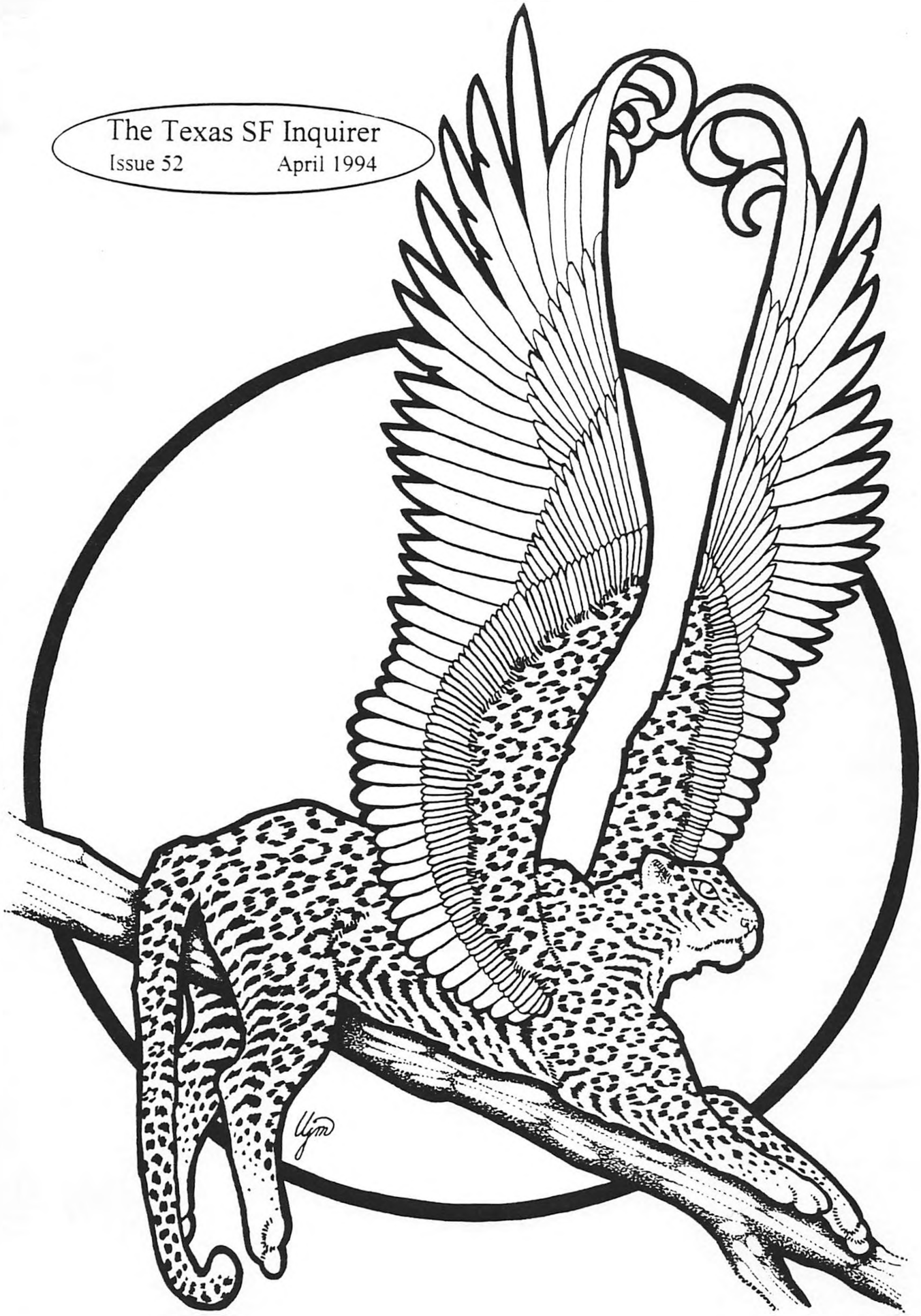
The Texas SF Inquirer
Issue 52 April 1994



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The Texas SF Inquirer is available for the usual or for $1.50 per copy in the US or Canada ($2.00 overseas). [*The editor prefers the usual]* This fanzine is also available free to all FACT members. Submissions, comments, trades, aor what have you may be addressed to either the FACT PO Box (see mailing cover) or to the editor at:

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Editor: Alexander R. Slate

Howdy

Another issue, relatively on time. We feature three different authors this time around, not counting myself. Thanks to FACT members Cindy Foster and John Moore for their contributions. Then there is the continuation of Evelyn Leeper's ConFransisco report, which takes up a lot of space, and it's still not finished. I hope to finish it up next issue. One note, you're not seeing the entire report, parts on certain panels are being taken out so it will fit. In it's whole form, Evelyn's report takes up over 40 pages.

I've also got lots of artwork, including two artists new to the *Inquirer*. Thanks to Betsy Mott and Tom Kidd for letting me use their artwork and to my regular cast of artists as well.

It is the writers and the artists who are the heart and soul of this fanzine. My job as editor is simply to try and present them in some readable format. I've said it before, but it bears repeating; my heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed to *The Inquirer* during my term as editor. I have not been the best of editors, and my efforts, compared to many of the fanzines I see that we get in trade are greatly lacking. But, I hope I have been an adequate caretaker and hope to continue learning and improving.

FACT logo by Ed Graham

Boondock Central:

Alex on Media

The name on the display read "Betsy Mott Dramatic Portrait Artist." The majority of the works Ms Mott showed were indeed portraits, most involving media characters and/or personalities.

The portraits are very good pieces. The most stunning of these was "The Magician: Gary Oldman." Other works included "Aurens" (Peter O'toole as Laurence of Arabia), "Gotham Knight" (Keaton as both Batman and Bruce Wayne) and "Dracula: Love Never Dies" (Coppola's Dracula). I'm not sure if "Warlord: the Survivor" is drawn from pop media or not, but it has the same feel and effect as the others.

The portraits were (as mentioned above) very well done. The flesh tones are good and there is a nice use of shadow. The eyes are vividly rendered, giving the pieces warm, lifelike expressions.

There were two pieces, "Battletorn" and "The Pale Horseman", that were not portraits. I did not like these pieces nearly as much as the others. Frankly I found the latter to be crude and grotesque. Both of these works lacked a sense of depth and realism that the others had. My guess is that this may be attributed to not having reference material to work from.

Tom Kidd exhibited quite a number of pieces; and I will not mention all of them in this review. They spanned a variety of media: pencil sketches, c-prints (cibachrome prints, a certain kind of photographic color print), and oils.

The oils reminded me of Jim Gurney's "Dinotopia" series in that they were part of a series and are meant to convey a world. They are, for the most part, more portrayals of landscapes than Gurney's works; you get less of the details that Gurney excels in portraying.

Kidd has a good color sense and also a good hand for conveying architectural details. Mr Kidd also likes airships (the lighter than air type) and a wide variety appear in a number of the pieces. And "Peale's Penthouse" (a c-print) shows the interplay of light and dark quite nicely.

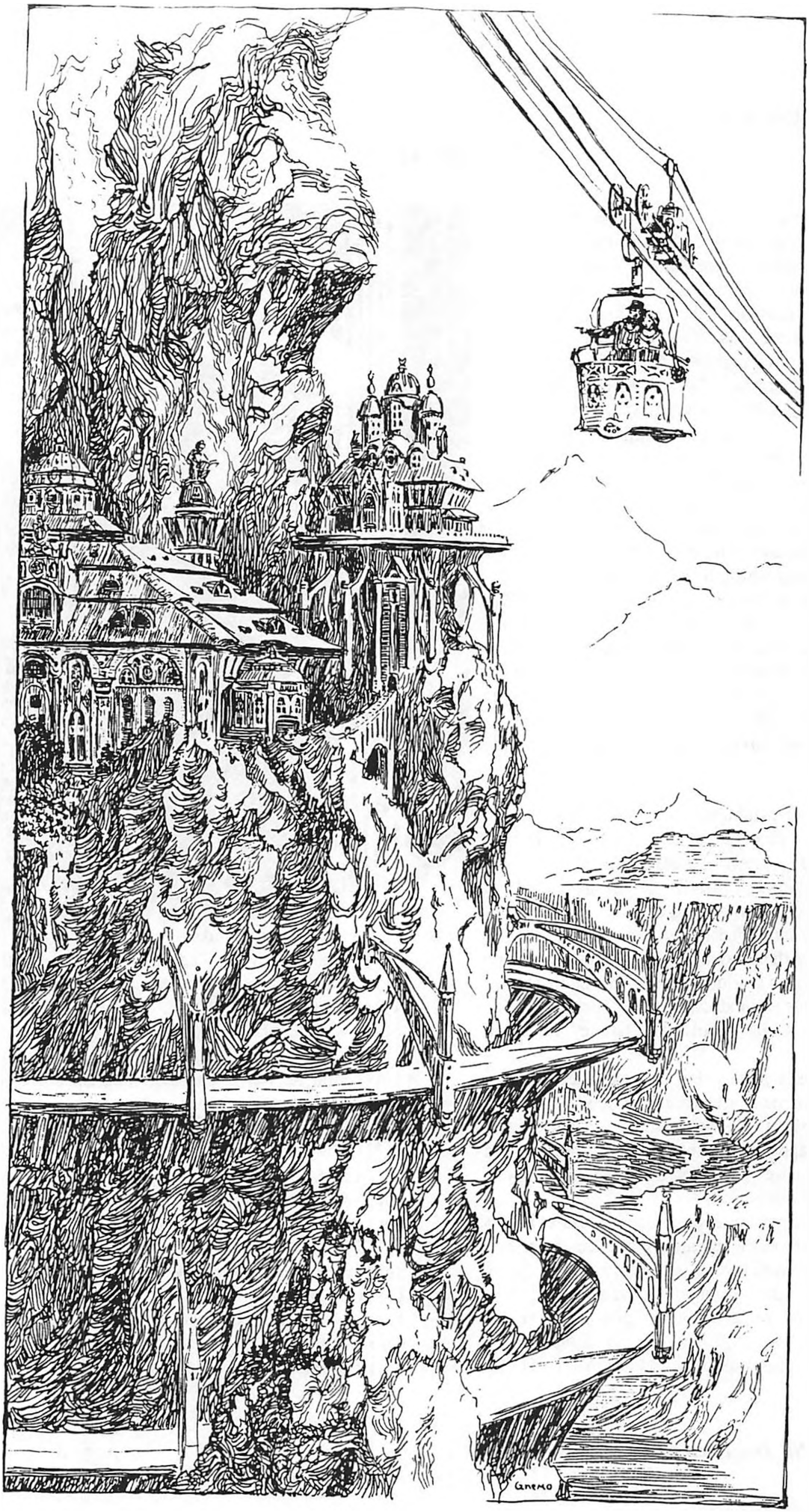
Another good thing about these works s that no single element of the paintings detracts from any other. The viewer's eye is allowed to move freely around the painting so you don't miss anything.

The pencil works are all figure pieces and I think may well be rough drafts of the details in the larger pieces (This was confirmed by Mr Kidd). In any case most aren't rendered with anything like the skill of the other works. Yet, this is not to say that Mr Kidd is not capable of working well with pencils. Contrast "Tom Kidd" which is quite rough and doesn't seem real to "Kopjes" which is quite lifelike.

Yet all of these sketches, which are less vast, more "intimate: works lead us to Segralla's Tree (c-print) which is not only Mr Kidd's finest piece, but one of the best works by any artist that I saw in 1993.

Again, as with Ms Mott, the flesh tones are well done. And there is a good use of color and contrast between light and dark.

There are many things in this painting that are difficult to render properly. One of these is trying to convey texture. Mr Kidd can do this. The fur in "Segralla's Tree" looks like fur; the wood appears that if you were to touch it, it would feel like wood. The girl's dress looks to be linen or cotton.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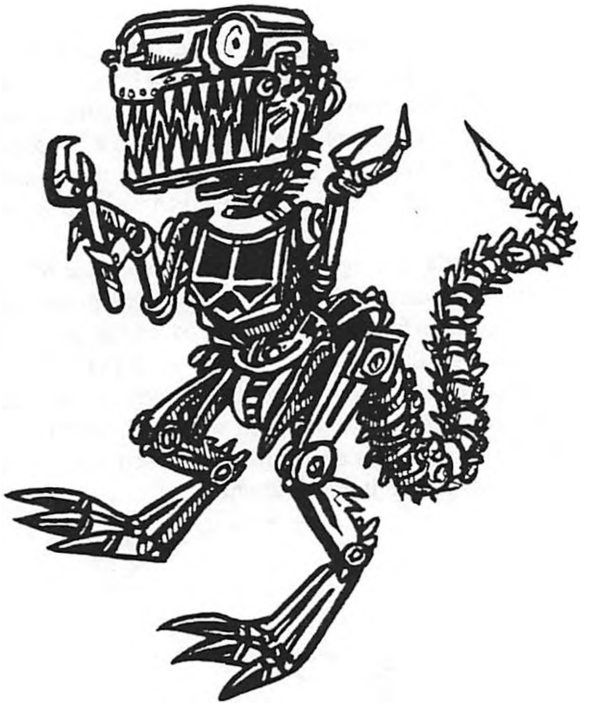


Another difficult detail is hair. Here, not only is the hair rendered to appear like real hair, but Mr Kidd has little wisps floating away from the girl's head as if caught in a little breeze. Little touches such as this are what bring a painting (or print in this case) to life.

If you haven't been able to tell by now, I truly enjoyed Tom Kidd's Confransisco display. He obviously takes a lot of time on his color works. They appear real, yet have those little absurdities in the details to let us know that this is fantasy, not reality.

(A letter from Mr Kidd explains that the idea for the Gnemo works was concieved and much of the work executed prior to Jim Gurney's Dinotopia, so these are not a rip-off of that idea. Nor did I intend in any way to say so; only to convey that like JIm Gurney's works the pieces are part of a whole concept.)

(Note that Tom Kidd's works are available through the Cerridwen Enterprise, 4821 Adams, Shawnee Mission, KS 66204-1931; phone 913-722-4375, fax 722-1479)

On to print! Stephen Papson, a sociology professor at St. Lawrence University's **...In A World Not of His Own Making** [Blue Canary Publishing, tp, 197 pp., 1993] is a nice first work.

It is an action-adventure novel, set in a cyberpunkish distopia. Actually, the setting is most reminiscent of **Max Headroom**. Remember that? The world is divided in the haves and the have nots, with a fringe of almost-have hanger-onners..

Ex-Alliance investigator (and whistle blower) Jim Smokes is confronted with a mystery. The father of an old flame is murdered, on live-TV, by a mysterious assassin shortly after confiding to Jim about the disappearance of an extremely dangerous engineered virus. Soon, Jim is hired by the powers-that-be to solve the theft. Who is trying to destroy the world? And can Jim stop them in time?

The plot is fast moving and developed enough to hold my interest. No long expository for Mr. Papson; he manages to explain the settings in short bursts, mostly right along with the action. Luckily, the universe type is one that is relatively familiar to many of us, and needs no long explanation. The ending is clever enough, if just a bit of a let-down.

The main character, Jim Smokes is almost developed into a real person. If there is one glaring problem, it is that every so often Smoke expounds on the fact that the situation feels out-of-control, that he is nothing but a character being written by an all-knowing author. What we have here, I believe, is that the character realizing he is a character within a story motif was the main theme of the initial draft of the story, that got lost, fortunately, in the re-writes. This guess seems strengthened by the somewhat inconsistent title. Insufficient editing left these little bits in, but fortunately for Mr. Papson, they are relatively few, short, and far-between.

Another unfortunate habit of Mr. Papson is to introduce secondary characters, then just throw them away without developing them. These other characters are just means to move the plot along, they are not characters in their own rights.

Blue Canary Press is new to me, and I think, probably to most of you. The presentation is reasonably professional in appearance. Most of the type is large enough and well spaced; some of the special effects printing is a little hard to read though. Unfortunately, the cover art, besides having nothing to do with the book at all, is crudely drawn.

Summary -- not a bad first effort. I think one more rewrite with a really tough editor could have turned this into a really good first effort. I look forward to more from both Mr. Papson and Blue Canary Press.

What else have I been reading? A bit, but nothing else hot and fresh off the presses. I did catch Ellis Peter's newest Brother Cadfael mystery, **The Holy Thief**, from the library; but frankly I was dissapointed.

Let's see, there was also Gene Wolfe's **Nightside of the Long Sun** [TOR, 352 pp, pb, 1193], volume one of "The Book of the Long Sun". Another excellent start to a series. This time the setting is a generation ship and the hero is a priest. In this world (ship) however, the gods and goddesses are 'real', well they are artificial intelligences anyway. All except one, perhaps?

The whole purpose of this book is to introduce us to Patera Silk, and to build up some empathy for him. Common to Wolfe's books, Patera Silk is being swept along on the tides of events, attempting to piece together the puzzles of a world he doesn't fully understand, but which he must come to understand.

What I really enjoy about Gene Wolfe's stories are the societies he develops. We are always treated to the decaying remnants of great civilizations. So familiar, yet so strange compared to what we know.

Can you believe it took me this long to get around to reading Guy Gavriel Kay's **Tigana**? Well, it did. I was afraid it was simply to be one of two things, either a pale hack-and-slash Tolkien imitation, or one of those convoluted, almost totally non-understandable books so beloved by the modern-lit crowd. Luckily, my fears were unfounded.

I finally took the plunge and am glad I did. There were some elements of the story, though, namely the Night Walkers that didn't seem to fit. I guess I'll have to pick up more of Kay's works to see if they are parts of other aspects of his world not explored by **Tigana**.

How about electronic media? Well, there's **Babylon 5**. I enjoy this series, but can see a lot of room for improvement. The plots have been too limited in scope, and they haven't even begun to explore the characters or the universe they exist in yet. Also can't say much for the sets.

I also don't much worry if I miss an episode or two. They haven't got around to building on each story to provide a progression of history. Something that **Star Trek: the Next Generation** has attempted to do. But on that track, anyone heard from Thomas Riker lately?

Star Trek Deep Space Nine is turning out to be quite a dissapointment. The characters are still as shallow now as when we first met them. Is it just me, or is Quark the only truly interesting character there? Some of the others could be, but they are still only cardboard; well so's Quark, but at least he's gaily colored cardboard.

O'Brian is turning out to be petty and mean spirited. Cisco is dull, Bashir is just a little boy. Dax does little but observe situations, and doesn't appear to have the wisdom of a being that's lived a couple of hundred years. Major Kira is one of the more interesting characters, but she isn't given enough to do, the boys get the most fun in this series.

There's no edge to this show, no sense of excitement or danger. For nasty guys, the Cardassians sure seem awful nice. And instead of the potential superpower they appeared to be in **ST:TNG**, the Ferengi are nothing more than petty squabblers, quite content to get along well with the Federation. I think that's enough about this series, actually I think that was giving it more attention than it deserves.

Article:

My First Time

by Cindy Foster

My first time .... let's see, I was eighteen and very, very shy. No, no, that was my first time to be kissed.

I was twenty-one and on spring break from college. I had never touched the clouds before. No, that was my first time in a plane.

I was twenty-four, in Los Angeles, and introduced to something that would change my life forever. Gosh, you people have dirty minds! I am referring to my first time to be "Conned".

It was LACONII, and little did I know that less than ten years later I would not only be attending conventions regularly, but that I would actually be a guest at one. Wow, did I say change my life?

Fandom really did change my life. I met people I felt comfortable with, that had similar interests and outlooks on life. I made dear and close friends. I met my husband through fandom, and changed my career path to become vice-president of his company.

Then, in 1993, this shy wallflower (I still see myself that way), was invited to be an "AND OTHERS" guest at Soonercon 9 to be held in November, in Oklahoma City. This would be my fourth or fifth time to attend Soonercon. It is a real fun convention with a large guest list, WONDERFUL art show, lots of programming, and "World Peace Through Chocolate" - their meet-the-pros program with all kinds of chocolate goodies to devour.

I have attended many conventions over the last ten years, big and small. I have worked on a few different committees, and even staffed at a WorldCon. I have several friends who work behind the scenes year-round on cons throughout the country. Due to my marriage, I have sold items in the Dealer's Room and displayed my husband's work at art shows. So I know a little bit about a lot of things at conventions. But I was surprised to be invited as a guest. Flattered yes, but definitely surprised.

I got to have a special badge and ribbon so that it would be obvious that I was "Somebody". Unless you are a major guest, basically everything is the same as normally attending a con. (Normal? Is there such a thing?) You are expected to appear on a few panels, and get your name called out during the Opening Ceremonies (Egoboo!), but pretty much you are on your own. People can be sure to find you if you are scheduled for a panel, so it isn't for those who like to stay anonymous. And you get a little bio in the program book. Since I wrote my own, it was both a lesson in self-promotion, AND a lesson in humility. It was amazing to see how easy it was to talk about myself, and I had to edit it quite a bit so I wouldn't look too self-centered.

So what was my first time like? My experience as a panelist ranged from having no other panelists show up and only one audience member, to a panel with five other panelists and over twenty people in the audience. (It is always successful when more people show up than make up the panel.) And all twenty of them had questions! Luckily, we could answer most of them.

I think my most enjoyable panel was "Faking Your Way Through Fandom." I count two of the other panelists as old friends, Ed Graham and Alex Slate; and hope to see more of Larry Nemecek, the other panelist, as time goes on. We talked about how while growing up we all felt like outsiders, and how that feeling remains to a degree today. But we also talked about fandom being home, and how welcome and united fandom makes us feel. We talked of faking our way through life every day, and how at conventions we seem to find situations that require a lot of dancing around and dead pan faces. Some of the stories were very funny, and no one really wanted it to end, but that just means that there are stories for another time.

Overall, I very much enjoyed My First Time. If you ever have a chance to "Fake you way" through being a guest, go for it! It can be unnerving, a little scary, and a whole lot of fun. You get to meet people that may otherwise not be in your circle. You get a cool badge. People who don't know you, and don't know any better, treat you like you are special. Trust me, if I can be a guest, so can you.

Available - one experienced guest.

ConventionaL

June 3-5 Thundercon 4
Century Center, Oklahoma City OK
Guests: Larry Nemecek, Lolita Fatjo, Shane Johnson, and a Star Trek actor to be named
Info: $25 until May 15, then $28, PO Box 892545, OKC, OK 73189-2545, (405)692-7035

June 24-26 NOSF3-94
New Orleans Airport Hilton, New Orleans LA
Inof: $20 until May 31, then $25, PO Box 791089, New Orleans, LA 70719-1089, (504)835-3109

July 1-4 Westercon 47
LA Airport Hilton & Towers, LA CA
Guests: George RR Martin, Real Musgrave, William Rotsler
Info: over $45, c/o SCIFI, PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409

July 15-17 Dragon*Con '94
Atlanta Hilton & Towers, Atlanta GA
Guests: Over 2000 including Glen Cook, Harlan Ellison, Phil Foglio, Tim Powers, Kristine Kathryn Rusch
Info: $40 until June 15, PO Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362-0696, (404)925-0115

Aug 5-7 GalaxyFair 94 & ArtConV
Sheraton Park Central, Dallas TX
Guests: Harry Turtledove, Jim Baen, Toni Weisskopf. Real & Muff Musgrave, Robert Asprin, Jody Lynn Nye
Info: over $25, PO Box 150471, Arlington, TX 76015-6471, (817)467-0681

7-9 October ArmadilloCon
Red Lion Hotel, Austin TX
Guests: Elizabeth Moon, David Cherry, Gordon Van Gelder, Guy Gavriel Kay
Info: $25, FACT address

October 27-30 World Fantasy Convention 1994
Clarion Hotel New Orleans, New Orleans LA
Guests: William Kotzwinkle, George Alec Effinger, George RR Martin, Tim Powers
Info: over $85, PO Box 791302, New Orleans, LA 70179-1302

Nov 18-20 SoonerCon 10
Oklahoma City, OK
Guests: Charles de Lint, Mark Ferrari, Alan Steele, E.A. Graham. The Ravens

March 2-5, 1995 World Horror Convention '95
Sheraton Colony Square Hotel, Atlanta GA
Info: PO Box 148, Clarkston, GA 30021-0148

July 13-16 NASFIC '95
Atlanta Hilton & Towers, Atlanta GA
Guests: Orson Scott Card, George Alec Effinger, Bjo Trimble, Michael Whelan, Timothy Zahn
Info: $40 until June 15, then $45. Dragon Office.

Aug 24-28 1995 Intersection (Worldcon 53)
Scottish Exh & Conference Center, Glasgow Scotland
Guests: Samuel R. Delany, Gerry Anderson
Info: $85 ($25 supporting) 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Mids, B66 4SH UK

1996 LAcon III (Worldcon 54)
Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim CA
Guests: James White, Roger Corman, Takmi & Schiko Shibano, Connie Willis, Elsie Wollheim
Info: $75,c/o SCIFI, PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409

Bids
1996 Westercon - El Paso, TX
1997 Worldcon - San Antonio, TX; St. Louis, MO; Zagreb, Croatia; Hong Kong; Adrains House, Sarnia
1998 Worldcon - Niagara Falls, NY; Baltimore, MD; Boston, MA; Atlanta, GA; Arkham, MA; NY, NY; TinyMUD
1999 Worldcon - Novosibirsk, Russia; Portland, OR; Wellington, New Zealand; Las Vegas NV; Dusseldorf, Germany; Melbourne, Australia; Kettlemen City, CA
2000 - Worldcon - Kansas City, MO; Chicago, IL; Jerusalem, Isreal
2001 - Boston, MA; Philadelphia, PA

Convention Review:

ConFransisco: Part 2

by Evelyn Leeper

Lecture: Postmodernism and SF
Friday, 11:00 AM
Kim Stanley Robinson

Well, after this panel I felt that I finally understood what Postmodernism was.

Robinson began by saying that all the adjectives being used to talk about Postmodernism today once were used to talk about science fiction, so it's natural that there should seem to be a connection. But Postmodernism is a historical period, not a style. Now is different than the Modernist period, and needs a new name. (Robinson described this process as "periodization," and noted that people did not suddenly say, "It's not the Dark Ages anymore; it's the Renaissance." Only later did labels get applied.) A period corresponds to a structure for feel-ing. But even within a period there are "residual" and "emergent" aspects. For one thing, he said, this allows people to dispose of anomalies easily.

Postmodernism follows Modernism which, in turn, followed Romanticism, which was represented by Realism. Various aspects of Modernism included Impressionism, stream of consciousness, existentialism, and the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. This is not to say everyone was Modern; rural areas were in most cases pre-Modern (still feudal in many ways). But in the arts the basic "structure of feeling", or zeitgeist, was alienation. People found themselves between the modern city and the rural area; not really *of* either. Modernism was also characterized by a functioning avant garde and a concern with history.

The change "point" between Modernism and Postmodernism was the period from 1939 to 1969. This was the end of the old world order, brought about partly by World War II, and partly by the end of colonialism. Jean Paul Sartre put it, "All the natives of the world proclaimed that they were people." Fragmentation is the Postmodern zeitgeist. There is a loss of purpose or of self. Robinson later said that to deal with this loss, we have a nostalgia for tribal cultures, because tribalism is an attempt to create social groups we can recognize and deal with.

We are not fully modernized, Robinson said. (I might dispute this, having seen rural farms in China. Actually, Robinson did later qualify this by saying there were still unmodernized areas. But communication has changed a lot of that. When we were trekking in northern Thailand a couple of years ago, our guide was a Bon Jovi fan who played in a heavy metal group.) Our architecture is learning from Las Vegas. Robinson pointed to the Marriott near the convention center that looks like a 1950s jukebox. (This was also mentioned in the "Future and Movies" panel.) Archi-tecture is now historical jumbles or melanges. I find this amusing as there is a painting which shows a city with just such a jumble of styles, and it is titled "The Architect's Nightmare." Architecture now shows a sense of humor: in Atlanta there is a ten-story Gothic castle as the base of a seventy-story skyscraper, which is in turn topped with a cupola.

Pop art (such as Andy Warhol's work) is another aspect of Postmodernism. In fact, there is no big split between high art and popular art. Movies have glossy production values, even portraying Depression dives in THE STING (which Robinson said looked like Hollywood fern bars) or the life of migrant farm workers in OF MICE AND MEN. New art forms arise. Fiona Jones in Boston hired people to go around and make other people happy as an art form. (It ended when the bank clerks she hired started giving money out to customers to make them happy!)

This lack of division between high art and popular art means that science fiction is the equal of any other art; there is no hierarchy any more. But this lack of division also means that to a Postmodernist, READERS DIGEST joke columns are equal to James Joyce. Much of the academic study of Postmodernism is horrendous writing. What's more, it considers itself art just as much as what it discusses. (Robinson said that just about the only person worth reading on this topic was Frederick Jameson [POSTMODERNISM, OR, THE CULTUAL LOGIC OF .....

LATE CAPITALISM], though he was tough going.) The criticism tends to be political, even if Postmodernism itself isn't. There is also no avant garde, because it's impossible to shock the bourgeoisie. Mapplethorpe is not avant garde so much as nostalgia for the avant garde.

Now, consider 1970s science fiction. It had shallow characters, distortion of time and space, and so on. In fact, it looked like an emergent Postmodern art form, especially since art forms can go through periods very quickly to catch up with the prevailing feeling. Elvis was Romanticist/Realist, the Beatles were Modernist, and Madonna is Postmodern. In science fiction, John W. Campbell pushed Realism, the New Wave pushed Modernism (with John Brunner's STAND ON ZANZIBAR modeled after John Dos Passos and Brian Aldiss' BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD modeled after James Joyce), and now we have Postmodernism. From the outside science fiction looked like an emergent form; from inside, it appeared to be an accelerated form. In science fiction art we have gone from the 1950s and Richard Powers' Modernist art to Realist art. Or is it just Postmodern glossy? Sometimes it's hard to tell.

Science fiction is an intermediate form between high and low art. (The nostalgia for the science fiction ghetto is really residual.) One reason that Postmodernism is confused with science fiction is that "Postmodernism" literally means "after the now." "After the now" *is* science fiction, but in this case a literal translation of the component parts of a word gives an incorrect meaning.

But science fiction is really anti-Postmodern. Postmodernism says that we are beyond historical styles because history has stopped--in other words, it takes an ahistorical view of the world. It is First-World-oriented (as was noted earlier). But science fiction has a sense of history proceeding into the future, and is *not* apolitical.

Science fiction is interested in utopianism. As Robinson said, "The future is going to be different depending on what we do," a theme I later stressed in the panel "Turning the Wheels of If." (A theme of Robinson's work in general.) "The world is a braided science fiction novel," he added, "that we're all co-authoring right now."

The reading protocols of science fiction have to be explained to Postmodernists. It appears to be part of the "movement," but appearances are deceiving.

Although cyberpunk claims to be an emergent form, Robinson said, we cannot predict emergent forms; they can only be recognized in hindsight, the same as historical periods.

Panel: Ahoy, Have You Seen the Great White Archetype?

Friday, 12 noon

Mary J. Caraker, Howard Frank, Katharine Kerr (m), Mike Resnick, Carol Severance

"What are they? Uses and abuses? Are there 'styles' in archetypes over the years?": The panel described archetypes as "ripping off mythological themes," as well as Christ figures and primitive legends. Most science fiction and fantasy is dominated by white European cultures and archetypes, though Severance uses Pacific Islanders and their archetypes. (Severance did note that she realizes that "Pacific Islanders" is a very broad term, encompassing many different cultures.) Severance felt that using different cultures made the fiction more interesting, because "every culture carries the rhythm of the physical setting that it's in." She mentioned in passing the large number of words for snow in Inuit languages, but also said that every Pacific Island language had a word meaning "death by falling coconut." Caraker is using the Kalevala (Finnish)--European, but not really over-used.

The panelists tried to distinguish between stereotype and archetype by saying an archetype is a function within a pattern of story (e.g., quest stories have a hero). As Maia Cowan noted, archetypes don't have to be people; they can be the quest itself, the journey, the generation ship, the wild place, or the clean village. (Someone noted that Earth *is* a generation ship, and someone else observed only poor villages were clean, because only rich villages had garbage.) Olaf Stapledon was an author with a lot of archetypes and no characters whatsoever.

One danger in talking about archetypes is that people will find things in writing that was never (consciously) intended by the author.

H. Rider Haggard was an author cited whose work was almost entirely archetypal. But Frank noted that Haggard's best-known work was not his best, and that Haggard respected black culture in Africa, contrary to people's impres-sions. Haggard also had a Victorian view of women but not, Frank claimed, a negative one. (Frank re-commended NADA THE LILY and ERIC BRIGHT-EYES as Haggard's best. SHE was written in six weeks on a bet.)

Doyle used archetypes: the wise old storyteller in Watson (and others). In fact, the wise old storyteller is a very popular archetype among authors, undoubtedly because they *are* storytellers. Wells has his wise old professor (Cavor). Romulus and Remus are the feral children, which we see later in Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli and Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan

But now these characters are usually given some flaw, usually for comic effect. Even so, science fiction still has noble characters, according to Frank, while most literature doesn't. Kerr felt that women authors often play against archetype as well as against stereotype in their female characters.

We now have the wise and compassionate alien and the creation that destroys its creator. They may seem new, but they really go back to the angel and the golem. There's also the master navigator, which shows up with Maoris as space-farers. Heinlein's "competent man" is another archetype.

Someone asked if archetypes prevent science fiction from becoming a literary art form, or at least accepted as literature. This seems unlikely; there is much archetypal work that is accepted as literature.

Anti-heroes are found in science fiction: Alfred Bester's DEMOLISHED MAN and THE STARS MY DESTINATION, Clifford Simak's CITY, and David Lindsay's VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS.

The prophet as archetype is often replaced by the author himself or herself, as when someone writes an "if this goes on?" tale. This observation led someone to wonder if a Calvinist (or other believer in predestination) could accept a cautionary tale. On the other hand, what are all the warnings of damnation in the Bible if not cautionary tales?

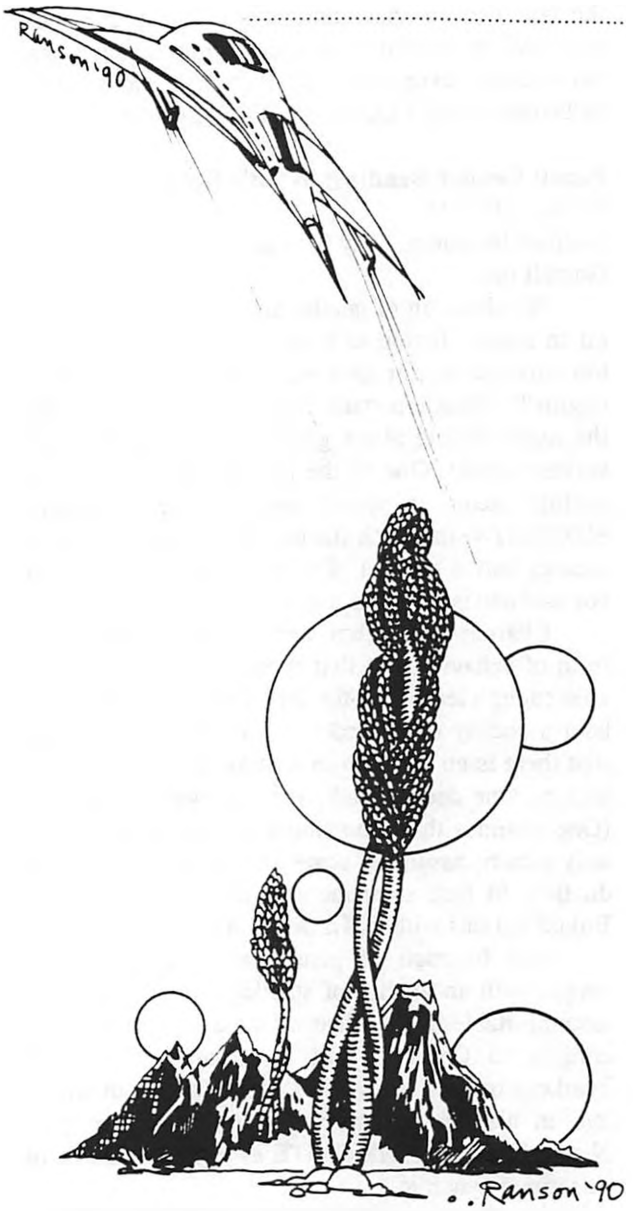
Panel: Using Literary Techniques in SF/F
Friday, 1:00 PM
Nicholas A. DiChario, Jean Mark Gawron, Eileen Gunn (m), Michael Kandel

"Is there room for stream of consciousness, self-referentiality, fractured time schemes and so on in SF?": The short answer seems to be yes, but focus on the task and choose the technique to fit rather than vice versa (according to Kandel, anyway). It is the story-telling that is important, not the artsy-fartsy stuff.

The panelists agreed that writers pick up techniques by reading other writers and therefore its probably inevitable that these techniqes will appear in sf. Some writers are more naturally stylists than others. The example given was that Mike Resnick is a storyteller and Lucius Shpard is a stylist.

How well do techniques translate from one language to another? This was a question perhaps better suited for the "Language" panel later, but Kandel said that there were some techniques that translated easily and others that were very difficult. (See the "Language" panel later form more on this.)

Regarding stylistic tricks, Kandel said that often one should "take out the goop" to improve things. This is true in the mainstream as well as in



science fiction, since the dichotomy between the two implied in this panel's title doesn't really exist. Kandel also warned against "expository lumps," which seem inherent in science fiction, but can be handled well. As an example of an author who could handle these "lumps," Kandel mentioned James Schmitz. Gunn said that you should "cut out the boring, tedious stuff and leave only what interests you."

People asked about specific techniques. Regarding foreshadowing, one panelist said that it has to come from the text, not be applied to it like lipstick. However, a beginning writer may have to do this consciously for a while before it becomes an automatic process.

In answer to my question, DiChario said that he chose the diary format for "The Winter-berry" as

the best way to show the main character's mental state and to skip large chunks of time. I didn't ask, but it seems obvious that this technique was inspired by Daniel Keyes' FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON.

Panel: Gender Bending: What's Good
Friday, 2:00 PM
Michael Blumlein, Suzy McKee Charnas, Jeanne Gomoll (m)

"Exploration of gender and roles isn't as popular in science fiction as it used to be. Are the issues too imponderable or have we explored this area thoroughly?": Blumlein started out by reminding us that the major debate about gender roles is still nature versus nurture. One of the best examples using the nurture theory in recent books is Sheri Tepper's SIDESHOW, in which the one of the two (hermaphroditic) halves of a set of joined twins is raised as a boy and one is raised as a girl.

Charnas noted that women can fill the spectrum of behavior, but that most fiction doesn't provide enough templates for this. But, if one writes about a society composed only of women, one finds that there is no problem in writing about a *complete* society. One doesn't find parts that women can't fit. (One assumes the same would be true from a men-only society, assuming some form of artificial reproduction. In fact, someone said that Lois McMaster Bujold did this with ETHAN OF ATHOS.)

One function of gender roles is to provide people with an anchor of stability. Most people are uncomfortable in free-floating masses of people (according to Charnas) and so groups form. (This hearkens back to Robinson's comments about tribalism in his Postmodernism lecture.) Charnas gave Nicola Griffith's AMMONITE as a good example of this group dynamic.

The discussion drifted into "gender dysphoria," or the psychological condition of feeling that your psychological sex doesn't match your physiological sex. (Forgive me if I am expressing this poorly; I do not have an M.D.) Someone said that, while transsexual surgery used to be considered a solution to this, such surgery is becoming less popular, though many people are taking the necessary hormones and living as the "other" sex. One suggested reason for this is that the easier of the two surgeries is male-to-female, but being a female in society today results in a loss of power, and people aren't ready to do that permanently. (Though I would think living as a female would have the same effect.) With this, as with a lot of the discussion, a lot of generalizations were thrown around.

Someone pointed out that even if someone did change their sex later in life (such as happened in Virginia Woolf's ORLANDO), they would still have experienced the first part of their life as their original sex. In the case of Orlando, he had gone through adolescence as a boy, and so did not have the same life experiences as someone who went through adolescence as a girl, even after he changed into a woman. (The panelists felt that the movie left a lot out that the book had.)

Regarding gender roles, someone observed that society makes rules because the rules *aren't* fixed within us--if they were, we wouldn't have to make artificial ones. Someone else cited THE RAINBOW MAN by M. J. Engh, in which women were *defined* as people who could give birth. So a "woman" who had some physiological problem which would prevent her from giving birth would not be considered a woman by that society.

One belief expressed was that there is a lot of emphasis placed on the societal pressures put on girls and woman, and less placed on the corresponding pressures on boys and men. At least one panelist said that we pretend that we can "skip the angry part" of problem-solving, but that is not true; we need to confront the pain.

There was some book-flogging at the beginning of this panel. Blumlein, who has an M. D., has written THE MOVEMENT OF MOUNTAINS and THE BRAINS OF RATS, and has a new book (called X, Y) coming out soon from Dell which will deal with a gay man who wakes up one day as a woman.

[Note: When discussing this subject, one trips all over the pronouns of the English language. Discussing someone who is in transition from one sex to the other (or was one and is now the other), pick either "he" or "she" and stick with it. "He/she" may work in written language as a replacement for "He or she," but in spoken language "he-she" is con-sidered as offensive as any number of racial or ethnic epithets which I will not list here. This is undoubtedly because this grammatical construction has been picked up by the religious right and used by them in an extremely negative and condescending fashion. So now you know.]

Panel: Nema Problema
Friday, 5:00 PM
Lynn D. Maners (m), Larry Roeder

"The Worldcon is not in the former Yugoslavia this year, but many fans still live there. Who are they, and what's happened to them?": Well, the good news is that as far as Maners knows, none of the well

known Yugoslav fans have been killed in the war there. Other than that, information is sketchy. The two major science fiction magazines, ALEF and SIRIUS, have folded. The clubs still meet--since none got any cultural funding anyway (through the Yugoslav equivalent of the National Endowment for the Arts), the break-up didn't disrupt that aspect of their organizations. (Of course, runaway inflation in many of the republics must be damaging in general.)

Maners thought Slovenia was the only republic to have turned into a democracy; the others are still dictatorships of one form or another. Apropos of this, I am reading Rebecca West's BLACK LAMB AND GREY FALCON, her descrip-tion of her travels through Yugoslavia in 1937 (com-plete with large chunks of history--those "expository lumps" that Kandel warns against in fiction writing, but which are marvelous in non-fiction). In her prologue, she says, "English persons, therefore, of humanitarian and reformist disposition constantly went out to the Balkan peninsula to see who was in fact ill-treating whom, and, being by the very nature of their perfectionist faith unable to accept the horrid hypothesis that everybody was ill-treating everybody else, came back with a pet Balkan people established in their hearts as suffering and innocent, eternally the massacred and never the massacrer. The same sort of person often set up on the hearth [their pet people as resembling] Sir Joshua Reynolds's picture of the infant Samuel. But ... to hear Balkan-fanciers talk about each other's Infant Samuel was to think of some painter not at all like Sir Joshua Reynolds, say Hieronymous Bosch." But I digress.

There was some discussion of Yugoslav sf. Maners said it tended towards the philosophical rather than the more hardware-oriented versions. This he attributed to the country not being a major technological power, and he says this tendency is found in the science fiction of most smaller countries. In addition to being less technological, it is often less optimistic. It's easy for a citizen of a super-power to be optimistic about the future; it's more difficult for someone in a less power-ful country. For one thing, they may feel that much of their future is in the hands of the super-power, who may decide to take action against them, or at any rate, ignore their welfare when making decisions.

Maners gave very complete instructions on how fans can donate books to the United States Information Agency libraries abroad (which is a sort of cultural exchange organization--*not* part of the Diplomatic Corps). Let me know if you want them.

Towards the end Larry Roeder came in and added a darker tone to the proceedings. He said he expects there to be a lot more war in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, particularly since we have taken away the ability of the Bosnian Muslims to defend themselves. Ethnicity, he says, is *the* issue of the next decade, not just in the Balkans, but everywhere. As D. Keith Mano said, "If Wilsonian self-determination were applied strictly to Yugoslavia there would be no kingdom larger than Greenwich Village. Yugoslavia isn't a nation: it's some form of ethnic and political super-collider." (NATIONAL REVIEW, June 30, 1989) The current plan to divide up Bosnia-Herzegovina certainly seems headed in that direction. However, Americans are not terribly unpopular (a delightful change). In fact, we are loved in Albania. Roeder claimed that this was because Nixon was related to King Zog, though he didn't say how. [Thanks to Mark for this last paragraph's worth; I had to leave early because I was on a 6 PM panel.]

(This panel was very sparsely attended--about thirteen people. Whether this means fans are apathetic, or just not interested in the specific case of *fandom* in the Balkans, I don't know.)

Panel: Turning the Wheels of If
Friday, 6:00 PM
Charles K. Bradley, John L. Flynn, Evelyn Leeper (m), Brad Linaweaver, Paul J. McAuley

[Much thanks to Mark for taking copious notes during this panel, as I can't be on a panel and take notes at the same time.]

"A discussion of likely change points for alternate realities, universes and histories": Although usually the panelists for a topic are authors who have written about that topic (and that was true here of Flynn, Linaweaver, and McAuley), Bradley was on the panel for a more unusual reason: he uses alternate history as a way to teach students regular history (though he did admit that sometimes he had to make sure they weren't getting confused about what was real and what was imaginary!).

I started by asking the panelists to pick one change point they would like to see dealt with, with the caveat that it *not* be European or North American, and especially not the American Civil War or World War II. McAuley thought that something involving Chinese expansionism might be good, although the feeling was that the Chinese philosophy did not lend itself to exploration; the Chinese had more of a feeling that other people should come to them. I suggested that if this came out of Confucianism, then a timeline without Confucius might have some interesting results. (Someone later suggested that the Chinese stopped exploring because they saw no monetary benefit from continuing.) Flynn said the

one alternate history story he had written ("Paradox Lost") assumed that the Library at Alexandria hadn't been burnt and that the Egyptians conquered the world. I pointed out that Mark was always reminding people that the amount of time since the fall of the Egyptian empire is shorter than the time the empire existed (or as Mark says, "We are in the umbra of the Egyptian empire"). Linaweaver said he had just written "The Bison Riders" in which the Aztecs are not defeated by the Spanish, but instead become high-tech and expand into North America. (Strictly speaking, this is still a North American change point, but not a Eurocentric one.)

Bradley thought that something interesting could be done with General William Walker, who tried to seize Baja California and Sonora in 1853. He failed, set himself up as president of Nicaragua in 1856, but was expelled in 1857. In 1860, he invaded Honduras, where his luck ran out: he was captured, court-martialed, and shot. Even today, he is hated by many factions in Central America. Another suggestion Bradley had was what if we had supported Ho Chi Minh, though again that is too close to an over-used change-point. My personal favorite (having recently read about prehistoric animal migrations) is what if the Bering land bridge had not existed? Not only would the Americas have been unpopulated when the Europeans (or Asians, or Africans) arrived, but the animal life of the Americas, and of Europe/Asia/Africa would have been vastly different. For example, as someone noted, horses and camels were New World animals which migrated *back* to the Old World and then died out in the New World. Imagine a Europe/Asia/Africa without horses or camels or donkeys. Other ideas for change-points batted around through the hour included what if Kaiser Wilhelm's father had lived longer, what if the Roanoke Colony had never existed, what if Carthage hadn't been defeated by Rome, what if Peter the Great hadn't turned Russia towards the West instead of remaining Eastern and what if Huey Long had been elected President (Virginia Dabney had this happen in a 1936 story which also assumed the South won the Civil War, and Barry Malzberg did this last year in "Kingfish")? Bradley noted that there are still people who believe that Roosevelt had Long killed, leading to a brief digression into conspiracy theories and secret histories, with Linaweaver suggesting that maybe Roosevelt also flew the lead plane at Pearl Harbor.

There was some subsidiary discussion about the Aztecs. Political correctness these days blames the Spanish for conquering them, but the fact is that the Spanish had a lot of help from the Aztecs' neighbors, who were tired of being captured for human sacrifices. Linaweaver claims the Aztecs were vicious fascists. (Note that he speaks from a libertarian perspective, though I suspect he's right in any case.)

I asked the panelists' views on the "tide of history" versus "great man" theories, noting that the former was in some sense the Marxist view and the latter the capitalist view, leading the former to be somewhat in disrepute these days. I placed myself somewhat in the middle: some things happen because of a unique individual, but there is also truth to Robert Heinlein's "When it's time to railroad, you railroad." McAuley wondered if Marxism itself would have gotten off the ground without Marx to write DAS KAPITAL. Since it was based on technological acceleration, would Marxism have arisen if we never got beyond water power? Flynn agreed that the "great man" theory seems the most likely to be true. Linaweaver agreed with me that a mix is the most reasonable guess. He suggested that without Hitler, there probably would have been a World War II, but it probably would have been very different, and the Holocaust would almost definitely have been greatly reduced. He noted that Communism had been based on the work of many people, but National Socialism was entirely Hitler's concept. Other "great men" he listed were Einstein and Tesla. When I suggested that if Einstein hadn't discovered relativity, someone else would have, Fred Adams from the audience said that was true--that relativity was in the air. I gave the further example of Newton and Leibnitz discovering calculus independently and almost simultaneously. (Christopher Ambler said this sort of simultaneity happens all the time.) Bradley was also middle-of-the-road, giving one example of the "great man" theory the idea that without a Lincoln, the United States would not have survived intact.

Someone commented that the rise of chaos theory has led to "fast" alternate histories, in which change occurs much more rapidly than it did before. It used to be that even after fifty years, things looked much the same as in our timeline, but now things become unrecognizable in a short time. This, of course, makes it more difficult for the reader to connect with the story.

At Flynn's suggestion, I asked the panelists why they thought there was such a fascination, especially now, with alternate histories. Flynn suggested it was wish fulfillment. (Bradley noted that alternate histories strike a basic cord in the human psyche; he is descended from Aaron Burr and might have been king.) Ambler disagreed, saying that we may be interested in some of these alternate histories, but we don't necessarily wish for them. Regarding this, I

noted that there are two categories of alternate history: the pessimistic (things could have been better) and the optimistic (things could have been worse). The French seem to like alternate histories almost as much as the English-speaking world, yet their alternate histories tend to be more pessimistic (according to Mark Keller). In particular, they focus on how much better things would be if everyone spoke French. Linaweaver thought that the British, on the other hand, portrayed more dystopias than we did, partly because we are still an empire.

Someone said that most alternate histories focused on people; what about some that focused on diseases, natural disasters, and other events? I noted there have been several based on variations to the spread of the Black Plague (especially the stories in Robert Silverberg's "Gate of Time" anthologies), but other ideas included what if Hurricane Andrew hadn't hit (too soon to show radical change, in my opinion), what if the storm hadn't delayed the Spanish Armada (done by Joseph Edgar Chamberlin as an academic study in 1908), and what if space aliens had invaded us? (For many of these and other ideas, Linaweaver said that work was being done on them, and that Harry Turtledove would be writing them all.) I noted that regarding plagues, 90% of the deaths in the New World after the Spanish arrived were from disease, not warfare.

We cautioned was that changes had to be somewhat reasonable, a constraint that many authors don't seem to recognize. Many people look at what might have happened if the South had won the Civil War or Germany won World War II, but close examination shows usually there is no way for their scenario to have happened. Prospective authors should watch James Burke's television series CONNECTIONS to get an idea of causality in history.

I also observed that in alternate histories changing the past changes the future, and maybe this was popular because we want to believe that changing the present changes the future as well. We want control over our destinies, and alternate histories (in general) say that there is *not* pre-destination, but rather free will. (This may have arisen out of Kim Stanley Robinson's lecture on Post-modernism, when he noted, "The future is going to be different depending on what we do.") In tradition-tional Judaism it is a sin to wish for something that is not possible, e.g., to want to change history. Yet alternate histories give us a way (vicariously) to do this. I also thought that part of my interest was based in my Jewishness--what if the Holocaust could have been prevented?

We never actually figured out why alternate histories were science fiction, although Linaweaver said they were part of the "speculative fiction" aspect of "SF." In history and economics they've been around for a while, as "counter-factuals." In any case, the panelists (especially the authors) said they hoped people kept reading them. Linaweaver also added that he enjoyed alternate histories because he still believed in human genius, and I suggested that the lesson to be learned from them is that one person can make a difference.

At the end, many people requested copies of the Robert Schmunk's alternate history list, an invaluable reference. Linaweaver and Thomas Cron are working on a bibliography in book form, but it's not out yet.

(I would like to note here that John Flynn came *incredibly* prepared for this panel--certainly more than I was. For example, he mentioned that in reading up, he found that someone referred to change-points as the "Jon Bar Hinge," after the character in Williamson's LEGION OF TIME. I recommend him as a reliable panelist for other conventions.)

Panel: The 100 MPG Engine: Legends That Will Not Die

Saturday, 10:00 AM

Gregory Benford (m), Rick Cook, Steve Howe, Daniel L. Marcus

"'Suppressed technology.' How do stories get started about cars that run on water, carburetors that allow 90 miles per gallon, and anti-cancer drugs made from common household chemicals?": Well, I had expected a panel talking about technological "urban legends" but instead got one talking about how some of these "wildcat" ideas are real, but not marketable. For example, there are cars that can get eighty miles per gallon of gasoline, but they are undrivable under street conditions: they have no acceleration and constantly backfire. The Wankel (rotary) engine was another idea that failed on its own merits (rather than being suppressed); its fuel consumption was high (about fourteen miles per gallon) and it generated a lot of pollution because the seals were never perfected. (So just what was its advantage supposed to be? I can't even remember.)

And then there was the nuclear-powered airplane. Oh, it would have worked, but sufficient shielding around the fuel would have made it too heavy, so it would only work if you had a crew that didn't mind getting fried by the radiation, *and* it would also irradiate all the land it flew over. But the designers had thought of what to do with it when they were done--they would land it in Antarctica and use that as a nuclear-waste dump. (Luckily, this idea never got off the ground--so to speak.)

cranks. Benford said that his school (University of California) doled out to the various professors. Most fall into two categories: 1) "What was that thing I saw in the sky last night? and 2) "I have a new energy source that will save the world." Howe asked whether Benford wouldn't be sorry if he rejected someone who turned out to be a genius. "Would I be sorry? Yes. But what are the odds?"

And remember SDI? This was described by one of the panelists as a "Fast Eddie" Teller idea, and eventually people concluded that it also had more flaws than virtues.

Other ideas probably were more workable, but not wise. Small nuclear bombs, weighing less than a hundred pounds complete, could be used by guerrilla forces in Europe after it was overrun by the Soviets. Well, that was the original idea, but someone apparently realized that given the state of the world, having bombs this small that people could smuggle around was a *really* bad idea.

On the other hand, the L5 solar power satellite sounded crazy initially, but turned out to be a good idea.

But why do we believe all the fantastic stories of great inventions and discoveries, even when they are bogus? (Cold fusion comes to mind, naturally, although it was pointed out that the whole cold fusion thing did teach us a lot about sub-quantum states.) Well, for one thing, we *want* to believe them. Someone (Thomas Hardy, I think) wrote a poem about how there was a legend that on Christmas Eve, animals could talk, and said at the end that he didn't believe it, but that if someone say it were happening in the barn, he would go, "wishing it might be so." Certainly there must be some explanation of why people believe what they read in the WEEKLY WORLD NEWS.

Howe said that one problem is that science nowadays is all done as "big science." His analogy is that it's as if the government of the 19th Century deciding to explore the West with an army that marches together as a unit instead of with lots of small exploration and settlement parties. So the "small science" is left with more than its share of

One panelist noted that he is more bothered by stories of suppressed cancer cures than stories of suppressed energy sources, because the latter are usually just humorous, but the former touch people personally in matters of life and death. Someone asked about Linus Pauling's theories about anti-oxidants, and the response was that since he was still walking five miles a day at age 92, they shouldn't be written off too quickly.

One audience member noted that the panelists were referring to crackpots as "he" and asked if they had ever run across any female crackpots, to which Benford responded, "I've dated some." Cook noted, however, that female crackpots seem to be more conspiracy theorists than scientists.

One problem with "suppression" and "conspiracy" theories these days is that suppressing an idea in the United States doesn't do much about suppressing it globally. Of course, there is suppression here, but it is more the Food & Drug Administration and liability laws than from any secret coterie. In addition (as was noted earlier) the public suppresses things by not buying them and hence driving them off the market. Most products represent a trade-off: you can get more miles per gallon, but only if you are willing to buy a smaller, lighter, slower car. Other products are monopolized (the example given was forceps, invented in the 14th Century but monopolized for a hundred years by one family).

Along the lines of the suppression theories, I recommend David Mamet's WATER ENGINE, recently made into a movie for TNT.

(There was a certain irony to the fact that this was opposite the panel on Nikola Tesla, and in fact,

there was odd sounds coming over the public address system that may have been coming from the demonstrations associated with the other panel.)

Panel: When Fandom and Real World Politics Collide
Saturday, 11:00 AM
Abi Frost, Jeanne Gomoll (m), Andi Shechter, Ben Yalow

"What should fandom do about boycotts, strikes, war, and real world politics?": Clearly, fandom does need to take note of them: this year's Eurocon was moved to the Channel Isles from Zagreb. But it's not only lately that conventions will get involved with real-world politics--this has always been the case. The split in fandom at the first Worldcon (when several people were turned away at the door and went across the street to hold their own convention) was part of a larger dispute between the Left (those turned away) and the Right (those running the convention).

It's convenient to think that fandom is united on social issues, but fandom isn't united on *anything*. There are plenty of left-wing fanzines and right-wing fanzines and other-wing fanzines. The best we can say is that fandom is self-policing and self-censoring: most conventions these days try to avoid taking a stand on one side or the other of any issue. (Iguanacon was a major exception to this, and many fans still resent the "co-opting" of that convention as a political statement. It's true that there are smaller conventions which are specifically feminist or otherwise specifically directed, but these are announced as this way up front.) Fandom is *not* apolitical, perhaps (someone suggested) because fans think about and care about the future.

One need only look at the various awards given out in science fiction to see the breadth of the politics: the Prometheus Award by the Libertarians, the Tiptree Award for examination of gender roles, the Gryphon Award, and so on. There is no consensus on anything.

However, labor disputes are another matter. Given that conventions need to deal with unions in hotels and convention centers, they must keep abreast of current disputes. And someone mentioned that fans sometimes need to be warned not to be arrogant toward unionized employees--sometimes our elitism is showing.

(If fandom were paying attention to the real world, would they be scheduling Worldcons to run right into Rosh Hashonah, as is happening next year?)

Panel: Will the Future Look Like the Movies
Saturday, 12 noon
Martin Brenneis (m), Evelyn Leeper, Bill Warren

[Much thanks to Mark for again taking copious notes during this panel.]

"If a present-day cinematic art director could fast-forward to the future, how disappointed would he or she be?": Well, I think the conclusion was that he or she would not see anything like what was portrayed, but probably wouldn't expect to either.

One of the things we noted at the start was that what was portrayed in films didn't actually have to work. The automatic sliding doors in STAR TREK were actually operated by people behind the set pulling and pushing on them, and the blinking lights on computer panels are often just someone sitting under the panel randomly pushing buttons. Of course, sometimes it's real: COLOSSUS: THE FORBIN PROJECT used the studio's payroll computer for the title character. Warren noted that in the movies, computers had large tape reels long after it ceased in real life (no pun intended) because viewers expected it. And no one really predicted PCs. (For that matter, you have at least half a dozen computers in your house in some form or other.)

It was agreed that in general the future goes at a pace nobody can comprehend. I noted that Bob Lucky (a director of research at Bell Labs) has been quoted as saying that scientists creating the future have no idea what is coming. They thought the Picturephone would be popular years ago, but it was a complete flop (even though the movies showed the future with Picturephones). On the other hand, they totally missed out on how FAX machines and cellular telephones would catch on. Nobody knows what will be popular.

Someone mentioned that the future is often too clean. Brenneis liked the idea that the hydraulics in STAR WARS leaked, leaving spots on the hanger floor. Warren commended Rob Cobb for his work on ALIEN and LEVIATHAN, saying Cobb understood the objects he was working with better than the director.

As far as objects go, I commented that they are frequently designed more with an eye for style than with any notion of utility. Citing Donald Norman's book, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EVERYDAY THINGS (a.k.a. THE DESIGN OF EVERYDAY THINGS), I noted that this is somewhat true even in actual objects in

use (like clock radios with flush, identical buttons for all functions), but said that even so, the idea of putting the planetary "blow-up switch" in a child's classroom in FORBIDDEN PLANET seemed like a bad idea. Warren agreed, but felt that FORBIDDEN PLANET (credited to Cedric Gibbons) was in general a good depiction of a future house and seemed to look like someplace a human being might want to live. Most other films, he felt, showed something totally unlike what a human being would want. Someone in the audience asked when we would see ergonomic designs, such as the pyramidal keyboard--I suspect the pyramidal keyboard will be about as popular as the Picturephone was.

There was also discussion of crazy architecture designs in real life. In Texas there is a building the shape of a dollar sign. I said that reminded me of the old June Taylor Dancers on THE JACKIE GLEASON SHOW, who did synchronized routines that made sense only when viewed from above; to the studio audience the routines must have looked like random motions. I also remarked that someone at Chicon V had commented that with the shopping mall connected to the hotel connected to the office complex, the "domed city" of the future had arrived. We just don't always recognize the old ideas from science fiction when we meet them in real life. Brenneis said that future cities with be a blend of the old into the new. For example, the Marriott near the convention center looks like a 1950s jukebox. He felt that the future will always have some element of the csmt, and this was often lacking in films. Too often, everything looks as though it were constructed in the two years immediately preceding the time of the film. Brenneis said it was fun to see holdouts from the past in real life: a CPM computer does as well for typing in as a Cray, so you have a blend of old and new. The old will not go away.

One person noted he is waiting for roads to look like they do in the movies. Brenneis said he had a friend who worked in a building that had been built to fit into a curve of an old Los Angeles freeway. After the freeway was torn down, the building had a very odd futuristic look to it! I noted that films always seem to have a lot of working mass transit, in spite of the fact that the sorts of things they show (e.g., moving sidewalks) would break down very quickly under heavy use. Althea McMurrian commended BLADERUNNER on doing a good job of portraying a future city, and Bill Warren said that Sid Mead deserved the credit for that. Someone else mentioned DEMOLITION MAN and Warren said not to expect a lot, though it seems to have the idea of the megalopolis: Santangeles, which runs from Santa Clara to Los Angeles. (I assume there has been some earthquake that wipes out the cities north of Santa Clara on the peninsula.) WILD PALMS was interesting and maybe not too unrealistic, though the technology seemed a bit too advanced.

Someone said that people who make films actually have a strong influence on the future. For example, everyone who saw an LED watch in a James Bond film wanted one. (Of course, just because everyone wanted the jetpack in THUNDERBALL didn't mean everyone was going to get it.) Sometimes the futuristic items are current technology used as product placement (though sometimes the set designer will use them without being paid by the company).

On the whole, clothing predictions are wrong, though Warren reminded us that FORBIDDEN PLANET did predict the mini-skirt. I remember a "predictor" on THE JOHNNY CARSON SHOW stating that sometime around 1979 all the women in St. Louis would shave their heads. They didn't, but that was the year STAR TREK--THE MOTION PICTURE came out, with a leading actress with a completely bald head. Someone claimed that clothing was very conformist--we were all wearing jeans. This was not entirely true, but it is true that skirts seemed largely to have gone away. I noted that Arcosante, a "planned community," succeeded only by making money from groups of visitors--people wanted to be individuals and a planned community made everyone's homes and lives look alike.

If the future does look like the movies, in part that will be because the movies influence the people designing the future. Or occasionally the people making the movies will do research (such as for 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY) When it was noted that this didn't carry through to 2010, Warren said this is because Kubrick is a genius and the director of 2010 is a hack. I said I expected to see a more global view of things in the future. John Carpenter does a good job, for example, of showing that not everyone is white in the future--his film's casts reflect the diversity one sees in daily life. (TIME TRAX did this also, but failed on many other counts.) Also, different countries have different views of the future. Third World country's view of the future would undoubtedly differ from ours.

Panel: Language: Barrier or Bridge
Saturday, 1:00 PM
Thorarinn Gunnarsson, Gay Haldeman (m), Michael Kandel, Yoshio Kobayashi, Maureen F. McHugh

"Translation helps bring works to audiences who can't read them in the original, but how are works affected when the words and the grammar

change?": The panelists had some commentary on why they thought they were chosen for the panel and what their *real* qualifications were. Gunnarsson said, "I've never done translation work, but I've been annoyed by enough of it." McHugh said that she though she was on the panel because so many of her stories were about China that people thought she spoke Chinese. She claimed she didn't, but it was clear from things said during the rest of the panel that her Chinese was certainly more proficient than most folks' second languages are.

The first, and perhaps obvious, point made was that translating is not a one-to-one thing. You can't sit down with a dictionary and a grammar and hope to get any sense of what the original meant in the translation. Kandel noted, for example, that objects (nouns) in some languages can have gender, which can lead to interesting word-play if these objects are animate. If "wall" in Spanish is masculine ("el muro") and in German is masculine ("der Wand"), then if a Spanish author writes, "The wall said to her, 'Wake up, dear,'" that will have a different connotation than it would in German (or in English). (I should note that going in the other direction, there *is* a masculine word for wall in Spanish ("la pared"), so that translator would have a way out.)

Kobayashi said that in Japanese there is no swearing (certainly not the variety we have in English), so translating strong language into Japanese can be a problem, particularly when the literal and figurative meanings of the words are both important. And often etiquette is tied up in language, according to Kandel--for example, whether the formal or familiar "you" is used matters in other languages, but there is no such distinction in English. Sometimes the difference is even more subtle: someone mentioned that Anne Frank's diary was much "livelier" in Dutch than in English, but was unable to explain just quite how.

Other, non-translation-specific, changes can creep in. McHugh said that when the German rights for her novel CHINA MOUNTAIN ZHANG were sold, her agent wondered whether all the characters would sit down to a nourishing bowl of Brand Something soup. When McHugh asked what he was talking about, he explained that in Germany, they sell product placements in books, so the characters might all stop their conversation to sit down to a bowl of their equivalent of Campbell's Soup, and then resume their discussion. (This apparently is the case in the German edition of Kim Stanley Robinson's PACIFIC EDGE.) Speaking of product placements, Gunnarsson thinks they are one reason that historical films aren't as popular any more--you can't sell product placements in them.

Sometimes a knowledge of other languages can affect the English original. McHugh said that since in Chinese everything is in the present tense, with a "tense marker" at the end of the sentence to say whether it is past, present, future, or what, she wrote CHINA MOUNTAIN ZHANG in the present to give it that feel. She also thought that, while science fiction may be partially global, it's not yet Chinese. Many concepts which we assume are understood around the world--such as faster-than-light travel and time travel--are unknown outside of science fiction circles and perhaps not known even there.

Science fiction poses its own special pitfalls for the translator. A translator needs to know some science, otherwise you get something like "brown movements" for "Brownian motion." But in Japan (and other countries, no doubt), translators are not educated in science, and scientists are not educated in languages. The result is that it is very difficult to find someone who can translate science fiction well. One thing Kobayashi said was that good style and characters are not important to Japanese science fiction readers (this is undoubtedly a result of the division of education as well), and that the literati hate science fiction. This makes translating a bit easier--one needn't spend as much time searching for just the right phrase.

Someone of course noted that sometimes it may be necessary to translate English into American or vice versa. "He was left standing outside her door in his pants and vest" means one thing to an Englishman and another to an American.

The panelists agreed that the best translations are the ones you do yourself, but that it was impossible to learn that many languages and translate your work into them and still have time to write anything new. The translators on the panel said it took them about six months to translate the average novel. Kobayashi said Lucius Shepard's LIFE DURING WARTIME took him a year, due no doubt to Shepard's heavy use of stylistic devices. A film novelization might take only one month.

While most translators don't talk to the authors who they are translating, sometimes it can be very helpful, as when Joe Haldeman's Japanese translator called up to ask just what he meant by "Unitarians on quaaludes."

Kandel noted that in Italian there is a proverb: "To translate is to betray." Ironically, the words in

Italian for "translate" and "betray" are very similar ("tradurre" and "tradire"), forming a word-play that is entirely lost in English.

Panel: Time Travel in H. G. Wells and Mark Twain
Saturday, 2:00 PM
Poul Anderson, Mark Twain, Lili Tyler (m), Connie Willis

"Twain sent his Yankee back in time and Wells sent his adventurer forward. Why did each chose the approach he did? Are the conventions of literary time travel still set by these early examples?": I guess I have to explain Mark Twain as a panelist. Con Francisco found someone (Jon DeCles, if I interpret NORTON READER #9 correctly) who could imitate Mark Twain (much as Hal Holbrook is known for doing) and had him as the "Dead Guest of Honor" for the convention, during which time he officiated at functions, served on panels, and gave speeches. The speeches and officiating would be fairly straightforward--write a script and stick to it. But the panels are much more demanding, and Mr. Twain was well up to the task of not only remaining in character as Mark Twain but also of discussing the topic and answering questions that were raised. In this case, for example, when Poul Anderson said, "I have been writing longer than most of you have been in this world," Twain responded, "I've been dead longer than Poul Anderson has been alive." His performance is going on my list of Hugo nominees for Best Dramatic Presentation next time around.

Twain noted that time travel stories get involved with the fact that people believe that they are the end of evolution and the pinnacle of achievement. So backward time travel usually focuses on how ... well ... "backward" people were, and forward time travel often assumes that technology will change but people won't improve. This is probably less true now than in Twain's time--or is that just my making the same error? Willis said this reminded her of WHAT HAPPENED TO EMILY GOODE AFTER THE GREAT EXHIBITION by Raylyn Moore; a woman attending the Great Exhibition in 1876 finds herself suddenly a hundred years in her future in 1976. But contrary to what people might think, she wasn't thrilled being in 1976 and really wanted to return to her own time, when things were much better. All this proves that there is a certain inertia to people, and whether or not what they are accustomed to is better (on some absolute scale, assuming there is one), it *is* what they are accustomed to. As Tyler noted, the most important thing in life to you are *your* problems. What happens to you if you time travel and discover that they don't matter any more?

The panelists pointed out that time travel has many uses. It can be just a puzzle, or a romp, or a study. Tyler said she thought there were more stories about going forward in time than backward, but I doubt that.

Connie Willis said that she used the time travel to the past in DOOMSDAY BOOK to cast light on the present (which is, of course, just what Twain did in A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT). Willis said that we are often blind to something right in front of us, and that rather than looking directly at a problem, we need to look at it with peripheral vision.

Someone noted that we are, of course, all travelers into future at one second per second. But there have been legends of people sleeping into the future before Rip Van Winkle and even before Sleeping Beauty. Mark Twain, however, is thought to be the first author to send his character back into the past.

A brief discussion of changing the past ensued, with people saying that the theory that time is constantly branching can get you out of a lot of paradoxes. Someone proposed the idea of an expanding spatial field of effect, where a change in San Francisco doesn't have an effect in New York until some period of time later (presumably longer than is demanded by Einstein's theories on simultaneity).

Twain felt that time travel should also include those moments when we suddenly realize that time has passed and we are old, or those other moments when we find ourselves pushed back in time (like when as an adult you visit your parents and when you come to the dinner table they ask you if you washed your hands).

Various stories were noted and recommended including TIMESCAPE by Gregory Benford, TIME OUT OF MIND by Pierre Boulle, "The Yehudi Principle" by Frederic Brown, "A Little Something for Us Tempunauts" by Philip K. Dick (Willis's all-time favorite--on reading it, I can see why), "Child by Chronos" by Charles Harness, "All You Zombies" and "By His Bootstraps" by Robert A. Heinlein (the two classics of the genre in short fiction), THE DOOR INTO SUMMER by Robert A. Heinlein, "Sideways in Time" by Murray Leinster, "Vintage Season" by C. L. Moore and Henry Kuttner (made into the film THE GRAND TOUR; it has also appeared under various combinations of their names and their many pseudonyms), PORTRAIT OF JENNY by Robert Nathan (which weaves back and forth in time), "Compounded Interest" by Mack Reynolds, MILLENNIUM by John Varley, and the backwards-flowing-time section of the film ZARDOZ. Anti-entropic (time running backward) stories

that were mentioned included the legend of Merlin, TIME'S ARROW by Martin Amis, COUNTER-CLOCK WORLD by Philip K. Dick, and "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" by F. Scott Fitzgerald. THE ALEXANDRIA QUARTET by Lawrence Durrell gives a "multiple view" of time (much as the film RASHOMON did). And the "Back to the Future" films were full of ideas about time travel.
(In regard to different theories of time, I *highly* recommend Alan Lightman's EINSTEIN'S DREAMS.)

Panel: Have Special Effects Taken Over?
Saturday, 5:00 PM
Martin Brenneis (m), Daryl Mallett

"Have character, concept and story taken a back seat to splashy SFX?": Yes.

Oh, you wanted a bit more than that?

The panelists did point out that many special effects are not obvious, and gave the television series THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES as an example. It uses photo collages instead of matte paintings, but it does use a lot of them, and people don't think of the show as a "special effects" show. The same is true of a lot of films as well. (By the way, the feeling is that what killed THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES was not its "academic" nature, but the fact that it never had a consistent time slot or schedule. I enjoyed watching it--when I could find the damn thing.)

Though the panelists liked special effects (and Brenneis is involved in producing them), they agreed that special effects aren't the meat of films. The analogy I used was that special effects are like the rides at an amusement park: there's nothing wrong with them, but they shouldn't replace libraries.

Too many films rely entirely on special effects and want to use everything available. This gives them a look not unlike the flyers and fanzines one sees done on PCs by beginning "publishers" which use every font available and look like ransom notes. Now that $10,000 can get someone started in the special effects business with the "video toaster" everyone wants more special effects. And with outlets such as MTV for special effects people (and others) to experiment with different techniques without risking a large-budget film, we will start to see more varied effects. (Not unlike what was observed in the "Short Story" panel, where it was pointed out that authors can experiment more freely in a short story than a novel, because the time investment is less.)

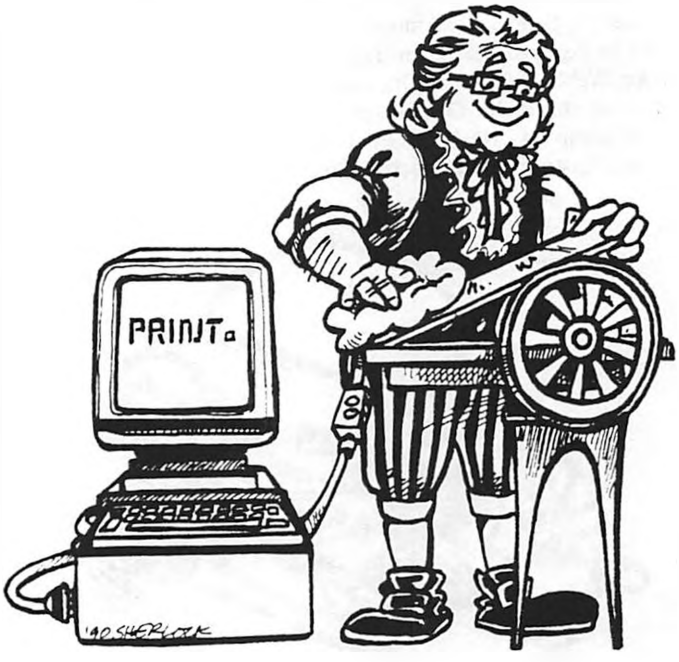
Of course, the computerization of special effects and animation has led to an interesting rip-off. Those animation cels that are sold in dealers rooms and shops at Disneyworld and other places for recent films such as BEAUTY AND THE BEAST are produced (according to Brenneis) solely for those markets. No one does animation cels for the actual production of an animated film anymore.

And the fact that special effects are taking over (or appear to be) is due in large part to the audiences. As big a flop as LAST ACTION HERO was reputed to be and as successful A ROOM WITH A VIEW was reported to be, the fact remains that many more people went to see LAST ACTION HERO than A ROOM WITH A VIEW.

One audience member felt that people continued to see special effects films in theatres because theatres provided the "total movie experience." Perhaps, but all too often the "total movie experience" includes sticky floors and rowdy audiences. One good reason to see films like A ROOM WITH A VIEW is that the etiquette of the audience tends to be much higher than that of the audience at LAST ACTION HERO.

(J. Michael Straczynski had been scheduled for this panel, but he had also been scheduled for a presentation immediately preceding this and got detained there. In general, conventions should not schedule people on back-to-back panels, especially if they are likely to find themselves involved in a lot of questions afterward.)

(To be continued.)



Trades Listing

♣**The Alamo Chronicles**
ed. Edw. A. Graham, Jr. & Casey Hamilton; FEAR, PO Box 291015, San Antonio, TX 78229-1015. Bidzine of the "97 Worldcon bid, contains some interesting info on San Antonio & the Alamo.

♣ **Artychoke** Nov 93
Ian Gunn, PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130 Australia. Comes with "Thyme". Deals with fan art. Also has episode 5 of Ian's "Space-Time Buccaneers".

Astromancer Quarterly Nov 93
ed. Joe Maraglino; Niagara Falls SFA, POB 500, Bridge Station, Niagara Falls, NY 14305-0500. A fanzine bucking for the Hugo. Good production values with some of the best writing by folks such as Leah Smith, Sheryl Birkhead and Tom Sadler (to just name a few).

Austin Writer Dec 93, Jan 94, Feb 94
ed. Judy Barrett; Austin Writers' League, 1501 West 5th St, #E-2, Austin, TX 78703. (Dec)The winners of AWL's young writers contest. Otherwise this newsletter is small articles for developing writers along with some poetry.

♣ **Australian SF News** Nov 93
Merv Binns & Alan Stewar (see "Thyme"). It says "News" but it's mostly reviews. Comes with "Thyme"

BCSFAzine #248
ed. R. Graeme Cameron; BCSFA, POB 48478, Bentall Centre, Vancouver, BC Canada, V7X 1A2. BCSFA history, b-movies and more.

♣**The Bestseller & Other Tales**
Don Webb, 6304 Laird Dr., Austin, TX 78757. Collected short stories by Don. I see the influence of Howard Waldrop and Neal Barrett. I enjoyed "The Bestseller" and "Instruments of Precision" the most.

♣ **Busswarble** #13
Michaell Hailstone, 14 Bolden Street, Heidelberg, Vic 3084, Australia. A personalzine whose political and philosophical leanings appear to line up with those of *FOSFAx*, if not even right of that. About 14 of the 18 pages were letters and responses. The single column dealt with an anti-Nicholas and Hanna stance and a continuation of an earlier topic dealing with an anti-somebody rally.

♣ **Challenger** Fall 93 (#1)
Guy H. Lillian III & Dennis K. Dolbear, POB 53092, New Orleans, LA 70153-3092. Just what I need, another top-notch contender for the fanzine Hugo. Seriously, this new effort has good production values and fine writing. Sort of an *Esquire* magazine for fandom.

Chernobylization #6
ed. Alexander R. Vasilkovsky & Boris Sidyuk; Zoryany Shlyah SF Club, poste restante, General PO, 252001 Kiev-1, Ukraine. Quite overdue, but well worth the wait. This is the best issue yet. Quite a bit on the state of SF in the XUSSR. The translation to English is also improving.

♣ **Conadian Progress Report #6**
ed. Terry Fowler, Conadian (WCon 52), PO Box 7111, Fargo, ND 58109 (US address). Amidst the normal convention information is a bio on guest of honor Barry Longyear and an interesting article by Mike Glicksohn regarding Canadian border customs and the US.

♣ **Cry Havoc** Sep, Oct, Nov 93
PO Box 2836. Wellington, New Zealand. A mew editor takes over the full reigns. Welcome to Linnette Horne. All sorts of news in the SF and fan scene.

DASFAx Jan 94, Feb 94, Mar 94
eds. Fred Cleaver & Rose Beetem; DSFA, c/o Fred, 153 W. Ellsworth Ave., Denver, CO 80223-1623. Clubzine. Looks as if Fred & Rose, or "Frose' as they refer to themselves, will be returning for another year. Feb also carries some nice fanzine reviews by William Lund. Mar contains an obituary to a Denver fan killed in an auto accident and a long article on the Quartermass movies.

De Profundis #260, 261, 262, 263
ed. Tim Merrigan; LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601. Mostly club news and minutes. #263 records the changing of the guard at LASFS, where once secretary Matthew Tepper becomes president and once-president Edward Green becomes secretary. The meeting minutes take a lot of shots at the new president.

File 770 #101

Mike Glyer, 5828 Woodman Ave, #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401. Lots of news, particularly about the LA quake and the fires in both LA and Australia.

FOSFAx Oct/Nov 93, Jan/Feb 94

eds. Timothy Lane & Elizabeth Garrott; FOSFA, POB 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281. Good news for once concerning a fanzine's finances. The normal mix of a FOSFAx. Any fanzine that has a Laurel Slate illo on page 2 has got to have something going for it.

Frivolously Time-Wasting Technology Oct 93

Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Road, London N15 6NH, IK. Strange that this fanzine should follow immediately after FOSFAx in our listing, because politically their about as far apart as you can get. Judith talks about her garden, and we have quite a bit on alternative economies.

♣From Sunday to Saturday

Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722. The return to the zine scene of a somewhat gafiate of respected standing. Rambles on various topics including personal (health) and fannish (fanzine reviews). Available for the usual.

The Frozen Frog #8

Benoit Girard, 1016 Guillaume-Boisset, Cap-Rouge, Quebec, Canada G1Y 1Y9. Excellent issue by Benoit. He also has a review of *In a World Not of His Own Making* (see Boondock Central). This ish highly recommended. Could FF be headed for a Hugo nomination? I wouldn't be surprised.

Habakkuk Dec 93

Bill Donaho 628 58th Street, Oakland CA, 94609. This is a much more interesting issue than the last. It's now a genzine rather than a letter substitute.

The Insider Feb 94

ed. Kay Goode; St. Louis SFS, POB 1058, St. Louis, MO 63188-1058. How to travel to Winnepeg. Granted, it's from SL, but the relative ideas are still good.

Instant Message #540, 541, 542, 543

NESFA, POB 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203. Some of the most boring minutes in all of fandom. I also wish they'd learn how to staple this so it makes some sense.

IntermediateVector Bosons #38

Harry Andruschak, PO Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309. The tale of Harry's trip across Africa.

Journal for Space Development V. 15, #5, 6

ed. Richard Braastad; Houston Space Society, PO Box 266151, Houston TX 77207-6151. Space news and opinion. #6 is a combined Dec 93, Jan & Feb 94 issue. The Houston Space Society and NSS continue squabbling.

Knarley Knews Dec 93, Feb 94

Henry & Letha Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024-2017. (Dec) Nice picture on the cover of the Welch family. Knarley 'spumes' over why he feels he needs to keep to a bi-monthly schedule. (Feb) Bobbitt, Dahmer, and the 'Reginald Denny' trial in the editorial. And if that wasn't enough, Karley seems to be one of the few reviewers as far behind as I am on published matter.

♣ L. Ron Hubbard's Writers and Illustrators of the Future Contest Newsletter

POB 1630, Los Angeles, CA 90078. Info on their latest gala. Karawynn Long of Austin was this year's writers' contest Grand Prize winner.

Mark V. Ziesing Book Catalog #109, 110, 111

Mark V. Zeising, POB 76, Shingletown, CA 96088.

Matrix #108(Oct-Nov 93)

ed. Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Leeds, LS12 2NNP, UK. British SFA. Mostly news of the SF and fannish scenes. But a bit more than that.

Mobius Strip Dec 93, Jan 94, Mar 94

ed. Roy M. Anthony; El Paso SF&FA, POB 3177, El Paso, TX 79923. It's a shame this fanzine is so short. I'd like to see what it would be like were it longer.

♣ Norwescon 17 Progress Report Alpha

ed. Judy Suryan; Norwescon 17, PO Box 24207, Seattle, WA 98124. I'm a thinin' that this used to be "Voice of the Clam". *(Yeah, but I'll do the thinin' around here, Baba Louie!)*

Opuntia #16, 16.5, 17, 17.1, 18

Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta Canada, T2P 2E7. (16) The Star Wars trial in Canada and (I think) the last episode on the Canadian SF Awards. (16.5) A continuing look at Canadian politics. So different than ours in the US. (17) Some zine reviews, and the beginnings of a history on Victoria fandom. (17.1) More zine reviews along with book 'uns. (18) Continues the history of Victoria fandom.

Proper Boskonian #31

ed. Kenneth Knabbe; NESFA. Trying to be semi-annual. One bad piece of fiction that needed at least two more editing sessions; two Confransisco reviews by Leslie Turek and Evelyn Leeper (Yes, the same review appearing in TSFI.); and an article on Heinlein's works by Jim Mann that doesn't near go into enough detail.

PSFS News Nov/Dec 93, Jan 94

ed. Rich Kabakjian; PSFS, POB 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101. Club news.

Rambling Way #38, 39, 40, 41

W. Andrew York, POB 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307. Postal Dip. I've given this zine scant attention in recent reviews, but there is more than just Postal Diplomacy here. #41 contrasts the American and French methods of broadcasting the Olympics, and America comes off the worse of the two.

♣The Reasonable Free Thinker #1

Tom Feller, Box 13626, Jackson, MS 39236. Tom was the editor of *Smart Ash*, the Chimneyville zine, when it folded. This is Tom's personal entry to the field. Welcome back! Tom begins with a little history and rapidly heads off into reviews, both books and movies.

Riverside Quarterly V.9, #2

Leland Sapiro, Box 956, Big Sandy, TX 75755. I don't get a chance to see this fanzine much, it only comes out about once a year, never mind what the name says. One of the closest things in fanzines to the scholarly journal. I thought the article by Grace Russo Bullaro on Blade

Runner was excellently done. There's a lot of poetry in here, none of which I appreciate since it's mostly free rhyme and metre (Just not my style). Some nice artwork (Sheryl Birkhead is the art editor), but be warned that it is very small print on somewhat glaring yellow paper.

Scavenger's Newsletter #121

Janet Fox, 519 Ellinwood, Osage CIty, KS 66523-1329. Writers info zine, lots on the small press world.

SF Convention Register 'aka "Filthy Pierre's"' Spr 94

Erwin S. Strauss, Box 3343, Fairfax, VA 22038. The most complete source for convention information in the multiverse.

♣ **SFSFS Shuttle** Dec 93

ed. Shirlene Ananayo; SFSFS, PO Box 70143, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143.

Spent Brass #23/24, 25

Andy Hooper & Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave. N., #103, Seattle, WA 98103. A fanzine I recommend reading. (23/24) The obligatory ConFransisco report, the results of the Spent Brass poll, and Ted White and I disagree on fanzines. (25) Andy does fanzines this time and Carrie does books.

♣**Stet** 8

Leah Zeldes & Dick Smith, 410 W. Willow Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-1250. Note the new address. The "Illinois" issue with articles from many a noted Illinoian, such as Bob Tucker, Gene Wolfe & Phyllis Eisenstein.

Stone Hill Launch Times Oct, Nov, Dec 93

Ann Morris, POB 2076, Riverview FL 33569. (Oct) A non-Worldcon report. (Nov) A Necronomicon report. (Dec) Book reviews.

Thyme Nov 93

ed. Alan Stewart, PO Box 22, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005, Australia. The masthead reads "The Australian SF News Magazine". Alan has done a good job with this zine since he took it over. It is much more readable.

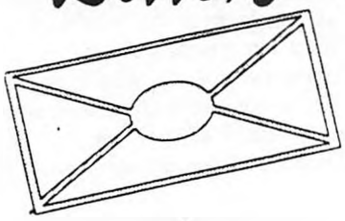
Unintelligencer #13

Embassy of Planet Claire, POB 3194, Bellingham, WAA 98227. Not recommended. Frankly, this fanzine goes beyond the bounds of intelligence & taste.

Westwind Dec 93, Jan 94, Feb 94, Mar 94

ed. George Nyhen; NWSFS, POB 24207, Seattle, WA 98124. (Dec)Lisa Wooding speaks of "Assimilative Capacity" and Michael Dunn rages about Lisa Wooding's positions. Plus a short-short with a slightly different slant on the Christmas legend. (Jan 89)Norwescon 17 Progress Report (It has changed chairs) and Lisa Woodings on sewage and water treatment are some of the offerings. (Feb 94) Contains an obituary/memorial to Annette Mercier, a northwest fan and another ecological article by Lisa Woodings. Ms Woodings, please try to stick to one topic at a time. (Mar) A so-so piece of fiction, another ecology article and something on the clipper chip proposal (anti).

Letters- We Get Letters



Alexander V. Vasilkovsky 14 Dec '93
(see Chernobylization)
Dear Alexander,

It's a pleasure to send you my best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Let 1994 be another good your for both in sf and mundane life.

Hoping to here from you soon. *[You wouldn't believe how long this took to get here. It arrived early Feb.]*

Teddy Harvia Jan 9
701 Regency Dr, Hurst TX 76054
Dear Alex-

I have a copy of the June TXSFI in my unlocced stack. Am I that far behind?. I loved the lines of Linda Michaels' mermaid holding a fish unde her arm but the meaning of it escapes me. Her scotch-tape mummy makes more sense, being the nightmare of old-time layout artists.

Has the clubzine died or just my brain? *(No comment.)*

-Beast Wishes

Lloyd Penney February 8, 1994
412-4 Lisa St., Brampton, ON, Canada l^T 4B6
Dear Alex:

Many thanks for issue 51 of TSFI...here's a late letter of comment. The job hunt continues, so there's little time for creating locs when the computer's often in use assembling resumes and cooking up cover letters. With any luck, this will be over and done with, and I can get back to a (relatively-speaking) normal life. The issue awaits!

A coincidence that you should review Hubbard's Slaves of Sleep ... just read it myself. I really did enjoy it, even though it follows the formula of a story style I hate, the main character tumbling through situation agter situation, protesting his ignorance of everything around him, and with the secondary characters cackling evilly, knowing everything and waiting for doom to strike. The *[book?-Alex]* takes unconnected ideas, like djinns, dreams and alternate history, and weaves them together into quite a likable story. Hubbard could write a good story, once upon a time. I may look up Masters of Sleep just to see what he did to hurt his reputation. *[Well, if you insist on being a completist. That's the only reason to reading it.]*

Awards galore! Some now bemoan the fate of the Hugos, now that the Star Trek The Next Generation episode "The Inner Light" won a rocket. Fie on the Trekkies, let them have the damned rockets, they say. Sigh...the overreaction on the part of some fans has been spectacular. There have been a few gems amongs the gravel of TNG scripts, but "The Inner Light" was a diamond, deserving of that Hugo. *[I agree, it was #1 or 2 on my list. I wonder what every-one's reaction would have been to a short story with the same plot and without the Trek characters. It occurs to me that it might have been a serious Hugo contender.]*

A very nice fanzine received list...I don't get some of these, people, gigantic hint...

I do have high hopes for Clinton's presidency, and I am heartened by what I see. It has to be better than what the previous 12 years gave the world. Still, there is room for improvement on Clinton's part. He must learn more about the world, more than what living in Arkansas and on Pennsylvania Ave. will teach him. Presidential ignorance about the world has hurt more people than we'll ever know.

To Harry Andruschak...BCSFAzine is still being produced, and is well on it's way to issue 250. Howeer, they've had to drop many trades in order to save money. Graeme Camaron, the editor, is being exteremely godd to me in still sending me the issues...Harry Warner and I seem to be amongst the few that loc the zine regularly.

Te time to wrap up is nigh, so I shall do just that. I have some inteviews coming up with some very attractive-looking employers, so wish me luck. Yvonne and I will be in charge of the Conadian fanzine lounge! Any new ideas? Thanks, see you nextish.

Don Fitch 16 March
3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722
Dear Alexander:

Time only for a quick note (rather than a loc), while rushing to get ready for another Trip...

It wouldn't be surprising if anyone didn't know a given word/acronym in modern fanspeak since there is so little communication between various sub-fandoms (there's even some terminology which seems to be specific to certain APAs) but I'm surprised that such a WKF (err... Well Know Fan ... at least; I'm not sure who the BNFs of today are) in fanzine fandom as you are *[I'm not even sure I count myself as a WKF, and certainly not a BNF - Alex]* would not recognize "fafia". It's an early offspring of "gafia", but instead of "Getting Away From It All", it comes from "Forced Away..." and implies distinct unwillingness - even though there usually is a choice, as between Fanac and spouse, career & family obligations, &cet.. Back in The Good Old Days, scholastic pressure was most often cited ("I'll be fafia after this August, because I'm entering College"), but in recent ("graying fandom") years the reasons seem more often connected to middle-age Responsibilities (& hostages to Fortune), and de-fafiation is often associated with the dread Middle-Age Crisis, or with Retirement.

Thanks for including Leeper's Confransisco Report: she does a good job of pointing out some of the organizational & operational flaws of the convention without descending into the silliness of implying that they're of Cosmic Importance; such a review will be useful to future Con

Coms - if they read it. *[And if they pay attention -Alex]* I benefited, primarily from her notes on some of the Ideas presented at the Panels. (No, I don't deliberately avoid the Panels & Programming out of a (misguided) sense of Faaannishness - it's just that I hardly ever seem to be where they're happening.) Some of those ideas took a bit of thought to recognize - e.g., Herz' suggestion of history as geography; if one were writing a story set in a medium-size mid-western city in the 1960's, for example, it would be a mistake to include what I think of as "'60s Culture" ... such places were, then, still living in the '40s. (I'm not sure how completely that applies to the '90s - communications & media are now so pervasive that the current cultural fads (or the trappings of them) seem to be instantly known & adopted (by those who adopt such things) almost everywhere).

Best Wishes

Joseph Nicholas 17 March 1994
15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4JU
Dear Alexander

thanks for TSFI 51. Please note our new address, as above...

I'm sorry that Rod Marsden is still confused by his King Williams, but I can't see where his confusion arises. William I was indeed the conqueror, and William I of England. William Rufus, his son, was William II - again of England. (Although it was William the Conqueror who died when his horse reared under him, not William II - but Marsden's attribution of the pronoun "he" is so unclear that one can't tell whether he does mean William II, so you're exempted from error. William II, just for the record, was murdered while out hunting one day. William of Orange was William III of England - but also, following the Act of Union (between England and Scotland) in 1707, William I of Scotland. The process has also worked the other way: James VI of Scotland became James I of England, without relinquishing the Scottish throne, on the death of Elizabeth III in 1603. (Scotland has never had a king of its own since; prior to 1707, the kings of England were de facto kings of Scotland as well. The Act of Union made the position de jure.)
[Now I'm a touch confused. Elizabeth III? Do you mean Elizabeth I (The Elizabeth of Shakespeare, Drake, & Raleigh), or were there two Elizabeth's I'm not aware of? - Alex]

Incidentally, your trade listing doesn't mention FTT 15, published in October 93. Did your copy arrive? *[It did not arrive in time for the printing of #51. It did, however, arrive, and is listed in the current trades' list. That's part of the vagaries of the postal system]*

Brad W. Foster march 18 1994
POB 165246, Irving, TX 75016
Greetings Alex -

Got the new TSFI in today, another fine issue. (Though, one minor quibble with no issue # on the front cover. But, hey, it's no big deal.)

High point for me in this issue was the in-depth reporting on the various panels from the Worldcon by Evelyn Leeper. Seems most con reports I see in fanzines are concerned with the trip to and from the show, who they ate dinner with, how they worked hard to actually avoid going to any programming, etc. I enjoyed her in depth looks at the panels I missed, and I'm looking forward to more next issue.

Keep up the good work, Alex. I think with the restraint of a too-often deadline gone, you've got the time to stretch out and work on each issue, and they're looking good.

stay happy-

David Thayer 27 March
701 Regency Drive, Hurst, TX 76054
Dear Alex-

I disagree with Jeanne Bowman that the hug will never die because it is too politically correct. Touching is a basic human need. Infants in orphanages who are seldom held wither and die. What has hurt the hug in our culture are those who use it to take rather than give.

Your *{Rod Marsden's -Alex]* article on comic censorship is timely in light of the x-rated frames the illustrators of Who Framed Roger Rabbit? inserted. Big Brother can't catch it all.

Beast Wishes, Teddy

Henry L Welch 3/27/94
see *TKK* (fanzines)
Alex,

It's nice to see that The TX SF Inquirer has survived to see issue 51. I wouldn't worry too much about letter editing as long as you edit within context. As a minor quibble I believe that the movie is called Hocus Pocus not Hocus Focus. *(Yep, you're right. Knarley, you wouldn't believe the temptation to edit this, just for fun. - Alex)*

WAHF
Bridge Publications
Maia Cowen & George "Lan" Laskowski have bought a house. The new address is 1306 Cherokee, Royal Oak, MI 48067-3386
Nova Express
Greg Costikyan has a new book out, By the Sword, signed bookplates are available for a 29¢ (**DO NOT** send an SASE) to Greg Costikyan, 306 Eight Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302.
R. Seth Friedman of Factsheet Five in lieu of a tearsheet of the zine review in FS5.
Mark Harris, wishing to trade. He may be moving to Austin soon says the card.
Sheryl Birkhead who sent a postcard and also let me know what fafia meant.

Article:

Winning the Texas Lottery

by John Moore

Yes, it's true. You can win the Texas lottery. Don't be misled by the high odds or the low payoff. The Texas lottery is not the long shot it appears to be. In fact, it's a sure thing, once you understand how to play.

Let's start with the basics. A Texas Lotto ticket has 50 numbers on it, and you get to mark out six. If those six numbers are chosen in the weekly drawing, you win the Lotto jackpot. The odds of picking six correct numbers are:

(6/50) X (5/49) X (4/48) X (3/47) X (2/46)
X (1/45) =
1/15,890,700

Those are the odds and there is absolutely nothing you can do to improve your chance of winning. You can, however, reduce the chance that you will have to share your prize with another person if you do win.

Studies have shown that people prefer to pick from the following numbers:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 (approx 15% of all entries)
5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 (approx 14% of all entries)
7 14 21 28 35 42 49 (approx 12% of all entries)

In other words, people prefer to play numbers that are multiples of 7, multiples of 5, and single digit numbers.

Furthermore, over 50% of people who regularly play lotteries incorporate someone's birthday into their picks -- that is -- the numbers 1-31. By choosing at least one number greater than 31, you can reduce the chance that you will have to split your prize with someone else.

The lottery is required by Texas law to pay back 50% of its earnings in prizes. On the surface this does not seem to make the lottery a good bet. After all, some forms of casino gambling pay back 99.5%. Remember, however, the pay back is not 50% every week. Some weeks have higher jackpots than others. The advantage of playing the lottery is that you know in advance approximately what the jackpot is going to be, and can bet accordingly. This is what makes the lottery such a good deal.

You know that the odds of winning are approximately 1 in 16 million. The minimum jackpot is $2 million. If the payoff on a $1 bet is $2 million, this is not a good bet. However, if the payoff is $16 million, it's an even money bet. And if the payoff is greater than $16 million, it's a better-than-even-money bet. If you stick to bets like this, you will, over the long run, come out ahead.

Of course, the naysayers will point out that in this case, "over the long run" means over millions of years. None-the-less, the problem has now been reduced from a question of beating impossible odds to a simple matter of longevity.

At this point, it is necessary to clarify what we mean by "payoff." When you win a $16 million dollar jackpot, you do not get a $16 million dollar prize. The prize is paid out over a 20 year period. You actually win a $16 million annuity. If there is infla-tion, the money you get at the end of twenty years will be worth less than the money you get now. A dollar will still be worth a dollar, but you will not be able to buy as much for a dollar as you can now. (Of course, if there is deflation, you will be able to buy more. But there has not been any deflation in the United States for a long, long time.)

So how much is a 20 year annuity actually worth? That depends on the rate of inflation. The average rate of inflation for the last 20 years was 7% per year. If the next twenty years go the same way, we can calculate the Present Value of a $16 million, 20 year annuity as only $8.48 million.

To get a payoff with a Present Value of $16 million, you will actually have to win a jackpot of over $30 million. If you bet on less than that, the odds are not working in your favor.

From this analysis we now can conclude that following three simple rules will inevitably lead to winning money in the Texas Lottery.

1. Avoid picking low numbers, and multiples of 5 or 7.
2. Bet only on very high jackpots.
3. Live for millions of years.

That's all there is to it! Good luck!

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