

BCCSFA ZINE

Vol. 27 Issue 5se Number 312se
May 1999 Free



"The Force is unusually strong in him."

Qui-Gonn

"At last we will have revenge."

Darth Maul

STAR WARS
EPISODE I
THE SILENT MENACE

STAR WARS
EPISODE I
THE SILENT MENACE

Johnny Says...

Star Wars - Episode 1
The Over-Hyped Menace

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MEMBERSHIPS

New	\$26.00
New Family	\$32.00
Renewal	\$25.00
Family (2 Votes)	\$31.00

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 Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1J1

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May 1999 Volume 27, #5se
 BCSFAzine is the club newsletter published by the West Coast Science Fiction Association (A Registered Society) *W.C.S.F.A. is also known as B.C.S.F.A. which is the social branch of the organization.*

For comments, subscriptions suggestions, and/or submissions, write to:
WCSFA
 #110-1855 West 2nd Ave.
 Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1J1



BCSFAzine is also available as a full colour Adobe Acrobat file.

WCSFAACTIVITIES

F.R.E.D. - Every Friday

The weekly gathering of BCSFAns and all others interested in joining us for an evening of conversation and relaxation, with pool table option. At the Burrard Motor Inn opposite St. Paul's Hospital (Downtown Vancouver) 6 blocks south of Burrard Skytrain Station. 3 blocks west of Granville (where many buses run). #22 Knight/McDonald bus along Burrard. Begins 8:00pm. On the Friday before long weekends, FRED will be at the lounge of Bosman's Hotel. This is two blocks east and a part of a block north of the Burrard Motor Inn (actual address is 1060 Howe St.).

Contributor's Deadline - June 18, July 16, August 20. September 17th, October 15th, November 19th, December 17th. Send your submissions/loc to John Wong at 2041 East 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V5N 1X9 or E-Mail me at woolf@vcn.bc.ca.

BCSFAzine Collation - June 6th, July 4th, August 1st, September 5th, October 3rd, November 7th, December 5th. First Sunday of the month 4:30PM. Call Steve Forty (S.40) to confirm at 936-4754.

BCSFAzine Pickup at FRED - June 4th, July 2nd, July 30th, September 3rd, October 1st. Last Friday of every month Pick up your issue of BCSFAzine at FRED! Pristine, mint condition copies are available at FRED. Call Steve to let him know you wish to pick up your copy. (These dates are approximate only. Due to production scheduling changes, the issues may be available one week early.)

Discount Movie Nights.

\$2.00 Tuesdays are back! When? The second Tuesday of the month (June 8th, July 13th) at 6:30 pm. The place being New West Cinema at #229 - 555 Sixth Street, New Westminster. Meet in front of the Box Office at the above time and we'll decide on which movie, where to do coffee and in which order.

May 31st (Monday) - **FREFF** at 7pm, **Forget Reality Enjoy Feeding Frenzies.** Held the last Monday of the month, (unless it is a long weekend), this gathering for food fans hits Vancouver restaurants during the odd-numbered months and suburban restaurants during even-numbered months. Reservations are never necessary since Monday is usually dead for most places. The current organizer (Doug Finnerty) is always looking for sugges-

tions of where to eat next. Stepho's 1124 Davie St., Vancouver. An inexpensively perfect place for a VCON postmortem.

Saturday June 12th (Saturday) **WCSFA Video Night.** Featuring a selection by R. Graeme Cameron! (As seen at VCON 24!) Meet at 7:00 pm. The address is: 316-4683 Arbutus St., Vancouver, BC V6J 4A3

June 19th - (Saturday) **WCSFA General Meeting** at 1 pm. Firehall Branch Library. 1455 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver. (Tenth and Granville). Phone Doug Finnerty (526-5621) for more information. Parking available under library.

Monday June 28th at 7 pm. **FREFF** Caspian Restaurant 1495 Marine, West Vancouver. Persian cuisine at its best.

Thursday July 1st - **WCSFA Metropolis Playdium Arcade Challenge** on Canada Day. Play as much as you can for \$12.00 an hour all day from 10 AM to closing.

July 17th - **WCSFA Open House.** Not confirmed yet, but perhaps a minicon style event where there can be an art show, dealers, and panels. Perhaps we can even get a few local authors down to do readings and sign books. We are working on getting a room at the Central Branch library for this. Keep an eye here for opportunities to volunteer and help out the club!

Tuesday July 20th at 7pm. **Night of the Writer Roasties.** Annapurna 1812 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver. The book being Bloodsport by Lisa Smedman. Secure your copy now.

Monday July 26th at 7 pm. **FREFF** Gain Wah 218 Keefer Street, Vancouver. Located on the edge of Vancouver's historic Chinatown.

August - **WCSFA Annual BBQ/Picnic/Beach Party.** Do you have a suggestion on where we can get together on the third Saturday of August? Let us know!

Saturday September 18th. 7.00 pm **WCSFA Annual General Meeting and Elections. Special Time and Place.** Misty's Billiards. 341 B. North Road, Coquitlam, B.C. Three blocks south of Lougheed Mall. Be there to elect the new executive for the new Millennium! Pick a President, Vice-President, Information Officer, Treasurer, Secretary, and three Members at Large. Choose wisely.

October 31st - UBC Science Fiction Society Annual Food Bank Trick or Treat. **WCSFA** is proud to join the UBCSFS in this charity event. Dress up and go trick or treat for the Vancouver Food Bank. Event is usually followed by a costumed party. Bring a canned item for a donation and munchies for the party later. Keep an eye out here for future official **WCSFA** sponsored events.

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

WESTERCON 52/Empire Con

Spokane, WA Jul 2-5 1999

Author Guests: C.J. Cherryh, Barbara Hambly, Kristine Kathryn Rusch

Art Guests: Alicia Austin, Wendy Pini

Editor Guest: Ellen Datlow

Fan Goh: Larry Baker

Toastmaster: Betty Bigelow

MEMBERSHIPS:

\$45 until July 6 1998,

\$50 until December 31st,

\$60 at the door.

HOTEL: Double Tree Inn, Spokane City Center, 509-455-9600 or 1-800-222-8733 Rooms begin at \$75 / night (Extra for fireworks view on July 4th.)

For more info: 509-891-5762

westercon52@webwitch.com

www.webwitch.com/westercon52 or write:

Empire Con P.O. Box 7477

Spokane WA 99207

Dragonflight August 27-29, 1999

P.O. Box 776, Seattle, WA 98111-0776

Dragonflight is an annual gaming conventions held at the Seattle University. Gamers gather to join in the friendship and the many games offered. The games played include play role-playing, miniatures, board games, card games, and networked computer games. The Dragonflight convention is held at the Seattle University. For more information on Seattle University visit their site at <http://www.seattleu.edu/> Registration for Dragonflight is \$31.00 through July 31, 1999. This includes, entry into the conventions for all three days.

Mail membership to Dragonflight 1999, PO Box 776, Seattle, WA 98111-0776, USA with your check.

MosCon XXI 10-12 September 1999

Where: University Inn, Moscow, Idaho

Why: Because we're coming of age...

Guests of Honor: James P. Hogan and Tara Harper

Fan Guests: Dan and Theresa Fears

Artist Guest: TBD

Scientist Guest: TBD

Remember to RSVP for Mark's PARTY!

Incon October 16-17-18, 1999

Spokane Valley Red Lion, I-90 and Sullivan Road

Author Guest of Honor - Charles De Lint

Margret Organ-Kean - Artist GoH

24-hour gaming, including Magic, RPGs, miniature wargaming, Vampire LRP

Lots of tourneys and prizes!

Plus Anime, Art Show, Autographs, Banquet, Charity Auction, Costume Contests, Dances, Dealers, Doll Costuming, Fan Clubs, Hall Costume Contest, Masquerade, Panels, Parties, Writers Workshop and much more!

WEEKEND PASSES:

\$15 until May 1, 1999

\$20 until Sept. 1, 1999

\$25 at the door

BUY EARLY / SAVE MONEY

Children 11 and under FREE if accompanied by an adult

For reservations call:

(509) 924-9000

or contact:

inconregistration@yahoo.com

Other enquiries;

incongams@yahoo.com

Terracon II, October 29-31 1999

Best Western Executive Inn, Fife, WA

Author Guest of Honor:

Dave Duncan

Media Guest of Honor: TBA

Special Media Guest:

Chris McDonell

Toastmaster: David Tackett

Registration: \$20 through 10/15/99

\$30 at door

OryCon 21 November 12-14, 1999

Columbia River DoubleTree Inn, Portland, Oregon. OryCon 21 will be a weaponless convention. Smoking allowed in designated areas only Artist Guest of Honor:

Nene Thomas

Writer Guest of Honor:

Nicola Griffith

Editor Guests of Honor:

Warren Lapine

Science Guest of Honor:

Angela Kessler Charles

It's time to start preparing once again for Oregon's premiere Science Fiction and Fantasy event, OryCon! Now in its twenty-first year, OryCon will feature programming, workshops, an art show, a dealer's room, filking, dances, gaming, the Susan Petrey Scholarship auction, and more!

For more information:

OryCon 21

PO Box 5703

Portland, OR 97228-5703

E-mail: saxon@agora.rdrop.com

Telephone: (503) 232-6506

Viking Con 17 August 18-20, 2000

Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington. Viking Union 202 Box V-1 Bellingham, WA 98225

Science Guest Of Honour

Freeman Dyson

Author Guest Of Honour

Larry Niven

Art Guest Of Honour

Julia Lacquement

Special Guest Of Honour

George Dyson

Fan Guest Of Honour

Paul Carpentier

Julie McGalliard

Memberships \$15 US

(Special rate for our Canadian friends. \$20 CAN) until 12/31/1999



Surf Us Out! WCSFA-On Line at:

<http://spellbinder.bc.ca/bcsfa>

Check out our web site for all the information you need to be a local fan.

• Convention Listings • Ask Mr. Science • SF TV Listings • VCON Web Pages • Internet Links • Store Listings

Special Thanks to Alan Barclay for the Web Space



Get a full colour version of this magazine! Subscribe to BCSFAzine electronically. The Acrobat version of this magazine includes extra internet interest pages, full colour pictures and text. It can be displayed on your monitor and can even be printed out at home on your colour inkjet, post-script or most laser printers.

See subscription information on page 2 on how you can get the full benefits of subscribing on-line!

Get the Acrobat Reader free from www.adobe.com

Dear Ken/John:

BCSFazine 312 has made its Acrobatic way to Yvonne's laptop, and she has printed out a hard copy for me to comment on. Here goes...
V-Con is coming up next weekend, as I write, so I hope all of you enjoy the convention. I look forward to the reports on the con in future issues of this zine.

Just before V-Con, though, is the premiere of Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace. Should this letter see print, it will have passed, and it's likely that I will have seen the movie. I have tried not to subscribe to the hype that's going on, and I have found out little of the plot. A large article appeared in the Toronto Star announced that one of their movie critics had seen the movie, and he had a review of it. I did not read the article, but the headline gave something important away...the critic didn't like the movie. He said this just wasn't Star Wars, but an excuse for massive merchandising, like that which has already hit the store shelves. Like many of you, I found fandom around the time of the original movie in 1977, and hey, I found it in Victoria. I shall go to the movie and have a rollicking good time, for not only will it be a look at an exotic future and a favourite universe, but also a nostalgic trip back to what gave me a good jolt of sensawunda in my neofannish days.

I'm taking time out from this loc to see Robert J. Sawyer verbally duke it out with Mike Bullard on Open Mike on the Comedy Channel...Rob told everyone how phallic a Hugo Award is, and just how he writes his science fiction, and how he'd choose Ray Bradbury over Bill Shatner as the better SF writer. I'm not sure that interview was a good idea, but Bullard seemed to want you back, so you'll get a rematch...

Julie Wall, editor of the
SFC is looking for
I though
be

Also, I'll be passing on your e-address to Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin. The ways to cut back on their printing costs, and that if Julie got in touch with you, you might be able to relay some of your adventures with Acrobat, seeing you've now done a dozen issues that way. With luck, you might be able to help out one of the biggest clubs in the United States.

Time to fold, it's getting late.
Take care, and see you nextish.
Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Hi: John Called Ken.

I'm not planing on writing anything on "Dr. Who" until after June 6th 1999, when the BBC can officially say what's going on. There are so many rumours that even my source close to the series can't make heads or tails out of it. One week it's going to be a major motion picture, the next week a new TV series made in Australia with help from the Americans, and the week after that it's a new TV series made in Australia without the American help. I feel like I'll give up on science fantasy and run off to eat pizzas with Jen Tilly after setting up house on the new "Little House" series out in Mission if I have put with more of this crap. My friend (my contact, who's uncle wrote for the original BBC series) said they most likely will have no official word on what will happen with the series until September.

Peter Pans is right, **Brimstone** was a much better series than **The Crow: Stairway to Heaven**. But **Highlander: The Raven** did a much worst job wracking a good fancies. This series took the expression *TV by committee* to new lows. If any of you find the strip to the pilot **Highlander: Mistwalker** you will know what I mean. In fact, in this version the hero is not a warrior at all, just a kind woman who fights for justice as a last resort with the help from the powers she got from her *Quickenings*. OK, sounds more like **The Crow: Stairway to Heaven** but this one had real heart, humour and could have been a hit as is.

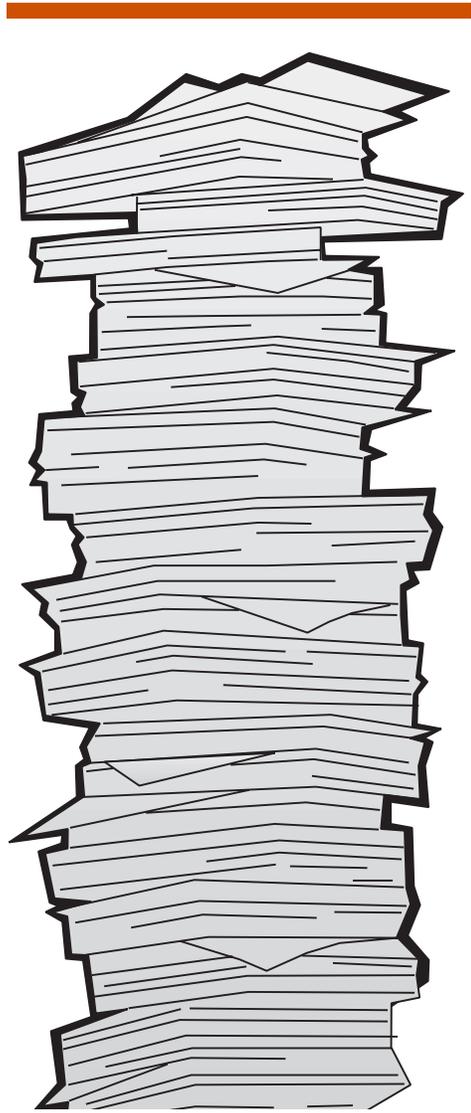
Too bad.

Back to real life now, I still may make it to VCon if someone has crash space by tomorrow. So for now, this is Dr. Media signing off. Be seeing you.

Ray "Dr. Media" Seredin
drmedia@thecentre.com



You would think I'd know better after all these years. Putting out an issue of BCSFAzine early is hard enough as it is. This year, however, I decided to do something incredibly stupid and put out an extra issue. Not just any issue, but one which could be distributed throughout this year without the contents dating themselves.



I was hoping to use this issue to showcase the many people who contribute to the magazine on a monthly basis. Unlike the regular edition, this issue did not have any page limitations. The ten page limit that we work under is just under the weight limit of the stamp that we are currently using. For this issue, the usual gang of writers were invited to ignore their usual word limits and write as much as they felt they required for their articles.

So what is this magazine all about? BCSFAzine is not just a club magazine. You will find that, although we do list upcoming club sponsored events and other conventions, most of the material in this zine is not club business like most zines of this kind, but contains a variety of different articles covering a large range of topics.

One of the first areas **BCSFAzine** looked into when I took over was the **Furry** fandom. Lynx Meerkat wrote about his views of the of the many "Furry" events and conventions he attended. Lynx moved south last year and my friend Tony Greyfox took over with **Fox Tails**. Tony's articles concentrated on the internet resources and the many Fur conventions in the area. Tony currently works for a newspaper in the interior and is unable to continue with articles on a regular basis.

I was very privileged to have been able to have Catherine Donahue write for BCSFAzine for over a year. She is a very busy person and her work takes up much of her time now. She works for the local television station, putting in twelve hour days. Catherine discussed many different topics under her article "**The Vulture's Eye View**." Catherine's speciality was little known facts about various aspects of Science Fiction. It was hard to read Catherine's column without learning something new.

Other contributors from my past include Clint Budd's "**Hot Gossip Stop!**", Alan Betz's "**Ask Mr. Science**." Stu Royan's "**Ether Emanations**", and Garth Spencer's "**Home on the Web**".

When we look at our current contributors, I can say that there is still a large variety of topics covered in what little space we have. Donna McMahon's **SF Book Review**, now in it's 11th column, covers a range of books which are available in our local libraries and are usually by authors whom I would not have otherwise considered reading.

Long-time contributor and well known fanzine editor R. Graeme Cameron still writes for the BCSFAzine. In the past, most of the zine was devoted to his work. Graeme's articles included "**Spotlight On**", and "**BCSFAzines of Yore**." Ever since taking over as Archivist, Graeme has started a column called the "**State of the Archives Report**."

Another contributor who has since become published recently is Lisa Gemino. Her column "**Perspectives**" usually involves some controversial comment of hers and her ranting and raving in support of her statement. (Gosh, I hope she isn't reading this...)

Dr. Media's Media Report may no longer be available, but Ray still contributes his comments on fandom, television, movies and Dr. Who on a monthly basis.

Our social calendar is reported on by Steve Forty in his column **40 Winks**. If you have a party you want to advertise, a movie you want to see as a group, or even just a simple gathering at a local pub that you want to publicise, Steve is the one to tell.

For over a year now, I have been making this magazine available to the membership electronically. Any member can request that their subscriptions be switched over to the *Adobe Acrobat* format version. This version of the magazine is e-mailed to the subscriber as soon as I have finished the layout work and have placed all the hyperlinked markers. These markers allow the reader to use their mouse to move from page to page, check out web sites, and send e-mail to the authors with the click of a button. Another benefit of having the *Acrobat* version of the 'zine is the full colour pages. If you have a colour printer at home, you can print out a full colour version of this zine. For those of you who have difficulty reading the small type on the printed page, there is a zoom feature in *Acrobat Reader* which will magnify any part of the page up to 400%. This issue is available on our web site as a free download, so check it out. (<http://spellbinder.bc.ca/bcsfa>) It is the only issue available on line so if you want future issues, you must subscribe. (See page 2 for subscription rates.)





F.R.E.D. which stands for (polite version, a stronger F word is the real version) Forget Reality Enjoy Drinking) is a loose social gathering of Science Fiction Fans. We gather every Friday at the Burrard Motor Inn, across the street from St Paul's hospital in downtown Vancouver (the exception to this is on long weekends when we go two blocks away to Bosman's Hotel's Sidebar Lounge- we post the change on the door at the Burrard, and it is only a two block walk East and a little North on Howe Street). FRED is not directly associated with WCSFA or VCON but almost everyone there is a member of both the club and the convention. We also get some fans from the S'Harien and occasionally some from local Star Trek clubs. There are usually 15 to 25 people over the 7:30 - 11:00 pm time that the Burrard is open -it is open earlier but we don't start to arrive until then because it is smoky before then (Bosman's is open later until 2:00 am, but is much smokier which is why we don't go there every week).

FRED turns 20 years old on May 7 (that is the closest Friday to the May 6 date mentioned in the original Book of FRED). FRED started out of the meetings to put on the BCSFA(BCSFA is now under the umbrella of WCSFA, the registered body) sponsored Rain relaxacon, which was held every year for six years. The group decided to have a place to go and visit with fellow fans, a place where you relaxed without having official meetings, or dues..... We started meeting on Tuesdays at the RobsonKeller (I have forgotten the correct spelling), and then FRED bounced around for a number of years. During the roving years not many showed most weeks. In 1986 we decided to hold it at Folk Life at Expo 86, where 10 to 15 showed up all summer. Then in October we changed the date (inspired by ESFOG in Edmonton) to Fridays and moved to the Centennial Hotel's (now the Ramada Hotel) Time Out Lounge on Broadway. Most weeks about 35 fans showed up. Our most successful location was at Stirlings in The Kings Best Western on Kingsway near Royal Oak in Burnaby. We got between 45 to 65 fans most weeks. We lasted there about two years and stayed for a short while at the Villa Pub in

Burnaby. We finally wound up at the Burrard Motor Inn lounge (Green Tree I think it's called) around 1989 where we still go most of the time now. The number of fans coming has gone up and down over the years, but right now after a few lean years we are getting more out, between 15 and 25 over the evening most weeks.

Through FRED a number of activities have resulted. Several VCONS were conceived through ideas at FRED, our Wreck Beach Sandcastle team was conceived and organized through FRED (we won the first two sandcastle events, winning best of category and best of show both years we ran a team). We also have had a number of events started out of a night of relaxation with our fellow fans. A Star Trek Club was even started through FRED a number of years ago.

A number of fans have met each other or gotten to know each other better here, and now are married.

We owe much of the idea of FRED to JoAnne McBride, and the book of FRED to Tom Waddell. I was

passed the original book of FRED by Tom, now we are on book two (thanks Wendy for donating it to us) which I am sure I will pass on to some enthusiast some day. Everyone who comes to FRED gets to sign the Book Of FRED once with whatever notation they want to include. Occasionally we will have a special event where everyone there will sign the book.

The people who have signed the book are from all walks of life and from all over the country. We have had authors such as William Gibson, Don Debrandt, Eileen Kernaghan, Spider and Jeanne Robinson, Lisa Cohen, Lisa Smedman, Rhea Rose, Robert Sawyer, Robert Charles Wilson, and a number of others I can't think of right now. We have also let fandom in general, world wide know we are here. We have had visitors from all over North America, Finland, England, Australia and a few others I have forgotten.

To wrap up, I (Steve 40, the Keeper of the Book of FRED) and all of FRED invite you to drop in and visit-have a drink (it doesn't have to be alcoholic) with us. You never know who might show up, the group is rarely the same each week.

F o r g e t R e a l i t y E n j o y D r i n k i n g

STATE OF THE ARCHIVES REPORT #10

The British Columbia Science Fiction Association (legally registered under the name 'West Coast Science Fiction Association') was first formed in January 1970. In October 1976 the following notice appeared in BCSFAzine #76: 'Position open as BCSFA Archivist. Duties: collect, catalogue, and store in safety BCSFAzines, mail, memorabilia, convention materials, etc.' Naturally, being an SF club operating on traditional Fannish time, the first Archivist, Gerald Boyko, was not appointed until January 1980, or some ten years after the founding of the club. Gerald served as Archivist for 16 years, stepping down in 1996 with myself as replacement.

So what the heck is in the club archive and why is it important? For starters, a separate file is maintained on each and every VCON since the beginning, preserving program books, GoH correspondence, reviews, financial records, etc., for each, thus preserving the history of VCON in its entirety. In addition, many program books from other regional cons, as well as Worldcons, are also preserved. 'Official' files are maintained of course, be it collections of meeting minutes, Society Act registration papers, VCON Trademark Registration documents, etc., but also files on fun stuff, such as a complete as possible a record of the infamous Elron Awards, or the text of the equally infamous 'Godzilla Sex Life Skit'. Two four-drawer filing cabinets are required to hold all of the above, which constitute a unique record of the curious phenomena of a Science Fiction Club active for nearly three decades. A matter of little interest for the moment, perhaps, but something Social Historians a century from now will be keen to study.

Of broader import for an understanding of twentieth century SF Fandom is the bulk of the archive, a collection of more than 5,000 SF Fanzines. What are SF Fanzines you ask? A phenomena as old as organized Fandom itself. What you are holding in your hand is a typical SF clubzine, a type of Fanzine. Fanzines put out by individuals (such as my own 'SPACE CADET GAZETTE') are called perzines, short for personal zines. Both types of zine date back to the 1930s. For example, 'THE COMET', edited by Ray Palmer for the 'Science Correspondence Club', is considered to be the first SF Fanzine, coming out in May of 1930. Two months later the 'New York Scienceers' published the first edition of 'THE PLANET'. By the end of 1930 dozens of clubs and individuals were publishing zines, a practice which continues to this day.

As might be expected, the majority of Fanzines in the archive date from the last three decades, though we have received a few donated examples going back as far as the 1940s. 49% are from the United States, 20% are published in Canada, 17% came out of the United Kingdom, 11% are from Australia and New Zealand, and the remaining 3% from elsewhere (Latvia, Ukraine, Argentina, etc). Perhaps the best way to convey an impression of what the archive contains is to describe five recent acquisitions:

by Anti-Archivist R. Graeme Cameron

A BAS # 0 - published January 23rd, 1954.

'The Fanzine For Discriminating Fen', a Derelict publication, was a spur-of-the-moment satirical one-shot written and printed at a meeting of the Toronto Science Fiction Society by such well-known 1950s Canadian fans as Howard Lyons, Boyd Raeburn and Gerald Steward. With its off-beat style of humour, the one-shot was an immediate success, and a further 10 issues were published, the last in 1957. According to Canadian Fan Historian Taral Wayne, comparing it to the legendary 1940/50s zine CANADIAN FANDOM (of which the archive has 8 issues), "A BAS was a more popular zine back then, and reads better today, but Can Fan is far better known in current fanhistories." Issue #0 is noteworthy for its review of the 1953 Hammer film SPACEWAYS starring Howard Duff ("In particular I was nauseated by the use of a bookkeeping machine in the guise of a super-duper-calculator," says the reviewer), a reported rumour that MAD MAGAZINE (then still a comic book) had folded after its sixth issue, and a plea that "the first fanactivity of the true fan should be to READ science fiction."

BOREALIS #1 - published Summer 1978.

The first Fanzine out of Halifax, Nova Scotia, was edited by John Bell and Alain Chabot. With full colour covers and available only by subscription, it perhaps qualifies as a prozine. Alas, only two issues were ever produced (the archive has both). This first issue features fiction by Spider Robinson, an article on Spider by Jack Gaughan, an article on 'SF in Quebec' by Norbert Spehner (the founding editor of REQUIEM, now known as SOLARIS), a Gene Day art portfolio, and much else besides. An ambitious, high quality effort, I suspect production costs vs. lack of subscriptions led to its premature demise. A pity, for it was a beautiful zine.

Continued next page...



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1944 FANZINE YEARBOOK - published early 1945.

Put out jointly by LE ZOMBIE's editor Bob Tucker and the National Fantasy Fan Federation, this lists 105 SF Fanzines that came out in 1944 (probably more than are being produced today?). This includes such famous zines as Walt Liebscher's CHANTICLEER, Sam Moskowitz's FANTASY TIMES and F.J. Ackerman's VOM, but also infamous zines like Claude Degler's COSMIC CIRCLE COMMENTATOR, and fun titles like Helen Bradleigh's FUTURIAN FEMME, Walt

Daugherty's SHOTTLE BOP CARD and Ackerman's VOMAIDEN FROLIC. The only Canadian zines mentioned are Beak Taylor's CANADIAN FANDOM and Les Crouch's LET'S SWAP. A glimpse into the distant past of SF Fanzine Fandom.

THE REALLY INCOMPLETE BOB TUCKER - published October 1974.

Edited by Dave Locke, this anthology of novelist and BNF (Big Name Fan, very big, legendary in fact) Bob Tucker's fan articles celebrates 40 (!) years of his fanwriting as part of a project to raise money to send Bob to the 33rd Worldcon held in 1975 in Melbourne Australia. This was successfully accomplished. Articles in this hilarious one-shot

include: 'The Girl With The Turbid, Impure, Cloudy, Confused, Mucky Eyes' and 'A Chucklehead Has No Honor In His Own Country.'

FANZINE INDEX - published at intervals from 1952 to 1959.

Edited by Bob Pavlet and Bill Evans, this was a fantastic attempt to list every SF fanzine published from 1930 to 1952! This is extremely useful to fan historians who want to know what Fanzines certain fans produced before they became pro writers, or the titles of all the various zines published by individual fans like F.J. Ackerman. Unfortunately, for reasons of space, much useful data was left out. I wish capsule descriptions of style and content had been included for instance, and the fact that addresses are not present makes it impossible to get a sense of regional development or even country of origin. All the same, from a researcher's point of view, this is a wonderful addition to the archive.

So there you have it, a brief explanation of what the BCSFA/WCSFA archive is all about. If you are interested in Fanzines and Fanzine fandom, drop by the CUFF table in the dealers room and meet me. I'll be glad to talk 'zines', and delerious if I can sell you some of the rare zines I'll be offering for sale, as well as publications of the BCSFA/WCSFA PRESS and other nifty stuff. Above all, enjoy the con!



PRESS

RELEASE

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WHO IS SPACE COMMANDER STONE?

Space Commander Stone is an independantly produced and marketed science fiction comedy drama radio play that parodies Star Wars, Star Trek and most other science fiction series, films etc.

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The initial 45 minute adventure (Space Commander Mission to Uranus) was produced in 1994 by Adrian Sherlock and David O'connor for less than two thousand dollars in a home recording studio. All the characters voiced in the first story were performed by Adrian Sherlock and based on characters created by Adrian Sherlock and Stephen Connell residents of Geelong, in the state of Victoria, Australia. The creation of Space Commander Stone was inspired by Doug Adams's Hitchhikers Guide to The Galaxy and The Late kenny Everett's Captain Kemmen radio serial, created by Cosgrove/Hall England.

WHAT IS SPACE COMMANDER ABOUT?

The basic plot of Space Commander Stone Mission To Uranus is that Stone and the crew of the Fingerone are sent on a suicide mission by their corrupt boss The Supreme Commander to save earth from the evil Lord Dark Marsbar who wants to turn Stone's ship into a flying bomb and crash it into an important meeting of planetary delegates on Earth. The first Stone adventure was launched at a monthly meeting of the Melbourne Star Trek fan Club Austreki where without prior publicity or fanfare it received a positive and open minded reception from Austrek and Science fiction fans in general.

WHAT NEXT FOR STONE?

Space Commander Stone's new adventure (The Next Regurgitation) has been produced in a professional recording on a sixteen track machine with electronic enhancements of character voices to give a more dramatic effect to the performance of each character. Adrian Sherlock still performs all the character voices but using state of the art recording technology allows him to push new boundaries with his incredible vocal and acting talents.

The writing and the performing of the theme and special sound effects by David O'connor added a rich texture to overall production of this Space Commander Stone story and Hangar Thirteen was most fortunate to have a musician and compoer of David's talent working with us.

THE NEXT REGURGITATION PLOT LINE

The new Space Commander Stone story revolves around the refitted and refurbished Fingerone (now galaxy class) still looking like a giant finger with wings on the outside but now ressembling a coffee lounge in the interior. The story also incorporates an outrageous interlude where the computer brags about his sex life but discovers that relationships have their ups and downs and hard drive crashes. The crew are then sent off into deep space where they have to confront (again) Stone's arch enemy Lord Dark Marsbar and his new battle craft whose design is different to say the least!! It is here Stone is taken to met his final destiny and discovers that potential relatives can be very strange indeed.

Space Commander Stone is a great example of the talent in Australia and one of the only Science Fiction Comedies produced in this country. Hangar Thirteen is looking for participation from the science Fiction lovers of the world to help us develope Space Commander intp various media formats, audio,animation,video, books and stage productions.

The world of Stone is about to take off so come join, Space Commander Stone, Mr Spook, The Computer, Zerg and Harry and Chewinggum The Whoohky on the ride of your life
Further details contact:

Stephen Connell, Producer, Hanger Thirteen Productions

E-Mail: spc13@hotmail.com or stephenconnell@mailcity.com



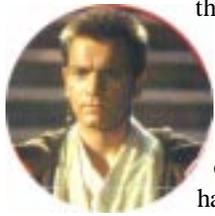


JOHNNY SAYS...

Star Wars, Episode One, The Over-Hyped Menace



Some of you may have noticed the advertising surrounding a certain film that was released in mid May. In some places, people were lined up months before it even opened in the hopes of being one of the first people to see the movie.



When the trailers were released, thousands, nay, millions flocked to see them. It was down-loaded off the net, it was shown in the theatres, and even on television. Movies which had the trailer shown before it did better than expected. People were willing to plunk down nine dollars just for the privilege of seeing the trailer. Who cares what the film is, there is a STAR WARS trailer before it!

Everywhere you looked, you saw STAR WARS - Episode One - The Phantom Menace. Anywhere you tuned on the radio, you heard STAR WARS - Episode One - The Phantom Menace. The hype machine is in full swing and there is no way anyone can avoid it.

Which leads me to my problem. STAR WARS was a major influence in my young life. When I first saw the Millennium Falcon, Luke Skywalker, C-3PO and R2-D2, Han Solo and Chewie, I was hooked. Yet, as the premier for the new movie approaches, I lack the excitement I felt when I was first exposed to *The Force*.

The release of Episode One was shrouded in absolute secrecy. Theatres did not know if they were going to get the film or not. Restrictions on the number of showings a days, no showings at theatres which are behind picket lines, and no critic could talk about the movie in their reviews added up to one of the most unusual releases in a while. The last film to restrict critics against discussing the film was *The Avengers*. Not a good sign folks.



I recently went to the bookstores and saw the faces of the new villains and heroes. I saw the new weapons and ships. I saw the new toys and model kits. I saw LEGO getting into the Star Wars act with new kits featuring ships and characters from the movie. I was quite disappointed with the selection available. I can only suspect that the really great toys and model kits

are being held back on reserve, awaiting the release of the movie.

When I first saw the new spaceships and other vehicles in the new movie, I was rather disappointed. They did not grab me like the ones from the old days, the Millennium Falcon, the X-Wings, the Tie Fighters, they all had a certain feel to them which pulled me in right away.

For the first time, ships were no longer symmetrical. Gone were the days in which spaceships were smooth sleek and sterile. The Millennium Falcon broke the mold of what space craft were supposed to look like. With the ship's bridge off to the one side, a disk spinning on the top, and texture! Pipes, indentations, bumps,



and grime covered the surface of this ship. And it was supposed to be the fastest piece of junk this side of the galaxy. People understood, for the first time, that without air friction, ships in space did not need to be smooth to be fast. Guns mounted on a ship had to be able to cover a full three dimensional grid, as opposed to the usual one hundred and eighty degree plain. Again, the Millennium Falcon addressed this problem by having a gun turret on the top as well as the bottom of the ship, giving it the best possible coverage with the fewest number of guns.

The stark difference between the Rebel ships and the Imperial fleet was explained by the fact that the rebel's ships are Imperial discards. The X-Wing fighters were the top of the line ships until the new Tie Fighters replaced them in the Imperial fleet. However, the new ships were not as maneuverable as the old ships which is why the new Tie Interceptor was developed in the later movies.

Looking at the new ships, the two that caught my attention the most were the twin pod racing ships and Darth Maul's ship. Unfortunately, even these two ships lacked



imagination in my mind. Granted, Darth Maul's ship looks like a logical ancestor of the X-Wing and the Tie Fighters, but it looks like somebody took two models and glued them together.

The racing ships, on the other hand, look like somebody from Star Trek was hired to design ships and they took the Enterprise, flipped it over, turned it around and said whoosh!

And what about these costumes? Darth Maul looks like that magician on FOX who gives away all the other magician's secrets. Then they gave Maul a crown of horns. What are the odds that he bites it in Episode three, causing the change in Anakin Skywalker?

What is with Queen Amidala's hair? Granted, George Lucas looked towards the Japanese Samurai for inspiration for the STAR WARS trilogy, but golly gee, if the royal hair didn't look like a joke by the royal hairstylist.

And who's idea was it to remove C-3PO's exo-skeleton? Come on folks, for esthetic reasons alone I wouldn't put a robot into service if it looked like its got veins pouring out of every joint. Aside from the fact that I would personally want the wiring protected from the elements, I wouldn't want to look at the ugly thing. These things are supposed to be sentient and last several lifetimes. What am I supposed to tell my children? "Don't worry, the monster in the corner is really a nice if somewhat chatty robot?"



In the end, I will have to mow through the throngs of avid raving fans that have blocked the entrances of every theatre in the country showing the movie just to see what all the fanfare is all about. Maybe after seeing the film, I will be better able to appreciate it all. Until then, I will have to continue with my complaints.

I do like Darth Maul's light staff though. Of course, I thought of it many years ago...



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SF BOOK REVIEWS #11

This Year's Nebula Nominees

Donna McMahon

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The 1998 Nebula Awards will be voted on the weekend of April 30-May 2 in Pittsburgh, and your reviewer, seized by a mad impulse, decided to read and review the six novels which made the final ballot (which, incidentally, are all available through the Vancouver Public Library). They are:

Asaro, Catherine: *THE LAST HAWK* (Tor, Nov97) Haldeman, Joe: *FOREVER PEACE* (Ace, Oct97) McDevitt, Jack: *MOONFALL* (HarperPrism, Apr98) Turtledove, Harry: *HOW FEW REMAIN* (Del Rey, Oct97) Wells, Martha: *DEATH OF THE NECROMANCER* (Avon July 98) Willis, Connie: *TO SAY NOTHING OF THE DOG* (Bantam Spectra, Jan98)

I started with the assumption that all these books should be good. But are they GREAT? And are they better than anything else I've reviewed in the last year? In particular, are they better than the following Nebula nominated books which I have reviewed which did not make the final ballot: *KOMARR*, Lois McMaster Bujold; *COMMITMENT HOUR*, James Alan Gardner; *MAXIMUM LIGHT*, Nancy Kress (review upcoming), *ONCE A HERO*, Elizabeth Moon; *THE NIGHT WATCH*, Sean Stewart; *THE MERRO TREE*, Katie Waitman.

Let's take a look.

* * *

In the first chapter of *THE LAST HAWK*, Prince Kelricson (brother of the ruler of the Skolian Empire) crashes his crippled spacefighter on an obscure planet named Coba. Seriously wounded, Kelric is hoping to send an SOS so he can be rescued, but the Cobans who find him have other ideas. Thanks to a bureaucratic oversight, Coba has escaped Imperial occupation and the Cobans are happy that way. If they let Kelric return to the Empire, he will take news with him that will forever end Coba's political and cultural autonomy.

The Cobans consider letting Kelric die, but they take him prisoner instead, and this novel is the story of his eighteen years on Coba, where his presence eventually upsets the fragile political balance of the planet.

This is an excellent set-up for a space opera, and I initially enjoyed the book despite its romance novel style (which turned off my partner, Clint, who dumped it after a couple of chapters). One of the best features is Catherine Asaro's clever and convincing depiction of Kelric's biomechanical enhancements. Kelric has an internal biomed computer which monitors his condition and directs nanomedics to repair damage. On Kelric's neurally relayed orders, the compu-

ter can also trigger hydraulic and other systems to respond to emergencies with super fast reflexes and heightened strength. However, Kelric's system is damaged and its erratic behaviour is entirely familiar to those of us who have screamed with frustration at an "illegal operation" message.

On the down side, Coba's female-dominated society is a lumbering parody of our own culture, complete with speeches about how men are the "weaker sex" and "hysterical" by nature. It's both unoriginal and unamusing, and Asaro's sharp handling of biotech only serves to highlight the fact that she made no serious attempt to address the biological and economic reasons behind sex roles. Also unconvincing was "quis," a complex dice game with which Cobans fight political and economic battles rather than having real wars. It's an interesting idea, but Asaro's sketchy outline of how the game works simply doesn't have enough depth or complexity to make a reader believe it.

More seriously, as the novel stretched on, leaping over years of time, I found Kelric's character stretching perilously thin. This aggressive biotech superman who stages a spectacular escape attempt early in the novel, abruptly calms down and takes meekly to life in a male harem. And his first reluctant acceptance of a forced marriage may have been credible, but by the fourth arranged marriage to a powerful woman (who just happens to be beautiful) it was silly. If Asaro had written a woman character who learned to love her succession of husband/buyers, she would have offended many readers.

I might have loved this novel at age 15 or 16, but for an adult reader it's strictly a leave-your-brain-at-the-door kind of book, mostly for a female audience. Nonetheless, Asaro is a talented writer and I'd like to see what she could do with straight SF instead of soap.

* * *

Those who've followed Joe Haldeman's war stories may suspect some irony in the title *FOREVER PEACE* and in one sense that's true. This novel certainly doesn't lack for scenes of brutal mayhem. However, Haldeman also postulates a method (albeit unlikely) by which human beings might finally find peace.

Julian Class is a "mechanic", a virtual soldier in America's war of 2043. Twenty days a month Julian is a professor of mathematics in Houston. The other ten, thanks to his draft board, he's part of a Remote Infantry Combat Unit in Central America. Except that Julian doesn't fight with his own body. He and the other

nine members of his platoon are plugged in via remote neural connection to fighting machines that Haldeman describes as “a huge suit of armor with a ghost in it.” The mechanics themselves never leave base.

Julian hates his army job—and he also loves it. The violence is appalling, but ten days a month he shares consciousness with nine other people, creating a group more close-knit than “unjacked” people can ever experience. Still, his own horror at his actions is driving him towards suicide. Ironically, what may save him is the discovery by his lover (an astrophysicist) that researchers are on the verge of inadvertently annihilating Earth.

There is certainly no question that Joe Haldeman writes a grimly convincing war scenario. By 2043 the gulf between “have” and “have not” nations has widened so far that Latin America and Africa have nothing to lose by fighting, even though they face an enemy with overwhelming economic and technological superiority. A negotiated peace is made almost impossible by the chaotic nature of the enemy—a loose coalition of governments, guerilla groups and criminal organizations, none of whom have much interest in protecting their civilians. Adding to the volatility on the American side is the “Hammer of God,” a group of apocalyptic religious fundamentalists who have slithered a few members into key government positions.

In fact, it is Haldeman’s chilling portrayal of violence which ultimately sinks this book, because he doesn’t build an equally convincing portrait of the peaceful alternative. Creating a lasting peace through violence is not a solution with a great historical track record, and after many chapters of bloody mayhem (gotta love those homicidal sociopathic religious zealots), Haldeman’s attention to the peaceful resolution is perfunctory. In fact, the final chapter descends into ridiculousness when the main characters decide to banish the minority of incurably violent people to remote “islands” such as Tasmania, Zanzibar, Puerto Rico, and British Columbia.

An odd aspect of this generally well written book is that Haldeman alternates between first person and third person narrative. This is very disconcerting for the reader the first few times, and though it was doubtless convenient for the author, I couldn’t see that it added much except confusion to my experience of the book.

FOREVER PEACE had many strengths, and was certainly one of the more mature books I’ve read lately. Haldeman’s characters are adults trying to deal with convincingly real problems. But ultimately the realistic feel of his book jars with the increasingly improbable “racing the clock” plot, and the peace theme fails utterly, leading to

an ultimately unsatisfied reader.

* * *

MOONFALL begins as Vice President Charlie Haskell arrives on the moon to preside over a terrific photo op—the official ribbon-cutting of the ambitious new moonbase, which promises to make the space program not just feasible, but economically profitable. Unfortunately for Haskell, astronomers have just discovered a large inter-

stellar wanderer (comet) heading for a collision with Earth’s moon. In five days moon and moonbase will be smashed into a cloud of rubble.

Certain that everyone can be evacuated from the moon in time, Haskell rashly announces that he will “personally lock the door and turn off the lights,” only to discover that these may be famous last words. Six people won’t make it, and the world is watching to see whether he will really volunteer to stay behind.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Henry Kolladner is struggling with a critical decision. Does he mobilize the government to attempt the impossible task of evacuating all coastal U.S. cities (triggering widespread panic and looting) or should he hope that predicted tsunamis will not materialize and tell everyone to stay home and keep calm?

This cast-of-billions disaster novel (which reminded me a great deal of *AFTERMATH*, reviewed last month) has the usual fast-paced movie-style storyline and sprinkling of realistic technical detail. And nary an American cliché was missed, including the inevitable emergence of fascist militia nuts from their backwoods bases. However, this is a tight, well written book and it kept me turning pages with rapt attention through the first half.

McDevitt’s plot line is good, his pace never lags, and his feel for the news media is excellent, giving an air of verisimilitude to on-air interviews and newsnet headlines. He also manages the difficult balancing act of reproducing the excitement and fascination of global disaster that keeps viewers glued to CNN, while not reducing dying people to Hollywood extras running about screaming.

It’s hard to say much more. This is a straight action-adventure SF novel, well written and researched, with a pro-space exploration message that will go down well with fans. Towards the end I found my interest lagging as events went on too long and Haskell’s involvement became too far-fetched. The final wrap-up also lacked punch—it’s pretty hard to top the moon exploding, particularly with a cast of characters who lack serious emotional depth. Still, it was a good read.

* * *

It is 1881 in the dis-United States, two decades after the Union lost the Civil War to Confederacy forces backed by France and England. Now, the Confederacy, having already annexed Cuba, is offering to buy the northern Mexican provinces of Chihuahua and Sonora from the enfeebled French protectorate under Maximilian. The Union views this potential expansion with alarm and declares war.

So begins *HOW FEW REMAIN*, Harry Turtledove’s sequel to his alternate history Civil War novel, *GUNS OF THE SOUTH*. This sweeping saga follows the fortunes of eight viewpoint characters (and scores of minor characters) through the second war between the states.

At this point, I must admit that I can’t offhand think of a subject which bores me more than the U.S. Civil War. Seven pages into this book my eyes were glazing over. After fifty pages I surrendered unconditionally. Fortunately, my partner Clint found this book more interesting than I did, so I base my review on his comments after he read it.

What Clint found most interesting in *HOW FEW REMAIN* was Turtledove’s perceptive and realistic portrayal of historic characters, including the juxtaposition of some people we usually think of as coming from different eras, such as Lincoln (then 72) and Teddy Roosevelt (22). Lincoln is particularly intriguing since Turtledove uses his writings and speeches to build a convincing portrait of Lincoln becoming a Marxist in his later years. Other major characters include Samuel Clemens (running a San Francisco newspaper), Custer, Stonewall Jackson, Jeb Stuart, and the respected black writer Frederick Douglas.

Turtledove’s depiction of history is exceptionally good. His

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characters speak naturally in a style appropriate to their era and class, complete with colloquialisms and cultural references. The settings feel very fresh and vivid, and the reader doesn't get the jarring sense of an author throwing in extraneous props or scenery just to add period detail.

On the other hand, he certainly does throw in "As you know, Abraham," conversations. All of his characters spend pages and pages discussing history and politics with each other. Clint also felt that many scenes in the novel were written solely to set up Turtledove's next book (an alternate history of World War I, with the Union on Germany's side).

HOW FEW REMAIN is not really a novel (defined as a story with a protagonist, antagonist and plot). This is a "gee, what would have happened if..." scenario, exhaustively researched and detailed which will delight history fans and Civil War buffs, but has little to offer other readers.

* * *

Nicholas Valiarde leads a double life. During the day he is the leisured and embittered young heir of Doctor Edouard Viller, a renowned metaphysician who was executed ten years ago on false charges of necromancy. At night he is Donatien, master criminal and man of disguises. Donatien has become the city's foremost thief, but his career is only a cover for Valiarde's real purpose—to destroy the evil Count Montesq, the man who destroyed his father.

THE DEATH OF THE NECROMANCER opens with Nicholas and his friends breaking into the cellar of a noble house, only to find that someone else has been there before them. But when Nicholas tracks down his competition, rather than finding other thieves he uncovers evidence that an insane necromancer is trying to build magic of monstrous evil in the catacombs under the ancient city of Vienne. Should he pursue the murderous necromancer at the expense of his long-planned revenge on Montesq? Or can he risk giving his information to the shrewd policeman, Inspector Ronsarde, who has already guessed too much about Donatien?

It's relatively easy to convey the plot of *NECROMANCER*, but far more difficult to describe the extraordinary texture of its setting. The city of Vienne has an Italian Renaissance flavour, plus nineteenth century technology, hints of Victorian England, and even whiffs of "A Tale of Two Cities" and "The Tempest". From this seemingly improbable mix of historical and fantasy elements, Wells creates a stunningly vivid society, from the gauche suburban mansions of the nouveau riche, to the drafty, severe elegance of the palace, to the festering alleys of Riverside. And throughout, magic is seamlessly interwoven in the technology, history and culture.

Wells' characters are equally compelling: among them Nicholas, who is a gentle man with a dark streak of rage; Madeline, the ambitious actress who lives with him; Reynard, the disgraced but proud army officer; and Crack, the tough, terse henchman. And there are many more, none of them forgettable.

Still, *NECROMANCER*'s most impressive feature may be its complex, twisting plot and swift pacing, which kept me glued to the pages. In fact, my only criticism of this book is that the conclusion doesn't have as much emotional punch as it could have. Wells still needs to learn how to write a last chapter that leaves her readers laughing, crying, and begging for more.

Still, this is a truly impressive novel. Wells is in a league with top writers like Bujold and Hambly and I'll be waiting impatiently for her next book.

* * *

Imagine "The Importance of Being Ernest" plus time machine and cat. Picture 434 pages of Victorian farce, sprinkled with the sort of lit'ry detail adored by those who worship Oxford's elit-

ism from afar. If this sounds like your kind of book, then you'll probably love *TO SAY NOTHING OF THE DOG*, Connie Willis's allegedly comic romp through a quaint, nostalgic version of 1888.

Ned Henry is a historian from 2057 who studies the past by travelling into it. At the moment, though, he and the rest of the Oxford History faculty have been dragooned into helping the wealthy Lady Shrapnel rebuild Coventry Cathedral precisely as it was before the German bombing raid of 1940. "God is in the details," says Lady Shrapnel, and no detail is too small to overlook, including an accurate reproduction of the "Bishop's Bird Stump", a hideous Victorian iron vase apparently destroyed in the bombing.

However, Ned's mission to find the Victorian monstrosity takes an unexpected detour when he is sent on an emergency trip to 1888 to return an object which accidentally travelled to the future, threatening to create a temporal incongruity which could destroy the continuum. Unfortunately, Ned was foggy from time-lag when he received his instructions, and when he finds himself standing at a 19th century Oxford railway station with a pile of luggage, he hasn't the faintest idea what he's supposed to do.

This is a good set up for a time travel comedy. It has lots of interesting elements and a typical time travel plot (i.e. twisty, confusing and full of paradoxes that don't bear close examination). There's really only one thing wrong with this book. It's not funny.

Well, I sure didn't find it humourous, and I plodded through the entire thing. I found it stilted, precious, tedious, and full of obvious Victorian stereotypes which have been ridiculed far too many times before, and much more successfully. While I wasn't laughing I also had time to notice that there wasn't much else to this book. That's the trouble with farces—they are by nature cardboard, so if the humour doesn't work, there's just no other point.

Either you'll enjoy this book or you'll drop it like a rock.

* * *

So, who do I think should win the Nebula?

As I had anticipated, I didn't find that any of these novels were of a higher quality than *KOMARR* by Bujold or *COMMITMENT HOUR*, by Gardner, the latter of which would be my personal choice for this year's Nebula. However, of the six books that made the ballot, *THE DEATH OF THE NECROMANCER* by Martha Wells stands head and shoulders above the rest, with its atmospheric setting, complex plot, vivid characters and sheer gripping entertainment.

It may not be the absolute best of 1997/98, but it's a damned fine book and certainly worthy of recognition.

Comments? Rebuttals? Suggestions?

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Garth Spencer

Some of the fanzines that teach me the most about good content and layout are not, perhaps, the best examples. I was thinking about this while re-reading a few issues of *FOSFAX* the other day, and wondering why I find the fanzine alternately irritating and absorbing. Not very much later came *Mainstream*, a Seattle genzine from Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins, famous in its day as well-regarded fanzine, both for its content and its layout and reproduction.

FOSFAX is the bimonthly clubzine of the Ohio SF Association in Louisville, Kentucky. It comes across as two dense columns of almost unbroken photoreduced type, with articles on conventions, political issues, fannish issues, humour and letter-column departments. Recent issues have run up to 84 pages. Despite my impressions, the text is broken up with interior illustrations, and the fanzine regularly features original cover art by a variety of fanartists.

Editor Timothy Lane, among other contributors, will often pick up a subject and start editorializing on it, without properly introducing the subject so you know what he's on about. To take just one example from the August 1998 issue:

The June 17 *Conservative Chronicle* included a cartoon suggesting the next campaign: angry figures calling for higher taxes on Twinkies, banning ads by Little Caesar and Pop, n Fresh aimed at the young, a warning label on burritos, reimbursement of medical costs by McDonald's and Sara Lee, no-snacking areas but maintain subsidies for sugar and dairy farmers.

I sort of worked out what Lane was saying here, only because I remember hearing about the "Twinkie Defense" and the outbreak of *E. coli* poisoning from improperly cooked hamburger - not at McDonald's, but at Jack-in-the-Box outlets, in Washington state. And I gather that Lane is satirizing the double-think people practice about smoking hazards, versus the tobacco industry.

An average *FOSFAX* may run to 35 pages of locs, from about 30 readers. This is absorbing and irritating reading, for much the same reasons: on the one hand, an exchange of information and ideas and varying levels of reason, even insults, that I missed more and more in my local fandom; on the other hand, a repetition of usually conservative, often unsupported beliefs and opinions - and,

um, not everyone here has grasped the art of a graceful transition from one subject to another, so that you even *know* you've moved on, or where to.

Ah, well. Maybe that's the human Default Mode. Maybe this is a price you have to pay for getting any text worth thinking and writing about. I keep promising myself I'll go through my back issues of *FOSFAX* with a stack of 5 x 8 file cards at hand. Real Soon Now.

Mainstream #17 arrived recently, which is a welcome surprise. When I first encountered *Mainstream*, it was a semi-quarterly general-interest fanzine from Seattle; well-known fans Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins featured a variety of articles, reviews and letters from fans and SF pros alike, which often showed little connection with SF, or even fandom, but always featured the attitude I came to recognize as "fannish" An off-beat, good-humoured approach to just anything in reality, in other words. This, despite the fact that Jerry disclaims ever producing a truly fannish fanzine, "in the sense of being about fans and fandom."

Unlike previous issues, *Mainstream* #17 is photocopied; previous issues were very nearly masterpieces of mimeograph craft. Like previous issues, the cover and interior pages feature art from a variety of fans, including Stu Shiffman, the late William Rotsler, Teddy Harvia, Steve Stiles and Anita Rowland. Jerry writes about poetry and a con game bringing on fits of nostalgia; Stu Shiffman presents his Baskervilles play in which Sherlock Holmes meets the Goon Show, as performed at the International Holmesian Games in Vancouver in 1995; and other fun stuff. Jerry writes that this will be the last *Mainstream*, for a number of reasons, not least the increasing lapses of time between issues. It will be missed.

Addresses, and more fanzines received:

2 Loonies and a Soft Toy: a handwritten FFANZ '98 trip report from "Renaldo" (the soft plush toy lamb), Frances and Phil; available from Box 33, Seville 3139, Australia.

Ansible #140, March '99, from Dave Langford at 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, U.K., or ansible@cix.co.uk; via Janice Murray in Seattle. I'm sorry, Janice, but I just couldn't afford to participate in the Down Under Fan Fund by deadline, and besides, I don't know any of the nominees from Adam! I am **13** really out of it!

Arcadian Guild Crier, c/o David Malinski at #115 - 720 6th St., New Westminster, B.C. V3L 3C5, or murdock@axionet.com. A local gaming newsletter.

The Bulletin #13, winter '99, newsletter of the National SF & Fantasy Society, Jean-Louis Trudel, chair; see their Web page at www.salmar.com/nsffs. No postal address listed, though I got this by mail. Evidently the NSFFS has been doing things. this is just the first word I've gotten. Mainly they hold book launches, and auctions at conventions (the proceeds going to the Canadian Unity Fan Fund and the Multiple Sclerosis Society). Publications like *Northern Fusion* and *On Spec* have helped publicize the society. To announce events to them, e-mail Mici Gold at charme@interlog.com. To convey news to the Bulletin and Web page, e-mail Trudel at jltrudel@torfree.net. Cliff Stornel has masterminded an online Canadian-SF discussion group.

The Debauched Sloth ##1-4, from <http://www.imi.gla.ac.uk/corflu/newsletters/>

A Corflu UK convention daily zine in Web page format, distinguished by photos of the congoers and Naomi Saunders, decolletage.

Derogatory Reference ##90-91, a semi-quarterly personalzine from Arthur Hlavaty, 206 Valentine Street, Yonkers, NY 10704-1814; or hlavaty@panix.com.

Arthur paints a concise, cogent picture of what is wrong with the current business religion by describing his former employers, as well as offering witty takeoffs on recent books, the Republican Party, and Ken Starr's "Spermish Inquisition".

Dick and Leah's Skiffy Calendar, January 1999, a fannish calendar from Dick and Leah Zeldes Smith, 410 West Willow Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-1250; rhes@enteract.com / lazs@enteract.com. The year in fannish/Sfnal events, at least from the Smiths, perspective, including a selection of American, Australian and British conventions and anniversaries.

Empirecon/Westercon 52 progress report #3, Jan. 1999, P.O. Box 7477, Spokane, WA 99207.

File 770:124 to 128 (May 98 to Jan 99), less ##125 and 126, Mike Glycer ed., 705 Valley View Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016; Mglyer@compuserve.com.

The evaporation of the Seattle in 2002 Worldcon bid; the Penneys succeed R. Graeme Cameron as CUFF administrators (I thought

there were administrators in each of Western and Eastern Canada?); Glycer asks, "Is Your Club Dead Yet?"; Jerry Pournelle invents noonday desert hiking, out of necessity; David Bratman points out some fan shibboleths.

FOSFAX, Nov 98 & Feb. 99, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281; reviewed above.

The Geis Letter, Nos. 54 - 57, Richard E. Geis, Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211-0408; news, views and reviews from one of the most pessimistic philosophers in fandom today.

The Knarley Knews #72-74, up to Feb. 1999, Henry Welch ed., 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024-2017, U.S.A., welch@msoe.edu. One of the more letter-intensive personalzines in print today.

Low Orbit 2:48, summer 1998, R'ykandar Korra, ti, lately of 5038 20th Ave. NE Nr. 1, Seattle, WA 98105, email REFRACTIONS@murkworks.net. An occasional glossy-cover personal/semiprozine, with some fiction, and articles by, to and about mainstream and small-press writers, and gaming/media-inspired art, including this waycool cover with like this totally buff babe and her circus cats er sorry. There go my hormones again. R'ykandar writes that this will be the last *Low Orbit*.

Mainstream #17, Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins, 3522 N.E. 123rd Street, Seattle, WA 98125; jakaufman@aol.com or suzlet@aol.com; reviewed above.

Mimosa #22, June 1998, Nicki and Ri-

chard Lynch, P.O. Box 3120, Gaithersburg, MD 20885; lynch@access.digex.net. A variety of fan and pro articles, letters and art, with some fanhistorical emphasis.

Opuntia 41 to 41.1C, up to March 1999 Dale Speirs ed., Box 6830, Calgary, AB T2P 2E7 (with *Sansevieria*, *Sempervivum* and *Canadian Journal of Detournement*); letters, historical articles on small interest groups, and zine listings.

Pinkette #16d, March/May 1998, from Karen Pender-Gunn; P.O. Box 567, Blackburn, Vict. 3130, Australia. A digested (5.5 x 8.5) light, generally humorous personalzine, with many letters.

Ottawa SF Statement #255, Oct. 1998, and #258, Jan. 1999, c/o A.G. Wagner, 251 Nepean St., Ottawa, ON K2P 0B7. Newsletter of the Ottawa SF Society, with Janet Hetherington cover cartoons.

Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin, May 1998; The Southern Fandom Confederation, c/o Tom Feller, P.O. Box 68203, Nashville, TN 37206-8203; a sort of monthly clubzine, with complete listings of clubs and conventions in each issue.

Space Cadet #10, Oct. 1998, from R. Graeme Cameron; 1855 West 2nd Ave., Apt. #110, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1J1, rgraeme@home.com; this time, an 8.5x11 rather than digest-size personalzine.

Thyme #123-124, September & November 1998, from the Melbourne SF Club; PO Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne,

Vict. 3005, Australia. The conclusion of the Space-Time Buccaneers graphic novel, and more doings of a science fiction club Down Under.

Trash Barrel, Aug. 1998, from Don Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606-2308; one-sheet collections of one-paragraph zine reviews, from a mainstay of the National Fantasy Fan Federation.

Twink #12, Feb. 1999, from E.B. Frohvet, 4725 Dorsey Hall Drive, Box #A-700, Ellicott City, MD 21042; a mystery fan is at last unmasked!

Weber Woman's Wrevenge #52, June 1998, and #53, Feb. 1999, from Jean Weber, P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach, Qld 4802, Australia; jean@wrevenge.com.au; an irregular personalzine from a Well Known Fan.

Widening Gyre #4, March 1998, from the recently-famous Ulrika O'Brien, 123 Melody Lane, #C, Costa Mesa, CA 92627, ulrika@aol.com or uaobrien@uci.edu. Ulrika wins TAFF; pigs fly on her front cover; Ulrika tells us how narrow and crazy Irvine, California is; Bill Rotsler and Brad Foster cartoons; Maureen Kincaid Speller on "Simply Having a Convention"; and a wide range of thought-provoking articles and letters from thought-provoking fans. I really, really have a big apology to make to Ulrika O'Brien for not getting out my zine and sending a copy to her, much sooner.



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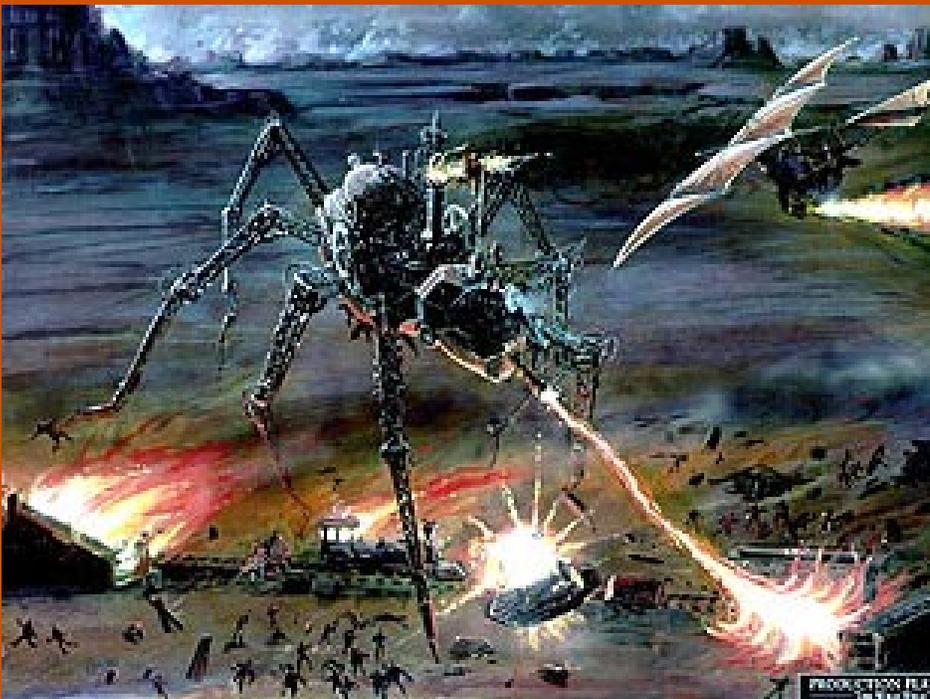
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WILL SMITH KEVIN KLINE

Opening July 2nd at a theatre near you, and hoping to avoid the overlap of the Star Wars showing is the Wild Wild West. Will it be the next Avengers, or Godzilla? Or will it be another MIB or Independence Day? Here is a hint, it stars Will Smith.



<http://www.willsmith.com/movies/215.html>

http://point-ak.lycos.com/reviews/TVShows_9197.html

<http://www.wildseed3d.com/insidewest/biohend.html>

<http://www.eonline.net/Facts/Movies/0,60,2614,00.html>

<http://www.upcomingmovies.com/wildwildwest.html>

<http://www.uvm.edu/7Eglambert/movie.html>

<http://www.wildwildwest.net/>

http://www.filmscoremonthly.com/articles/mar98/16_Mar---Another_Dark_City_Look-Wild_Wild_West_News.html

<http://www.movielist.simplenet.com/w/wildwildwest.html>

<http://www.starseeker.com/films/1999film/wildwild.htm>



<http://www.aol.eonline.com/Facts/Movies/0,60,19154,00.html>

<http://www.wildseed3d.com/insidewest/biologia.html>

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