

# BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#477

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Please send comments, suggestions, and/or submissions to Felicity Walker (the editor), at [felicity4711@gmail.com](mailto:felicity4711@gmail.com) or #209-3851 Francis Road, Richmond, BC, Canada, V7C 1J6. *BCSFAzine* solicits electronic submissions and black-and-white line illustrations in JPG, GIF, BMP, PNG, or PSD format, and offers printed contributors' copies as long as the club budget allows.

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## **This and Next Month in BCSFA**

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Sunday 17 February @ 7 PM: | February BCSFA meeting—at Ray Seredin's, 707 Hamilton Street (recreation room), New Westminster.                             |
| Friday 22 February:        | March <i>BCSFAzine</i> production (theoretically).   |
| Sunday 24 February @ 2 PM: | West Coast Science Fiction Association Annual General Meeting—at 241 Union Street, Vancouver (Brandywine Bartending School). |
| Sunday 17 March @ 7 PM:    | March BCSFA meeting.   |
| Friday 29 March:           | April <i>BCSFAzine</i> production (theoretically).   |

## **About BCSFA**

The incumbent BCSFA Executive members are:

President & Archivist: R. Graeme Cameron, 604-584-7562

Vice President: TBA

Treasurer: Kathleen Moore, 604-771-0845

Secretary: Barb Dryer, 604-267-7973

Editor: Felicity Walker, 604-448-8814

Keeper of FRED Book: Ryan Hawe, 778-895-2371

VCON Ambassador for Life: Steve Forty, 604-936-4754

BCSFA's website is at <http://www.bcsfa.net/> (thank you to webmaster Garth Spencer). The BCSFA e-mail list is BC Sci-Fi Assc. ([http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcscifi\\_assc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcscifi_assc/)). See <http://bcsfa.net/events.html> for more events. Low-resolution back issues of *BCSFAzine* are also archived at <http://efanzines.com/BCSFA/index.htm> (thank you to webmaster Bill Burns). Contact Felicity for high-resolution copies.

## Letters of Comment

[*Editor's responses in brackets.*]

**Dave Haren**  
tyrbolo@comcast.net

Saturday 26 January 2013

Hi Felicity,

[SF Signal](#) has an interview with CJ Cherryh. Someone has decided to Kickstarter the first three Bren Cameron books in audio play (theatrical format). For Foreigner fans this will be a variant you shouldn't miss.

[Amazing Stories](#) is another site worth a visit. If you like the retro spaceship style of the '50s magazine covers you need to look at these.

[Gutenberg](#) is pushing towards 42000 ebooks. A Sam Delany novel was a recent addition.

Many years ago I did a playtest for a game called Holy Wars which was part of the microgame boom started by Metagaming. The designer was Lynn Willis. He has just died and there's an incomplete obituary up at [Chaosium](#). What's missing is his science fiction game record from the early days. Lynn was one of the truly innovative designers of board games. His were always interesting and fun to play. If you saw his name on a product you weren't going to be disappointed.



- Lords of the Middle Sea (Earth on its way to being Waterworld)
- Olympica (UN assault on Nix Olympica, stronghold of the Martian Webmind)
- Bloodtree Rebellion (the cities have an entire political internal struggle, the Federation has overwhelming firepower but is constrained, the aliens may intervene...includes such variations as nuclear artillery<sup>1</sup>)
- Godsfire (monster map with a 3-D hex system and the most innovative force limit built-in; if you get too many counters the Hypersun Godsfire pops into realspace and fries everything back to the Stone Age)
- Call of Cthulhu RPG products—too many to list.

Lynn is going to be sorely missed by every person who knew him. His influence on gaming has been profound and pervasive.

### RANDOM NOSTALGIA

PHIL FELIX  
MOLLY OLIVER  
TRIMLINE TELEPHONES  
DEREK LEE

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1 [Portmanteau word for "orbital artillery."—Felicity]

At the risk of being a boring olde farte, when I was a kid stuck in the rurals, gender issues were in the realm of “the love that dare not speak its name.” The existence of any variant was not even on the radarscope of discourse. Now the topics are at least open for discussion. Some have been able to correct what they perceive as a personal imbalance, and there is now a spectrum of variations around us. There has been immense cruelty inflicted on individuals, usually by people who were suffering from a blind sense of ignorance and a lack of empathy. Gays (who should know better) have been quite overtly cruel to the transgender. I’ve also noticed that people who transition start to discard their past as part of their transition.



There’s no moral here, no closure, and no ancient wisdom. If you want that try making up your own as you go along. Your own experience is what counts for you.

The next asteroid near miss is at 11500 miles away...*grin*.

Governments are too busy with important stuff to pay attention.

Warmest regards,

Dave Haren

**Lloyd Penney**  
1706–24 Eva Road,  
Etobicoke, Ontario  
M9C 2B2  
[penneys@bell.net](mailto:penneys@bell.net)

Tuesday 29 January 2013

Dear BCSFAns:

Gotta do this quick! I will catch up with all the *BCSFAzines* I had yet to respond to...Thanks to Felicity for a paper copy of issue 475, and here’s some fast comments.

Re Sheryl Birkhead’s article on fanzine reviews...I wrote for several years for John Purcell’s fanzine *Askance*. I detailed the contents of each issue, and pointed out what I liked about it, but some, I think, were expecting me to tear a strip off each zine with a complaint, no matter how minor. I tried to review all the zines I get, and I admit, there’s a lot of them. But because I wouldn’t be vicious in my reviews, they were largely ignored.

I am not surprised that the Daniel Day-Lewis biopic *Lincoln* was panned by some because Honest Abe wasn’t hunting vampires in it. I knew some would believe that Lincoln was a vampire hunter, and probably honestly still believe it. (*rolls eyes*)

I hope everyone got the message about the Aurora Awards now open for nomination. We must participate in it more than ever if we want to make sure that fans win the fan awards. The website is [www.prixaurorawards.com](http://www.prixaurorawards.com), and please do register to nominate and vote. It costs so little to make it work. One of my nominations this year will go to Yvonne for her regular newsletter *Pubnites and Other Events*, which tells Toronto fandom about upcoming pubnights, conventions, meeting and other opportunities for fans to gather and meet. Please have a look at the various categories; I believe they have changed every so slightly for this year.

Hope this gets to you in time, and I am slowly catching up with all the zines I've received over the past couple of months. See you next time.

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney

Thursday 31 January 2013

Dear Felicity:

I had indeed forgotten that I had *BCSFazine* 476 in my fanzine IN box while I was writing comments on 475...now to really catch up.

Glad to see that Sheryl Birkhead is able to watch *Murdoch Mysteries* via Netflix US. It's not broadcast on any US-based channel I know of, but the series has become a big hit in the UK, Australia, and much of Europe, in various languages. Ever since the CBC acquired it from CHUM/City, it's been a ratings bonanza.

My LOC here...no, I didn't get the job at the advertising agency, but there's still some interesting jobs I've applied to. The CBC Live event was a lot of getting in line and waiting, but we got to meet Jonny Harris again, and we did have a good time.

Event listings...I see Seattle has a carnival ball. The zines I get from San Francisco show me they have regular masked and costume balls, about once a month on average. I don't see anything like that in Vancouver, or Toronto or anywhere else in Canada. Different traditions? I wouldn't mind attending one in the BArea.

Sun News? Like Fox News, a contradiction in terms. Sun News spews hatred of anyone or anything they don't like. News is supposed to be objective, so where Sun News gets their mandate, I don't know. I just hope it stays way up in the upper reaches of the cable spectrum; we'd have to deal with a lot more political problems if they ever got into the regular cable service channels.

The future is never as we envision it, never as we expect it, and never as it was predicted in the past. There is the expectation that SF writers are psychics, that they will predict what will happen, and both the writer and SF as a whole gets blasted if the predictions don't come true. SF writers do not try to predict the future in their fiction...there's the word some media forget, fiction. They write about fictional futures, and if even a smidgen of that comes true, this is where the psychic label comes from. I predict that the future will not resemble what anyone expects it to be.

And now...you have it all. Many thanks!

[*Thank you for your faithful LOCing.* ☺ ]

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney

**Michael Bertrand**  
[fruvousfox@gmail.com](mailto:fruvousfox@gmail.com)

Monday 4 February 2013

Hey there BCSFAns! Time for me to chatter at ya again. A Happy Valentine's Day for those of you who like the holiday, and for those who don't, may Cupid get diaper rash!

Not much to report from my little old life. The big news is that, due to an acceleration of my insulin regime, I now have my diabetes under control. I take an injec-

tion every night at 11:30 PM, and at 11:30 AM, I test my blood sugar and take another injection if it's too high.

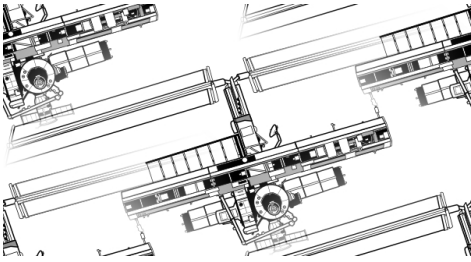
Net result, normal blood sugar most of the time. So, yay me!

Re: Sheryl Birkhead: Oh, is it Hugo season again already? They always make me feel so inadequate as a science fiction fan because I look over the list and I haven't read a single thing on it. All my science fiction come from used book stores. I can't afford to stay current. Someday...perhaps I will.

Re: Lloyd Penney: Sorry to hear about your being cruelly discarded from that job. It is truly a Dickensian time for job seekers, is it not?

Re: Dave Haren: I too am interested in the open source world. The miracle of the modern Internet is that the hobby of a few can be the liberating software tool of billions of people. Or a few thousand dedicated editor/contributors can keep the marvel that is Wikipedia going. A few dollars from enough people, and worthy art projects get funded via Kickstarter, completely without the need for government intervention or corporate gatekeepers. Never in human history has it been easier to create things which benefit all of humanity.

That is why I consider this to be a Golden Age of the Mind, and I think future historians will agree.



Finally, while I agree with Taral Wayne that it is sad to see dreams like lunar exploration and nuclear power fall by the wayside due to public apathy and shrieking reactionaries, we still have a truly magical future ahead of us. Nanotechnology, computers billions of times faster than our current silicon based ones, regenerative medicine, tissue engineering, clean energy sources, and those are just off the top of my head. I have great hopes for the next seven years.

We just have to live long enough to get there!

Peace out, BCSFAns!

**We Also Heard From:** Garry Erwin, Nalini Haynes, Kathleen Moore, and Taral Wayne.

## Calendar

Note to print readers: underlined events have an associated URL. Links are included in the PDF version at <http://www.efanzines.com/BCSFA/>.—Julian Castle

### Already in Progress

30 January–3 February 2013: SPARK FX '13, Vancouver International Film Centre, 1181 Seymour Street, Vancouver. Conference: 1–2 February 2013. Festival: 30 January–3 February 2013. “SPARK FX '13 will bring together leading talents and minds of the visual effects industry to meet, mingle and share.”—Julian Castle

## February 2013

1 February 2013: Premiere of films *Warm Bodies* (romantic zomedy; John Malkovich, Rob Corddry) and *The Haunting in Connecticut 2: Ghosts of Georgia* (horror; Katee Sackhof, Chad Michael Murray, Cicely Tyson).

1, 8, 15, and 22 February *and* 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 March 2013: Fontana Friday—BC Browncoats, 6:30–7:30 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings Street, Burnaby.—Keith Lim

1 February *and* 1 March 2013: Board Gamers: Friday Night Magic, 6:30–9:30 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. Open gaming; seven to eight tables. “For Friday Night Magic we will be running a limited Draft FNM. Cost is three booster packs plus \$2, starting at 6:30 PM. Also feel free to come by for some casual Magic: The Gathering from 6–9 PM. Feel free to use the house decks if you just want to try out the game. Don’t forget to check out our Facebook page.”—Keith Lim

1 February 2013: Trumpeter Tabletop Games Society Game Night, 7–8 PM at Bonsor Community Centre, 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby (beside Metrotown Centre). \$4 for members; \$6 for non-members.—Keith Lim

1, 8, 15, and 22 February *and* 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 March 2013: Friday Board Game Night—Drexoll Games, 7–11 PM at Drexoll Games, 2880 West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (½ block west of MacDonald Street), Vancouver. “In our stores, it’s *open gaming* any time we’re open, so stop in with a friend and try a game! Both of our locations have 7–8 tables and plenty of seating. Space may be limited during tournaments—scheduled events take precedence over open gaming tables. We have about 100 open board games for playing in the store. Playing is *free* except for some tournaments.”—Keith Lim

1–3 February 2013: GottaCon 2013, Pearkes Arena, 3100 Tillicum Road, Victoria. “Victoria’s gaming convention! Trading card games; role-playing games; board games; video games; minis; workshops & panels. Doors open at 5 PM Friday and don’t close until 7 PM Sunday for around the clock gaming! Convention details: over 200 events in 24,000 sq. ft. of space; large exhibitor area central to all events; demos of new and existing products; major tournaments with amazing prizes; events in a wide variety of games; large computer LAN & Xbox 360 LAN; interactive gaming stations; gamers auction & costume contest; special guests, workshops, & panels; huge Warhammer & Warmachine events. Facebook. Twitter.”

1–7 February 2013: The Great Digital Film Festival 2013 at Colossus Langley (20090 91A Avenue, Langley), Scotiabank Theatre Vancouver (900 Burrard Street, Vancouver), and SilverCity Victoria Cinemas (3130 Tillicum Road, Victoria). “Showcasing favourites in digital on the big screen. *The Matrix*: A computer hacker learns from mysterious rebels about the true nature of his reality and his role in the war against its controllers. *Jaws*: When a gigantic great white shark begins to menace the small island community of Amity, a police chief, a marine scientist and

grizzled fisherman set out to stop it. *2001: A Space Odyssey*: Humanity finds a mysterious, obviously artificial, object buried beneath the Lunar surface and, with the intelligent computer HAL 9000, sets off on a quest. *A Clockwork Orange*: In future Britain, delinquent Alex DeLarge is jailed and volunteers for an experimental aversion therapy developed by the government in an effort to solve society's crime problem... but not all goes to plan. *An American Werewolf in London*: Two American tourists in Britain are attacked by a werewolf that none of the locals will admit exists.



*Raiders of the Lost Ark*: Archeologist and adventurer Indiana Jones is hired by the US government to find the Ark of the Covenant before the Nazis. *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*: After arriving in India, Indiana Jones is asked by a desperate village to find a mystical stone. He agrees, and stumbles upon a secret cult plotting a terrible plan in the catacombs of an ancient palace. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*: Dr. Henry Jones Sr. suddenly goes missing while pursuing the Holy Grail; eminent archaeologist Indiana Jones must follow in his father's footsteps and stop the Nazis. *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*: Famed archaeologist/adventurer Dr. Henry 'Indiana' Jones is called back into action when he becomes entangled in a Soviet plot to uncover the secret behind mysterious artifacts known as the Crystal Skulls. *Cockneys vs. Zombies*: A gang of bank robbers fight their way out of a zombie-infested London. *Gremlins*: A boy inadvertently breaks three important rules concerning his new pet and unleashes a horde of malevolently mischievous monsters on a small town. *The Fifth Element*: In the colorful future, a cab driver unwittingly becomes the central figure in the search for a legendary cosmic weapon to keep Evil and Mr. Zorg at bay. *Battle Royale*: In the future, the Japanese government captures a class of ninth-grade students and forces them to kill each other under the revolutionary 'Battle Royale' act. *Oldboy*: After being kidnapped and imprisoned for 15 years, Oh Dae-Su is released, only to find that he must find his captor in five days. *Goodfellas*: Henry Hill and his friends work their way up through the mob hierarchy. *Casino*: Greed, deception, money, power, and murder occur between two mobster best friends and a trophy wife over a gambling empire. *Reservoir Dogs*: After a simple jewelry heist goes terribly wrong, the surviving criminals begin to suspect that one of them is a police informant. *Pulp Fiction*: Interweaves three tales, told in a circular, fractured manner, which only fully connect by the time the final credits roll."—Julian Castle

2, 9, 16, and 23 February and 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 March 2013: Board Gamers: Saturday Afternoon Gaming, 12–7 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. "Hello. Feel free to come in anytime on Saturday afternoon until 7 PM and play any of the many open games there are here at the store.—Kirby"—Keith Lim

3, 10, 17, and 24 February and 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 March 2013: Kitsilano Board Games: Lazy Sundays, 2–3 PM at Cuppa Joy, #295–2083 Alma Street, Vancouver. "Sunday afternoons: they are made for relaxing, cups of warming beverage, and



most especially board games. Thus, *Sunday board games!* Cuppa Joy's large tables, usually unoccupied space and laid-back attitude suits this purpose perfectly. Bring board games, friends, and of course your lovely selves! If anyone has any board game requests, feel free to post them in the comments and I will try to accommodate. You can also post less specific requests (e.g. 'games that take eight players,' 'games that don't involve math,' 'games about farming') and I'll see what I can do. Happy Sunday!"—[Keith Lim](#)

4 February 2013: Thank a Mailman Day.

4, 11, 18, and 25 February *and* 4, 11, 18, and 25 March 2013: [Board Gamers: Painting Miniatures](#), 5–9 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. "Hello. Painting miniatures can be fun, challenging, and sometimes even outrageous. Feel free to come by the store to paint, share tips, or maybe even learn a thing or two about the craft, nay artform, that is miniatures painting. There are some paints available to use, and brushes, as well as primer. Warmachine figures will likely be the name of the game for most, but anything is welcome."—[Keith Lim](#)

4, 11, 18, and 25 February *and* 4, 11, 18, and 25 March 2013: [Vancouver Hack Space Craft Night](#), 7:30–10:30 PM at 45 West Hastings—Back Alley Entrance, Vancouver. [*See Vancouver Hack Space Open House for description.*][—Keith Lim](#)

5 February 2013: [West Coast Geeks Versus Nerds—Episode 6: February Femageddon](#), 7–9 PM at Electric Owl Social Club, 928 Main Street, Vancouver. "[Get tickets online](#). A new year is just beginning, and we're one show down into the second half of our 2012/2013 season—but now a new time of reckoning is upon us: the February Femageddon! Join us February 5<sup>th</sup> for our first annual all-female debate, where brilliant Femmageeks and Nerdettes square off in the ultimate battle of trivia, gadgets, and witty banter. Our first debate pits two heavyweight woman warriors against one another to see 'Who is the ultimate alien exterminator?' Is it Samus Aran or Ellen Ripley? Then, in our headliner match, we pair up two of the world's craftiest conjurers to see 'Which brainy bookworm is the best witchy sidekick.' Could it be Hermione Granger or Willow Rosenberg? You need to be a lady to compete this month, but nerdlings of all genders are welcome to come down and see the show at our awesome venue, Electric Owl Social Club (see below for deets). Enjoy some snacks off the epic menu and grab some drinks, then stick around for post-show karaoke fun! Remember: In Geeks Versus Nerds, *you*—the audience, determine the victor, so come on out and show your support! West Coast Geeks Versus Nerds is a monthly, live, comedy debate-style show where we pit pop culture icons against each other in the ultimate showdown of trivia, gadgets, and witty banter. This month features the debating talents of: Jennifer Armstrong, Andrea Westaway, Abbey Spracklin, Jen Bradley, Anne Honeycutt, Sarah Brocklehurst, Tarrah Tanaka, Beverly Phillips, Breanne Fultz, Arinn Westendorf, Eva Mak, and Aryn Ogilvie.—Tickets: \$10 at the door or online. (That's better than a movie!)—Show is 19+ only. (Sorry, younglings!)—Costumes & fun t-shirts encouraged. (And potentially rewarded!) Door prizes courtesy of our sponsors: Gamedeals Video Games, Connection Games

& Comics, Geek Sweets, StormCrow Tavern, Metropolis Comics and Toys, and Golden Age Collectibles.”

5, 12, 19, and 26 February *and* 5, 12, 19, and 26 March 2013: Board Gamers: Tuesday Night Board Gaming, 5–10 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Feel free to come by anytime from 5 PM to about 10 PM to play a game or two. There are hundreds of open games for playing, or feel free to bring your own. Parking out front is a buck thirty-five an hour (free after 6 PM), or there is a parkade a block away (buck an hour), across Columbia and down by the river. We are located two blocks northeast of the New Westminster Skytrain Station, at Columbia and Begbie. There is a Waves coffee shop in the same building. Go uphill on Begbie to Clarkson, and the store is to the right. Tuesday is also the Buck a Slice special feature at Fresh Slice Pizza just down the street. Have a good day.—Keith Lim

5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, and 27 February *and* 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, and 28 March 2013: Vancouver Hack Space Open House, 7:30–10:30 PM at 45 West Hastings—Back Alley Entrance, Vancouver. “Vancouver Hack Space provides a physical space where every creative type can gather to share ideas, equipment, and opinions. We aim to create a 24/7 brain gym where members can show up and work on personal projects, consult with friends, and learn new tricks. More than just a studio space with tools, we focus on sharing all sorts of knowledge within a friendly and collaborative atmosphere. At this point most of our members are hardware and software engineers, many of whom share an interest in microcontrollers, robotics, electronic music, and art. We welcome anyone with skills to share or an interest in learning. Come to our open nights and check it out!”—Keith Lim

6 February 2013: **Bill Marles** and **Lin Aylward**’s birthdays.

**ARE YOU  
INTO  
COMIC  
FANDOM?**



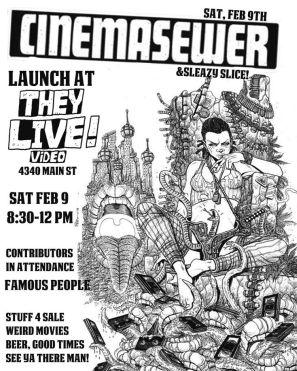
6, 13, 20, and 27 February *and* 6, 13, 20, and 27 March 2013: Cloudscape Comics Weekly Meetup, 7:30–9:30 PM at the Grind & Gallery Coffee Bar, 4124 Main Street, Vancouver. “The Cloudscape Comics Society is a community of comic creators in Vancouver, BC who together publish and distribute quality graphic novel anthologies, as well as host comic workshops and other related events. Here enterprising comic artists come together to network, develop their ideas, and help each other perfect their craft. Everyone is welcome to the weekly evening meet-ups on Wednesdays, starting at 7:30 PM in the back room of the Grind and Gallery Coffee Bar.”—Keith Lim

6, 13, 20, and 27 February *and* 6, 13, 20, and 27 March 2013: Vancouver Hack Space Kaizen Night AKA Hack the Space, 7:30–10:30 PM at 45 West Hastings—Back Alley Entrance, Vancouver. [*See Vancouver Hack Space Open House for description.*]—Keith Lim

7 and 21 February *and 7 and 21 March* 2013: “Burnaby Sci-Fi Writers’ Group meets alternate Thursdays 7–9 PM at Metrotown Public Library (program room) or Connections lounge. Open to new members, mainly sci-fi/fantasy or what have you. Contact Allan @ (604) 946-2427 or email [lowson@dccnet.com](mailto:lowson@dccnet.com) for details.”—[Allan Lowson](#) (on [Richmond Writers Network Facebook Group](#))

9 February 2013: [UBC Anime Club](#) Presents [Valentine’s Cosplay Social & Dance](#), 6–11 PM at UBC Student Union Building—party room. For singles and couples. Cosplay optional. Snack & mingle, cosplay contest, raffle, speed-meeting or king’s game (seems to be variation on Simon Says) and 9–11 PM dance. Coat check free to ticket holders. Early bird until 8 February: \$5 members (or 5 tickets for \$20), or \$6 non-members (or 5 tickets for \$24). At the door: \$7 members or \$8 non-members.—[Julian Castle](#)

9 February 2013: [Venice Is Sinking: A Venetian Masked Carnival Ball](#), 8 PM–1:30 AM at Bell Harbor International Conference Center, 2211 Alaskan Way, Seattle, Washington. “Venice Is Sinking is a gorgeous, sexy celebration of Venice’s Carnival (the classier version of Mardi Gras). This party is *the* party of the year in Seattle and is not to be missed. Tickets: [Eventbrite](#). Much like Carnival in Venice, Venice Is Sinking celebrates world music and tantalizes party-goers with performances by Cirque de Soleil-like performers: a troupe of aerialists (featuring Tamara the Trapeze Lady and Jenn Q) will be hanging and performing from the ceiling via hoops, fabric, and more; Fuchsia Foxx—burlesque; Fleurs d’Egypte belly dancing troupe; Noelle Wood, aerialist pole performer; contortionists; acrobats; jugglers; stilt walkers; psychics & tarot card readers tent... There is a surprise around every corner. *Music & dancing*: [Goffrey Castle](#): electric six-string violinist; [Fractal](#): is a collaboration between DJ Sorbello and percussionist Brian Fischer; Rafe Pearlman—Aramaic chanting. *The ball sells out each year—2013 is the 6<sup>th</sup> year. Early bird pricing*: \$60; general admission: \$75 after 1/2/’13; VIP: \$125 per person (\$140 after 1/2/’13)—and includes: 3 drink tickets, heavy appetizers, decadent dessert bar, VIP-only check-in & coat check, swanky seating and the best view of the main stage. *No refunds will be issued. Attire: everyone* must wear a Venetian-style mask in order to gain entry to the ball; and you’re encouraged to wear your mask the entire evening, to add to the allure and sensuality of the event. Guests are encouraged to dress in costume (think Marie Antoinette era, and tails for the men). Wigs, festive hats...the sky’s the limit. Otherwise, formal is desired (tuxedos and suits for men). Long gowns for the women. No jeans, khakis, etc. or you will not be allowed entry. *Costume contest*: prizes will be awarded for Best Female, Best Male and Best Couple costume of the evening. We have a panel of stylish judges who will be making the call. Visit [A Masquerade Costume](#) in Bellevue and Seattle (Georgetown) to buy or rent a costume; they also have dozens of gorgeous Venetian masks to purchase also. *Tell them you’re going to Venice Is Sinking and they will donate 10%* to the featured non-profit: [Crooked Trails](#).”—[Steampunk Exhibition Ball](#)



9 February 2013: Cinema Sewer #26/Sleazy Slice #6 Launch!!!, 8:30 PM–12:30 AM at They Live Video, 4340 Main Street, Vancouver. “*They Live Video* is proud to host the launch of *Cinema Sewer #26 & Sleazy Slice #6* Saturday February 9!!! Creator Robin Bougie and various contributors in attendance for the night! Magazines and drinks for sale! See you then!”—Robin Bougie

10 February 2013: **Kevin King**’s birthday.

10 February 2013: TV series *The Walking Dead* and *Talking Dead* resume on AMC.—Julian Castle

12 February and 12 March 2013: Monthly Steampunk Coffee Klatch, 7:30–9 PM at Waves Coffee House—Large Private Room, #100–900 Howe Street (@ Smithe), Vancouver. “Second Tuesday of every month. In the Victorian tradition of conversation in coffee houses, this casual monthly event is open to everyone who wants to just get together and meet up with other local steampunks. Whether you’re new to steampunk or well-seasoned, young or old, silly or serious, please feel free to drop by. We can discuss whatever folks want, plan nefarious plots, or just relax, hang out, and get to chat with one another. Costumes welcome but not required—dress as you feel comfortable! I will be at least steamily accessorized, since I have to work immediately beforehand. The only requirement for us to have this space is that everyone should purchase something at the coffee house. They offer teas, coffee, hot chocolate, and various cold beverages, as well as some baked goods.”—Keith Lim

13 and 27 February and 13 and 27 March 2013: Kitsilano Board Games: Wednesday Is the New Monday!, 7–8 PM at Cuppa Joy, 2083 Alma Street, Vancouver. “Wednesday is the new Monday! And by that I mean, we’re switching our every-other-week, weeknight games to Wednesdays, so that I can actually attend! Also popular opinion (i.e. I asked a couple of people) seems to agree—Wednesdays are superior. Some come on down to Cuppa Joy, grab a pint and a samosa, and play some *board games! Wednesday Wednesday Wednesday!*”—Keith Lim

14 February 2013: **Potlatch Convention** and **MC Brennan**’s birthdays.

14 February 2013: *Comic Book Men* (TV series) season two resumes on AMC.—Julian Castle

14 February and 14 March 2013: Vancouver Astronomy Monthly Meetup, 7:30–8:30 PM. [No location given.] “Second Thursday of every month. This is the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—Vancouver monthly meeting and is shared with the general public at no charge. Please be advised that RASC Vancouver’s monthly lectures will be held at different locations throughout 2012. The location of each meeting will be posted in advance, along with details of the speaker and topic. We meet at 7:30 PM on the second Thursday of each month, with astro-coffee, cookies,

and juice served after the presentation. Please join us for interesting and informative lectures on all aspects of astronomy and space-science, along with stimulating conversations!”—[Keith Lim](#)

14 February *and* 14 March 2013: [Fraser Valley Model Club Monthly Meeting](#), 7:30–9:30 PM at Kariton House Gallery, 2387 Ware Street, Abbotsford. “Meetings held second Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM from September to June (July & August have no meetings—summer break).”—[Keith Lim](#)

15 February 2013: **Liana K’s** birthday. Premiere of films *Beautiful Creatures* (fantasy; Jeremy Irons, Emma Thompson) and *Escape from Planet Earth* (computer animation; Jane Lynch, Craig Robinson, Paul Reubens, Sofia Vergara, Steve Zahn, Chris Parnell, Brendan Fraser, Rob Corddry, Jessica Alba, Sarah Jessica Parker, William Shatner, Gregg Binkley).

15 February *and* 15 March 2013: [IPMS Vancouver Monthly Meeting](#), 7–9:30 PM at Bonsor Recreation Complex, Second Floor “Arts Room,” 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby. “Club meetings are held on the third Friday of every month (with very few exceptions such as if the third Friday falls on Good Friday or is too close to Christmas—check schedule). Doors open at 7 PM. Meetings officially run from 7:30–9:30 PM.”—[Keith Lim](#)

16 February–9 June 2013: [Co-Mix: A Retrospective of Comics, Graphics and Scraps](#). The first retrospective exhibition of Art Spiegelman (creator of *Maus*). Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby Street, Vancouver. Daily 10 AM–5 PM, and Tuesdays until 9 PM. Tuesdays 5–9 PM admission by donation. Regular adult \$17.50 (and other prices listed at website). Gallery info: 604-662-4719.—[Julian Castle](#)

16 February *and* 16 March 2013: [Vancouver Comic Jam](#), 8–9 PM at the [Wallflower Modern Diner](#), 2404 Main Street, Vancouver. “The Vancouver Comic Jam is generally held the third Saturday of the month. In cases of long weekends or other conflicting dates, the jam may move to the second or third Saturday. For up to date information, [join the VCJ Facebook group](#) or [follow us on Twitter](#). *Who can come?*: Anyone who is of legal drinking age is invited. *How much?*: No admission fee. There is a \$5 minimum purchase per person required by the Wallflower. They provide their full menu to order from and alcohol galore: beer, wine, highballs and shots. *There will be a gratuity of 18–20% added to all bills because we are a large group*. Bring your own pencils/pens. Paper is provided. If you’re drawing with markers that bleed through paper, be sure to either bring a drawing surface or place extra sheets of paper under the paper you’re drawing on.”—[Keith Lim](#)

17 February *and* 17 March 2013: [Board Game Swap Meetup](#), 11 AM–1 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminster. “Every third Sunday of the month a swap meet will be held where gamers can sell or trade any board games they would like to get rid of. RSVP for the event and you can list what you are looking to sell, or what you would like in trade. Use the message board to pro-



## March 2013

1 March 2013: **Lonnie Allen's** birthday. Premiere of films *The Last Exorcism Part II* (horror) and *Jack the Giant Slayer* (fantasy; Ewan McGregor, Warwick Davis, Stanley Tucci, Bill Nighy, Ian McShane, John Kassir).

1–3 March 2013: VancouFur at Executive Hotel & Conference Center Burnaby, 4201 Lougheed Highway (west of Brentwood Town Centre SkyTrain station), Burnaby. Main hotel sold out. Overflow hotel: Accent Inn Burnaby, 3777 Henning Drive, Burnaby. Rooms: \$99+tax (1–4 people). Pet-friendly rooms available. Reserve room (using group code #27440) at 1-800-663-0298 (24 hours) or directly at 604-473-5000. Second year of Vancouver's furry convention. Pre-reg closed. Convention registration (cash-only): Friday noon–9 PM, Saturday 9 AM–9 PM, and Sunday 9 AM–1 PM. Regular weekend membership \$45, Friday \$20, Saturday \$30, and Sunday \$15. Sponsor membership \$80 and patron membership \$160 (benefits listed at website).—Julian Castle

2 March 2013: Neil with the B-Movie Reel Presents: B-Movie Nights Vancouver, 9 PM–2 AM at Collingwood Cinema, 3215 Kingsway, Vancouver. “Regular B-movie screenings of the classic and not so classic B-movies from the Atomic Age and beyond! Featuring *The Blob* (1958) and *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (1956)!”—Neil O'Brien

3 March 2013: If Pets Had Thumbs Day.

8 March 2013: Premiere of film *Oz the Great and Powerful* [fantasy; James Franco, Mila Kunis, Rachel Weisz, Bruce Campbell (rumoured), Zach Braff, Tony Cox, Ted Raimi].

8–10 March 2013: Imperial Hobbies' Year End Sale!, 11 AM–9 PM (Friday), 10 AM–5:30 PM (Saturday), 12–5 PM (Sunday) at Imperial Hobbies, 5451 Number Three Road, Richmond.

9 March 2013: The Penny-Ante Peepshow!, 8 PM–1 AM at Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI), 860 Terry Avenue North, Seattle, Washington. “A short film festival of the steampunk variety hosted by the Steampunk Exhibition Ball. What we need from you is the *films!* What we're looking for: *short* steampunk or weird Victoriana films. Films with an erotic element are *highly* encouraged, but prurient content is not required. Films will be juried for acceptance and then attendees at the Steampunk Exhibition Ball will vote for their favorite! If your film is selected, you'll receive two free passes to the Ball. How to submit: email [sepiachord@yahoo.com](mailto:sepiachord@yahoo.com) for details! Deadline: *all* films must be received by February 15<sup>th</sup> 2013. This event is only for people age 18 and over who have a valid ID in their possession. Center for Sex Positive Culture.”—Steampunk Exhibition Ball

9 March 2013: Steampunk Exhibition Ball & Lava Beds Cabaret, 8 PM–1 AM at Museum of History and Industry, 860 Terry Avenue North, Seattle, Washington. “A limited number of early bird tickets are now on sale for \$25. The Steampunk Exhibi-

tion Ball & Lava Beds Cabaret return for a fourth year! General tickets are \$30 in advance; \$35 at the door. VIP tickets \$250 per pair. Named for Seattle's red-light district of the Victorian era, the Lava Beds Cabaret is a showcase of local music and dance performance. Lava Beds performers include: Diva La Deviant (emcee); music: Good Co., Chicharra Tango, Dogwood; dance: La Petite Mort, Sailor St. Clair, Trojan Original, Evilyn Sin Claire, Jesse Bell Jones, Solange Corbeau. In addition to the main stage performances, our ballroom will have live music and a caller to keep you dancing all night. The Steampunk Exhibition Ball is a benefit for the Center for Sex Positive Culture. Attendees must be 18 years of age or older with photo ID. The Center for Sex Positive Culture is a 501(c)7 community center dedicated to providing a safe place for adults to explore their sexuality."—Steampunk Exhibition Ball

## Iron Brush

"Tron Brush"?"

10 March 2013: Iron Brush, 9:30 AM at Fraternal Order of Eagles Club, 170 3<sup>rd</sup> Street West, North Vancouver. "1 day. 3 games. 2999 points. A painting, modelling, and design-focused Warhammer Fantasy tournament." "\$32 tournament entry, with \$10 going to an Eagles charity (TBD)." —Chop! Gaming Club

11 March 2013: **Cameron H. Russell's** birthday.

14 March 2013: Pi Day.

15 March 2013: **Jennie Merrifield's** birthday.

16 March 2013: Winter Is Coming... You Win or You Sean Bean!, 6–10 PM at the Cellular Nightclub, 1006 Granville Street, Vancouver. "*Hodor!* Hodor. Hodor hodor hodor. Hodor. *Hodor!* Hodor, hodor, hodor hodor hodor. *Game of Thrones!!!* Hodor, hodor hodor. *Hodor!* Starring *Haylee Bee*, *Chesty LaRue*, and others!" —Cameron H. Russell

19 March 2013: Exploration of Art and Fiction Book Club, 6:30–8 PM at VAG-Annex Workshop, Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby Street, Vancouver. In tandem with the VAG's Art Spiegelman CO-MIX exhibition we will read Maus I & II by Art Spiegelman. *Free*. Registration required. Registration began January 7 at the VPL Central Library, Level 2 info desk. For more info contact VPL—Popular Reading Library at 604-331-3691.—Julian Castle

20 March 2013: Extraterrestrial Abductions Day.

22 March 2013: Premiere of film *The Croods* (computer animation; Nicolas Cage, Ryan Reynolds, Emma Stone, Catherine Keener, Cloris Leachman).

27 March 2013: National Joe Day.

29 March 2013: Premiere of films *GI Joe: Retaliation* (action/SF/unnecessary reimagining; Bruce Willis, Channing Tatum, Dwayne Johnson, Ray Park, RZA, Arnold Vosloo, Jonathan Pryce, Robert Remus) and *The Host* (SF; William Hurt, Bokeem Woodbine.)



## News-Like Matter

### Nerd-Interest Publications?

Wandered across a publication that I thought would be of nerd-interest and wondered what other publications nerds would like.

The publication I wandered across: *Play It, Make It. A Tiny Book of DIY Games* by Rio Safari. “Why pay to play games? *Play It, Make It* is a simple guide to DIY games you can play with friends. All that you need to play these punk parlor games is some friends, a minimum of materials, and kickass creativity. Eight games are outlined in the zine (including sample cards for one about dinosaurs racing toward extinction) and they give the foundation for making up your own. Or, as suggested in the zine, ‘*Create your culture and write me about your games!*’ ”

<http://www.microcosmdistribution.com/catalog/zines/3540/>

Julian Castle

to BC Sci-Fi Assc. Yahoo! Group

Sunday 27 January 2013

### Notes from January 2013 BCSFA Meeting



(The ones we had in the 1980s were louder.)

In attendance were Graeme Cameron (president), Barb Dryer (secretary), Ray Seredin (host), Felicity Walker (editor), Michael “Fruvous” Bertrand, William Graham, and Duncan McGregor.

William was still in “convention mode,” even wearing a badge, and brought “news of conventions far and wide.” This reminded me of James Burke’s description of the troubadours in the Middle Ages in his series *The Day the Universe Changed* (1985), who brought news from around Europe and delivered it in song. Fruvous added, “In an annoying, monotonous musical style...but that’s an improvement if the only other sounds you heard were cow flatulence.” I said there was also folk music of the type that inspired later classical composers.

Graeme was able to eat the Hawaiian pizza I brought (he said “I love Hawaiian”), because he’s lost five pounds thanks to riding an exercise bike. The bike is quiet enough that he can watch B-movies while he works out. He’s also finding that he’s sleeping better and over more regular hours, and doesn’t need to nap anymore.

Fruvous talked about the Mars 500 project, in which Russian scientists locked six astronauts in a model spaceship for a year and a half. The ship stayed on Earth but the crew experienced the same long period of isolation while the scientists monitored their mental and physical health. He realized the astronauts’ experience was a lot like his life: moving very little, sleeping a lot. Fruvous and Duncan both thought that this implied that humans do go into torpor or a kind of semi-hibernation. Duncan added that the project also had odd results with salt retention.

This reminded Graeme of Mars One, a private space program that will establish a colony on Mars sometime in the next decade, paid for with money from making a reality TV show about the colonists. The colony would be permanent—the members would have no way to get back. New colonists and supplies would arrive periodically. We all had our doubts about this idea.

Duncan heard his friends talking about Twitter and thought, “The next thing they’ll be saying is ‘I tawt I taw a puddy tat.’” Fruvous replied that that’s Twitter’s barrier to acceptance: it sounds stupid when you say it out loud. I said that I could accept “Twitter” and “tweet” but drew the line at “twibes” (groups of Twitter users).

Fruvous said that the portmanteau word is being tortured in this era. He’s also worried that we’re losing the war with people who don’t know the difference between “everyday” and “every day.” On the plus side, I haven’t seen quote marks used for emphasis lately. This reminded Fruvous of an exercise in elementary school where they changed the meaning of a sentence by changing which word was emphasized. It was his first exposure to shades of meaning.

**EVERY DAY  
LOW PRICES  
“EVERYDAY”!**

*The quote marks are how you know they really mean it.*

Somehow this topic led to the time I was at an art gallery listening to a short story reading, and the gallery’s walls didn’t go all the way to the ceiling, so when someone went to poo in the bathroom, we could all hear it.<sup>2</sup> As the author was finishing his long memoir about his depressing childhood, it was punctuated by the flush of the toilet. It was the best part of the reading. I thought that a band like Hex-static could do a hilarious yet musically great song using sampled bathroom sounds. Fruvous said that Al Roker started in the White House (not on purpose—only because of his recent gastric bypass surgery).



*Cuddly yet terrifying:  
Palin as “Bimmler.”*

Fruvous wondered if Arthur C. Clarke had ever heard the expression “Clarke-level technology.” Ray said something about Clarke being the most famous person from Minehead (Clarke’s birthplace in Somerset, England), but because of Ray’s accent it sounded like he said “MindHead,” which was the name of a Scientology-like organization in the movie *Bowfinger* (1999). Ray added that Hitler ran for public office in Minehead in a *Monty Python* sketch. I remembered it: Hitler posed as Mr. “Hilter.” Fruvous

said that *Monty Python* were ahead of their time in making fun of Hitler.

Someone said that Walt Disney made cartoons laughing at Hitler; I had the vague impression Disney had supported Hitler at some point. Fruvous said that like other mildly antisemitic Americans, Disney thought the Nazis were good *at first*; later, as the truth about Nazi Germany emerged, Disney changed his mind.<sup>3</sup> Duncan

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2 Form vs. function, so to speak.

3 According to [Wikipedia](#) and [The Straight Dope](#), there are early Disney cartoons that use racial stereotypes, and Walt Disney attended Bund meetings in the early 1930s; however, Disney was not a Nazi sympathizer, and never hated any ethnic group.—Future Felicity

added that Disney was ultra-conservative, and never forgave his animators for unionizing and striking for higher wages, and blacklisted them.<sup>4</sup>

Graeme said that the Germans have never forgiven Hitler for losing the war, and therefore neonazism is more popular outside Germany than inside it (ironically). Duncan said that there's a neonazi movement in Russia. I had read about that in *National Geographic*. (Neither Duncan nor I could remember what the group was called.)<sup>5</sup> Graeme had heard that



*Stay thirsty, my friends.*

Putin is a member of a sect that believes in the racial superiority of Russians/Siberians. Both Duncan and I were also reminded of Vladimir Zhirinovksy, and his proposal to dump nuclear waste in the Baltics (with giant fans to blow toxic clouds into Lithuania). Graeme said that Zhirinovksy got into a fist-fight at a strip club in Finland but laughed it off as just a case of "lively Russian hormones."

Duncan talked about the danger of agricultural monocultures and added that Microsoft is the corporate equivalent of a monoculture. Duncan then fell asleep (but continued to carry on a conversation), because he was still on Ottawa time and had been up all night at Conflikt, a folk convention. Cindy Turner was there too and was going to come to the BCSFA meeting but was also too tired from Conflikt.



*"EIEIEIO!"*

The subject changed to polka. A few of us remembered Canadian polka TV shows that could have been the inspiration for *SCTV*'s "The Happy Wanderers"; my guess was *Polka Time* with Canada's King of Polka, Walter Ostanek. Graeme remembered the Dancing Rabbis, who would have telethons to raise money for their synagogue. One would play the flute and the others would link arms and dance in a circle. Their studio was smaller than our meeting room, yet they had amazing

guests; they somehow booked Bob Dylan, who was stunned at how small the event was. Gary Coleman had fun dancing with the rabbis. There were no visible phones but they would show or say the names of donors and the amount they donated. Someone would donate \$1000, and then someone else would top it with \$1010.

Ray remembered *The Rock 'n' Roll Show* on cable access in 1979, in which a sleazy host introduced videos while sitting on the toilet with his pants down. Also, an overnight DJ for the station at the University of Victoria once took the microphone with him into the bathroom, and that man eventually became the entertainment editor for the *Victoria Times-Colonist* newspaper. Graeme said that there was once a DJ who was so angry at having to work on Christmas Eve that at midnight, he said, "Well it's Christmas Day...bad news...NORAD has shot down Santa. His guts are spread across Hudson's Bay. I hate my fucking job," then put on a Hitler record,

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4 This is true.

5 The name of the group that publishes *National Geographic Magazine* is, of course, "The National Geographic Society."

followed by three or four hours of silence (while presumably someone drove frantically to the station).

Graeme also remembered a TV show where the two hosts would talk excitedly about the record they were holding, then play the record while sitting with their arms folded. Not visually interesting, but it got the information out. Fruvous likened this to videos on YouTube of a record spinning on a turntable.

Fruvous had read that on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, when the contestant uses the “Ask the Audience” lifeline, the audience is right 95% of the time, but in the Russian version, the audience deliberately guesses wrong because they resent the contestant. Graeme wondered if the Russian audience also whistled; he was an extra in *Rocky IV*, and the extras playing Russian boxing fans were instructed to whistle at Rocky to show they were mad at him.

Barb is volunteering at Stanley Park with invasive species removal (English ivy).

Graeme almost wore the “Perry Como sweater” he got as a gift—gray-green, high collar, brown elbow patches, brown breast pocket, brown slash-like hand pockets with shiny black tabs. His wife said, “You’re not going to wear that around the house, are you?” I said I’d seen a cute video of a cat wearing a Halloween sweater and acting like it weighed too much for her to even walk. Graeme said that his cats have caught some mice, probably refugees from the construction site down the street. The mice are alive, so Graeme and Alyx have been keeping and feeding them.

Barb talked about changes in BC Transit: the #10 has been cancelled and other buses are no longer waiting at the Marpole Loop. Graeme said that he used to like the Marpole Loop because it was the only place in the city you could see the rare Asian crested mynah. Thousands of bird-watchers would come here looking for them (back when China was closed), but didn’t know where they were. Barb said that the Marpole mynahs had died out.

Felicity Walker

Sunday 27 January 2013

## **Cities in the Sky Kickstarter Project**

Cities in the Sky: an audacious and daring gambit to reveal the secret history of the science fiction literary world on film. Help make it happen! There’s just 28 hours left in this Kickstarter campaign and only about \$8700 to reach their goal. A \$25 pledge is enough to get you a high definition digital download and the satisfaction of assisting a worthwhile creative endeavor.

(I’m posting this here because I know we’re all fans of speculative fiction here and I’d really like to see the project succeed. Even if you’re not interested or unable to contribute, it would be great if you could share this information with others you know who might be.)

[Cities in the Sky: Science Fiction’s Forgotten Visionaries at Kickstarter.](#)

Jenni Merrifield

to [YCON Volunteers Facebook Group](#)

Monday 4 February 2013

## 2013 FAAn Awards Ballot Now Available

The ballot for the 2013 Fan Activity Achievement (FAAn) Awards is now at <http://corflu.org>.

Deadline is April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013, and voting is open to all fans, not just Corflu attendees.

Note that this year there is a new category, Best Fanzine Cover. To help voters decide on contenders for this interesting new award, eFanzines.com has prepared a page of cover images of both electronic and paper fanzines published in 2012:

<http://efanzines.com/covers2012.htm>

If you published a fanzine in 2012 and its cover is not on the page, please email me.

Bill Burns  
to eFanzines Yahoo! Group  
Friday 15 February 2013

## Fiction: My Species Profile on the Rek

Michael Bertrand

For my species thesis for this most excellent and informative course on Zafland's many indigenous species of sentient life forms, I have chosen to study the lowly and oft-ignored Rek.

This choice was not without controversy, not to mention open mockery and a series of inventive and cruel pranks perpetrated upon my person and my lodgings, and I very much thank the Faculty of Living Sciences for acquiescing to my petition to allow this choice of topic despite the catcalls of the members of nearly all other faculties and that rather unfair editorial in *The University Spectacle*.

Before beginning the work proper, I feel I must address the one charge against this thesis that is not entirely a baseless and tasteless potion of equals parts immaturity, provincial prejudice, and scatological fixation.

Yes, the Rek are, indeed, sentient. They meet all the most basic tests for sentience and are quite capable of language, solving novel problems, making informed decisions based on what they know, and all the rest. True, their thought is neither swift nor deep, but if mere stupidity was enough to disqualify one from sentience, I daresay half my fellow students and not more than a few members of the faculty (you know the ones) would be immediately disqualified and be forced to seek a living as furniture.

That unpleasant business concluded, let us proceed to the examination of this remarkable species and I think that, by the end of this work, you will agree with me that the information I have acquired about the Rek shows that they are a unique and almost interesting species, and well worth including in this University's august *Encyclopedia of Races*, and the highly valuable extra credit that would thus be duly accrued by this humble scholar as a result of its inclusion.

And now, the Rek.

## Basic Racial Description

The Rek are bipedal humanoids of roughly Human size and dimensions. They are composed, apparently entirely, of smooth grey rock-like substance which has a finely granular texture not unlike sandstone, but with (to put it mildly) much greater strength and durability. They have the usual humanoid complement of two arms (long and thick), two hands (four thick equally opposable digits each), two legs (same thickness as the arms), two feet (crude and toeless clubs), a torso (thick but not very broad), a neck (usually quite short), and a nearly spherical head. The head is unusual as there is no nose or ears at all, and the eyes and mouth are mere dark holes in the surface of the face, giving the Rek their characteristic vacant and some would say sinister appearance. Well perhaps not sinister. But stupid and up to something.



They walk with a smooth, plodding gait, and in general move slowly, carefully, and deliberately. There have been theories that this is because if they fall down, they cannot get back up against, but this is patently absurd, and most likely as misconception based on the fact that when a Rek does fall over, which is rare, it often takes them a considerable amount of time to figure out that they have fallen over and that standing up will solve the problem of their being a lot of dirt in front of them and they can't see their friends any more.

They move nearly silently, which does nothing to dispel their eerie appearance, and speak in a dull and listless voice, with a faint but highly distinctive hollow sound. Their speech is as slow and deliberate as their motions, and is sometimes inaccurately described as a monotonous. It is not. Their vocal tone has three or four distinct notes, depending on age and region, and the impression of a monotone comes from their tendency to give equal emphasis to every word in a sentence.

They have no genitals or genders, and no organs of elimination. They take nothing in and therefore need put nothing out, and their method of reproduction remains a complete and total mystery, especially to themselves. The pits of their eyes and mouth lead nowhere. They are merely indentations in the surface of their heads. How they see and talk remains a great mystery.

## Primary Racial Characteristics

The single most important thing to remember about the Rek, more so than their unusual appearance and their lack of intellect, is their imperviousness to all known forms of physical harm. This cannot be emphasized enough. Because people so routinely ignore the Rek, this fact is not widely known, yet it is the key to understanding nearly everything else about them.

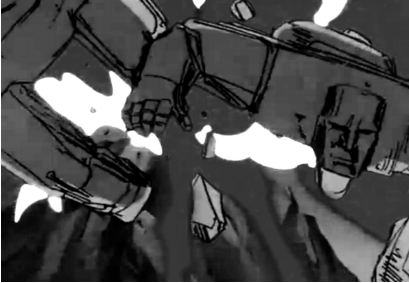
As far as I have been able to ascertain, Rek are impervious to fire, heat, acid, impact, cutting, blunt force, slicing, and anything else you can think of. They cannot smother or drown because they do not breathe. They cannot be poisoned or drugged

because they do not eat. They cannot be tortured because they do not feel pain. Obviously, they cannot be threatened.

Punch a Rek and you'll hurt your hand. Hack at a Rek with a sword and you'll break the sword. Drop a Rek off the Cliffs of Everspire and you'll just put a dent in the ground. Load them into a catapult and fling them toward the horizon, and you will merely relocate them. As far as testing can determine, there is absolutely no way to hurt a Rek. None.

That is, to put it mildly, more than a little weird.

## Mentality and Psychology



It is this invulnerability that is the key to understanding the Rek. Their psychological attributes all stem from this one single fact.

Take their well known pacifism. One of the reasons the Rek inspire such contempt in this warlike and aggressive era is that they absolutely refuse to fight under any circumstances. Not to defend themselves (from what?), not to defend their Realm (they cannot grasp politics of any sort), not to defend their more vulnerable non-Rek friends, not at all. They can't be recruited, press-ganged, conscripted, or otherwise made to fight for any reason in anyone's religion, army, or cause.

Well, why should they fight? Nothing can hurt them. How much of our aggression is merely fear of being hurt expressing itself in fighting instead of fleeing? They have no reasons for conflict. They have no mates to fight over or compete over, no territory or homes to defend, no resources they need to survive. They don't even need shelter from the elements. Rain, cold, snow, summer heat all mean nothing to them.

This also leads, in the opinion of this humble scholar, to their general affability. They are, to a single one of them, friendly, nonjudgmental, kind, mild-mannered, and easygoing. And I say this as someone who followed groups of them around on their daily activities for months in order to do the field research component of this assignment. I have never seen a Rek display any anger whatsoever, even when subjected to insults and abuse from the locals wherever they happen to wander.

And wander they do, because without any of the other concerns that preoccupy we fleshy types, what seems to motivate them most besides their general kindness is their curiosity. They are always looking to see something they have never seen before. Indeed, they possess a childlike wonder about the world, and are able to take delight in the simplest of things. I watched a Group of five of them just watch a particularly pretty little waterfall in a stream for over three hours.

And when some sort of large fish came shooting over the waterfall and splashed into the pool below, then swam away, they all clapped.

## Rek Social Organization

At first glance, it would appear that the Rek possess no social organization whatsoever, but this is not strictly true. It's true that they have no government of any sort, but they do have a tendency to form a loose sort of hierarchy whenever they group together, and it invariably follows the following pattern:

A group of between four and ten of them will end up in the same location via their wanderings and begin wandering as a Group. Nobody is sure what, exactly, causes this to happen other than their simple proximity to one another. In this Group, there will be one Rek who wanders on his own and the others follow. This Rek is invariably referred to as the "Head" of the Group. He will also be the one who does all the talking if a non-Rek needs to talk to the Group, and the one who decides if the Group will join a Protest.

And Protest they do. Despite their pacifist natures and inability to grasp politics, Rek have fairly strong opinions on right and wrong, and so they occasionally get it into their spacious heads that they have to put a stop to something or keep something from happening, and that's where their natural talent for passive protest comes in handy. When a Group of Rek decide to block a road by simply standing there and refusing to move, moving them is an extremely tricky prospect. Many a Lord or Master has been forced to seek somewhat less bellicose methods of conflict resolution by a group of Rek expressing their disapproval of plans for war by picking the road between the two opposing groups for an impromptu gathering. This is especially effective when other Groups wander by, ask the Protesting group what they are doing, and decide to join in. I've personally witnessed a minor conflict between Tarsen and Edioboke that was looking to blow up into a major war blocked by a group of several hundred Rek who had slowly gathered on the King's Gate Road and wouldn't let anyone in a uniform or carrying a weapon through.



And I think that's the real reason for the rampant anti-Rek prejudice that saturates all of the Zafland Realms. Ridiculous rumours that they eat children (with what? they don't even have teeth!), that they steal and eat corpses (see previous), that they abduct and rape youths and maidens (for what? *with what?*), and all the rest of that rubbish is, in my opinion, the result of a powerful propaganda campaign by those in power who are tired of the Rek getting in the way of their nice clean bloody wars and forcing them to use diplomacy and trade to settle their differences.

## Life Cycle of the Rek

As I mentioned briefly before, Rek reproduction is a complete mystery to all, including, perhaps especially, the Rek themselves. When asked about it, they have a great deal of trouble comprehending their question. To their simple minds, all of them have always been around and always will be. They are dimly aware of death and their own mortality, but it is not something they think about very much. As to their



origins, they have absolutely no idea. The closest I have gotten to an informative answer to this question was from the Head of a Group, a Rek named “Pik,” a real philosopher by his race’s standards, who said “Sometimes, there’s more of us around, and sometimes there’s less.”

They don’t even seem to know how their get their names. It’s almost as though they find out the first time another Rek asks them what their name is, and they reply.

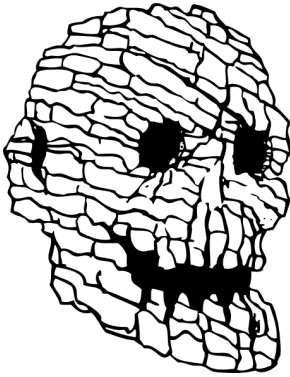
Rek 1: Hello, who are you?

Rek 2: I’m Tig.

Rek 2 then thinks to himself “Oh, I guess my name is Tig then. Okay.”

So we do not know where the Rek come from, and as there exists absolutely no records as to their population numbers due to the difficulty in conducting a census of creatures who wander so widely and are extremely difficult to tell apart, it’s not even definitively certain that they do, indeed, reproduce. The evidence strongly suggests it, but we cannot, at present time, be absolutely certain.

What we do know is that there seem to be young Rek and old Rek. I’ve seen a Rek as small as a five year old boy, and while the exact nature of “childhood” seemed to mystify the Rek whom I asked about him, they all agreed that he was, indeed, a small Rek and would likely someday be a bigger Rek. They couldn’t tell me where the smaller one (Guz was his name) came from or how long he had been with their Group. But they were pretty sure he would be a Rek of their size some day.



And the Rek, despite their physical invulnerability, do die of old age. Rek time measurement being largely limited to phrases like “now” and “later” and “a while ago,” judging their lifespan is difficult, but my researches into the scanty archival materials concerning them suggests that individual Rek live somewhere between sixty and one hundred and twenty Human Standard Years. After that time, they begin to move even slower and eventually cease motion altogether.

I was, through great effort and diligence and personal sacrifice, able to be witness to one such death. It was an elder Head named Yiq, and by the time I encountered him he was moving so slowly that at times I wondered if he’d somehow simply turned into a statue in front of my eyes. But eventually, he stopped altogether, said “Well. I guess that’s it, then,” and fell to the ground to move no more.

The rest of the Rek then gathered around his prone body, and I thought they would mourn, but they did not. They all simply watched his body intently for roughly an hour, until it quite suddenly broke apart into thousands of tiny pebbles, no bigger than a baby’s fingernail. His Group watched for a little while longer, until all the pebbles had ceased flowing over each other and settling, then another Rek, one called Tep, said “I guess that’s it for Yiq, then,” and they all nodded, then wandered off together.

It was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen.

## Summary and Conclusions

To summarize, the Rek are rocky humanoids of human sizes and configuration. They are immune to all known forms of physical harm and do not require food, drink, shelter, or air. It is not known how they reproduce and they live around a century on average. Their temperament is calm, gentle, childlike, curious, and benign.

They are entirely pacifistic, and for that all the Realms should give thanks, for the last thing we need is indestructible warriors with ambitions entering into the political mix.

They exert a gentle and almost entirely beneficial effect on the affairs of the Realms by standing in the way, often quite literally, of war.

It is the opinion of this scholar that the massive prejudice and hatred of these gentle and harmless creatures is one of the greatest injustices perpetrated in all the Realms today, and were I Overking for a day, I would immediately pass laws guaranteeing they were left to wander and observe in peace.

When I began this project, I was merely hoping to get the extra credit for covering a race not currently in the *Encyclopedia*. I knew as little as everyone else, and was expecting to merely do a little field work, repackage what was already known about them within a thin framework of new observations, and pat myself on the back for my own cleverness and indolence.

But instead, I find myself quite taken with these odd, simple-minded people, and intend to continue my research into them well into the continuance of my degree in the Life Magics at this esteemed University.

With that, I conclude this Profile with the words with which Yiq ended his life:

Well, I guess that's it, then.

Gehhatra Adrianus Tallet the Third

Priestess of Yahl, Second Acolyte Class for the Living Magics Faculty  
of the University of Magical Arts in Sindal

*(affix student's seal here)*

Michael Bertrand  
The Million Word Year  
Saturday 8 May 2010

## Message from the President of BCSFA

### A Brief Notice of Intent

At the informal request of the Board of Directors of the West Coast Science Fiction Association and with the informal agreement of the Board of Directors of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, two items affecting the relationship between the two organizations have been placed on the agenda of the upcoming Annual General Meeting of WCSFA for preliminary discussion.

**Item 1:** That ownership of the trademark VCON be transferred (at WCSFA's expense) from BCSFA (the organization which founded VCON) to WCSFA (the legally registered society which governs VCON).

As President of BCSFA and Archivist for both organizations I believe this will greatly strengthen the hand of WCSFA when negotiating (with hotels, etc.) on behalf of VCON.

**Item 2:** That BCSFA formally be incorporated into WCSFA as a standing committee responsible for social activities designed to promote WCSFA as a whole (possible activities may or may not include such actions as informal meetings, slide presentations, open houses, picnics, parades etc.) As President for BCSFA I believe this will breathe new life into BCSFA, vastly increase the number of people involved in its activities, and enable both BCSFA and WCSFA to more effectively carry out their mandate of promoting science fiction and science fiction fandom.

If item 2 is ultimately approved, it would enable BCSFA to carry on its current practice of doing business under the name of WCSFA (the BCSFA bank account is in the name of, but does not currently represent, WCSFA). No change required.

If item 2 is ultimately rejected, then—the two organizations continuing to be separate entities—BCSFA will, at the request of WCSFA, close its bank account under the name of WCSFA and open a new bank account under the name of BCSFA.

Discussions moving beyond the preliminary stage would delve into such matters as whether or not to retain the name *BCSFAzine* for the BCSFA newsletter (I argue YES for the sake of tradition), how BCSFA would identify itself to third parties, the precise nature of whatever positions would govern the activities of the standing committee, financial relations, and so on.

Results of the preliminary discussion at the AGM, as well as further considerations and possibly relevant historical data will be included in the next *BCSFAzine* (and possibly a future *VCONversation*) to further discussion.

It is my belief that the two proposals, if approved, will be of mutual advantage and benefit to both WCSFA and BCSFA.

R. Graeme Cameron

BCSFA President, BCSFA/WCSFA Archivist.

**Note:** The WCSFA AGM takes place Sunday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM at (amusingly enough) the Brandywine Bartending School at 241 Union Street in Vancouver.

Graeme Cameron

Monday 18 February 2013

## Zines Received

**‘Opuntia’ #250** (June 2012). Published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7.

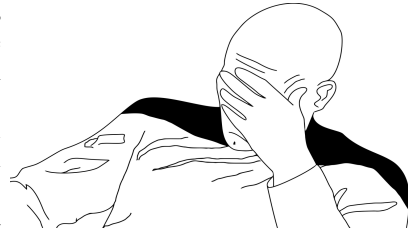
“Genesis 47:15”: Reviews book *Currency Wars: The Making of the Next Global Crisis* by James Rickards. Neatly summarized by Dale. Contains disturbing scenarios: a worldwide dictatorship ruled by the International Monetary Fund; massive economic chaos (per James Rickards); a gradual decline of living standards (the *optimistic* view, per Dale Speirs).

“Watching You in Cowtown”: Dale succeeded at last in photographing a Calgary Parking Authority/ParkPlus surveillance van. It would be ironic if the driver ob-

jected to being photographed. I hope that the payment kiosks accept cash; using a credit or debit card always incurs a service charge.

“Calgary Comic Expo 2012”: Not a convention report as Dale did not attend, for valid reasons, to which I can relate: overcrowding, high prices, faceless consumerism. There’s some unnecessary mediafan-bashing (“barbarians”; “overweight Klingons”). Dale adds that this article began as a LOC reply that started to get too long and had to be separated out; that sounds like a neat way to trick yourself into writing editorials (for us inhibited writers).

Relatedly, along with *Opuntia*, Dale’s envelope included a page clipped from the Sunday 29 April 2012 *Calgary Herald* with two articles about the convention. “Comic Show Lineups No Laughing Matter”: A crowded event sounds stressful enough even when it goes according to plan; in this case a sudden spike in attendance (brought on by a reunion of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* cast) caused the Fire Marshal to rule that there was not enough room for all the fans. Many were turned away, even though they had paid to attend, and some had spent hundreds on membership and travel costs. It sounds as if the promoters honestly did not expect the problem, as opposed to cynically over-selling the convention. On the other hand, they did not sound sufficiently contrite (or at least, not as quoted in the article). “*Trek* Reunion Takes Fans Where None Has Gone Before”: On a lighter note, two *Star Trek* fans got engaged at the convention, and those who did get to see the *TNG* reunion were in for a treat. Both articles are written by Heath McCoy, who does not trot out the standard “get a life” stereotypes, perhaps because he’s a comics and wrestling fan (though he does tend to throw in a lot of puns).



*Shaka, when the walls fell.*

Also: “Letters to the Editor”; “Otafest 2012”; “World Wide Party #19.”

## Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead.....	Masthead
<u>Brad Foster</u> .....	Cover
Clip art (via <u>Dave Haren</u> ).....	Pages 1–2
Clip art ( <u>Clker.com</u> ).....	Pages 4, 23
Clip art.....	Pages 6, 8, 15, 26
Clip art (via Robin Bougie).....	Page 10
Clip art [ <i>Dark Skies</i> (1996) screenshot].....	Page 12
Font (SWFTE International).....	Page 14
Font (AllType).....	Page 16 (right)
Clip art [ <i>Monty Python’s Flying Circus</i> (1969) screenshot]..	Page 16 (left)
Clip art [“Troika” (2012) screenshot].....	Page 17 (right)
Clip art [ <i>Polka Time</i> (1989) screenshot].....	Page 17 (left)
Clip art [ <i>GI Joe</i> (1985) screenshots].....	Pages 20–22