

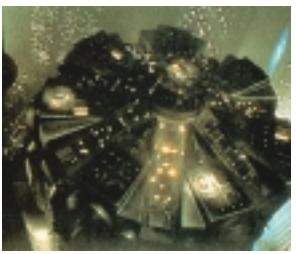
BCSF^{zine}



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WEST COAST SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION

Vol. 28 Issue 8 • Number 327
August 2000 \$2.50

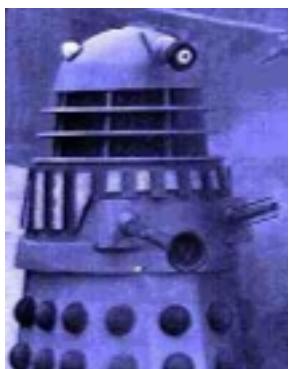
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Ex-ter-min-ate!
News of a new series?
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For comments, subscriptions suggestions, and/or submissions, write to:

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

WCSFACTIVITIES

Contributor's Deadline - June 16th, July 14th, August 18th, Sept. 15th, Oct. 20th, Dec. 15th. Send your submissions, comments, loc's to John Wong at 2041 East 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V5N 1X9 or E-Mail me at woolf@mac.com

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.).

BCSFAzine Pickup/Collation at FRED - The Friday before the first Sunday of the 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.

WCSFA Annual Picnic. July 29th, 4pm. 12th annual **Illuminaries**, at Trout Lake (Victoria Drive at 15th Avenue) starting at dusk. Bring sandwiches and something to drink at the picnic dinner. Then stay and follow by the lantern parade around the lake! This unique event even gives you a chance to attend a lantern making workshop (\$5, SW side behind the community center, 2pm to 5pm). You can join the parade and display your own lantern.

FREFF Saturday August 12 at 7pm Aldo's Pasta Bar 441 Columbia St., New Westminster Like the Spaghetti Factory, this place is next to a Skytrain Station and does serve pasta. But the comparison ends there. This place is so much better.

WCSFA Executive Meeting. August 12th, 1 pm. Firehall Branch Library 1455 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver. Tenth & Granville.

FREFF Saturday September 9 at 7pm Russian and Ukrainian Restaurant 3124 Main Street, Vancouver And yes there is a difference between the two. Proving so is half the fun.



UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

Con-Version 17 Science Fiction and Fantasy

Convention August 11-13, 2000 Calgary, Alberta, Canada Metropolitan Centre, 333 4th Avenue SW

Guests: Mike Resnick
GoH, Candace Jane Dorsey
CdnGoH, Julia Lacqueument
Artist Guest, Thor Osborn
Science Guest, Michael McAdam
Toastmaster/FanGoH, Mike Dale
Con-Version is a scifi fantasy literary convention which hosts many author panels, dealers room, art show, hospitality suite, videos, costume contest, dance and more.
Visit our website at: <http://www.con-version.ab.ca>

Moscon XXIII August 25 - 27, 2000 University Inn, Moscow, Idaho

Welcome to the MosCon XXII web site!

Author GoH: Frank Robinson

Science GoH: Thor Osborn, Ph.D.

Fan GoH: Tim Hammell

Special Guest: Julia Lacqueument

Gatecon 2000 22-24 September 2000 Not just a convention... A Stargate SG-1 Experience! Guest include Teryl Rothery, Don S. Davis, Amanda Tapping, Christopher Judge, Peter Williams and Tony Amendola

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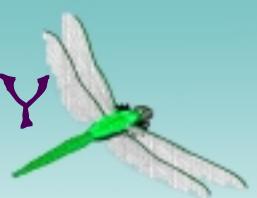
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<http://www3.telus.net/dh2/bcsfa>

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- Convention Listings • Ask Mr. Science • SF TV Listings •
- VCON Web Pages • Secured Members only area •
- Internet Links • Local Store Listings •

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is available to subscribers in Adobe Acrobat format. Check out the zine in it's full colour glory with all the bells and whistles of instant web links and e-mail.

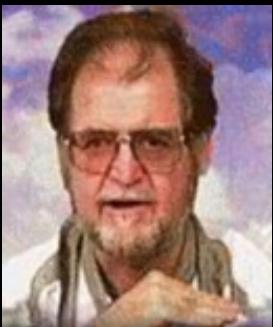
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Author Guest
Larry Niven



Art Guest
Julia Lacqueument



Special Guest
George Dyson



Fan Guest
Paul Carpentier &
Julie McGalliard

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Hi John:

Just had a chance to read the May BCSFAzine. Once again, it's very attractive, with all the colour and pictures. I printed out the information on creating an ezine for my files. It sounds really neato. I'm really enjoying it. For those who attended VCON, I hope it was a success. Sorry, once again my schedule conflicted with it.

Currently, I'm finishing the last two TVOntario scripts for their teen series Out of the Box which may end up being called Band On The Run. So watch for that. I also did a "Sci Squad Cadet" episode for them this year.

Currency Issue:

I ran across a factoid, which should be an issue for the SF community of Canada. Through my efforts, it's been turned into a page on the www.publicdebate.ca site, which friends of mine are running. The URL is <http://www.publicdebate.ca/is/150/index.html> and I urge you all to check it out and to VOTE on it. It's about time that legislators and bureaucrats realized that Science Fiction is as legally Canadian as any other genre.

BTW, www.publicdebate.ca is a very interesting site, which invites response, votes, opinions, etc on a wide range of political, social and other topics. The factoid in question concerns the funding of television and film in Canada. Even though I have been involved in film here for several years, I only learned this recently: SF does not qualify as for the Canadian Television Fund, which can give you up to **Twenty Percent** of your weekly series budget and has done so for shows as varied as Traders, Cold Squad, etc. All the SF that's made here, like First Wave, Final Conflict, So Weird does not qualify. The money for these shows has to come from the broadcasters exclusively, which means they are funded mostly by the U.S. broadcasters. Now, whatever you might think of the sanity of the government funding tv shows, it isn't fair that the SF shows we love to do and watch are discriminated against.

Anyway, that's my rant for the week. I'll be sending this to SF Canada as well, soon. I'm sure none of them know this.

Publicdebate.ca, as a website is interesting, too, in and of itself. It's a form of the new digital democracy which is entirely open to opinions and votes. Already political parties and newspaper staff are checking it regularly to see 'what the public' thinks. So I urge you all to get on it and vote and give them feedback, so that the site can truly reflect what we think.

Oh and just for Garth, publicdebate has an issue about alien conspiracy theories, sort

of: check out <http://www.publicdebate.ca/is/154/index.html>

Bye for now

Catherine Girczy

Check out my current favorite net site:
<http://www.publicdebate.ca>

Dear Ken, John and BCSFAns:

Once again, I have hardprinted the latest issue of BCSFAzine, no. 326, and I'm sitting down to enjoy a good read. Love the cover...I usually see Alan White's art in File 770, so it's a pleasure to see it here. Now to see what's behind it...

Some updates on my sizable letter...some of you may know that Hugo-winning and 2000 Hugo-nominated fan artist Joe Mayhew died of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease on June 10. I had said that Joe had suffered through several small strokes, and this was seen as a precursor to this disease. I have since asked another Hugo-winning fan artist, David Thayer, to illustrate our CUFF trip report, and there will be a memorial page to Joe in our finished report. Also, I mentioned something about the movie The Bicentennial Man...they must have been waiting for me to mention something about it before moving it onto the market...the movie is now available for rental in your local video shop, and will soon be available on pay-per-view.

John, you are right when you say that many faneds who produce fanzines on their computers don't use all the features they could be using. If they did, I suspect they'd be printing for a living instead of for a hobby. Many of the fanzines that were in that lounge were printed versions of WP documents. When I get this trip report done, I suspect that I will be using some, but not all of the features you talk about. I will use Word 2000 for simplicity in production, and at least one page will be done using QuarkXPress v3.31.

Based on Ray Seredin's report, the choice of actors to play Doctor Who has been narrowed down somewhat. Patrick Stewart, I think, would make a great Galleyfreyan. He fits the three criteria laid down by the BBC and partners. Only thing...age may be a concern. Stewart just turned 60, so they may be looking for someone younger to play the role. At least Stewart has shown that this is a role he'd like to play, so that may be a factor in his favour.

Perhaps this isn't the best letter, or the longest, but it is done for now. In less than two weeks, TT2000 takes place, and the Aurora are handed out. As soon as I can get home with the results, I will get them to you. Until then, take care, and see you next issue.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney.



A New VCON Society

Policies & Procedures 2000

(Policies & Procedures 2000 are a collection of By-laws governing the operation of the VCON Society; they are NOT a constitution and are not registered with the Societies Branch of the Provincial Government. They can be changed by a simple majority vote of the membership at any regular General Meeting)

Policies

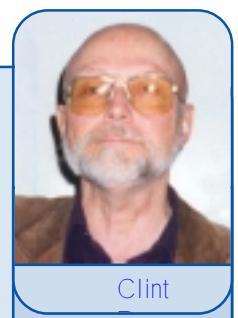
1. Name:

The name of the organization is The VCON Society

2. Purpose:

The purposes of the Society are:

- * To promote, recruit for, aid in organizing and oversee the VCON Science Fiction convention.
- * To enable persons and groups to share information about Science Fiction and Fantasy in British Columbia and about the running of conventions.
- * To foster and encourage interest, involvement and participation in Science Fiction and Fantasy in British Columbia.
- * To educate the general public about Science Fiction and Fantasy.



Clint

This proposal can have a dramatic effect on the workings of WCSFA. I am reproducing the entire proposal so that when it is discussed at the upcoming Annual General Meeting every member will be familiar with the entire document.

PART 1

Update On Jim Johnston Archives

Some good news.

The following items donated by Jim Johnston to the club have been transferred from my basement to the BCSFA archives.

Even more good news.

It appears that our club's archivist will be moving into a bigger dwelling very soon. And that the rest of Jim's donations can be moved out of my basement and into a place where perhaps they can be more readily accessed by BCSFA members. Hooray! So what is to be moved? Four boxes full of stuff plus one big container full of artwork. A full list of what is available will soon be forthcoming, in installments small enough for our gracious BCSFAzine editor to handle. And it will be a brief listing as above, and not a full description of each item as promised. I sort of gave up on that three-quarters of the way through box #1. And you will soon see why.

by Doug Finnerty



Starship Agol (a prozine) Spring 1979
BCSFAzine #100
BCSFAzine #148
BCSFAzine # 149
The SFA Digest #1
The SFA Digest #5
The SFA Digest #7
Love Makes The World Go Awry #4
Fandom Unlimited #2
Fandom Unlimited #3
Cthulhu #2
Art Portfolio by Richard Upton
Masiform D #11
The Occult Lovecraft
From The Deep And Beyond
Essays Lovcraftian
Rediscoveries Newsletter #15
“Cthulhu For President” bumper sticker
“Cheech Wizard” T-shirt
pale blue BCSFA logo’d T-shirt
poster for VCON 4

DR. WHO BRIEF

Ray "Dr. Media" Seredin

“Dr. Who: Death Comes to Time”

The latest news is that BBC's Radio 4 has ordered a 25 minute pilot to be produced sometime in October. If the power of the like it, a full six to twelve episode series will be ordered.

The New “Dr. Who Project”

The Good News: Fan support for a new series or feature film has forced the BBC to play its hand and commit 15,000,000 pounds (\$28,500,000 US) to the project at the June 12th meeting. The BBC's American partners said that they will commit their share if the network can prove the project viable.

The Bad News

We won't hear anything more on the project until late summer, (if not longer). The partners are keeping a tight lid on things, so they wouldn't ruin the hopes of series fans if the deal falls through. They are rumors about, but after the “Seven-teen Days Of Confusion” I don't believe any.

“Classic Dr. Who”

Bad News: As you may have already heard, the deal to sell (or renew) the “Classic” movies on 58 PBS stations has fallen through. Uncertainty about the stations' future (In the wake of the announcement that all US government funding will end by 2004.) played a large part in this decision. An \$100,000.00 (US) investment up front and a five year commitment is just too

much for a publicly funded station that could be history in a few years. Nonetheless, fourteen PBS stations will continue to air the “Classic” episodes in the original twenty-five minute series format for the foreseeable future.

BBC America had canceled plans to move their 50 minute “Classic” episodes into the 8PM (Eastern time) Saturday time slot. The reason, what happened back home on BBC2. “The Doctor” lost against Hollywood blockbusters, a new American (O!) It's also Australian, British and Canadian, eh.) science-fiction series, game shows and sports airing on the other sixteen channels in the UK market. Meaning that the poor “TARDIS” would be in much larger battle in the 150 channels America market. While at first it looked like the station was only postponing the move until the fall, the series was quietly moved to 5AM (Eastern time) weekdays, a few days after the American networks and cable stations announced their new fall lineups.

They are rumors that Blockbuster Video is talking to BBC Worldwide on bringing the “Classic” videos into its stores. It could happen, till then it's only a rumor. So far only Hollywood videos have signed onto the deal starting in October.

Other “Who” News

Scottish Woman Has “Dalek-phobia”: 39 year old Shona McLaren of Tullibody, Scotland has a constant fear of “The Doctor's” best known adversaries “The Daleks”.

She told The Daily Star newspaper that her phobia started on a Saturday night as a six-year-old girl watching “Dr. Who”. She has been living in fear ever since, with their trademark “Ex-ter-min-ate, Ex-ter-min-ate, Ex-ter-min-ate!” sending her into blind panics. Her fear is so great that she won't even watch TV again, on the off chance a “Dalek” might be on. The sight of one in a book or magazine makes her ill.

“I know they're fictional, but they scare me to death”. She Said.

Her husband Kevin said: I thought it was a joke at first and couldn't believe someone could be scared of “Daleks” but I realized it is a very real fear. We've just learned to cope.”

Shona has sought medical help and asked her church to pray for her.

All us “WhoFans” should wish her the best and hope she gets over her “Dalek-phobia” soon.

Another Correction:

Unless A&E actually owns a working “TARDIS”, then they don't have 110% programming. It should have read “In fact the new A&E would have been 20% music, 30% comedy and 50% dramatic programming.”

Sorry about that. Be seeing you.



lungbarrow@aisl.bc.ca
NWSciFiMedia@egroups.com



Palle's Movie Mania

My apologies in advance if parts of this are a little incoherent. This month's edition of Movie Mania had to be written in record time, in the middle of the night.

With a huge box office opening weekend for **X-Men** we can be sure that more comic-to-film adaptation projects are going to be fast-tracked. I counted over twenty such projects in various levels of development but I'm hesitant to report them because most will never be completed. The **Fantastic Four** and **Hulk** projects seem to be the best bet for seeing the light of day, both are deep into the pre-production stage and big numbers for X-Men should keep them going. The **Fantastic Four** is slated to be shot in Vancouver. **Michael Tolkin** (*Deep Impact*) is writing the latest version of the Hulk script for Universal. I won't believe the Spiderman project will be done until I see it; it's been in the work for fifteen years! The latest casting rumor has **Wes Bentley** (*American Beauty*) in the title role, which I think looks like a good choice.

One problem is that every time a comic adaptation does well the studios rush out to sign contracts for rights with the comic-book companies, and the writers/artists get all pumped up and start telling everyone that it will definitely be made. Then a comic adaptation is released that does poorly, the studios panic, and several projects are shelved. Another problem is that comic adaptations are viewed by Hollywood as necessarily big-budget, so the pre-production is long and costly, the investors are panicky and want big-name stars to help guarantee their returns, and the target audience becomes the mainstream audience, not the comic-book audience.

Last year's **Mystery Men** was a box-office flop, although many people raised on comic books loved it (myself included). About a year ago I mentioned another film with the same basic premise (a gang super-heroes with strange or near-useless powers) called **The Specials**. It was in the can at the time of my writing, but Regent Entertainment decided to shelve the film, though whether they were worried about competing with a similar film or whether they were put

off by **Mystery Men**'s low box-office is not clear. The **Specials** was made for less than two million dollars which would make one think that it was guaranteed to make a profit. Keep in mind with a two-grand per reel printing cost, to get a film into say, five hundred screens, costs the distributor $500 \times \$2000$, or \$1,000,000 just to print the reels, half that again in posters, and the big theatre chains won't pick up a film unless they see a lot of dollars in advertising. PLUS, the large chains are guaranteed a certain return from the distributor, based on a certain percentage of seats sold (so if the distributor promises a two week run at 50% capacity and it plays a week at 25% capacity, the distributor has to pay the difference in revenue to the chain). And my example of 500 screens would be a small release. Anyway, for some reason the **Specials** is now going to be released; my guess is the enthusiasm for **X-Men** is allowing Regent Entertainment to feel they can now get a return on this picture. Here again is the cast: **Rob Lowe** as The Weevil, **Thomas Haden Church** as The Strobe, **Jamie Kennedy** as Amok, **Melissa Joan Hart** as Sunlight Grrrl, **Jordan Ladd** as Nightbird, **Paget Brewster** as Ms. Indestructible, **Barry Del Sherman** as Zip Boy, **Kelly Coffield** as Power Chick, **Judy Greer** as Deadly Girl, **James Gunn** as Minute Man, **Sean Gunn** as Alien Orphan, **Matt Champagne** as Joel Tippen, **John Doe** as Eight #1, **Mike Schwartz** as U.S. Bill, **Jim Zulevic** as Mr. Smart, **Jordan Ladd** as Nightbird, **Barry Del Sherman** as Zip Boy, **Michael Weatherly** as Verdict, **Lauren Cohn** as Abdul Salaam El Razzac, **Greg Erb** as Tom Dorfmeister, **Chuti Tiu** as Brian Gunn, **Chase Masterson** as Moira Murphy, **Frank Medrano** as Orestes. **Craig Mazin** (*Rocketman, Senseless*) is directing, written by SF novelist **James Gunn**. The premise: The Weevil, as a long-time member of America's seventh-greatest superhero team, gets an offer to join a better group, complete with better merchandising opportunities, and must decide between loyalty to his team or big dollars. Release date: September 2000, a full one and a half years since it was completed. Despite the delay members of cast and crew are expected to be out in full force at the upcoming San Diego Comic Con. Official Web Site: www.thespecials-movie.com "designed by Mr. Smart and Minute Man," two of the **Specials**, with news on the team, their exploits and their arch-villains.

①

Another movie I wrote about at around the same time as the **Specials** was **Komodo**, yet another animals-eat-people-with-an-environmental-message flick. I kind of want to see this; watching animals devour hapless people is always high on my list of guilty pleasure. Well, apparently it's finally being released this August, but it's straight to video in North America. It is being released in theatres in Europe and Asia where such movies are a sure-thing when it comes to box-office.

"For God's Sakes, Why?

I'm sure you've heard the rumors of a 4th **Indiana Jones** movie. It started with a cryptic remark from **Steven Spielberg** at his Director's Guild of America Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony that "Indi-

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ana Jones is coming back soon." Then the talented **M. Night Shyamalan** (director/writer of *The Sixth Sense*) was quoted in *Variety* that he had been asked to write the new Indy Jones script as soon as he wraps up production on his latest film, **Unbreakable**. Lucasfilm however, denies that Shyamalan has been given the job, and that he is but one of several writers being considered. It would seem that the "completed" script that Lucas and **Harrison Ford** were talking about last year is imaginary or dead. Of course, this could all come to naught. As Marvin Levy, Spielberg's spokesman, says, "*Steven's got A.I., George has Star Wars. Do the math. We could be looking at 2007, but your guess is as good as mine.*" How old will Ford be then? And while I'm sure he'll be involved in some capacity, I suspect that Spielberg isn't going to be the director.

①

Terminator 3 is definitely not going to be directed by **James Cameron**, the director of the first two Terminator films. "The Hollywood Reporter" names **Christian Duguay** (*Screamers*), **Roland Emmerich** (*Independence Day*, *Godzilla*), **David Fincher** (*Fight Club*, *Seven*) and **Ridley Scott** (*Blade Runner*, *Gladiator*) as possible directors. Apparently **Arnold Schwarzenegger** has final veto on who directs this production. The script, by **Tedi Sarafian** (*Tank Girl*, *The Road Killers*), is apparently done but filming is not slated to begin until spring of 2001 in Los Angeles with a Summer 2002 tentative release time. **Linda Hamilton** stated on "Entertainment Tonight" that she would only consider another Terminator movie if Cameron was involved (they divorced in '98). Schwarzenegger has stated his preference would be to work with Cameron, but that he could be sold on the project based on the script and who they could get to direct. "The Hollywood Reporter" gives us another tidbit of info; that the baddie Terminator will be female this time round. Terminators need gender? I thought T1 and T2 were both pretty stupid, but for some this project is cause for great excitement.

①

The "Space Channel" has given me a chance to see some films that I haven't seen since I was a kid, including all the **Planet of the Apes** flicks. And, to my surprise, I found that the first two still stand up quite well, although the rest were even worse than I remembered. 20th Century Fox's insistence that there be a sequel made seems very strange to me. Why not re-release the original to the big screen as we've seen done successfully with other classics? For years Fox was kicking this project around with **Oliver Stone** (*Platoon*, *Natural Born Killers*) as the prospective director (which struck me as a bad choice). Hollywood mogul **Richard Zanuck**, who produced the original, announced this past March that production on the remake was going ahead with **Tim Burton** (*Mars Attacks*, *Sleepy Hollow*) to direct. **Mark Wahlberg** (*Three Kings*, *Perfect Storm*) is set to play the lead (don't laugh, he's a much better actor than Charlton Heston). **Gary Oldman** (*The Professional*, *The 5th Element*) and "Sports Illustrated" model **Estella Warren** are in negotiations. Veteran make-up artist **Rick Baker** (*American Werewolf In London*, *Men In Black*) will be producing the ape make-up. I'm glad they decided for make over computer-graphic apes or the animatronic apes that **Stan Winston Studios** were at one time to provide. (Stan Winston's work is very good but can be very lacking in style). July 4, 2001 is the set release date.

①

But if Tim Burton is directing *Planet of the Apes*, what about his project **X, The Man With the X-Ray Eyes?** Sure enough, his name no longer seems to be attached to the project. Plus it's gone from DreamWorks to MGM and the script by **Bryan Goluboff** (*The Basketball Diaries*) is being reworked by **Caroline Thompson** (*The Addams Family*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*). I've gone from

being very excited about this project to very worried about it, although I suspect Thompson will have a better feel for the material than Goluboff. Oh well, I can always rent the 1963 original by **Roger Corman** with **Ray Milland**. If you rent it, be warned: there are two endings, the one preferred by Corman and the "tidy" ending preferred by the studio, and I've not seen the Corman ending available on video.

①

Our last film in the sequel department, and this could be cool or this could be very bad is **Escape From Earth**, sequel to the terrific **Escape From New York** and the truly, truly awful **Escape From L.A.** **Debra Hill**, producer of the first two films and co-writer of the second talked about wanting to put this together. There is also talk about *Escape From New York* being put together as a syndicated TV series for sometime in 2001! If the TV series takes off Hill wants to look at making this movie. Of course it would also depend on **Kurt Russell** and director **John Carpenter**. Russell has worked with Carpenter on four films and it's hard to imagine him not jumping at this. Carpenter, however, has become leery of Hollywood and pretty much turned *Escape From L.A.* into a commentary on what he thinks of that city. I think his enthusiasm will depend largely on how well his upcoming **Ghosts Of Mars** does.

①

Dreamworks' new production of **H. G. Well's The Time Machine**, seems quite interesting. As far as I'm concerned, this fabulous book has never been properly filmed before, and this production shows promise. What's really interesting is that director **Simon Wells** (director of animated features such as *Prince of Egypt*) is, in fact, H. G. Wells' great-grandson! If he isn't interested in preserving Wells' vision I don't know who would be. The script is by **John Logan** (*Gladiator*, *Bats*). What I want to know is, are they going to start the picture in Victorian England or will they move it to a more modern setting?

①

Another SF classic, **Isaac Azimov's Foundation** series has had its film rights purchased by 20th Century Fox. **Dennis Feldman** (*Dead Again*) has been hired to write a script and **Shekhar Kapur** (*Elizabeth*) has been named director. No dates for filming have been set. I first heard of this project a year and a half ago but with the naming of a director last month it seems Fox is serious. Some good news is that Kapur has been a huge Azimov fan since high school.

①

Another Azimov classic, **I Robot**, is being negotiated over in a rather odd way. **Hardwired** is a project that Disney had in the works since 1995; an old-fashioned murder-mystery in a society heavily populated by robots (if you've read *I, Robot* you'll note the resemblance). **Bryan Singer** (*X-Men*, *Usual Suspects*) was to direct. Eventually the project ended up at Fox, who have recently hired **Alex Proyas** (*The Crow*, *Dark City*) to direct. The project is supposed to get underway as soon as



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Proyas finished his **Masque of the Red Death** project. The curious think is, the script has never been an adaptation of I, Robot, despite the similarities, but Fox is negotiating for the rights to the title anyway. It seems they want to keep their original script, include some elements from Azimov's book and rename it to I, Robot. If Fox doesn't get the rights, the project should go ahead anyway, under its original name of Hardwared. The script is by someone named **Jeff Vintar** who has a huge bio of several SF and comic scripts that have almost been made. Hmmm. Anyway, if it's not going to be I, Robot, I certainly don't think they should call it that, but I guess they're hoping to use Azimov's name as a hook.

①

Another classic book project, **Arthur C. Clark's Rendezvous with Rama**, which I mentioned a few months ago, is now being made by Polygram Films, Propaganda Films and Revelations Entertainment. That's a lot of potential dough. I've come across no real updates on this project, the web page still lists **David Fincher** (Fight Club, Seven) as the prospective director and **Morgan Freeman** (Shawshank Redemption, Seven) as the star. **Moebius** has been brought on board as the Conceptual Design Artist. You can Check out www.revenet.com/film/rama.html for updates.

①

Another case of a script with similarities to a classic book is **Pluto Nash** from Warner Brothers. Taking place on the moon in 2087, the story follows a reluctant hero getting entangled in the moon's independence movement and war breaks out with the Earth. Warner's is denying that this is any way based on **Robert Heinlein's The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress**, but acknowledges the stories contain many of the same elements. This film was greenlighted fast, with big names such as **Eddie Murphy**, **Rosario Dawson**, **Illeana Douglas** (Cape Fear, Happy Texas), **Randy Quaid** (Independence Day), **Peter Boyle** (Young Frankenstein) and **Pam Grier** (Jackie Brown) attached. (Get Eddie Murphy, Robin Williams or Will Smith attached to a project and it sails by other projects that languish for years!) Being marketed as a comedy, **Ron Underwood** (Tremors) is directing and **Neil Cuthbert** (Mystery Men) has written the script, two men whose comedy work I respect. Due for release sometime in 2001, currently being filmed in Montreal.

Some updates:

First it was a go, then it wasn't, now it is again. Pathe Pictures (the oldest film company in the world by the way) has the ball rolling and **The Man Who Killed Don Quixote** is slated to be released next winter. The good news is that **Terry Gilliam** (Brazil, The Fisher King) is directing from his own script, co-written with **Tony Grisoni**, Gilliam's long-time collaborator. **Nicola Pecorini** (Rules Of Engagement, Fear & Loathing In Las Vegas) is the Director of Photography and **Gabriella Pescucci** (Midsummer Night's Dream, Adventures of Baron Munchhausen) is the Costume

Designer. We have a cast list now: **Johnny Depp**, model/singer **Vanessa Paradis**, veteran French actor **Jean Rochefort**, **Rossy de Palma** (Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down), **Christopher Eccleston** (Elizabeth, Gone In 60 Seconds), **Bill Paterson** (Hilary and Jackie) and **Miranda Richardson** (Blackadder, Sleepy Hollow). The film's on-going budget problems are ironed out, and the film will be done for \$32 million. Filming starts this Summer in Spain. We know a bit more about the story as well, this from Gilliam himself, interviewed in "Dreams," the Terry Gilliam fanzine: "*It's about an American advertising executive working for a British company in London and making commercials. One of the commercials he's making is using the characters Quixote and Sancho. They're making it in Spain and he somehow stumbles into part of Spain, he gets his tender little brain a bit confused and somehow he finds himself in the seventeenth century. And it goes back and forth between the two worlds.*" Some actors will be playing dual roles *a la Wizard of Oz*.

①

Jason Robards and **Keith Campbell** have been added to the cast of Steven Spielberg's **A.I.**, joining **Haley Joel Osment** (The 6th Sense) and **Jude Law** (Gattaca).

①

Deborah Kara Unger, **Ving Rhames**, **Polly Walker**, **Udo Kier** and **Billy Crudup** are all being named for **Christophe Gans' Nemo** film, but none are officially confirmed.

①

Star Wars Episode 2 casting news, straight from Lucasfilms. **Temuera Morrison** (Once Were Warriors) plays a bounty hunter. Rumours abound that this character is the father of Boba Fett! Now that's just silly. But we know Lucas doesn't have a problem with silly. **Rena Owen** (Once Were Warriors); details of the character not yet released. **Ayesha Dharker** will play a "regal leader." In the world of international film Dhakar is a huge name, best known for her work in **City of Joy** and **The Terrorist**, two films for which she garnered many awards. **Marton Csokas** (Xena: Warrior Princess) pays a "planetary leader." He's also working nearby in the upcoming **Lord of the Rings** films as Celeborn. **Anthony Phelan** plays a "global director." **Ronald Falk** will play "a local proprietor;" of what, they don't say. Falk and Phelan are veterans of Sydney's active theatre scene. Veteran Kiwi actor **Ian Watkin** plays "a food server." **Phoebe Yiamkiasi** (five years old) plays a "Jedi hopeful." **Pernilla August** is returning as Shmi, **Frank Oz** is back as Yoda, **Andy Secombe** is back as Watto and **Silas Carson** returns as Jedi Master Ki-Adi-Mundi. Rumors persist of **Christopher Walken** to play Darth Bane; this should be confirmed or dismissed by the time you read this. (Bane, by the way, not mentioned in any of the films, is an established character in many of the novelizations and in the Star Wars universe.) In case you missed these announcements from June: **Jimmy Smits** (NYPD Blue) has been cast Bail Organa, an Alderaanian Senator, warrior from the Clone Wars and future father to Princess Leia Organa, and the veteran **Christopher Lee** will play a "charismatic separatist." Lee, of course, is currently working across the water in New Zealand on Lord Of The Rings (and he has been listed in the Guinness Book of Records for appearing in the most full-length movies ever; almost 300!) **Matt Doran** (The Matrix, he played Mouse) plays an "unsavory troublemaker." Some actors I've never heard of: **Bonnie Piesse** will play teenage Beru, Luke Skywalker's aunt. **Alethea McGrath** will play a "Jedi academic" and **Susie Porter** will play a "waitress." Finally, we'll get to see the diners of the Star Wars universe! There should be more details on the official web page by the time you read this at www.starwars.com/episode-ii

①

Based on the award winning children's book by **Lois Lowry** is **The Giver**, the story of a young boy who seeks escape from the futuristic dystopia that is the only world he has ever known. Lancit Media Enter-

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tainment are putting this together and Universal may join in to distribute. **Joe Johnston** (Rocketeer, Jumanji) is directing and **Jeff Bridges** is listed among the producers. The script is by **Robert Weide**. Bridges may also star as the boy's father. The book is fantastic, and readily in print, and I recommend it for children or adults. For the most part, the story is a discussion of the balance of safety versus freedom, presented in a way that almost any bright child should be able to comprehend (I was about 10 when I first read it). The boy in the story is chosen for a special career; he is to be a rememberer, one who remembers all the things that his society has eliminated, such as art, fiction, war and love. My one worry is the book's wonderful ending, which is the type of ending I imagine most Hollywood producers wanting to change, will be tampered with.

①

The Last Journey, a neat project I've been talking about for some time seems dead, or permanently altered. The Last Journey was origi-

nally introduced as a plan to raise money for the **Mir Space Station**, by being the first movie shot in space. The story, by **Yuri Kawa** who would also direct, concerns a cosmonaut who refuses to leave Mir, determined to orbit the Earth until he dies. The ground controllers send up a woman to convince him to return. English producer **John Daly** (the Last Emperor) raised the money to make this film, and Russian actor **Vladimir Steklov** was hired to star. Steklov has recently said that he has been denied permission to go to Mir and will film his parts in a studio, and that Cosmonauts **Sergei Zalyotin** and **Alexander Kaleri** will take equipment to shoot some footage on their next trip up. However, on April 4th the Soyuz rocket launched but there was no word on if they took any filming gear with them. Daly says the film is going ahead, with a big-name star tied in, but it's not clear if this will be the first movie to have scenes actually filmed in space.

②

Fanzine E-Publishing

JCHW

After you have looked at the all the pictures and all the fancy graphic elements on these pages, you will move on to the most important and subtle part of your fanzine, the text. As I have discussed in the past, even the text can be viewed as a graphic element. By carefully choosing the typeface (letter design), leading (space between lines of text), justification (the alignment of the text's edge) and tracking (spacing between the letters), you can control how dark a block of text looks. Depending upon the program you use, these will be measured in points, by percentage or a mix of measurements depending on what you set in the program's preferences. Justification can usually be found in paragraph style controls.

The type of reader you expect to pick up your magazine will determine the density of that text. When you decrease the spacing between the letters, you make the blocks of text darker and more difficult to read. This gives the impression that the subject matter is more intense than it may actually be. Increasing the spacing between letters gives the opposite effect rendering the material easier to read and lightening the mood of the subject matter. If you plan to inform your reader, use a darker density than what you would use if you were trying to entertain them.

Most magazines are laid out on a grid before any of the elements are placed on the page. Each image is carefully positioned and every line and bar is precisely marked before any words go onto the paper. How do they know how much text is needed in an article?

Once you have determined how dense your text should look, you can begin to gauge the amount of text you need to fill an article and a fanzine. Determine the grid you plan to use, and flow some text into the columns. Set up the text to the density that you want it at.

Pick a typical section of your text. If you have many small paragraphs and you use indenting, pick a section with the beginning of a paragraph. If you have lots of long paragraphs, pick a section in the middle of such a paragraph. Measure out an inch of the selection starting at the base line of the previous line of text and count the number of whole lines that are in that inch. If you know the leading, you can also get this figure by dividing 72 by the leading. This will give you the number of lines per column inch. This figure is useful because it gives you an idea of how many lines of text your grid holds.

Now count the number of words in that inch. Do this several times in different areas of your article. You should get a set of numbers that are within two or three of each other. This is your average word count per column inch. If you know how many column inches your grid has, you can then calculate the number of words your grid can accommodate. You need to do this for all the different column widths you plan to use. This way, if you use a mix of different widths in your grid, you can still estimate the word count of a page.

There is one other figure that will be useful to you when you are planning the layout of a page. You need to know the words per column width. To do this, get an average letter count (including spaces) across an inch of a line. The standard average word is four letters and a space which is

five characters. With this knowledge, you will be able to estimate a word count for grids with odd shaped columns and factor in any text wrapped images on the page.

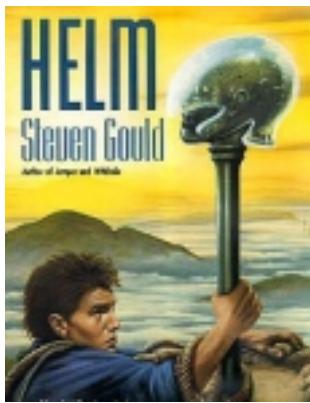
Of course, you must do this for all the styles of text you plan to use including headlines, subheads, all the way down to the body text and captions because they may have different leadings. This can be compensated for by adjusting the spacing before or after each element. This way, you can maintain a consistent line spacing.

With this information an experienced layout artist will be able to predict where paragraphs begin and end. They will be able to plan out a grid and know with accuracy how much space the text will take up and how much space is left over. They will know how many images will be needed to help fill out a page. Detailed instructions on every aspect of a page can be then be passed on to the layout staff and the designer can be sure that the final product looks exactly as they had planned it.

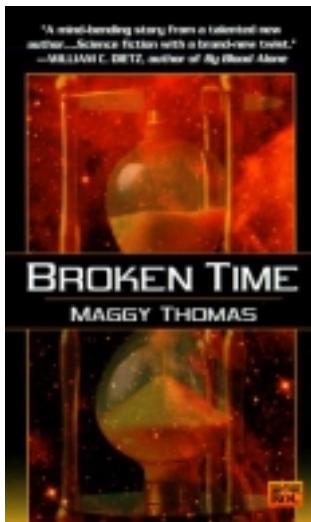
③

Next month: Laying out text and images.

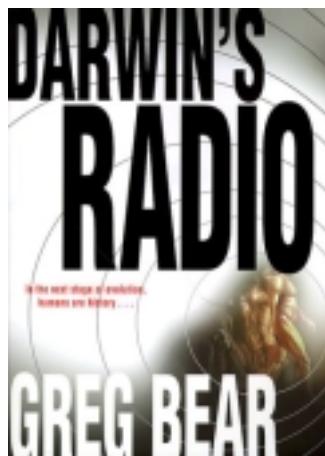
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Helm Steven Gould (Tor, Apr/98)



Broken Time
Maggy Thomas (Roc, May/00)



Darwin's Radio
Greg Bear (Del Rey, Sept/99)

HFour centuries before the opening of **Helm**, refugees from the destruction of Earth set out for Epsilon Eridani II, fleeing in overcrowded ships which couldn't carry all the tools and equipment needed to sustain an advanced technology. Instead, they took glass helmets that could "imprint" Earth's knowledge in a wearer in just a few minutes.

Centuries later, only one glass helm remains, fiercely guarded by the ruler of the city-state of Laal. Dulan is grooming his eldest son to wear the helm and eventually govern Laal, but his plans are wrecked when his youngest son, 17-year-old Leland, breaks all the rules and dons the helmet instead. An avid scholar, Leland longs for knowledge without understanding the dire consequences of wearing the helm, nor does he realize that it is potentially the most dangerous weapon on his world.

Steven Gould wastes no time in getting "**Helm**" underway. By the end of chapter 1 Leland has worn the imprinting device, consequences are rolling, and for the most part the pace does not lag right to the last page. The main characters are strong and the setting—a planet still in the process of being terraformed—is interesting and well drawn.

This book has lots of flaws. There are too many characters and it's tough to keep track of them, in part because Gould switches viewpoints far too often. A number of the plot problems are never adequately resolved, and characters are introduced and then dropped at the author's whim. Gould's personal interest in aikido adds an extra dimension and lots of verisimilitude to the fight scenes, but sometimes it's too much detail. Near the end when the pace should be picking up, the fights are simply too long.

Nonetheless, Gould's characters carry this book, especially young Leland and the ancient personality that is sharing his head, thanks to the Helm. Gould writes an entertaining and humorous story, making **Helm** a difficult book to put down.

For a sample of another Steven Gould title, check out the very strong opening chapters of **Blind Waves** at <http://www.tor.com/samplestor.html>.

Another book which succeeds due to charming characters and the author's light touch is **Broken Time**—an improbable collision between space opera, fantasy and **Silence Of The Lambs**. Even describing the plot of this book is difficult; nonetheless Maggy Thomas manages to glue it together and deliver a satisfying wrap-up.

When Siggy Lindquist was seven, she saw teenager David Silverstein fall into a time pocket and disappear—from the planet Veil, and from everyone else's memories.

Twelve years later Siggy graduates from school into a universe where too many people with too much education are competing for too few jobs, so she feels lucky to land a janitorial position on the planet Agate. But working at the Institute for the Criminally Insane swiftly becomes a nightmare and she's not sure who to fear more—prisoner MS-12 ("the Professor") or the

sadistic Director of the Institute. The Professor may be a ruthless murderer, but he's the only person who sees a connection between the Lost Boy and Enigma—the supermassive cosmic phenomenon which distorts space near Veil.

I'm not going to attempt to synopsize further, except to say that the plot of **Broken Time** involves murderers, time travel, ballroom dancing, a war with an alien race, and shopping at Trollmart. What the heck, try it. I enjoyed it.

Molecular biologist Kaye Lang, a specialist in retroviruses, works in an obscure corner of her field, so she is utterly unprepared for the tidal wave of fame that strikes when her work becomes the lynchpin of a battle against a devastating new disease. Pregnant women around the world are contracting "Herod's flu," a mysterious illness that severely deforms and kills fetuses. As public pressure and hysteria grow, the U.S. government enlists biotech companies and universities in a race to find a cure, with a reluctant Kaye recruited as their figurehead scientist.

While efforts focus on finding a vaccine, Kaye becomes more and more convinced that researchers are chasing a dead end. The key, unexpectedly, lies with Mitch Rafelson, a maverick anthropologist who discovered a mummified Neanderthal family. Mitch believes the Neanderthal DNA may contain evidence to prove that the retrovirus "SHEVA" is not a disease, but rather the next step in human evolution. But nobody is willing to listen to him.

Darwin's Radio starts out as an engrossing, fast-paced scientific detective story with well drawn characters. As usual in Bear's novels, the science is strong and extremely detailed (and I REALLY could have used that glossary that I didn't find until I got to the end of the book). The near future settings are vivid, and Bear does an especially excellent job of depicting the biotech industry and its relationship with the American government.

Unfortunately, the end of this novel doesn't live up to its beginning, and Bear's problem is structural. Fundamentally this is two different types of stories sandwiched awkwardly together. What begins as a scientific suspense tale about the race to cure a disease, shifts suddenly to a different problem in new settings, narrated at a slower pace. Plot threads developed in the first half of the book are dropped or receive only perfunctory attention, and most characters, including one of the three protagonists, are virtually abandoned.

I can't comment in greater detail on **Darwin's Radio** without including spoilers, so I'll just say that I found both my suspension of disbelief and my patience wearing very thin in the concluding chapters of this book. And it was frustrating. Bear is an excellent writer. With a stronger ending, this would have been one hell of a book.

Comments? Questions? Rebuttals?

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