

BCSFA NEWSLETTER #6

This newsletter is written, typed, run off, collated, stamped and mailed by Mike Bailey (#4-2416 W. 3rd Ave. Vancouver B.C. V6K 1L8 --731-8451 or 666-6604) on behalf of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association (PO Box 35577 Vancouver B.C. V6M 4G9 -- 77 for "Westercon in '77"). Computer address labels courtesy of Mike Bailey.

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EDITORIAL I

I thank those of you who sent me a dollar (in some cases \$2) to help with postage. However, there may have been some misunderstanding about the reasons for asking for the money: the basic idea was that we wish to have active members and I felt that those who were inactive should pay. Consequently if you don't wish to attend meetings, write letters, help in some way, and yet still wish to receive the newsletter (for a year or so), please send a dollar. Those of you who are active members and who contributed a dollar will have a dollar deducted from your membership dues when we formalize our organization.

MIKE CONEY SELLS TO LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, Mike Coney was challenged by Harlan Ellison to make good on his claim in a letter to Richard Geis' ALIEN CRITIC, "I could write that type of story, and write it better, about blacks and whites, Catholics and Protestants, any the-majority-is-a-bastard situation", with reference to Joanna Russ' feminist story, When It Changed. Harlan called him some names, told him to write his story, and said he would hold LDV open for it--if it were good enough. Mike Coney had two weeks and he took up the challenge. At the October Meeting he confided in me that he didn't think Ellison could publish the story he had written. Apparently he was wrong and Ellison wrote him, "...I would be dissembling were I to say your story struck me with anything but revulsion. I take it to be a very tightassed, sick presentation of a tainted viewpoint...I find the piece repellent in virtually every particular...I may not agree with what you have to defecate, but I'll break my back to publish that shit." With this kind of rapport between editor and author I can't wait to read the forward and afterward to the published version in LDV.

Mike Coney also wrote that Gollancz has purchased his new novel, Winter's Children, for hardcover publication.

MEETING REPORT

The November meeting took place at the Walsh's on Saturday, November 17. About 35 people attended, including Paul Stanbery from Seattle and Hazel Du Pey from Sedro Woolley. As with all our previous meetings, a few new faces turned up: Kat Ferguson, John White, Carmen Osgwell, Allen Dickeson, David Grannis of Collector's Books, and Carl Chaplin. (Someday, if everyone shows up at once...) The meeting was essentially a social occasion, but some business was transacted early in the evening and some attendees sounded me out with ideas for the convention. Carl Chaplin showed strong interest in getting involved in SF art both for the convention and for my fanzine, LAGNIAPPE. Allen Dickeson suggested ideas for the convention, such as an alpha-wave recording device for display and use, and a computer hookup by Doug Seeley (are you reading this, Doug?). Al Betz asked me if I'd be willing to publish, as addenda to the newsletter, a complete listing of SF radio programs. (I am, and maybe in a few issues, it'll start appearing.) Later in the evening, David George gave a verbal updating on the convention and presented Chuck Davis with a birthday present.

Some people couldn't make it to the meeting: Mike Coney phoned his regrets from Victoria (car trouble), Ed and Norma Beauregard went to the Island, Eve Savory was covering the municipal elections for CHQM, Rob Leung doesn't like social occasions, and Rob Scott didn't show up again, so I couldn't boast to him that I had Var The Stick (Piers Anthony), Future Glitter (Van Vogt), The Tin Angel (Goulart), and Jondelle (E.C. Tubb--Dumarest) in paperback.

There was some doubt about a December meeting with no one willing to host one. However, at the meeting, Clayton Vogler volunteered his house for a Christmas Party-- Saturday, December 15, 1406 West 14th Avenue 7:30PM, KNOCK LOUD, BYOB, BYOFOOD, John Thomson will show his Bellingham slides and says that some Bellingham fans will attend.

OTHER NEWS

Phil Dick has sold movie rights for Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?. He receives option money each year, and if it is made into a film, he receives a lump sum.

The 1974 Nebula Awards Ceremony will be held on Saturday April 27, in Hollywood.

LASFS (Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society) has purchased its own clubhouse (11360 Ventura Blvd. in Studio City) for \$32,000. Is this the basis of almost-charges of mis-handling of funds re the 1972 IACon?

F. Lee Bailey's GALLERY magazine is apparently going out of business. Too tame, I guess. (Have you seen CLUB INTERNATIONAL or COQ?)

What I think is the next step in conventions is occurring in England--a six week festival, BEYOND THIS HORIZON, with programming budgetted at about \$20,000. This is the obvious answer to people who claim conventions are getting too large.

APECON -- yes, APECON, dedicated to The ~~Planet~~ Planet Of The Apes, ("all the apes you could hope for"), takes place December 29-30 in Hollywood. If anyone's interested I can supply the address of this as well as other upcoming conventions.

BOOKS -- UPCOMING, REVIEWS, AND COMMENTS

Berkeley will issue Heinlein's Time Enough For Love in January, (--that means June in Canada).

In his new list Don Grant mentions that he is so pleased with the sales of R.E. Howard's Sowers Of Thunder that he is going to publish the Conan series in a high quality, uniform hardcover edition -- possibly with colour plates -- retaining un-edited Howard stories and titles.

New titles of note: More Things In Heaven, Time Jump by John Brunner from Dell. Again Dangerous Visions is available in paperback -- in two large volumes at \$1.95 each. Read the story that enraged Michael G. Coney.

High Deryni by Katherine Kurtz Ballantine Adult Fantasy \$1.25

An almost-Book Review For Secret Fantasists

This is "Volume III of 'The Deryni Chronicle'". When I spoke with the authoress at Torcon she said it was the last of the trilogy, but that other books are planned. In fact, she rattled off so many names and titles that I was quickly lost. But her enthusiasm about her fantasy world is catching.

If you've read the other titles in the series (and I recommend them), then I need not introduce the basic conflict. But just in case you haven't, the plot involves a conflict between humans and Deryni, mutated humans who have telepathic and similar powers. The world is a medieval one in which the Deryni have been defeated by the humans, but some still live in secret -- some, in fact, don't even know of their powers.

The series started off being the story of a prince whose father is assassinated. He learns that he is a Deryni and he soon receives aid from "half Deryni" friends and relatives in consolidating his royal and inherited powers. In the three volumes, much strife occurs: civil war, persecution and excommunication of the Deryni, and invasion from a neighbouring country. During the narrative, the protagonist of the series is slowly transformed from the young king to the half-Deryni, Morgan. I suspect his character grew in strength and Miss Kurtz relinquished the hero's role to him. (A similar situation almost occurred in Dune with Duncan Idaho.)

The writing is good throughout the series, although the ending of HD shows evidence of sloppiness. I suspect Miss Kurtz became emotionally involved with her own story and her style became a little grandiose at the climax. But, on the whole, I recommend this series as the best I've encountered since Tolkien's LOTR.

In his introduction to High Deryni, Lin Carter points out that all the good new writers of fantasy are women. He wonders why, and so do I. Maybe women fantasize more than men, and make use of their experience to add better internal consistency to their writing. From her garb, Miss Kurtz appears to be a SCA member. So, I guess she's a not-so-secret fantasist.

CORRESPONDENCE

I receive letters -- amazing.

Phil Dick writes that he heard from Bubbles Broxon, "She's a pro writer now; wow! When you see her give her a kiss for me and congratulate her." Probably thinking of the political climate and energy crisis, he also writes, "I doubt if it's worth it to drive down here to the Westercon, or even fly. I'm having doubts myself, and I live here." -- and he's also the guest of honour.

J. Robert Davison (another Rob) writes from Victoria about our November meeting, "Much to my chagrin, this will be the one weekend out of five I will not be in Vancouver." He goes on "I just received... Daniel Say's Newsletter..Day (sic, Dan? Say?) speaks as though he is talking of two different organizations, and yet my impression has been that there is only one. Somewhat confuddling!" Two organizations? -- Just try to find Bill Dodds -- And does Gillian Arsenault really exist? Two organizations indeed!

From Bubbles Broxon in Seattle re the convention, "If you make posters I could place at least 3 or 4." Here they are, Bubbles, 3 or 4.

From a different Phil Dick letter referring obliquely to the meat shortage, a timely newspaper misprint, "CHICKEN FARTS SIXTY-FIVE CENTS A POUND."

Ken Bieber in Waterloo (Ontario -- let the bastards freeze, remember?) writes, "For obvious reasons I won't be attending your monthly meetings ... P.S. I like your newsletter."

Claire Hogg writes from Tokyo (Japan) re Torcon, "Did Dan Say pop out of the woodwork as usual? ... We had a medium-sized earthquake yesterday ... Carpe diem."

Eve Savory wrote from the Press Gallery in Victoria, "the latest newsletter was so good I had to compliment you... if that doesn't turn people (those 100) on to S-f we don't want them anyhow." Eve, compliments like that are worth at least a lifetime subscription.

Rob Scott writes from Agony, B.C. VOM 1A0, "Just finished 'Hero of Downways' (by Mike Coney). I didn't feel it was up to the standards of 'Mirror Image' ... Coney is a good writer and I'm looking forward to his next work ... I suppose you've read Niven's new one, 'Protector'? As usual you probably didn't like it but I think it was good, better than RW even (OK, Rob, you really put your foot into your mouth -- or your pen nib into your finger-- this time. In fact, I'd say you blew it. Better than Ringworld? It wasn't even as good as The Flying Sorcerer.) ... Please excuse the spelling errors and typos (forgive mine too, Rob) but this small town... Perhaps if I was genetically altered into a cow or milking machine I'd do better."

Ursula Le Guin writes from Portland, "I do hope you are awarding the Elrons this year. I have several nominations ... If this letter does not reach you, please inform me promptly..."

Jim Maloan writes from mundane Port Coquitlam on "Scientific Vacuity and/or Card-board Characters ... As examples of what I mean, I could cite Silverberg's Dying Inside, with its 3-dimensional characters but questionable scientific or logical credibility, and the works of Asimov and Clarke with their attention to scientific detail but often lamentable lack of complete characterization." Interesting dichotomy, Jim.

ELRONS -- WHAT ARE THEY?

During the First Vancouver SF Convention, a "fiendish mind" (according to Mike Sch, conceived --with Brent MacLean, OK Brent? -- , wrote and presented a series of

awards designed to shame certain authors into silence. The Elron Awards (no connection to well known SF hack, L. Ron Hubbard) were bronzed lemons mounted on a classy plywood base and were presented for the Worst Novel, Least Promising Author, and Worst Dramatic Presentation. Someone also was elected to the Elron Hall of Fame -- for continued disservice to SF. The presentation of the awards raised some static in Eastern SF circles, and consequently were not presented at V-con II. However, we intend to revive them for V-con III, so think up nominations. Remember no story or movie is so bad, it can't receive an Elron.