

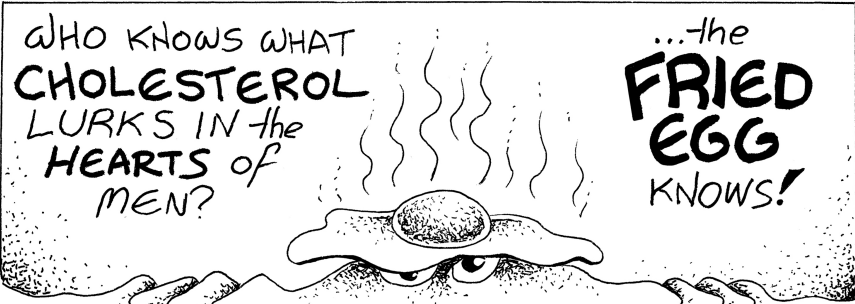
# BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#484

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September 2013



@brad w foster · 2013

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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 15 September @ 7 PM: | September BCSFA meeting—at Ray Sere-din's, 707 Hamilton Street (recreation room), New Westminster. |
| Friday 20 September:        | Submission deadline for October <i>BCSFAzine</i> (ideally).  |
| Friday 27 September:        | October <i>BCSFAzine</i> production (theoretically).   |
| Friday 18 October:          | Submission deadline for November <i>BCSFAzine</i> (ideally).                                       |
| Sunday 20 October @ 7 PM:   | October BCSFA meeting.   |
| Friday 25 October:          | November <i>BCSFAzine</i> production (theoretically).  |

## **About BCSFA**

The incumbent BCSFA Executive members are:

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

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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 Assoc. ([http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcscifi\\_assoc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcscifi_assoc/)). 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

Monday 19 August 2013



Hi Felicity,

I've been reading lots of terrible stuff and seeing more on TV. This tends to cut back on my usual ebullencia.

I have a bunch of weird snippets that might prove useful to you. I'll send that along in a separate email.

My commentary on cultural biases is from an outsider's viewpoint. Fish have never discovered that they live in water.

The Indio was Morales, South American president whose plane was diverted around European airspace until it had to land and be searched for Snowden.

USA is so heavy-handed and clumsy it is painful to watch.

We're not alone though. I recently caught a TV snip on the "cold war" between the Rus and Canada and others. Passing out guns to the icebound fringe doesn't look like a solution to anyone but Harper.

[*I wonder if it's in case there's oil under the ice.*]

These are great days to be alive unless you want to live in peace and quiet.

If you want to see a cool geek check out Ladyada. The TV-B-Gone is a wonderful invention.

[*It's a great idea, and something I've dreamed of.*]

Jane Fancher has some new books at Closed Circle (ebooks). CJ Cherryh is busy doing fish pond engineering with dubious results. Lawrence Ferlingetti has a new poetry book out. He's one of the Beat generation. Been around almost forever now.

Elon Musk wants to turn California into a political circus of gigantic proportions as they build a super gee-whizz high speed train.

Warm regards,

Dave

**RANDOM NOSTALGIA**

**FIBERGLAS PINK  
GOLDEN WARRIOR GOLD LIGHTAN  
"WAR OF THE WORLDS--THE SERIES"  
"VIRTUA RACING"**

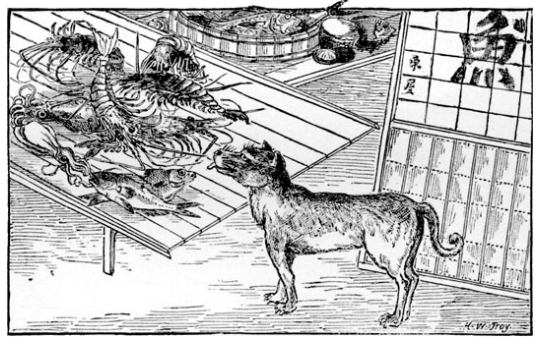
**Lloyd Penney**  
1706–24 Eva Road,  
Etobicoke, Ontario  
M9C 2B2  
[penneys@bell.net](mailto:penneys@bell.net)

Monday 26 August 2013

Dear Felicity:

I might be a little late, but here's some comments on issue 483 of *BCSFazine*. It's been crazytime here, and the kids are getting antsy over the last week or summer vacation.

*[I had mixed feelings about the end of summer break when I was growing up. The golden colour of the late-afternoon sunlight was beautiful, yet melancholy. There was the sense of losing something as it passed away forever, and pangs of guilt at having wasted so much time doing nothing. On the other hand, I was also kind of bored and looked forward to a return to the activity and structure of school. Plus, a chance to shop for stationery.]*



Don't let idiots on the radio say summer's almost over. There's still a month of it left! September is a summer month! Says so on the calendar!

Any book read, whether it is SF or something else, is a temporary escape from reality, a little something to distract you from your everyday routine. I think it's a refreshment, and there's even something to learn from fiction, too.

By coincidence, as I type this up, it is raining and thundering, although not nearly as much as it did in July.

*[We've had some rain here in the past week, some of it quite hard. Not hard enough to wash the dead cherries off the top of my car, though.]*

The Murdoch Mysteries Experience was wonderful fun. I won a pocket watch for my costume, and there were people from all over Canada, the US, Britain, France and Belgium. Just this past weekend was a similar event in Birmingham, England. This Canadian-made programme has a world-wide fan base. Then, this past weekend was also Fan eXpo in Toronto...we won't go near this event, but lots of local fans seemed to enjoy it, and there's lots of pictures on Facebook.

I hope the club will recognize the fact that Christina Carr, in her guise of pirate Captain Charity Ann Rackham, head of the BC Renaissance Faire, has been inducted into the Order of Leviathan, the greatest honour pirates can bestow upon one another. Hurray for Cap'n Charity!, and way to go, Christina!

*[I voted for her!]*

My condolences to all in BCSFA on the passing of Andrew Brechin. I hope the gathering at Trout Lake helped many accept and deal with his death. It's never easy, and I've had to go through it too, but a gathering of friends can help you through.

I hope everyone's been enjoying their summer, and remember, there's still a month left! Just because the kids go back to school, there's no reason to say that

summer is over! And, the fall can be pretty nice, too. Enjoy, everyone, and see you next issue.

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney

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

Friday 30 August 2013



Here I am, back again, and I might have missed the last BCSFA party (I mean meeting) but I am not going to miss a LOC!

Like Dave Haren, I get incensed when people dismiss science fiction as “escapism.” If you are experiencing fiction, you are escaping from reality, whether it’s the *Foundation Series* or *Coronation Street*. All written media provides the exact same level of “escape” because when you are experiencing it, you are not experiencing reality, at least if it’s any good.

Furthermore, as far as I can tell, science fiction is actually the most intelligent and intellectual form of fiction. It explores possibilities and challenges the reader to deal with ideas from different angles and perspectives than the mainstream one. Even mediocre science fiction demands more from the reader’s imagination than any other kind of fiction, and the truly great stuff can expand your mind better than any drug ever could.

But hey. Nerds like sci fi. Nerds are social outcasts. Ergo if I admit to liking science fiction, I will also be a nerd and a social outcast.

And that’s enough for most folks.

Also, I like Vegas precisely because it is a carnival run by crooks. It’s a big dirty playground for grownups and is really up front and honest about that.

And what can I say...I love shameless spectacle. That’s the Vegas I love.

On the personal front, I still make a video a day, even though the 60 day project ended a month ago. It’s a habit now, just like blogging 1000 words a day.

Eventually, I might try making something that seems vaguely professional.

But until I am rich and famous, I will always return to *BCSFazine*.

Seeya next month, folks!

**We Also Heard From:** Joseph Bardsley, Brent Francis, Jim McPherson, and Lynda Williams.

### RANDOM NOSTALGIA

"T. AND T."  
THE BARBARIAN BROTHERS  
"MAZES AND MONSTERS"

## 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

11 July, 8 August, 12 September, 10 October, 14 November and 12 December 2013: Teen Manga Advisory Group, 4–5 PM at Teen Library, Level 2, Vancouver Public Library, Central Branch, 350 West Georgia Street, Vancouver. For teens aged 12–18. “Do you love manga? Come tell us what the library should have on our shelves and meet other manga enthusiasts.” For more info call Children’s Library 604-331-3663. Free. Alternate URL.—Julian Castle



29 August and 5, 12, 19, and 26 September 2013: Falconetti’s Presents—Mind Games—An Aether Avenue Production, 7 PM at Falconetti’s East Side Grill, 1812 Commercial Drive, Vancouver. “Doors open at 6:30 PM. Show starts at 7:30 PM. Aether Avenue is proud to present the first Thrilling Thursday Theatre production: *Mind Games*. In the dangerous and deceptive world of high-stakes knowledge gambling, players bet not with money but their own knowledge and memories for a chance at winning the ultimate secret. One young gambler will risk not just his future but the key to his own past, in his pursuit of the big win. Thrilling Thursday Theatre is an homage to *The Twilight Zone* in which Aether Avenue tells fun, quirky stories, using elements of the supernatural with an ironic twist. Aether Avenue uses an interactive format, performing amongst the audience instead of on the stage. *Mind Games* will be performed at Falconetti’s East Side Grill. Show dates will be August 29th, as well as September 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th. Reserved tickets are \$10. Shows are intimate with limited seating, so don’t hesitate on reserving tickets; shows are selling out fast. Directed by Zac Fudge. Written by Stephanie Gray.”—Stephanie Gray

### September 2013

1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 September and 6, 13, 20, and 27 October 2013 (*Sundays*): 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

2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 September and 7, 14, 21, and 28 October 2013 (*Mondays*): 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. Warma-chine figures will likely be the name of the game for most, but anything is welcome.”—Keith Lim

2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 September and 7, 14, 21, and 28 October 2013 (*Mondays*): 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

3, 10, 17, and 24 September and 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 October 2013 (*Tuesdays*): 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.—Kirby”—Keith Lim

3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 24, 26 September and 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, and 31 October 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

4 September 2013: **Lezli Robyn**’s birthday.

4, 11, 18, and 25 September and 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 October 2013 (*Wednesdays*): 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](#)

4, 11, 18, and 25 September and 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 October 2013 (*Wednesdays*): [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](#)

5 and 19 September and 3, 17, and 31 October 2013 (*alternate Thursdays*): “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](#))

6 September 2013: Read a Book Day. Premiere of *Riddick* (SF/action; Vin Diesel, Karl Urban, Dave Bautista, Bokeem Woodbine, Raoul Trujillo).

6, 13, 20, and 27 September and 4, 11, 18, and 25 October 2013 (*Fridays*): [Fontana Friday—BC Browncoats](#), 6:30–7:30 PM at La Fontana Caffe, 3701 Hastings Street, Burnaby.—[Keith Lim](#)

6, 13, 20, and 27 September and 4, 11, 18, and 25 October 2013 (*Fridays*): [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](#)

7, 14, 21, and 28 September and 5, 12, 19, and 26 October 2013 (*Saturdays*): [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](#)

8 September 2013: International Literacy Day.

8 September 2013: [Vancouver Comic Con](#), 11 AM–5 PM at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (at 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue), Vancouver. Special guests: Jim Mahfood (*Tank Girl*, *LA Ink Stains*, *Marijuanaman*, *Stupid Comics*), Dave Crosland (*Yo Gabba Gabba! Comic Book Time*, *Scarface: Scarred for Life*), Tyler Jenkins (*Peter Panzerfaust*), Kurtis J. Wiebe (*Peter Panzerfaust*, *Debris*, *Grim Leaper*, *Green Wake*), Mel LeVrault (Phobiasoft), Jim McPherson (*Phantacea*), and others! Admission: \$4; kids under 14 free. Dealer tables: \$65 center; \$75 wall. Comics for Classrooms: Donate a



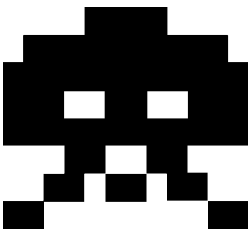
new or gently-used school-appropriate graphic novel for free admission to this show. Books collected will be donated to Vancouver schools. Hourly door prizes! Follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/vancomicon/>. For more information: <http://www.vancouvercomiccon.com/>. 604-322-6412.—Leonard Wong

10 September and 8 October 2013 (*second Tuesday*): 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

11 September 2013: **Ziv Kowarsky’s** birthday.

11 and 25 September and 9 and 23 October 2013 (*alternate Wednesdays*): 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

11–15 September 2013: SPARK Animation ’13 Film Festival. Conference 12–14 September. Job fair 13–14 September. Opening night (11 September) at Scotiabank Theatre, 900 Burrard Street, Vancouver. All other activities at VanCity Theatre, 1181 Seymour Street. Job fair: *free*. Regular pass: \$249. Event tickets: \$4.76 to \$14.29 (depending on what event). Passes & tickets can be bought via website (and probably at door).—Julian Castle



12 September 2013: National Video Games Day.

12 September 2013 (*second Thursday*): 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

12 September and 10 October 2013 (*second Thursday*): 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

13 September 2013: Premiere of film *Insidious: Chapter 2* (horror; Patrick Wilson).

13 September and 11 October<sup>1</sup> 2013: Board Gamers: Friday Night Magic, 6:30–9:30 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminister. 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 Face-book page.”—Keith Lim

15 September 2013: **Mike Jackson**’s birthday.

15 September 2013: Retro and Relevant—Vancouver’s Retro and Modern Toy Show!, 11 AM–5 PM at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver. “Transformers, Star Wars, GI Joe, Masters of the Universe, Ninja Turtles, Ponies, Spawn, DC, Marvel, and much more! Early bird (11 AM)—\$5; general admission (12 PM)—\$2; dealer tables—\$20. Register at <http://www.retroandrelevant.com/>.

15 September and 20 October 2013 (*third Sunday*): Board Game Swap Meetup, 11 AM–1 PM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New Westminister. “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 propose trades or list items for sale. Board Game Warriors can be a neutral site for meeting and doing transactions during store hours.”—Keith Lim

16 September 2013: **Melissa Tookey**’s birthday.

19 September 2013: **Randy Byers**’s birthday. International Talk Like a Pirate Day.

20 September and 18 October 2013 (*third Friday*): 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



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1 Every Friday night, according to Board Game Warriors.

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](#)

21 September and 19 October 2013 (*third Saturday*): [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](#)

21–22 September 2013: [Attack-X](#) (tabletop wargame expo) at North Shore Community Centre, 730 Cottonwood Avenue, Kamloops. General admission (non-gamers): *free*. Mini gamer: \$5 per day (play non-major games including Mutant Epoch). Major gamer: \$40 (enter one major tournament including Warmachine/Hordes, Flames of War, Warhammer Fantasy & Warhammer 40K, but must attend tournament games on both days. Can also play non-major games).—[Julian Castle](#)

22 September 2013: **Peter Kuper**’s birthday.

25 September 2013: National Comic Book Day.

26 September–11 October 2013: [VIFF](#) (Vancouver International Film Festival) at various locations in Vancouver, BC. [The Congress](#), 122 mins. (animation/action/sci-fi); [Halley](#), 83 mins. (zombie); [The Unity of All Things](#), 97 mins. (“multilingual, queer science-fiction satire on Otherness”); and other films. *Single* tickets: \$13 regular. \$11 weekday matinee before 6 PM (not valid holidays). \$11 student (18+) or senior (65+). *Ticket packs*: \$50 for student/senior 5-ticket pack. \$60 for 5-ticket pack (limit 1 ticket per screening). \$144 for 12-ticket pack (limit 2 tickets per screening). \$220 for 20-ticket pack (limit 2 tickets per screening). \$300 for 30-ticket pack (limit 2 tickets per screening). *Passes*: \$100 for dragons & tigers pass. \$175 weekday matinee pass. Plus other passes.—[Julian Castle](#)

27 September 2013: Premiere of film *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2* (computer animation; Anna Faris, Neil Patrick Harris, Will Forte, Andy Samberg, Kristen Schaal, Terry Crews, Bill Hader, Benjamin Bratt).

28 September and 26 October 2013 (*last Saturday*): [Board Gamers: 12 Hours of Gaming](#), 12 PM–12 AM at Board Game Warriors, 708 Clarkson Street, New West-

minster. “Hello. Feel free to come by anytime on Saturday from noon until midnight and play any of the many open games there are here at the store. The event is perfect for any of those more epic games we have at the store that you’ve been wanting to try or for any you might own but can rarely find the time/space/players to accommodate. Besides a couple of local coffee joints, there are a bevy of nearby eating establishments, and we will probably order some supper at around 6 PM. Hope to see you there.—Kirby & Critty”—[Keith Lim](#)

28 September 2013: [Richmond Rumble](#), 7:30 PM at Fraserview Church, 11295 Melis Drive, Richmond. “All Star Wrestling makes its debut in *Richmond, BC* on Saturday September 28<sup>th</sup>, bell time 8 PM. ASW Trans Canada Title: Kenny Lush (champion) vs. Adam Ryder. Special attraction: Davey Boy Smith Jr. vs. Kyle Sebastian. Plus a *Richmond Rumble* featuring the stars of All Star Wrestling: The Great Kasaki, Matt XStatic, Alex Prestige, Collin C4 Cutler, Nasty Nate Daniels, Ritchie Destiny. Tickets are \$15 advance, \$18 at the door. Tickets on sale soon! Info—604-710-0872.”—[Michelle Starr](#) via [Verne Siebert](#)

30 September 2013: **Chris Eliopoulos**’s birthday.

## October 2013

1 October 2013: **Dave Strutt**’s birthday.

4 October 2013: **Barbara Scutt**’s birthday. Premiere of film *Gravity* (SF/thriller; Sandra Bullock, George Clooney).

4–6 October 2013: [VCON 38](#) at the Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel, 3500 Cessna Drive, Richmond. “VCON is Vancouver BC’s premiere science fiction and fantasy convention. Come join us for three days of fannish fun and multi-track programming including: art show & auction • vendors hall • author readings • 24-hour games rooms • multi-author book launch • writers workshops • demos • Academie Duello •

**VCON 38** artists alley • Frankenstuffies • fan groups • cos-tuming • panels • hospitality suite • dance • Elrons • Turkey Readings • workshops.” “VCON 38 Theme: Pirates and Piracy: Sea, Space & Web. Arrrrrr Matey! Swashbuckling rogues, desperate space battles, the future of intellectual property rights, grizzled old seamen following ancient treasure maps, the basics of Ferengi business practices, peer to peer file sharing, and maybe even a little Captain Morgan...there’s a lot to think about, and we’re sure you’ll have plenty of ideas to keep you busy over the next year! Welcome!” “VCON 38 Guests of Honour: Author Guest of Honour—[Mur Lafferty](#) (also a podcaster and a voice actor); Author Guest of Honour—[Dan Wells](#) (also a podcaster); Artist Guest of Honour—[John Kovalic](#) (also a webcomic author and game creator); Special Guest Artist—[Thyrza Segal](#) (also a costumer).”

4–6 October 2013: Can-Con 2013—The Conference on Canadian Content in Speculative Arts and Literature, Minto Suite Hotel, 185 Lyon Street North, Ottawa, Ontario. Host of Convention 33—Aurora Awards.

5 October 2013: **Jim Naguib**'s birthday.

6 October 2013: **Arthur D. Hlavaty**'s birthday.

11 October 2013: **Ivy Blais**'s birthday. Premiere of film *Carrie* (horror/"reimagining"; Chloë Grace Moretz, Julianne Moore, Judy Greer).

16 October 2013: **Duncan McGregor**'s birthday.

19 October 2013: **Cathy Palmer-Lister** and **Gareth von Kallenbach**'s birthdays.

20 October 2013: **Richard Walters**'s birthday.

21 October 2013: **Christopher J. Garcia**'s birthday.

25 October 2013: Punk for a Day Day and Frankenstein Friday.

25–27 October 2013: Kippers Melee

at "Ramada, 315 Rosehill Drive, Nanaimo (for Friday night Magic and early registration) and Royal Canadian Legion #256, 1630 Wellington Drive, Nanaimo (for all events)." "Includes: Warhammer Fantasy, Warhammer 40K, Malifaux, War-

machine/Hordes, Magic, Bloodbowl, X-Wing, open gaming. For registration, schedule, and details please visit <http://www.kippersmelee.ca/> or contact [kippersmelee@gmail.com](mailto:kippersmelee@gmail.com). Register with payment before September 1<sup>st</sup> for early bird rates."



26–27 October 2013: VIMACS IV—Vancouver Island's Most Amazing Comic Show! at Pearkes Field House, 3100 Tillicum Road, Victoria. With featured guests: Ron Randall, Ken Stacy. Special guests: Glen Mullaly, Janine Johnston, Nelson Dewey, Nevin Arnold. Admission: \$4 at 10 AM; children with adults free; early birds \$20 at 8:30 on Saturday. For further information call 250-361-5909 or e-mail [acecola@shaw.ca](mailto:acecola@shaw.ca).

27 October 2013: **Peter Tupper**'s birthday.

28 October 2013: Plush Animal Lovers' Day.

29 October 2013: **Tamara Gerbrandt**'s birthday.

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2 Except Friday night Magic, presumably.

30 October 2013: **Kirstin Morrell**'s birthday.

31 October 2013: Halloween. Increase Your Psychic Powers Day.

## News-Like Matter

### Notes from August 2013 BCSFA Meeting

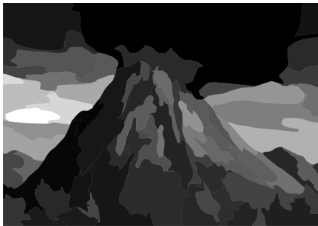
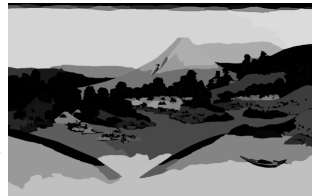
In attendance were Graeme Cameron (president), Barb Dryer (secretary), Kathleen Moore (treasurer), Ray Seredin (host), Felicity Walker (editor), Joe Devoy, William Graham, Stewart Smyth, and Sidney Trim.



As soon as I arrived, Ray wanted to tell me that Melissa Gilbert, former celebrity spokesperson for the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, has officially resigned after her changing her mind about marijuana. She now wants to teach children how to say no to marijuana until they're 21, and she says she "can't wait to toke up again."

Butch Day phoned Ray to ask if he was watching the news, because a volcano<sup>3</sup> had just erupted in southern Japan.<sup>4</sup> Butch said it was an eruption on the scale of Mount St. Helens<sup>5</sup> and those with allergies and/or breathing problems, such as Barb, should prepare for dust to make its way over here.

Ray said that his family was visiting Washington State at the time of the Mount St. Helens eruption (Sunday 18 May 1980). Ray saved some of the ash in a cup, but his father told him not to bring it back with him because he thought it wouldn't get through customs. Joe said that he had a souvenir vial of Mount St. Helens ash.



I then realized that in the original *Transformers* comics, the Autobot spaceship crashed into a volcano which was called "Mount St. Hilary," was in Portland, and erupted in 1984. I wondered if it was based on Mount St. Helens.

Kathleen brought objects left over from the Andrew Brechin memorial: glow-sticks and glitter. Kathleen said that Keith Lim was the last person to arrive at the memorial, having just come from the zombie walk, and was still in zombie costume. She said that Andrew will be cremated in his Baby Cthulhu costume.

Someone brought up the topic of conditions for life. Graeme said that all life on Earth—even extremophiles like those giant tube worms that live in hydrothermal vents—is still genetically related to us. Graeme also said that sulfuric-acid-fluid-

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3 Sakurajima.—Future Felicity

4 Kyushu.—Future Felicity

5 Added note: not as large an eruption as first reported. In fact, 500<sup>th</sup> time this particular volcano has erupted so far this year. Locals consider it a nuisance.—Future Graeme

based (instead of water-based) cellular life could exist in the upper atmosphere of Venus. (I didn't get a chance to record a lot of this topic.)

The next topic was libertarians in fandom. Graeme knew a guy who worked for Stephen Harper but quit because Harper wasn't right-wing enough. Joe remembered that recently the Tea Party was mad at Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell—who said in 2004 that the Republican Party's first priority should be to



make sure Obama was a one-term president—for not being right-wing enough. I said that even Richard Nixon would be too moderate for today's Republican Party. Graeme said ditto for Ronald Reagan, who proposed some gun control legislation—before he'd been shot—then *refused* to consider further measures, fearing “extreme” gun control advocates would try to take advantage of the public uproar over his failed assassination to hurt the NRA.

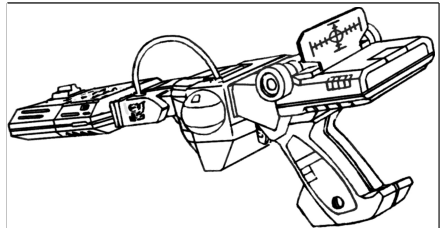


Graeme mentioned that guy with the video blog who called for the violent overthrow of the government, including a list of politicians to shoot. He eventually took it back, but only partly, since he said that he'd had the right idea but the time was wrong. This made Sidney think of *The Weapons Shops of Isher* by AE van Vogt. I asked about it, and Sidney said it was set in a future with an authoritarian, corporate government that is kept in check by the weapons shops,

which act as the opposition and sell super-guns to citizens to fight the government. The shops' slogan is “the right to buy weapons is the right to be free.”

Graeme remembered again AE van Vogt saying that he had a strict, almost mathematical formula for writing which he had worked out over the years, and which was partly inspired by another writer he admired. This other writer wrote romance novels, not SF, but van Vogt said it didn't matter; he had the knack of hooking the reader and not letting go. I said he sounded like a true pulp writer.

Graeme said that William Lyon Mackenzie King was like our (Canada's) Roosevelt in terms of helping us through the Depression with work programs. Graeme added that King met with Hitler in Berlin in 1937. Asked afterwards what he thought of Hitler, King said that Hitler reminded him of Joan of Arc. On hearing this many people at the time assumed King was an incredibly poor judge of character, to put it mildly, but he was in fact merely giving his opinion that Hitler was as dangerous a political fanatic as she had been a religious fanatic. In other words, watch out!



*You get a space gun and get to make fun of guys who have pointy ears.*

Graeme said that the non-militarization of space is like the non-militarization of Antarctica. The attitude has been “let's not fight over it until we know there's

something there worth fighting over.” There’s not much worth fighting over in Antarctica—just some coal left over from the warm years when there were dinosaurs there. (This explained Marvel’s Savage Land to me.)

Felicity Walker

Additional writing by Graeme Cameron and Kathleen Moore

Sunday 18 August 2013

### **Reminder: Aurora Voting Still Open**

I am sending this notice out [...] to remind you that there is just a week to go before voting closes for this year’s awards. I will be sending out a notice to all of our membership but if you can spread the word it would be much appreciated. Registration is still open so all Canadians can still register and submit their ballots.

<http://www.prixaurorawards.ca/Membership/>

Voting is open until noon, PDT on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of September. This year we’ve moved the close of voting to the middle of the day rather than the middle of the night.

[...]

Clifford Samuels

Aurora Awards Administrator

Thursday 5 September 2013

## **Cracking China: A Look at ‘The Fat Years’**

Taral Wayne

[*This article was previously published in Alexiad #63 (June 2012, edited by Lisa & Joseph Major).*]

***The Fat Years*, by Chan Koonchung,  
translated by Michael S. Duke,  
Doubleday, 2011, \$29.95**



It seems I don’t read science fiction these days unless it’s from left field...far left field. I don’t even *look* for SF to read. Instead, I wait for a writer-friend I know to recommend something and lend me *his* copy. This is not just lazy of me, it’s *cheap* of me. But writing these reviews pays rather less than could be desired—nothing, in fact.

Where Bob discovered *The Fat Years*, I don’t know. But he found it refreshingly different and brought it to my attention. It isn’t every day that a science fiction novel about China is written *in* China. *The Fat Years* is subject to harsh legal penalties for reading it, yet is currently the most talked-about book in the country.

The author is Chan Koonchung. He was born in Shanghai, raised in Hong Kong, and currently lives in Beijing. He was the founder and editor of a prominent magazine in Hong Kong, as well as the author of several novels. *The Fat Years* is his first best



seller and the first to be translated into English. In fact, in telling the story of Lao Chen, a journalist and novelist, one gets a strong impression that Chan used *himself* as a model. It takes no stretch of the imagination to suspect the author *also* feels Lao Chen's uncertainties about the new China.

The story is only *barely* a tale of the future. It is set in 2013—the first chapter is entitled “Two Years From Now.” There's no reason to worry about it being overtaken by events. The story is really about “now”—and in some ways its view of the present is flawed, so don't let the aberrant facts put you off.

In *The Fat Years*, the global economic meltdown is presented as far more serious than in fact it has been (so far, cross our fingers), and has persisted, while at the same time China's rise has been much more dramatic than even in reality. In fact, the Party has declared the beginning of an official “Golden Age of Ascendancy” in which China's “soft power” extends to every corner of the globe. The whole of the East, including South Korea and Japan, have merged into China's most intimate sphere of influence, and everywhere in the developing world there is admiration for the great and shining example of Party-led consumerism. Europe is little mentioned, America hardly at all, so little relevant they have become.

But, though Lao Chen is one of the most content and smug of a nation of people well-satisfied with themselves, he meets a pair of old friends, Fang Caodi and Little Xi, who bring him unwanted awareness of a crack in the façade. He refuses to believe it, but despite his denial, Lao becomes more and more curious about the odd fact that nobody can remember a “missing” month. According to his friends, an entire month passed between the economic collapse of the West, and the announcement of the new “Golden Age” for China. Those thirty days can't have just disappeared, but why does nobody remember them? Something must have happened, but there is no record of it in books or magazines or on the Internet. Nor are Lao's friends the only ones. There are numerous people who have fallen between the cracks somehow, and know something is missing—even if they don't know what.

More than that, there is the mysterious, perpetual “high” most people seem to be in, including Lao. Only those who are aware of the missing month seem to have the ability to feel dependency, discontent or doubt. Everyone else wanders the streets with a smile on their faces and no questions in their minds. It begins to appear that the Golden Age of Ascendancy may be either more...or less...than it seems.

Despite the conspiracy-driven plot, the China portrayed is very much a realistic picture of China as it is today. Money is flowing freely in the cities, fortunes are to be made in graft and shady business deals to which the government turns a blind eye—or even has a hand in, the glut of consumerism is rising to comic levels...but the bureaucracy is as firmly in control of every detail of life as it has been since 1949...and will doubtlessly continue to be until 2949, if the Party has its way. Unquestionably, this is the strongest virtue of the novel—not its SF content, which is rather minimal, but as a satire of “capitalism's” newest poster boy, communist China.

In some ways, *The Fat Years* is a rather primitive book. Although it is a translation, the plot is constructed awkwardly, from narrative scenes, letter extracts, diaries and expository lumps. In that sense, it reminded me of *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker. While perhaps acceptable to late Victorian literature—along with falling asleep in caves as a means of traveling to exotic places inaccessible at the time—it is a cumbersome device to modern readers. Yet the prose is quite transparent, and the reader will

have no trouble following the point of view. A little more problematic is the final confrontation in Part Three.

Lao and his friends have kidnapped a senior Party official, He Dongsheng, to demand the truth from him. Under the influence of threats and...well, better leave that to the reader to find out...He regales them with his life-history, then a 60-page discourse on the Party's long term policies, leading to the final achievement of the government's objectives—restoring the world to its proper order with China as the rightful leader of nations. Howard Roark's endless peroration at his trial, in *The Fountainhead*, invites obvious comparison—except, of course, there was nothing about human rights or the supremacy of the individual in He's speech.

It is in this section that the science fiction element makes itself more strongly felt. There is a definite strain of Hari Seldon's "Plan" in He Dongsheng's speech. Moreover, it is only at the end of the book that you discover what happened in the "missing" month, or why everyone in China except, apparently, asthmatics, has their heads in the clouds. Much of the author's speculations about China's recent past and near future are very shrewd—particularly about how Western financial wizards played right into the Party's hands—but nevertheless, certain guesses about how the chips will fall seem wishful thinking at best.

So, if you read SF to broaden your mind at all, and not just as predictable escapism, you might take your head out of the Harry Turtledove and Lois McMaster Bujold for a few days and read a book that is actually on the cutting edge of something. Though by no means great literature, *The Fat Years* will expose the SF reader to something that is tantalizingly both *unfamiliar*, and yet *nearly* as familiar as Philip K. Dick.

Taral Wayne

Thursday 12 April 2012

## Zines Received



**'Opuntia' #256** (Remembrance Day 2012). Published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7.

"Out of Whose Womb Came the Ice?" Reviews freeze-themed film *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* episode "The Blizzard Makers" (1964), film *Absolute Zero* (2006), and short story "A Pail of Air" by Fritz Leiber (1951). Offhand, I know of no world-freezing disaster movies from

my era (1975–1993); the closest thing I could find with casual research was *Avalanche* (1978) starring Rock Hudson and Robert Forster.

However, temperature-changing mad science, as a primary goal or a byproduct, was a frequent plan of the supervillains in 1980s cartoons. The case that most closely fits the topic at hand is the *Transformers* (1984) episode "Fire in the Sky": Megatron taps into heat from the Earth's core to make energon cubes, causing worldwide winter

in July.<sup>6</sup> Less specifically, there are dozens of other “weather machine” and “freeze ray” episodes in dozens of animated series.

Meanwhile, in comic books, in the first issue of the *MASK* regular series (1985), General Miles Mayhem builds a device to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, thereby negating the greenhouse effect. It does not operate on a global scale or take decades, either; the device is small enough to attach to his Switchblade jet helicopter, and causes an instant hyperlocal Ice Age wherever it goes. As Switchblade cruises past it, the Statue of Liberty freezes and cracks in half.



*I got the ice in me!*

As Switchblade cruises past it, the Statue of Liberty freezes and cracks in half.

“Transit Fanning in Calgary: Part 1: The Old Order Changes”: Dale says that his mother told him “that she had made a mistake in her younger days of not bothering to photograph what seemed to be mundane and perpetual.” I feel exactly the same way, and have tried to document all the buildings (interior and exterior), outdoor scenery, vehicles, and people that I can. Even then I’m often too late—in the time between noticing something (and making a mental note to photograph it when I have time), and coming back there (finally *having* the time), it’s been torn down or renovated. Attention, everyone: now that we have digital cameras, and there are no developing costs, we should all be photographing every vintage thing that we see.

Also: “Oh Grave, Where Is Thy Victory?”; “The Eurocrisis Not Explained”; “Sherlockiana: Part 11” (reviews books *The Army of Dr. Moreau* by Guy Adams and *Sherlock Holmes on Screen* by Alan Barnes).

Dale also enclosed a clipping from the Calgary *Metro* (Wednesday 24 October 2012): “A Destination Wedding Where No Man Has Gone Before,” by Paul Sullivan (“Just Sayin’ ”). See [BCSFAzine #475](#), “News-Like Matter,” “As Others See Us? VI.”

‘Askew’ #5 (July 2013). Published by John A. Purcell, 3744 Marielen Circle, College Station, TX 77845, USA, [j\\_purcell54@yahoo.com](mailto:j_purcell54@yahoo.com).

“Action Along the Homefront”: From his description, it sounds like John will turn the fanzine lounge at Worldcon 71 (LoneStarCon 3—San Antonio, Texas) into a hybrid hospitality room—couches, comfortable chairs, round tables, and coloured Sharpies and drawing paper, all next door to a bar. That sounds great! It combines fanzines, sitting down, drawing, talking, and eating—several of my favourite hobbies.

“Skewed Results” (LOCs): Taral Wayne says that if he’d tried to publish his zine (*Broken Toys*) on paper, it would have cost him \$3,200 (100 copies each of 16 issues at \$2 per issue), and therefore there’s no alternative to e-zines. One alternative would be to limit the printed copies to contributors, paying readers, and editors who send paper zines in trade. The print run would drop to a few dozen copies or less. Another angle to approach it from would be to ask, “How did people afford this *before* the In-

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6 Whenever winter weather happens in an impossible month, it’s always July, never June or August. Sometimes the dialogue will be even more specific: “In the *middle* of July?”

ternet?” (I mean, how *did* they? Fans have always been poor; what’s changed? Is it the cost of printer toner? I bet it’s the printer toner. I don’t know anybody who owns a functioning printer anymore.)

Font criticism: I liked Cooper Black (headlines) but not Calibri (body text) or Berlin Sans FB Demi (editor’s remarks in letter column).

Other aesthetics: I also liked the coloured paper, Teddy Harvia’s illustration, and John’s deliberate padding of his preface to the letter column to avoid an orphaned paragraph over the page break. (That’s one of my sensitivities, too.)

## E-Zines Received

‘**Swill @ 30**’ #11 (Winter 2012). Published by Neil Jamieson-Williams, [swill@uldunemedia.ca](mailto:swill@uldunemedia.ca), “VileFen Press, a division of Klatha Entertainment, an Uldune Media company,” <http://swill.uldunemedia.ca/>.

“Editorial: Past Imperfect”: From this article, it sounds like there was some bullying in the original *Swill*, which still seems like a bad thing to me. For fairness, I read *Swill* #2 to see for myself, and it makes much more sense if you take it as good-natured punk sadomasochism than if you take it at face value. I guess it depends on whether you feel included or excluded by the zine’s attitude. Maybe the reason the original *Swill* accumulated so many enemies is that the people being bullied were (a) lifelong victims of actual bullying and (b) depending on their age and experience, not able to tell good-natured punk shoving from sincere abuse. Whose responsibility is it to see that they get the joke? And did they give their consent? The right kind of abuse can bring out your inner punk and make you feel pretty. The wrong kind just reinforces the feeling that the world is an evil place where evil prospers and there’s no justice.

“Thrashing Trufen: Themes Past and Present”: On the other hand, the thrashing of trufen appears to come from a place of anti-elitism, which sounds OK.

“Pissing on a Pile of Old Amazings”: Lester Rainsford writes that “today cucsk so that we go back and rehash stuff that happened in our youth.” Well put (sort of).

Also: “Flogging a Dead Trekkie: Odds and Sods...”; “Scribbling on the Bog Wall: Letters of Comment”; “Endnote: Narrowing the Lens.”

## Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead.....	Masthead
<u>Brad Foster</u> .....	Cover
Clip art (via <u>Dave Haren</u> ).....	Pages 1–3
Clip art ( <u>Clker.com</u> ).....	Pages 4, 7, 8, 12 (top, middle), 13 (middle)
Font ( <u>Ray Larabie</u> ).....	Page 10
Clip art (flyer).....	Page 11
Clip art (screenshots, vectorized by <u>Clker.com</u> )....	Pages 12 (bottom), 13 (top)
Clip art (Shōhei Kohara/Floro Dery).....	Page 13 (bottom)
Clip art ( <u>Clker.com</u> , combined by <u>Felicity Walker</u> ).....	Page 14
Clip art (screenshot).....	Page 16
Clip art (screenshots, combined by <u>Felicity Walker</u> ).....	Page 17