

# BOSZUMA

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WCSFA

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86 Warrick Street, Coquitlam, B.C. V3K 5L4.

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For comments, subscriptions suggestions, and/or submissions, write to:  
**WCSFA**  
86 Warrick Street, Coquitlam, B.C. V3K 5L4

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

# WCSFAACTIVITIES

**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.

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

**WCSFA Annual General Meeting.** Saturday, October 16th at my home at 86 Warrick street, Coquitlam. Phone # 526-7522 for info. By bus, take the 154 from either 22nd Skytrain Stn. or from Lougheed Mall, get off at the intersection of Mundy St & Cape Horn Ave, walk East & downhill from the intersection, passing Denman St, then turn left on Warrick. #86 is on the slope on the lefthand side. Note: steep driveway to climb. By car, off Lougheed on to Brunette Ave which turns into Cape Horn, Warrick second street past Mundy.

# UPCOMING CONVENTIONS



### Gatecon 2000

22-24 September 2000  
Not just a convention...  
A Stargate SG-1 Experience!

#### Guest:

Teryl Rothery,  
Don S. Davis,  
Amanda Tapping,  
Christopher Judge,  
Peter Williams  
Tony Amendola

#### Tickets:

Gatecon,  
PO Box 76108,  
Colorado Springs, CO  
80970-6108 USA

#### Hotel:

Radisson Hotel Burnaby  
4331 Dominion Street Vancouver,  
Canada  
www.radisson.com

### Terracon III



October 20-22, 2000

#### Hotel:

Sea Tac Radisson 17001  
Pacific Hwy South, Sea Tac, WA

#### e-mail:

terracon@iname.com

#### snail mail:

Terracon, PO Box 11816,  
Olympia, WA  
98508-1816

**Writer Guest of Honor:** Bill Ransom

**Artist Guest of Honor:** Drew Hilstad

**Fan Guest of Honor:** Dick O'Shea

**Toastmaster 2000:** Dave Tackett

#### Memberships:

\$20.00 through April 23, 2000

\$25.00 through October 1, 2000

\$35.00 at door



### Incon 2000,

October 27 - 29, 2000

**Guest of Honor:** John Dalmas

**Artist Guest:** Nene' Thomas

**Attending Pros:** C.J. Cherryh and Jane Fancher!

**Fan Guest** - John Hertz

**Toastmaster** - Dragon Dronet (not confirmed)

#### Hotel

Spokane Shilo Hotel,  
E 923 Third Avenue,  
Spokane, Washington,

99202-2215  
Reservations: (800) 222-2244

**Memberships**

\$20 until October 1, 2000

\$25 at the door

Children 11 and under FREE if accompanied by an adult

**Snail Mail:**

Incon 2000,  
PO Box 9112,  
Spokane, WA  
99209-9112

**AKA Con 2000**

**Mail:**

7680 Barrymore Drive,  
Delta BC V4C 4C7

**Hotel:**

Sheraton Wall Centre  
Hotel, 1 0 8 8  
Burrard Street,  
Vancouver, B.C.,  
Canada V6Z 2R9

Telephone:

1-800-663-9255

Memberships:

Tickets will also be sold at the door for \$20 for a one day pass!

Pre reg your 2 day pass (\$35.00) and save \$5!

Pre regs will only be accepted up until November 11th!

**Guests:**

**Studio Ironcat**

Stephen R. Bennett IV,  
Stephanie Brown,  
Doug Smith

**Bandai Entertainment**

Jerry Chu,

**Saccubus Studios,**

Samantha Evangeline

**Aka Anime Productions**

Aka-chan

**A.D. Vision Films**

Jessica Calvello,



David Williams,  
Pam Lauer  
Amanda Winn Lee,  
Jason Christopher Lee,  
Tiffany Grant

**Industry Guests**

Scott Frazier

We Are Currently Located At The Current E-mails

Amanda L. Tomasch,

Convention Chair/Coordinator, Guest Relations  
Mandy@Gospeedgo.com

Eluke Luoh,

Convention Coordinator, Tech. Head, Treasurer, Online  
Director

lukeluoh@Axionet.com

Tiffany Nours

Convention Coordinator Event, Advertisement  
Director, Volunteer Director,

linverse@direct.ca

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<http://www3.telus.net/dh2/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 • Secured Members only area •
- Internet Links • Local Store Listings •

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**Dear John/Ken/everyone else:**

Thank you for the .pdf version of BCSFAzine 327. It always looks great in colour. Lots of things to talk about, so I'll get right to it...

Just before sitting down to respond to this fanzine, I did as Catherine Girczyk advised, and logged on to [www.publicdebate.ca](http://www.publicdebate.ca), and checked out the discussion about whether or not science fiction is Canadian. I left some comments there, but never found a way to see what other messages others have left. Good to see that newspapers and political parties are reading what's being discussed on this website, but I have to wonder if the government is looking at these opinions, and if the site is merely a place to rant without any effect. I hope it can truly influence opinions and policy in Ottawa; it would be good to have visible proof of what it can do.

An update on my letter...as I learn more and more about what Word 2000 can do for me, I must think that the reason most faneds don't use all the features they could be using is that there are so many features in the current WP & DTP programmes, it's impossible to learn or remember them all. I discovered I'd forgotten some features, and I'll probably forget them again. And, if I ever do learn EVERYTHING that Word 2000 can do, the next version will come along, and what I've learned will be obsolete. I should get myself a Dummies' book on Word 2000 which will serve as a back-up memory for me.

Local Dr. Who fandom probably gets some of the information that Ray Seredin does, but they are not letting a lack of new Who adventures ruin their good times...there will be yet another Dr. Who convention in Toronto on November 11, called Who Party 12. Location and guests have yet to be announced, but I suspect we'll be there to help out.

Palle's Movie Mania...I had to smile at the premise of the movie The Specials. The seventh-best superhero team in America? Sounds like sports teams...trading players, rising in the standings, merchandising, big contracts with big money... That's a movie I think I could get into. Out of all the movies being made from classic SF, I think I'd rather see what they could do with Clarke's Rama books. I have great hopes for Star Wars Episode II, partially because Episode I was a sleeper, and because it simply went too fast.

Well, the Convention has come and gone. TT2000 was July 14 to 16 at the usual Toronto Trek venue, the once-glori-

celebrating five years of publishing, and even had the time to sell some pre-supports at our table and do some panels. There was a literary aspect to the convention, but for the most part it was confined to a small area within an attached tower. I guess it was to make sure the Klingons didn't shock the writers...

Highlights...Graeme Cameron had asked us to represent VCon 26's bid to host the 2001 Convention, and we said yes, but TT2000 threw a curve at us...they rescheduled the Convention Business Meeting from its traditional Sunday to Friday. Chris Sturges had sent us a short three-minute blurb on VCon 26's plans for their programming, and details of the hotel in Burnaby the con intends to use. However, I was to get a substantial .pdf file with lots and LOTS of details of VCon's plans. I gather it was sent to the convention, to the hotel and just about anywhere else they thought I might be...at the business meeting, I stood up and read Chris' original short blurb, and afterwards added that many of us in the room (besides me, Yvonne, Rob Sawyer and Carolyn Clink were there, too) had attended VCon 25 and had a great time, and based on that, I thought that 26 would be an excellent venue for the Convention, to return Convention to the east-west rotation it should have been following all this time. The only competition to the VCon bid was an unrepresented bid from Edmonton from the OnSpec group to stage a ConSpec...given that the original ConSpec had to be cancelled, VCon got the unanimous nod from those assembled. So now VCon 26 is also Convention 21. We'd love to be there, folks... (By the way, we did get the .pdf file from the convention...on Saturday...)

And I won't forget the Aurora Awards... Yvonne and I were skunked again! We've got enough support to get on the ballot, but not enough to win the trophy. Seeing we were both nominated for Fan Achievement (Organizational), we figured that we split the vote. However, there were some new winners, and some familiar winners, too. Like the Convention, we felt that the Auroras were almost forgotten, and stuffed at the end of programming on the Sunday. Nevertheless, it was a good, straight forward ceremony hosted by TT2000 Auroras coordinator Aaron Yorgason. Both Yvonne and I were presenters for the Fan Achievement (Fanzine) Aurora. After the ceremony, we were simply exhausted... we packed the car and headed home. Fortunately, it was only 10 minutes away...

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ous Regal Constellation Hotel out by the Toronto airport. It was a usual Toronto Trek (and as usual, there was very little to mark the fact it was a Convention), with guests like John deLancie and Alexandra Tydings in attendance. The actors are never an attraction for me; it's always the fans. Yvonne and I were quite busy with what

we're usually busy with...we helped to stage a party for a relatively new gay/lesbian SF group in Toronto called the Q Continuum (with deLancie there, the name was a natural), and we staged our own Toronto in 2003 bid party. We also attended a special party for Aurora nominees hosted by Parsec Magazine,

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(John, did you get the list of Aurora winners I sent to you? If not, you can find them at [www.sentex.net/~dmullin/aurora/](http://www.sentex.net/~dmullin/aurora/))

Next up for us...I spend August 25 and 26 at SFX, the Canadian National SF/Comics/Anim&#142; Expo, to do a last promo of the bid, and then we use the Sunday for a final opportunity to pack everything, and then on August 28, we hit the highway to Chicago and Chicon 2000, and with luck, we'll bring the Worldcon home. As soon as we find out, we'll get the word out. If there's anyone from BC who's going, come to the Toronto in 2003 bid table and room parties, and we'll see you there. For everyone else, I hope there'll be good news to relay next issue.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney.

### Hi: John called Ken.

I'm joining the fight against the Canadian Television Fund and their "Adult Science-fantasy is NOT Canadian programming" stand.

Here are my reasons.

**First:** For some reason, the Americans all seems to love Sci-Fi shows named "Star Trek" or "X Files", or have lots of guts and gore in them.

Canadian studios have been involved in a number of well made multinational SF co-production over the last ten years. All had strong followings here and internationally,

but not in the United States where most of the money to produce them came from. So they were cancelled after one season and in a few cases less than that.

So we're unlikely to see any non-American SF series, unless we fund it ourselves.

**Second:** The home grown science-fantasy media idea worked elsewhere and help build the SF media production industry in those countries.

In Australia, their television funds recognize home grown SF as a genre back in the 1980's and they have produced a number of good low budget series. Now US studios are in major co-production deals with these people "Down-Under" and some of these are world wide hits. They even have the next two "Star Wars" movies being filmed down there.

Same is true in New Zealand. They started with one low budget home grown series back in 1988 and now they are home to "Zena: Warrior Princess," the number One show on the planet.

Then you have Britain, who have always supported the home grown SF genre media. Who knows how "2001 Space Odyssey" and the first four "Star Wars" movies would have looked liked if their production people didn't hone their skills on a little low budget Sci-Fi series named "Dr. Who".

So home grown genre series will help stop the "brain drain" of talented produc-

tion people to Hollywood and may put Canada on top as the place to make SF series or movies. If not, we'll be reduced to making "Issue" of the week TV movies within a few years.

**Third and more importantly:** It would be nice to have a few truly Canadian SF series because, they will be Canadian stories. We are a lot different than our gun loving "Shoot first ask questions later," American neighbors. It would be nice to turn on your TV and watch stories set in a magic "Curio" store in the heart of Toronto or Vancouver, run by Canadian time travelers from the distant future. Or a series about a Mars colony populated by people from all over Canada, lead by a Newfoundlander. Or stories of a space adventurer who grew up in Supuzzum, BC, Canada, Earth and the rest of her Canadian crew.

I'm sure the CBC would rather show these series than those art shows. Heck, we got Bravo! and PBS for those shows. So head on over to <http://www.publicdebate.ca> and let your feeling be known.

Wishing you the best and I'll be seeing you.

Ray "Dr. Media" Seredin  
lungbarrow@aisl.bc.ca  
Mailing list:  
NWSciFiMedia@egroups.com



### Conolulu

What to say about a totally unexpected experience. Hmm... I really enjoyed Hawaii-the best holiday I ever had-the convention happened also. I talked to the organizers and they figured that was what would happen.

Westercon was about the size of a VCON with less programming and almost no art show (the artist guest Ctein had artistic photography hanging, but there was nothing else). There was a dealers room that if you took the bid tables away had fewer dealers than most VCONs, there was no video room, the con suite shut down at 6:00pm (but was taken over by bid parties and then run later). For a Westercon it was small-a little over 300 fans, of which few were local.

Programming was between one and two tracks-I was even on a couple of panels and I did an interview with the fan guest of honour, John Lorentz. I really enjoyed it though. It was small enough to get to sit down and talk with authors/editors such as David Hartwell, Larry Niven, Gardner Dozois, Jerry and Kathy Oltion, and Charley Brown (there were others that I can't think of right now, and a few I didn't get to talk to). Because it was small, I really got a chance to talk to them and a number of fans. The con suite was on the 31st floor of the Waikiki Sheraton and had the most incredible view of the beach and colorful ocean. I would have liked wetter (more booze) parties, but most nights there were only two parties.

My best memories of the trip were touristy things such as going into the crater of Diamond Head and then climbing to the lookout on the highest point of land up there(I have some neat telephoto shots from up there), swimming two to three hours every day in seventy eight degree F. water (including snorkeling), from the 31st floor watching the giant turtles coming in between 3:30 and 5:30 every afternoon, sitting in the "Sand Bar" drinking tropical drinks in the warm night air as the sun's nearest neighbours the "Centauri system-Alpha and Beta Centauri ((Proxima is too small to see)) were visible low in the sky, and the incredible colours of the ocean.

I also wound up in Pearl Harbour on the naval base on July 4th and toured a number of war ships from countries such as Chili and Japan as well as a number of US ships.

Overall I would rate that as my best vacation, I will go back to Hawaii. I spent too much money though, and will not be able to go to the World Con in Chicago. My next "Winks" I hope to report on Viking Con.

If you need any information on Westercon in Portland next year remember to phone me or hit me up at FRED, or if you want to join, I am the Canadian Representative and can take your membership money(you can also send it direct).

Steve 40

# DR. WHO BRIEF.

## “Dr. Who” Books

On July 29th Canada's *National Post* newspaper reported that *Chapters*, the country's largest retailer of BBC's “Dr. Who” novels, was in big financial trouble and that it could close its 73 locations.

This is not true. In fact *Chapters* is in excellent financial shape and plans to expand to 150 outlets by the end of 2002. The company is now planing legal action against the paper.

## “Dr. Who: Death Comes to Time”

The latest word on this BBC Radio4 pilot is that Sylvester McCoy will return as “The Doctor”, Sophie Aldred as an older, wiser “Ace” and there's no gay “Cyberman” in it.

The station said that production will take place the first week in October and we should know if the series is going ahead or not by early November.

## The New “Dr. Who Project”

Still no official word on the “Project” from BBC, *Hollywood Mutual Films* or *Buena Vistas*. Yet, a few “WhoFans” who work for the network are saying that the partners are now looking at a new TV series because a feature film will be far too costly.

This is the approach I would take on a new series. I would get the BBC and *Hollywood Mutual* to invest \$4.5 million (US) in an one hundred minute (Or two episodes long.) made for TV movie to be produced sometime next spring in the UK. *Buena Vistas* then gets the US. rights to sell it as a pilot to a 13 episode pre-season series (*Note: Buena Vistas* hasn't ruled out selling the series to a media outlet outside the *Disney* family.). If a network or cable station said “Yes”, there will be a new series starting in the fall of 2002. If not, the movie's American rights are taken over by *Warner Home Video* and sold as a “one shot” made for home video release, while elsewhere it could air as a special “Dr. Who” movie.

With the break-up of *Disney* and *Viacom's A&E* cable station on again. I'll pick *A&E1* (The new name of the operation that airs music, comedy and drama programs.) as the most likely candidate for the new series in America. Still, *A&E1* could be the wrong choice, since they never handled a true “science-fantasy” series before. Then I would take it to the other media outlets outside the *Disney* family, because, after *A&E1* their other outlets are “long shots”. Then there's always *Syndication*, you know that thing that gave us “*Star Trek: TNG*” and “*Star Trek: DS9*”. Or better let, *Streaming Video*, viewed on or downloaded to you PC via the WEB. That technology should be up to par with television by September 2002.

Under my plan at least we get to see “Dr. Who” done right once again and the partners gets some returns on the “Project” regardless

what happens. Oh yes, if the series is picked up, I would have at least a few of the six stories take place either in North America or some place else in the Universe that looks like the greater Vancouver area.

Still all this is based on a few rumors, from a few “Fans”, who work at the BBC. Until an “Official” announcement is made, “Who” only knows what's going to happen with the “Project”.

## “Classic Dr. Who”

*BBC America* has cutback the “Classic” series once again. It lost its Monday time slot to “Save the Children Fund of America” specials as for July 24, however, will keep airing Tuesdays through Fridays at 5:00 AM Eastern Time. The station feels that they can keep more viewers interested by airing the four part stories over four adjoining days. As for the handful of six part stories, four will air Tuesday through Friday, the rest airing the following week on Tuesday and Wednesday, with two additional “Save the Children Fund of America” specials filling the rest.

*Space: TIS* has no plans to bring back the classic “Doctor” until the new “Project” is made “Official”. They also said that could buy the Canadian right to the new series if its American media outlet is unavailable.

*Warner Home Video* said that the first Tom Baker story should be out in mid September, but gave no title. *Suncoast Video*, *Blockbuster* along with Internet giants *Amazon.com* and *Buy.com*, have “Officially” joined *Hollywood Video* in marketing the video series. Don't go running to these places just let, *Warner Home Video* is repackaging it and the old *CBS/FOX* videos have been removed.

Still no deal has been reached with a Canadian video outlet, however, rumors say that *Rogers' Video* is interested.

## Other “Who” News.

At the Christies' “TV Generation” Auction in mid July in London, an unnamed American paid 1,410 pounds (\$2,467.50 US) for a full sized replica of the red and white “Dalek” seen in the 1967 story “The Evil of the Daleks”. The purchaser said he/she is a loyal long time viewer of “Dr. Who” and even admits to own a “TARDIS” shaped telephone. I would really liked to have seen the faces at *British Airways* when it came rolling in for its flight home.

*BBCI's* “Generation Game” will have a “Dr. Who” theme episode airing sometime this fall. Recorded July 21, the episode is co-hosted by Colin Baker (AKA “The 6th. Doctor”) in full costume. In the game, two teams of contestants try to guess the cost of a series prop, like a police box, the “TARDIS” console, a “Cyberman” and a “Dalek”. Sorry they don't get to take these props home if they win.

“Trekners” take heart, *CBS* has the American rights to this game and said they do plan to have a “Star Trek” theme episode if they do go into production.

That's all for now, so I wish you the best and I'll be seeing you.

Ray “Dr. Media” Seredin

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As I have discussed in previous instalments of this article, if you want to attract readers to your fanzine, you not only need to keep them intellectually interested, but visually stimulated as well. You want to draw their eyes to your words by employing some graphic elements which will help with the flow of the page. The type of reader you want to attract will determine the ratio between text and illustration in your zine. At the same time, how you blend these elements will effect the intensity of the article.

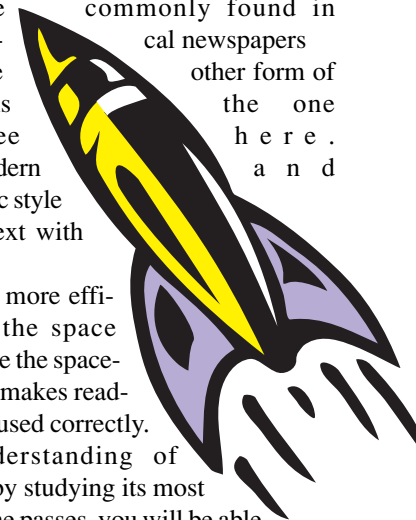
When I say graphic elements, people usually bring dazzling photographs or giant collections of clip art to mind. The complexity of these elements can lead to some of the most beautiful pages, or more commonly, some of the most unfortunate arrangements ever to be put onto paper. What some editors do not account for in pictures is the fact that images tend to hold a lot of information, among which are the visual clues. Colours, balance, and flow all take place inside a picture. A key part of using a picture, is knowing which part of the picture you will use. Don't just drop in a photograph onto a page.

Take a careful look at the composition and decide if you can zoom in on a specific area. Then crop the image to suit your needs. By doing this, you cut down the amount of useless information in a photograph, and narrow down the visual clues. For example, if you want to show a picture of a specific aeroplane, you don't use a photo of it surrounded by politicians at an airport while passengers are boarding another aeroplane off to the left and the baggage carts are pulling in from the right. You need to centre the reader's attention on the aeroplane itself by cutting away the airport in the background, the politicians on the ground, and the peripheral action on the sides.

Now, when a reader looks at your page, the first thing they will see is the aeroplane. They will not be distracted by the action around it.

The use of simple shapes and lines go

plane. They will not be distracted by the action around it. The use of simple shapes and lines go



a long way in shaping a page. I would encourage editors to experiment with page arrangements using simple shapes and lines. After a short time, you will begin to notice some of the visual clues these shapes have in leading your eyes around the page. Eventually, you will begin to notice these shapes in photographs and clipart and understand the complexity contained within.

There are essentially only two ways in which text can interact with a graphic element. Your words can go through or over the picture, or it can flow around it.

When you allow the letters to flow over a graphic image, make sure that the reader can easily see the text. Check to see if you have enough contrast between your words and the image on which it sits. This can be quite the challenge as some images have dark and light spots. Reading over such an image may be more difficult than it is worth as individual words or at the very worst, letters will need to be changed from dark to light. You will lose a reader this way if you are not careful. If you use an image with contrast extremes, make sure that it has large areas of one contrast extreme.

The other method of blending graphics with text is to flow the text around it. The most basic example of this is the block wrap around the ringed planet seen above. By using the "Text Wrap" feature in my layout program or word processor, I am able to designate an area where the letters will not enter as shown by the dotted line. This form of text wrap can be commonly found in many local newspapers. The other form of text wrap is the one that you see here. This is a modern and very dynamic style of mixing text with graphics.

It makes more efficient use of the space available but like the spaceship on the right, makes reading difficult if not used correctly.

Get an understanding of graphic elements by studying its most basic forms. As time passes, you will be able to utilize complex images and take full advantage of the software on your computer.

*Special Note: Starting with BROWN GIRL IN THE RING, I intend to review the six Canadian novels that were nominated for the Auroras this year, then I'll say who I think should have won. A full list of the nominees will be in next week's column.*



## Navohar

Hilari Bell  
(Roc, June/00)

But first, a couple of other books...

Critical SF readers will find almost everything wrong with Hilari Bell's first novel,

**Navohar**. The background story is

ridiculous (aliens coming to Earth to abduct human slaves?!). The science is stupid. Her alien planet looks just like Earth with a few exceptions—for instance the camels, for no discernible reason, have three eyes and six legs (very Edgar Rice Burroughs, especially when the heroine is attacked by a six-legged puma). And the big secret in the plot is so obvious that the reader has deduced it long before the blundering protagonist.

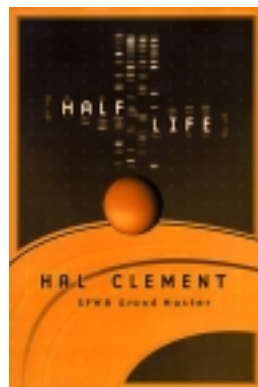
Nonetheless, I finished this book because the writing is competent, the characters are well drawn, and the underlying moral dilemma is genuine, even if it has been tackled more skillfully by other writers.

Microbiologist Irene Olsen is a crew member aboard a starship sent out to determine the fate of twenty-two missing human colonies and also to search for a cure to a bio-engineered plague which is devastating Earth. After visiting eighteen planets where humans were killed off by alien environments, they arrive at

**Navohar** and find a small group of survivors who seem surprisingly unhappy at being rediscovered.

When the colonists unexpectedly kidnap Irene's nephew, Mark, Irene abandons her ship and follows with bloody-minded determination, risking exposure to local toxins and starvation. And when she finally catches up to the nomads, she discovers that they are concealing a secret which her colleagues would destroy their world to obtain.

It took a couple of chapters for me to warm to this book, but once I abandoned most of my critical faculties, I enjoyed the story. Irene was convincingly depicted as a middle-aged workaholic who nonetheless has a sense of humour, and for the most part her actions moved the plot. Even the secondary characters were interesting, and their relationships with each other rang true. With caution and provisos, I recommend this book.



## Half Life

Hal Clement  
(Tor, Sept/99)

I do not, however, recommend **Half Life** to any but the most extreme hard SF readers. Even dedicated Hal Clement fans are likely to be disappointed by

this novel about the exploration of Titan.

The background story of **Half Life** sounds improbable, to say the least. About 200 years in the future, people on Earth are dying by the billions as diseases mutate far faster than scientists can devise cures.

Therefore, in desperation, a space craft is built and staffed with fifty volunteers (all nonmilitary scientific generalists who have slow-progressing terminal illnesses) and sent to Titan to do basic scientific research in the faint hope of making a discovery that will explain the accelerating disaster on Earth.

The action in this novel consists of the scientists sending various probes (and eventually individuals) to the surface of Titan to take measurements and samples, encountering many difficulties and dangers, and discussing—at enormous length—puzzling phenomena. The characters are numerous, flat, and almost indistinguishable from each other. There is no main protagonist.

In a word, for readers who do not have a passionate scientific interest in Titan, this book is extremely boring. And for those few who persevere all the way to the end, the conclusion is anticlimactic.

Back in the 60's, Hal Clement wrote novels that became instant SF classics. In particular, **Mission Of Gravity** and **Needle** combined solid elements of science with a suspenseful adventure story and engaging characters. Science is certainly a feature of **Half Life** (and a more information-driven plot I have never seen), but the story and characters fall completely flat.

## Brown Girl in the Ring



Nalo Hopkinson (Warner, July/98) **Brown Girl in the Ring** by Toronto writer Nalo Hopkinson won the Warner Aspect First Novel Contest in 1998. Although this book has flaws, it is very strongly written and displays great

energy and originality. What it is **not**, despite its near future setting, is science fiction. This is a fantasy novel with a few unconvincing SF elements pasted onto it.

When Ti-Jeanne got pregnant, she walked out on her charming, buff-addicted boyfriend Tony, and went back to live with her grandmother. Mami Gros-Jeanne is the local expert in herbs, healing and magic—old lore from Jamaica that Ti-Jeanne has never wanted anything to do with. But soon she has no choice. Powerful visions are invading her mind, and then she is drawn into helping Tony escape the local druglord. To survive, Ti-Jeanne must learn to use the powers of obeah, even though she is terrified of going insane like her mother before her.

**Brown Girl** is set in near future Toronto after government and business

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(following an improbable series of events) abandon the inner city to poverty and crime. This setting, and an over-the-top plot thread about killing poor people to harvest organs for the rich, are some of the weakest elements of the novel—clichéd and largely irrelevant to Ti-Jeanne's story. (In the very silliest bit, we discover that the villain lives at the top of the CN Tower.)

However, these weaknesses are more than overshadowed by Hopkinson's rich portrayal of the Jamaican-Canadian community, her terrific characterization (even of Ti-Jeanne's baby), and the tension-building plot. I particularly admired her skillful handling of dialect—accurate enough to give her characters authentic flavour, but written so carefully that readers don't bog down. In this ex-

cerpt, for example, the villain tells his story:

*"From I born, people been taking advantage. Poor all me born days. Come up to Canada, no work. Me wife and all kick me out of me own house. Blasted cow. If it wasn't for me, she woulda still be cleaning rich people toilets back home, and is so she treat me. Just because me give she little slap two-three time when she make she mouth run away 'pon me."*

This is a book well worth reading, and Nalo Hopkinson is a writer we'll be hearing a lot more of.

Comments? Questions? Rebuttals?  
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Donna McMahon



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## A New VCON Society

### Policies & Procejures 2000

#### NOTIFICATION:

All General Meetings must be announced one month (30 days) before they are held. Notification shall be circulated by BCSFA and S'Harien club newsletters, circulated by email, posted on the VCON Society web site and otherwise made accessible to all VCON Society members.

#### SPECIAL MEETINGS:

A Special General Meeting may be called by the President at any time for an urgent item of business. Notification must be given as above. The single reason for the meeting must be stated in the notification and that shall be the sole item of business.

A Special General Meeting must be called by the President on the written request of any ten (10) members of the VCON Society.

### 7. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

#### FISCAL YEAR

The VCON Society 's fiscal year is October 1 to September 30.

#### SIGNING AUTHORITIES

There shall be at least three signing officers for all bank accounts, and two signatures shall be required on all cheques.

VCON SOCIETY- The signing officers shall be the Treasurer and any two other Executive Directors.

VCON CONVENTIONS - The signing officers shall be any two of the following: the VCON Society Treasurer, the VCON Convention Chair, and the VCON Convention Treasurer.

#### BANK ACCOUNTS

The VCON Society, and VCON Convention accounts may be located at different branches, but shall all be kept with the same bank or financial institution to facilitate funds transfer and record keeping.

#### STANDARD CONVENTION ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

A standardized chart of accounts (see Appendix A) shall be maintained by VCON Society and used by all VCON Conventions in order to allow comparison and analysis of convention expenses and income from year to year. Convention accounting and membership records shall be kept in a format translatable to Microsoft Office (Excel/Word) for ease of transferring records from one convention to the next.

#### 8. VCON CONVENTION DEBTS AND SURPLUSES

The VCON Society is liable, to the limit of its resources, for the debts of the VCON Society - sponsored conventions. Similarly, surpluses accruing from conventions must be turned over to the VCON Society to be used for funding other standing committees, maintaining an emergency reserve fund, and buying equipment required by the organization. VCON Society capital expenditures of over \$1,000 require approval of a general membership meeting.

*Continued next issue...*



Clint Budd

*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.*

*Members are encouraged to forward their suggestions and comments to this zine.*

**PART 2**



# WCSFA

## EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

Saturday, October 16th, 86 Warrick Street, Coquitlam

### Executives

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

### Members at Large

- Archivist
- Info. Officer
- Members at Large

### Representatives

- V-Con 26 Rep

This October, the executive positions will once again become available to the general membership of WCSFA in an election. This is an extremely important election as whoever sits on this up coming year's board WILL have an important effect on the immediate future of our club. Before us is Clint Budd's proposal (A New VCON Society) for discussion to change the nature of WCSFA along with the composition of the membership.

In this proposal, WCSFA will be dissolved and a new VCON society will be formed. Ownership of VCon will be transferred from BCSFA to this new society who's membership will be composed of BCSFA and S'harien members. In the future, additional membership to this society can be offered to other local clubs (such as TASC, the Camerilla, and the Orion Consulate) who have participated in VCON. The main purpose of this new club is to oversee the business of VCON.

It will be up to the new executive to explore this proposal and present the members of WCSFA their recommendations. Who you vote for will have a direct effect the fate of the club and our ownership of VCON. If you wish to have a stronger voice on what happens to the club, then you should consider running for an executive position. All four executive positions are available to be contested.

- The President chairs general and executive meetings, sets the agenda, and oversees the running of the club.
- The Vice President chairs meetings in the absence of the President and assists the President in the day to day operations of the club.
- The Treasurer maintains the bank accounts, keeps a complete list of the membership and prints out the address labels every month for the BCSFAzine.
- The Secretary takes the minutes of the meetings and all the paperwork related to maintain WCSFA as a society.

Three other positions are appointed by the executives. The Members at Large are general members who have specific jobs in the club.

- The Archivist is the person who houses the vast WCSFA files and publications. All official publications, documents and correspondence is catagorized and filed by the archivist. Currently, R. Graeme Cameron maintains the archives.
- The Information Officer is in charge of the publication of BCSFAzine including the minutes of the meeting as submitted by the Secretary and an annual Financial Report as submitted by the Treasurer. The position has developed over the past few years in that the editor must now also be able to maintain an electronic mailing list and generating Acrobat files of the BCSFAzine.
- Other Members at Large are additional positions on the executive which will represent the interests of the general membership at all executive meetings, or help on other additional jobs which may come up from time to time.

The final executive position is chosen by the current VCON Con-Com. This person is responsible for keeping the WCSFA executive updated on the progress of the convention as pertained in the WCSFA constitution.

This upcoming election will have a major impact on the club. How you vote will determine the nature of the clubs future. Make sure your voice is heard by voting or running for a position on the executive.

