, holding a place against the wind while the cold etched deeper and deeper toward the bone. For a fraction of a minute, the microwave beam reflected from something buried in the controls. The reflection left her dazed, half-blinded. She could hear a clanking sound behind her. Rupert had finally remembered that the non-helm category controls were still powered. The sound was a maintenance robot inching its way towards her. As it grew closer, the bursts of cold from his weapon turned into a spray of frigid needles, which locked the muscles of her back and shoulders.

She let her knees sag. She had planned that she would pretend to collapse, but the pretense was a little shallow. Stiffly, she clutched at the porthole cover. Her hearing had blurred. Rupert raved in a language she could no longer understand. Stray irrelevant ideas crept across her brain, driven by the weapon's static. If she were a Technodeist, she found herself thinking, she would be on her knees, offering up hosannahs of praise to St. Faraday for his protection. Her metallized dress seemed to work as well without those prayers. She pivoted, lifting up the cover as a shield. Wherever the microwaves go, she thought, there goes the turbulence — and this is a half-meter reflector.

Her head burned. For an instant, she took the full unshielded force of Rupert's weapon. Then the reflector covered her face. She heard a dull thud, and gradually realized that Rupert's weapon had ceased to fire. A glance around the cover revealed Rupert sprawled across the helm. His pistol had fallen to the deck below. He couldn't have gotten more turbulence, she estimated, than I did, counting

that stuff in the face; o-mind is less resistant to turbulence than n-mind, so I'm less resistant than him. But he is out cold, while I am still standing. N- and o-minds allowed her a grin of pride.

A maintenance robot stood on the deck. "Back!" she called. "Orders cancelled!" Would it obey, she wondered? Or would it continue to chase her?

"As you command!" it responded. It rolled back towards its storage closet.

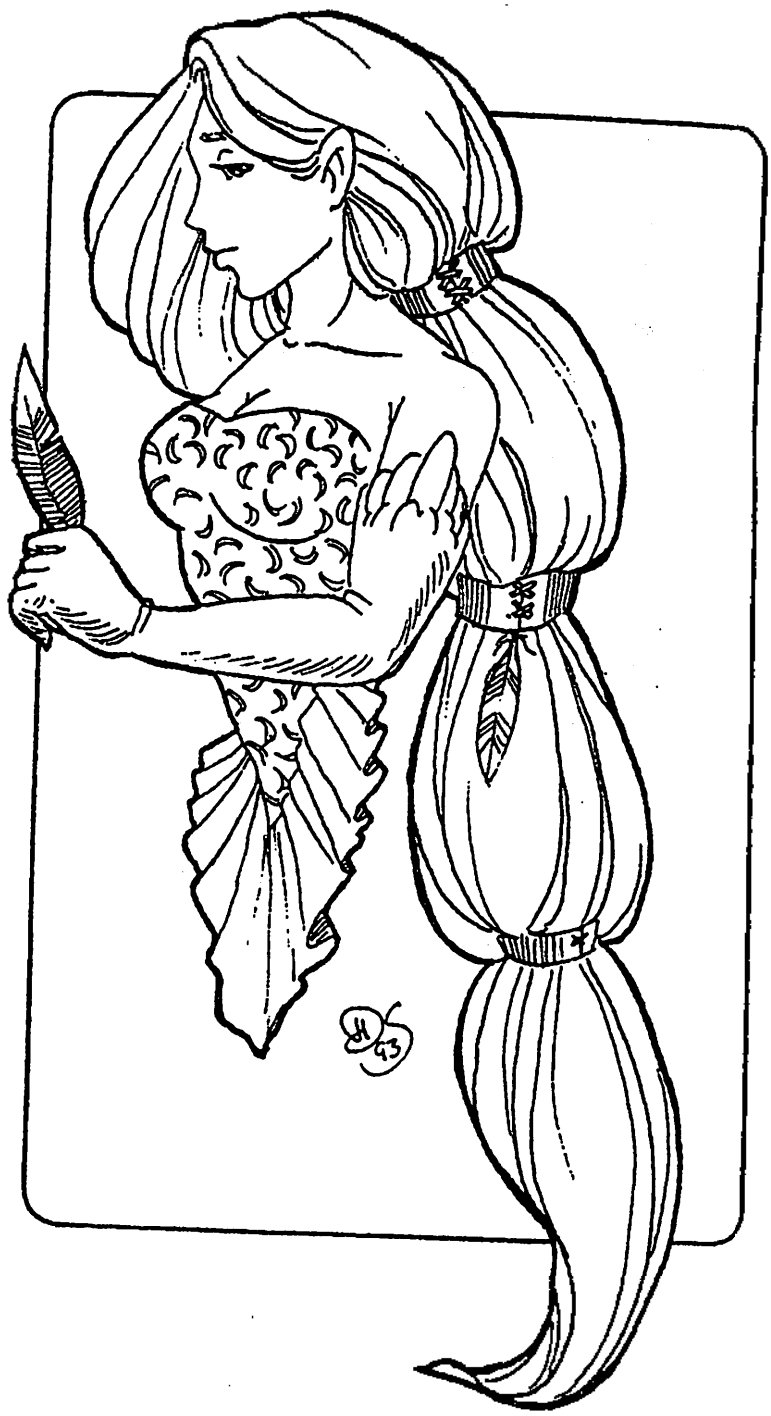
"Command?" she asked herself. Who did the ship acknowledge as captain? Someone had to be in command, and that person had better have a way to deal with the pirate battleship on their tail. To her surprise, hers was the only name on the Command list.

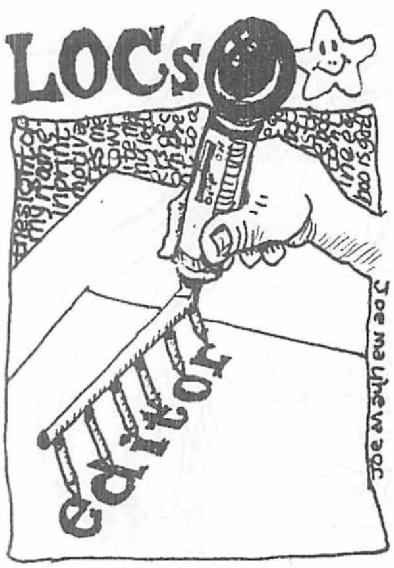
She wanted nothing more than to lie down and lose herself in darkness. Rupert and Von Morwitz were both dead or unconscious. She had turned off the security monitors, and restored bridge gravity, hadn't she? It was so difficult to be certain. She could distantly hear Hamilton on the transceiver.

"Miss FitzRyan! Miss FitzRyan! The ship still won't let me through! It thinks I'm a pirate. You've got to reset..." His voice faded into the roar in her ears.

The world was swathed in cotton fog, through which clear thoughts slowly marched. The pirate was still using hyperdrive. A solution became apparent. She began programming the hyperdrive settings. Hamilton's protests came distantly to her ears. "You can't do that...our drive fields would shred them to ribbons...can't kill people without a trial, even the likes of..." She stopped listening. They could still use the ship's drives to escape, though the backblast would destroy the unshielded pirate. Hamilton couldn't stand the thought of killing the pirates without a tribunal first. Barbara was repelled by the Federation's flaccid beliefs about mercy. It was something about the way they all grew up — or failed to grow up, she wasn't sure which — something that made sure they couldn't stand unpleasant decisions.

"I'll get'm" she mumbled. Before Hamilton could respond, she threw the main drives into action. "Emergency escape," she slurred to the computer. Her voice was almost gone. Telltales warned of unusual stresses on the engines. She had expected the other ship to be badly damaged, not to dissolve into pyrotechnic sparks. The pirates, she guessed, had expected no resistance, and were not prepared for surprises. That was bad piloting on their part. The liner surged ahead into interstellar space. She fell back into an acceleration couch, exhausted, content to watch the stars swirl around her like snowflakes driven by a winter's gale.





May 27, 1994

Dear Helmuth and the gang:

Beginning with Evelyn Leeper's comments on the size of the new, media-disoriented, Boskone: There we seem to be running into a conflict between getting enough members to pay for all the hotel facilities and getting enough members who are not just gamers, costumers, media-trekkies, or whatever fringe fandom you care to name. One recent nearby convention was spoiled because the hallways were taken over by gamers. I recall when Kubla Khan in Nashville was a big event. (I have been to many, including the latest one.) This last one was considerably smaller than Boskone's 700-900.

General Programming Notes: The first program item we went to at Kubla was an item on the [then] forthcoming collision of comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 with Jupiter. Big science item, astronomical spectacular, involvement of the Voyager, the Galileo, and the Hubble Space Telescope. How many people showed up? Six, three of them being *FOSFAX* editor Tim Lane, coeditor Elizabeth Garrott, and me. So it is more than just the era of the "hard-science" **Boskone** that is over.

After his Boskone item on "Comic Books and Alternate History," Will Shetterly may want to know about H. Beam Piper's story "Crossroads of Destiny," in which a TV producer on a train has pushed to him a series concept for an alternate-history TV series. The producer replies that the idea has the problem that most people do not know enough about real history to get the point. As the punch line, it comes out that the story is set in an alternate history, one where Benedict Arnold is the hero of the Revolution — and the guy pushing the high concept is a time-line traveler. But, on the other hand, you may recall alternate history items from "Saturday Night Live," like "If Spartacus had had a Piper Club" with Kirk Douglas.

The two *National Lampoon* alternate-history issues concerned the Kennedys, and were extremely dark and negative. [Joseph had five paragraphs of details. Anyone who is a "Kennedy basher," look for the issues. KK]

The folks who were "Creating an Internally Consistent Religion" might want to know that like the Boxers ("Righteous Harmony Fists") in China, the Simbas ("Lions") in the ex-Belgian Congo (Zaire) had charms that would make the charmed one bulletproof. The spells and charms always worked, too. They had an elaborate system of rituals that had to be consistently adhered to in order to work; and all those who had been wounded or killed simply had failed to scrupulously adhere to the prescribed rituals.

The big problem, though, is with works that just fail totally in the religious field. One would think, for example, that the people of Pern would worship something, most likely the dragons, but no, they came from an interstellar civilization that has outgrown faith in spite of the immense psychological shocks that have happened since then, have stuck to this belief in disbelief, or disbelief in belief. At least this is more honest than the medieval (or other pre-modern) fantasy works that simply ignore the matter.

Allow me to recommend to all of you *Watch the Skies!: A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth* by Curtis Peebles (Smithsonian Institution Press: $24.95; ISBN 1-56098-343-4). This is a fascinating short chronicle of the flying saucer phenomenon, showing its ties to domestic social instability and its degradation into extreme paranoid thought. Its description of the strange partnership between the 4' Raymond A. Palmer and the 6' 8" James Oberg alone is worth the price. (It explains RAP's role in the development of the flying saucer phenomenon and why fans were attracted and repelled — principally repelled — from it.)

Best wishes to you all.

Námarië,
Joseph T Major

June 2, 1994

Boskone through the eyes of a first-timer.

Boskone 31 seemed like the right time to attend. Last year I became aware that my 30th wedding anniversary coincided with Boskone. They both had their beginning in the same year. My husband was acquainted with Allan Kent back then and we heard a lot about NESFA and Boskone, but never attended a meeting. When I saw the booth at the Copley Square Bookfair in 1993, I had to join.

First, I paid for the weekend in advance. I didn't realize that there was a day rate. That was O.K. because I might have gone on Sunday if time permitted.

Registration went fine because I was early and I had preregistered. Since all the sign-ups were in the hall, I milled around until the appropriate hour. I had heard the art show was excellent. I went there first. It was early so it was quiet and I was able to see the art without staring at someone's back. As soon as the Kaffeeklatsch person showed up, I rushed to sign up for Hal Clement. Since Harry (Stubbs) attends every year, it was not overbooked. I enjoy the Kaffeeklatsches more than the talks. I had time to catch Hal's slide show, which had standing room only and floor for sitting. I sat in briefly for the critique of the art show, which I found very interesting.

The Hectograph: Thanks for being so nice when I arrived at the end wanting the recipe. Our hectograph has needed to be repaired for years. Keep up the tradition.

Optics for Children: Special thanks to Jeff Hecht. I was able to get the last copy of his book at You-do-it. I couldn't find it anywhere in any store.

Anna Hillier

June 5, 1994

Dear Kenneth,

PB 32 was very attractive. The Mayhew retrospective was really good! The Leeper review was less interesting, perhaps. Letters on re-reading Heinlein were interesting. Heinlein's work remains highly controversial, a permanent thread on rec.arts.sf.written.

"Inconceivable" and "Fire in the Morning" [scheduled for next issue KK] are, as you doubtless noted, Telzey Amberdon (James Schmitz) pastiches. "Fire in the Morning" is more transparent than "Inconceivable" as a pastiche.

I look forward to seeing the comments on my stories.

George Phillies

April 4, 1994

Dear Ken,

I have asked in several spots, and I'll make *PB* one more location — I am trying to find a videotape of the Hugo ceremonies from ConFrancisco. I was told that there were people there taping and have asked the formal channels, but no one seems to know anything about it. Any ideas/suggestions? [I have not heard of a tape being available. I suggest you ask Kevin Standlee. The Hugo ceremonies and masquerade at ConAdian were both taped. Those tapes should be available soon. KK]

I **really** liked the Laboratory Retriever!

Thanks for another ish!

Sheryl Birkhead

June 30, 1994

Dear Ken,

I can only imagine how many hours Joe Mayhew put into the pieces which appeared in *PB* 32. Quite an undertaking. [The pieces were done over a period of 17 years. Joe has done much more. I only used about one third of what he made available. KK]

It was interesting to look at some of the names listed on the convention art pages — yeah, I know that's straying from looking at the art itself, but... The individual convention personality pieces would (did?) make great badge illustrations.

I enjoyed "Inconceivable," but felt the ending was hurried. In keeping with the rest of the ish, I wish Joe had done some illos for it also. [One of my goals is to have pieces ready far enough in advance for this to be done. This issue's cover is an example of what I am trying for. Any artist who is willing to do illustrations should let me know, and I will be happy to send along any piece I have that is even close to ready. KK]

I'm of two different opinions on frequency of pubbing — more than twice a year would be "nice," but *PB* could become a "habit" of Worldcon and Boskone — kinda like a tradition. [If I added a third issue it would be for around August. I intend to keep the December and June issues, but a third issue would give me freedom for more variety. It would give me a chance to experiment more. KK]

That's about it. Thanks for so many nice Mayhew views.

Sheryl Birkhead

Next Issue: The art of Merle Insinga and a decision on who to highlight in *PB* 35. Remember, I can only keep producing issues if people continue to send material.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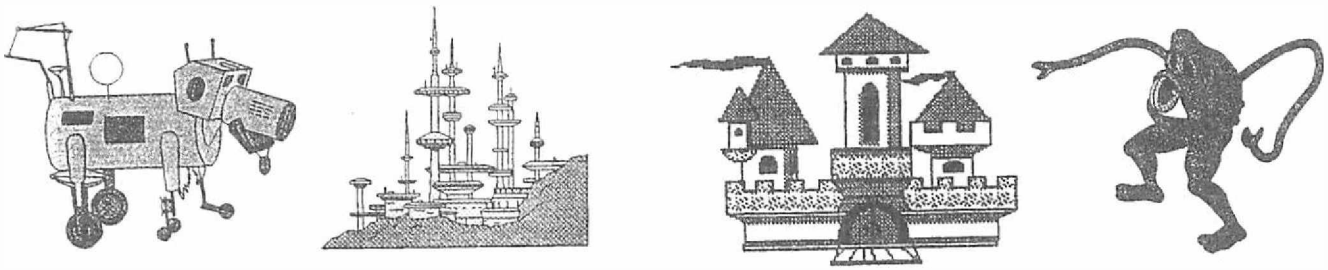
Announcing the return of the:

New England Science Fiction Association

1996 Science Fiction & Fantasy Short Story Contest



The contest is open to all amateur writers, defined as anyone who has not sold a story to a professional publication before 15 November 1995. Entries must be either science fiction or fantasy, less than 7,500 words long, and the original work of the person submitting them.

Entries must be in black type, double spaced, on one side only of 8½-by-11-inch white paper with one-inch margins all around. The title of the story must appear at the top of every page, preferably centered on the first page and in the upper right hand corner of subsequent pages. Number the pages. High-quality copies are acceptable. Computer output must be dark and legible: most dot matrix is not; laser, ink jet, or daisy-wheel printer output usually is.

The author's name **must not** appear on the manuscript. Put it on a separate cover sheet along with the author's address and the title of the story. This is to insure the greatest objectivity by the judges, especially in the case of several stories entered by the same person.

Include a self-addressed stamped envelope (with adequate postage if you wish your manuscript[s] returned). Entries must be postmarked by midnight, **30 November 1995**. Send them to:

NESFA Story Contest
Post Office Box 809
Framingham, MA 01701-0203

For your own protection, keep a copy of your manuscript. Any entry that does not conform to the rules may be refused and the author will be notified using the SASE provided (the manuscript will be returned if sufficient postage was provided). In all cases, the decisions of the judges are final.

The results of the contest will be announced at Boskone 33, to be held in Framingham, MA on 16-18 February, 1996. The winner will be awarded a plaque, guaranteed publication in *Proper Boskonian* (subject to author's permission), and a free Boskone membership (either a refund of their Boskone 33 membership or membership in Boskone 34 in 1997). Two runners-up and several honorable mentions may also be recognized.

Entries will be mailed back during the month of March 1996. NESFA will keep an archival copy of finalists' manuscripts, but all other copies will be destroyed. All rights will remain with the authors.

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for ON SPEC magazine illustration - [signature] '94