

BCSFAzine #360

Vol. 31 No. 5

May 2003



*1964: The Fab Four (Michael, Ryan, Garth and Joe) arrive in the U.S.!
(Five minutes later they are trampled to death by crazed teeny-boppers)*

In this issue:

* GARTH APPOLOJIZES AND MEKS KREKSHUNS FOR HIS MISTEAKS *

ROBERT FORWARD, R.I.P. *

* SILLY NEWS, BOOK REVIEWS, FAN NEWS *

“SOCIAL ENGINEERS” AND “CREATIVE SOCIOLOGY”

Colophon

BCSFAzine – *Something to offend interest everyone!*

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BCSFA's e-mail discussion list may be joined by emailing

BCSFA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To post a message, email BCSFA@yahoogroups.com

To contact the list owner, email BCSFA-owner@yahoogroups.com

To unsubscribe, email BCSFA-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

The shortcut URL to this list is

<http://www.yahoo.com/community/BCSFA>

F.R.E.D., the weekly gathering of BCSFAns and all others interested in coming, happens every Friday at 8:00 p.m. at the Jolly Alderman Pub, 500 West 12th Avenue (entrance on Cambie Street, just south of 12th Avenue), in the ground floor of the Plaza 500 Hotel (diagonally across from Vancouver City Hall).

Web Pages

BCSFA's Web page may be viewed at

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

Vcon 28's Web page may be viewed at <http://www.v-con.ca>

The V-Con Society Web page may be viewed at

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

Graeme's **Canfancylopedia** page can be viewed at

<http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html>.

Andrew Murdoch's **Canfandom** page can be viewed at

www.fandom.ca.

The CUFF website can be viewed at

www.vcn.bc.ca/~hrothgar/cuff

The Royal Swiss Navy website can be viewed at

www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn

Any other websites by BCSFA members can be listed here!

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New: \$26.00

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New Family (2 votes): \$32.00

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BCSFAzine is also available by e-mail; please email the editor at hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca if you wish to receive our newsletter this way.

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Art Credits

Doctored cover photo: Michael Morse

p. 2: William Rotsler

p. 17: Michael Morse

Plane Spikking

KREKSHUNS

First screwup: I was going to editorialize this issue on how some people in fandom reacted when *Voyageur*, a Star Trek clubzine from Toronto, appeared again and again on the Aurora Award ballot. (*Voyageur* is now appearing on the Hugo Award ballot.) Some people were muttering things like "ballot-stuffing", although a three-time award winner presumably has won fair and square. The key issue at hand seems to be something like goodwill, or something like credibility; in any case, whether or not we recognize a new face as One of Us.

Personally I think that contemporary fandom is not one, but *several* subcultures, there are at least as many people narrowly focused on *one* special interest each as there are fans with a wider range of interests; and groups as various as Goths and Trekkers and filkers and costumers and fanzine fans and Scadians and writer-wannabes can be *totally unaware* of each other's Famous Fans and fanzines.

I actually said, with like my bare face hanging out, "I'd just like to know, if the Hudson Bay members thought it was worthwhile to compete for the Aurora Awards, why they didn't make themselves better-known to fandom at large? Or did they not see this credibility/ goodwill issue coming down the track?"

In fact the members of the U.S.S. Hudson Bay *did* make themselves known. Lynda Ciaschini pointed out to me the following:

1. Infinite Diversity International Corporation / USS Hudson Bay has been in operation since 1989.
2. Members and former members exceed three hundred people.
3. IDIC has volunteered as a group at countless conventions since 1989, including Toronto Trek, Anime North and Creation Conventions.
4. IDIC Fliers have been distributed at every Toronto Trek, every Ad Astra, every Creation Convention, every SFX, every Primedia and some Anime North conventions occurring after 1989. (These are all annual conventions except for the Creation conventions, which occurred several times a year when they were in operation.)
5. IDIC volunteered at countless Blood Donor Clinics, Charitable Events, Food Banks, Parades and Library Presentations. At every event we brought fliers and copies of "The Voyageur".
6. Some of the fliers in more recent years (including prior to the "The Voyageur" Aurora Award wins) consisted of Membership Forms stapled to copies of "The Voyageur".
7. IDIC fliers have consistently been distributed to science fiction bookstores, the Universities, the Colleges and throughout the Toronto Library System.

8. IDIC has given in excess of twenty room parties at Toronto Trek, Primedia, Ad Astra and Creation Conventions. At these room parties I personally distributed copies of "The Voyageur". I know for a fact that members of the Ottawa Science Fiction Association attended and received copies of "The Voyageur" because I spoke with them personally.

9. IDIC has been exchanging Newsletters with the Ottawa Science Fiction Association for over ten years.

10. IDIC exchanged Newsletters with Star Trek Winnipeg for many years.

11. IDIC and "The Voyageur" has been mentioned in the media so many times I can no longer keep track, including, television, newspapers, magazines and radio.

12. The IDIC Website has been in existence for many years.

13. All copies of the "The Voyageur" that won the Aurora Awards had been posted to the IDIC Website during the period that they were eligible to be nominated and voted for. Dennis Mullin included the location of copies of "The Voyageur" on the Aurora Nomination Lists and on the Voting Ballots.

14. Don Bassie has mentioned IDIC and "The Voyageur" on his "Made in Canada" Website and in his "Made in Canada Newsletter" and gave links to copies of "The Voyageur".

15. The TorCon Website has a link to the IDIC Website.

16. IDIC has placed numerous advertisements in Convention Progress Reports and Program Books over the years including TorCon and Toronto Trek.

So Garth, I can assure you the members of IDIC did try to publicize IDIC and "The Voyageur" prior to the Aurora Award wins. <grin>

I left out one other form of advertising. The USS Hudson Bay had club tables at numerous Toronto Treks, Primedias and Creation Conventions at which we informed fans about the club and handed out copies of "The Voyageur".

I stand corrected.

Second screwup: There may be some confusion between the Treasurer and myself as to who has and who hasn't got a current BCSFA membership. Part of that is my fault, not making regular meetings with our treasurer to compare membership address lists and hand over renewal cheques and thrash out other information.

Third screwup: I keep mislaying things, including membership cheques, so I covered Vera McIntyre's recent renewal out of my own pocket. PLEASE update me and Doug Finnerty if we seem to have neglected your renewals. ****AND**** send in your birthday information!!

Non in Commotione Deus

Julian Castle" jcastle@vcn.bc.ca, March 20, 2003
(on BCSFAzine 359)

Oops, I am the prince of procrastination. I'll make this short because (1) hopefully easier to fit in BCSFAzine and (2) easier for me to write.

Plain Speaking: I'm writing, I'm writing. ... I'm familiar with fan funds. Broadcast of SF info (on what I assume is worldwide basis) sounds like a big topic and I'm trying to keep this LOC brief. I'm not too worried about TV and film info being left out of fanzines, though (1) it makes me wonder if SF zines would use a monthly summary of worldwide SF (made available before the zines' deadlines) and (2) I admit I really like to see the release dates for upcoming movies in the BCSFAzine Upcoming Events section.

Letters: Lloyd Penney's letter - * "no matter what is produced, the Trekkers will watch it". Speaking for myself and a friend: I only watch Enterprise if someone I'm with is watching it (translation: I've only watched about 4 episodes). My friend who enjoyed the writing of DS9 tried Enterprise, stopped watching it and considers the captain on Enterprise to be "a block of wood".

* "another direction Trekkers would like the franchise to go". I have little interest in war, my favourite episodes were ones about truths of existence such as the (1) DS9 episode 'Duet' where an innocent filing clerk admits to war crimes he didn't commit, to bring the system to account. or (2) TNG episode 'Chain of Command part 2' where Picard is tortured until he imagines he sees 5 lights.

Personally, I'd like to see a 'Tales of Star Trek' series with stories told of different crews in the Star Trek universe. For example: what is life like for Klingon scientists?

Upcoming Events: thanks for a great job on this section.

No comments on the rest of the zine so I can send this sooner rather than later.

Keep up the good work,

Michael Morse, BCSFAZINEzine, April 2003

Cover: In the mid-eighties, Don Adams had a sitcom called *Check It Out*. I think it was made in Canada. It could be described as "Fawlty Towers in a supermarket." The security guard was named Viker.

(I think Taral meant to write "Vickers".)

Plain Speaking: Guy Lillian was nice enough to send me a copy of *Challenger* #16. Did my LOC on it make it in time for #17? I suspect not, since it's not in the LOCs on his web-site <http://www.challzine.com/>.

LOCs: "Do [the NRA] have a web-site?" Yes: <http://www.nra.org/>. Here's the safety section:

http://www.mynra.org/display_content/show_content.cfm?mod_id=58&id=0.

(Thus demonstrating the ancient wisdom that All Knowledge is Contained in Fanzines.)

Upcoming Events: Feeding Frenzy, and Philip and Kathleen's party, in Richmond! Yoh! :)

Member Profile: My explanation of the international privatization / globalization / cutback movement is "I'm against it"? That's not how the question was phrased in the survey! :(Thanks for the acknowledgement, though. :)

Fanzines: Uncle Smiley's Bookcase: The beret is cooler, anyway.

Media: If done right, a Doctor Who movie starring Ralph Fiennes could be good. Then again, there was *The Avengers*.

Book Reviews: The Scar: World-building at the expense of readability is not acceptable.

* WE INTERRUPT YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED LOC FOR THIS SPECIAL BULLETIN *

Ryan will love ""Unpublished Titles of Gor."

* WE NOW RETURN CONTROL OF YOUR LOC TO YOU.*

Archivist's Report: Accounting for inflation, I figure the VAFSC's \$2 membership fee would be the equivalent of \$64 today-yikes! Today's equivalent of the VAFSC itself would be MUFON. IIRC, Michael Strainic is the Canadian National Director, and he lives here in Vancouver.



"Lloyd&Yvonne Penney" 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON, M9C 2B2, penneys@netcom.ca, April 18, 2003

I've finally gotten to issue 359 of BCSFAzine after a busy past couple of weeks. I'm job-hunting again, but I am still working, this time doing some phone work for the National Broadcast Reading Service. You might know these people as VoicePrint, and they have an office in Vancouver. I volunteer at the Toronto offices here, and I am working there

through the day trying to get as many interventions as possible for their broadcasting license renewal. Now that it's the long Easter weekend, I can get caught up with some writing.

I've noticed many of the clubzines you comment on are lacking in or are devoid of news. I think this is a problem many clubs have, and it is a result of the usual apathy. In the past clubzines were full of club news because people were doing things, coming up with interesting activities, and club members were gathering outside of club meetings to socialize and take part. About 10% of the club membership were the doers and makers, and the rest of the club often took part in a few things, or simply belonged to the club to observe. That 90% used to be referred to as the Happy Deadwood, not doing anything, but still valuable because their membership moneys kept the club afloat and going. These days, I think that percentage of the Happy Deadwood is rapidly approaching 99%, for almost no one is doing anything outside of running the club, and the only activity is the clubzine itself, keeping members informed of news in SF, but not news of local fandom, often because there is none. Again, folks, please participate in your club, or it shall surely die of that apathy.

Near the end of March, DBRS, the company that took me away from the abuse of Central Reproductions, laid me off because of lack of work. So, I am jobhunting again. The work at VoicePrint is keeping me afloat and optimistic, and it looks like my EI claim will go through. I still have my list of websites to check, and lots of resumes have been going out every week. ...

The spring is always the convention season here, so Yvonne and I have been to three conventions in four weeks. March 21-23 was Ad Astra XXII...we took a dealers' table, and did a sell-off of some of our SF collection, and we did very well, with about \$200 in sales. The convention seemed to succeed, especially with the addition of Orion, a local gaming convention, in the same facilities, and also with the addition of David Brin as a GoH, replacing Michael Moorcock. I think the conventions hit about 600 people together. I'd heard that this arrangement of Ad Astra and Orion together may keep going for another year, and at a hotel in the east end of Toronto...the downtown hotel the con had been at these past few years has been purchased by the University of Toronto for conversion to a giant student residence.

The weekend after was FilKONtario 13, the country's only filk convention, and Yvonne and I were on the committee again, in charge of transportation and at-con hotel liaison, respectively, and we also provided some equipment to the con suite. The con set an attendance record for itself with 140 people from all over the world, including Britain and Germany, and is now regarded as one of the best filkcons on the continent, second only to the Ohio Valley Filk Fest in Columbus, Ohio.

This past week, April 11-13, was Eeriecon 5 in Niagara Falls, NY, and Yvonne and I were FanGoHs. This convention started out as a dark fantasy and

horror convention, but has morphed into a general convention, catering to many interests, including animé and gaming, but especially fantastic literature and fandom.

Yvonne and I held the Buffalo and area party for Yuri's Night the second night of the con. Yuri's Night is April 12, the anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's launch into space, and also the launch of the first space shuttle flight, 42 and 22 years ago respectively. It's always a fun convention, but always struggles to get enough attendance. I think it hit about 130 this year, and may get more next year with Larry Niven as a guest.

And now, we get to rest convention-wise until next month, where we will be working in Animé North's treasury department, running their cash office. With luck, I'll have a new job by then.

Gor Titles that have never yet been published:

*Chamber of Commerce of Gor
Sexual Epistemologists of Gor
Stock Market Promoters of Gor
Used Car Salesmen of Gor
Beer Gardens of Gor
Insomniacs of Gor
Cat Fanciers of Gor
Animal Husbandry of Gor
Hairballs of Gor
Insect Repellents of Gor
Spoo Farmers of Gor
Ant Farmers of Gor
Mutual of Gor
White-Collar Workers of Gor
Chemical Experiments of Gor
Estheticians of Gor
Taxpayers of Gor
Ratepayers Association of Gor
Mental Floss of Gor
Prana Yoga Techniques of Gor
Proctologists of Gor
Deficit Financing of Gor
Civil Servant Auctions of Gor
Transactional Analysis of Gor
Post-Modernists of Gor
LoCs of Gor
Overbearing Mothers of Gor
Kilts of Gor
Tactical Bagpipes of Gor
Thermonuclear G-Strings of Gor
Revivalist Preachers of Gor
Dyslexic Terrorists of Gor
Freedom Fighters of Gor
Space Pirates from Gor
Dead Letter Offices of Gor
Bedroom Furniture of Gor
Cabinet Ministers of Gor
Royal Commissioners of Gor
Rad Parties of Gor
P.A.G.'s of Gor
Phone Scams of Gor
Jedi Knights of Gor
Toastmasters of Gor
Race Riots of Gor*

Body Art of Gor
Figure Skaters of Gor
Public Health Nurses of Gor
Improbable Genitalia of Gor
Sweet Transvestites of Gor
Anagrams of Org

(a product of FRED, November 1, 2002)

DOUG FINNERTY, BCSFA's treasurer, has his birthday on October 10, 1964. His kind of SF and fan activities is reading, writing, and con-going. the feeding frenzies and book discussion groups. In his opinion, the biggest thing he has done in fandom was serving as past president and current treasurer of BCSFA, as V-Con art show assistant, and (still) editing *Fictons* eight. ("it is on its way!").

Asked whether there a BCSFA activity or *BCSFazine* column he would like to see revived, Doug replied, "Yes. All of them. The trick would be to find the people needed to resurrect those columns, I guess. Any BCSFA activities I'd like to see? If anyone puts forward a suggestion, I'll do my best to help."

Invited to be a starring character in fiction, Doug responded, "I do not wish to be the starring character in anybody's work of fiction, thank you veddymuch!!!" Doug's fifteen minutes of fame are a secret. He says, "I know what I want my fifteen minutes of fame to be, and no, I'm not telling. Otherwise it won't happen." Asked for his secret crime-fighter identity, like John Bartley, Doug

replies, "If I told you, it wouldn't be a secret." Asked to explain the international privatization/ globalization/ cutback movement, Doug answered, "Hang on! I thought there was a global movement to *stop* that nonsense! The past twenty years of privatization/ globalization/ cutbacks was *sponsored* by an actual *bona fide* movement? Then it seems that I'm right after all. Anyone wishing to make lots of money writing short works of speculative fiction should stop writing for the fiction mags and start writing for the Fraser Institute."

Asked similarly leading questions about our provincial premier, Doug wrote: "As all the evil masterminds are too busy planning some pointless vendetta against the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen to actually affect anything happening in the real world, *everybody* in 'Gordo's' cabinet qualifies as an ivory castle idiot."

Asked the same leading questions about Iraq's head of state, Doug described him as "an evil mastermind who cluttered up his country with lots of really neat ivory castles, soon to be remembered as the twit who took up more TV air-time than that major threat from the 1980's, Colonel Muamar Qadaffi of Libya!"

Doug reveals that the four major food groups (besides coffee) are "French fries, garlic, spicy barbecue sauce, and cheese."

The Social Scene

May 2003

May 3 & 4: **Cloud City**, Marpole Curling Club, Vancouver, BC. Gaming convention, with Star Wars theme. Memberships: \$10. For more information, www.vancouvergamingguild.com.
(Lloyd Penney's con list, Jan. 03 update)

May 5: *Brimstone* premieres on *Space*.

May 10 @ 7pm: **Second Saturday Feeding Frenzy** at Cockney Kings Fish & Chips, 1005 Columbia Street, New Westminster. Featuring basic British cuisine. There's cod an' chips an' halibut an' steak&kidney pies an' mushey peas an' proper malt vinegar too! Also serves the only Canadian beer that has a Union Jack on the label - Canterbury! The street address might be slightly misleading. The restaurant is actually located in the Columbia Square shopping complex, one block west of the New Westminster Skytrain Station.

May 10 & 11: **Otafest**, University of Calgary Science Theatres, Calgary, AB. Anime convention, with cultural events. Guests and memberships: TBA. For more information, www.otafest.com.
(Lloyd Penney's con list, Jan. 03 update)

May 15: alleged release date for *The Matrix Reloaded*.

May 15, 7:00 p.m.: Book discussion group at Blenz, 2506 Granville (Granville x Broadway). Title: *The Dispossessed* by Ursula LeGuin.

May 16: *BCSFazine* 361 deadline.

May 16-18: **Keycon 20**, Radisson Winnipeg Downtown, Winnipeg, MB. SF literary theme. Guests: Robert J. Sawyer (writer), Carolyn Clink (poet), Jolly Blackburn (artist). Memberships: Can\$50 after April 30 and at the door. Children 6-12: \$25. For more information, write Keycon 20, P.O. Box 3178, Winnipeg, MB R3C 4E6, call 1-204-669-6053, email loyalminion@hotmail.com, or see keycon2003.tripod.com.

May 23-25: **MisCon 17**, "MisCon-spiracy" at Ruby's Inn and Convention Center in Missoula, Montana. Guests of Honor so far are: Authors) David Gerrold, Samuel R. Delany; (Media) Jennifer Blanc; (Artist) Chuck Bordell. Room reservations: write Ruby's Inn and Convention Center, 4825 North Reserve, Missoula, Montana 59808, tel. (800) 221-2057. Memberships: At the door: \$25; Family Rate: \$50. Write: MisCon, P.O. Box 7721, Missoula, MT 59807, U.S.A.

Sunday, May 25th, 11 AM to 5 p.m.: **Vancouver Comicon** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Special Guests: Skottie Young, penciller of *Human Torch*, *Spider-*

Man: Legend of the Spider Clan, *X-Men Unlimited* #37; Robin Thompson, creator of *Captain Spaceman*, *Knuckles Malone*, *Champions of Hell*; Ralph Alfonso, creator of *Ralph*. Admission: \$3.00 per person Kids under 14: Free! Dealer tables: \$45/50 Free comics for all attendees! Hourly door prizes!
<http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

May 30 - June 1: **ConComCon 10** at the Cottontree Inn, Mount Vernon, WA. Convention topics will include: HOTEL NEGOTIATION (Contracts, ADA issues, Room Blocks, Alcohol, Room Parties and more); PUBLICITY (Advertising, Building a Good Flyer, Room Parties and others). Hotel Rate: \$72/night, single/double/triple/quad (Includes breakfast buffet!) Call 360-428-5678 or 1-800-662-6886 to make reservations. Convention Membership Rate: \$30 until May 10; \$35 at the door. For more information contact: Becky Citrak @ 360-456-7441 or adonno@aol.com; Shawn Marier @ 425-957-7565 or smarier@oz.net.

June 2003

Sunday, July 6th, 11 AM to 4 p.m.: **Toy and Collectables Show** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Buy, sell, and trade character toys, action figures, toy cars, Star Wars, model kits, comic books, trading cards, Disney, games, and more! Admission: \$2.00 per person Kids under 14: \$1.00 Dealer tables: \$35/40 Free comics for all the kids!

July 2003

July 3 - 6: **Westercon 56** in the SeaTac DoubleTree aka the Seattle Airport DoubleTree Hotel in SeaTac, Washington. Full membership: \$50. Write Westercon 56, P.O. Box 1066, Seattle, WA 98111, U.S.A. See www.westercon.org.
(Northwest SF Resources, © Jack Beslanwitch, Apr. 03 download)

July 11-13: **Toronto Trek 17**, Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, ON. SF media convention. Guests: James Marsters, Julie Caitlin Brown, Erin Gray, Gil Gerard. Memberships: See website. For more information, www.tcon.icomm.ca.
(Lloyd Penney's con list, Jan. 03 update)

August 2003

Aug. 28 - Sept. 1: **Torcon 3** at the Metro Convention Centre in Toronto, ON. GoHs: George R.R. Martin, Frank Kelly Freas, Mike Glycer, TM: Spider Robinson. Hotels: Royal York, Crown Plaza, Renaissance Toronto Hotel at SkyDome. For more info write Torcon 3, P.O. Box 3, Stn. "A", Toronto, ON M5W 1A2, or see www.torcon3.on.ca.

Cur, Quomodo, Quando

Robert L. Forward (1932 - 2002)

We belatedly got the word that Dr. Forward, who built the first bar antenna to detect gravity, received 18 patents in his thirty years at Hughes Aircraft, wrote eleven SF novels, and formed the Tethers Unlimited company to promote the electrodynamic tether concept, expired in 2002.

John Hertz, *Vanamonde* #498, Nov. 26/02

WE SHALL NOT SEE HIS LIKE AGAIN: Harry B. Warner Jr (1922-2003)

David Langford writes that Harry Warner Jr, "long-time fan, fanzine publisher, historian of fandom and indefatigable letter-writer, died at his fannishly famous home address - 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland - on 17 February (and was not found for some weeks). He was 80.

"Harry's fanzines included the 1940s *Spaceways* and the long-running *Horizons*, published through FAPA ever since 1939; his fan histories of the 1940s and 1950s were *All Our Yesterdays* (1969) and *A Wealth of Fable* (1976), whose 1992 expansion won him a nonfiction Hugo. He also received 1969 and 1972 Hugos as best fan writer, and was a guest of honour at the 1971 Boston worldcon.

"Like so many fanzine publishers around the world, I've lost count of the kindly, conscientious and sometimes cranky letters of comment he sent me over the decades. As Bruce Gillespie wrote at the start of his own memoir, 'I've regarded Harry Warner Jr for so long as the patron saint of fandom that it will be very hard to get used to the idea of him not being there.'"

From *Ansible* 189, April 4, 2003

There has also been some recent discussion on TimeBinders/MemoryHole listservs about the disposition of Harry Warner's mammoth fanzine collection; his will left almost all his estate to his church, while some separate letters described how he wished his book and fanzine collection disposed.

CAN SF NEWS

The Aurora Awards ballot includes among its nominees local fanzines *Covert Communications from Zeta Corvi* and *The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette*. While clubzines such as *BCSFazine* and *Voyageur* have been nominated, they are in fact ineligible for the fanzine Aurora; they may, however, be voted the Aurora Award for Fan Activity (Other).

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund now has three competing candidates - Andrew Murdoch from Richmond, Garth Spencer from Vancouver, and Lyndie S. Bright from Winnipeg.

I did remember to attach ballots, didn't I?

"John Rose has sold Toronto's SF bookstore, Bakka Books, to Ben Freiman, and the store has been reborn as Bakka-Phoenix Books. Store

manager Chris Szego says the store should have a grand reopening in May with a new sign and illustration on the front of the store. Check out the new website at www.bakkaphoenixbooks.com."

Lloyd Penney, April 18, 2003

IS PRINT DYING?

"According to the Associated Press, AVIN MARK DOMNITZ, the CEO of the American Booksellers Association is hearing concerns about "the rapid deterioration" of business in the bookselling world. "These are indeed challenging times for independent booksellers, as the continued softness of the national economy and international events have hit many of our members hard," Domnitz wrote in an e-mail (<http://news.bookweb.org/1311.html>) posted April 3 on the association's Web site. Independent booksellers form the core of the ABA's membership."

(Sources: AP, Reuters, ABA, USA Today)

"Paula Guran" <darkecho@darkecho.com>:
DARKECHO #20

SMALL PRESS

David Langford also writes:

"Discreetly blowing my own trumpet: Chris Priest and I have started a tiny e-book outfit at www.ansible-editions.co.uk, with the first titles being the unpublished John Sladek novella *Wholly Smokes* and David I. Masson's fine 1968 collection *The Caltraps of Time*, now expanded with three 1970s stories to comprise his complete sf. For those who prefer print editions, we have a co-publishing deal with Cosmos Books: *Caltraps* is scheduled for POD release later this year. And the new Langford title from Cosmos is *Up Through an Empty House of Stars: Reviews and Essays 1980-2002* - listed on Amazon in hardback (May 2003) and paperback (November). Help this man become a capitalist!

From *Ansible* 189, April 4, 2003

TO MARKET, TO MARKET:

LEVIATHAN ANTHOLOGY NOW OPEN

"... Ministry of Whimsy Press will be reading for the fourth instalment of its British Fantasy Award and Philip K. Dick Award-finalist original fiction anthology series *Leviathan* from April 7th to June 30th. The anthology will be edited by Forrest Aguirre. Submissions should be 5,000 to 20,000 words long. Please adhere to the minimum and maximum word count. Maximum payment of \$250 per accepted piece.

Leviathan 4 is a themed anthology-- The theme is "Cities". We are looking for previously unpublished stories where a city or cities is (are) so critical to the success of the story that the tale utterly fails if moved to another location, real or imagined. The works we publish might be described as surreal, decadent, experimental, slipstream or magically real,

but with a strong literary sensibility. Tales for *Leviathan* should contain some fantastical element, however slight, with a strong sense of atmosphere and word-crafting throughout. We are not afraid of experimentalism, but do note that our readers appreciate some sense of linearity, though this sense might be minimal. Remember, a city must, in essence, be a character, be the plot, be the oeuvre of the work. Please do not send ANY stories that feature such traditional tropes as vampires, werewolves, zombies, or faeries. Traditional science fiction, hardcore horror, sword and sorcery, and stories in which humour is the primary element stand little chance of acceptance. Monkeys, small children, and anthropomorphic cleaning products are also not welcome. No multiple submissions, please.

You can submit your story to editor Forrest Aguirre via email at ministryofwhimsy@yahoo.com in RTF or Word .doc format. You can also submit your *Leviathan* 4 story via snail mail to Forrest Aguirre at 1718 Weber Dr, Madison, WI 53713. Stories submitted via snail mail without adequate SASE will be disposed of unread. Submissions to the Ministry's Tallahassee address will not be read. We strongly recommend that you buy a copy of the *LEVIATHAN 3* anthology to get an idea of the type of story for which we are looking.

Forwarded April 1st 2003, by members Wendy & Gary Meuse

eBook Anthologies

Amazing Heroes - E-mail: cpulpsubs@hotmail.com . Editor: G. W. Thomas. "New sf/f/h adventure stories with an emphasize on action and a pulp flavor." eBook anthology. "Advice: Send me a story that would belong in a pulp magazine today-fun and adventure but not necessarily a pastiche or parody. You can do things that the old pulpsters couldn't, like swear." 2000-5000 words; pays equal share of 50% of the royalties. "Will look at longer. No reprints. Prefer .rtf attachments." Deadline: "Until anthology is full."

Forbidden Texts - E-mail: cyberbain@hotmail.com . Editor: David Bain. "*Forbidden Texts* is an eBook anthology from Cyber-Pulp featuring all-new stories of characters involved with or encountering forbidden texts of various sorts. Fiction: "Looking for plot-driven stories featuring characters involved with or encountering forbidden texts of various sorts. Though I imagine there will be a few musty old tomes, the texts in question can take any form you can imagine. ... I would welcome seeing tales in sf or fantasy settings as well as straight horror. Basically, the forbidden texts are the crux of the matter; the rest is up to you. 2000-5000 words. Query for shorter or longer. Poems: I'm looking to include a very few. No length limit, but no epics. If in doubt, query." Pays "50% of the profits, split equally between contributor." Query about reprints. Send as .rtf attachment only. RT-to 3 months. Deadline: When filled.

The Ghostbreakers: Sinister Sleuths - E-mail: cpulpsubs@hotmail.com . Editors: Danielle Naibert, G.W. Thomas. "A dark fantasy collection from Cyber-Pulp. New horror-mystery stories with a recognizable ghostbreaker. (Advice: We received a lot of straight horror stories with the first volume: *New Horrors*. Please make sure your story has a ghostbreaker in it. Not sure what that is? Then see the *Ghostbreaker Criteria*.)" 2000-5000 words; pays equal share of 50% of the royalties. "Will look at longer. No reprints. Prefer .rtf attachments. Deadline: "Until anthology is full."

The Kings of the Night - E-mail: cpulpsubs@hotmail.com . Editor: G.W. Thomas. "A Sword & Sorcery eBook from Cyber-Pulp. New fantasy stories with an emphasis on action and dark magic. (Advice: Try to send a story that is more than just another Conan pastiche. I will be looking for stories that seem to live in their own identifiable world. Remember, S&S is not just Robert E. Howard. Think Fritz Leiber, Jack Vance, C. L. Moore.)" 2000-5000 words; pays equal share of 50% of the royalties. "Will look at longer. No reprints. Prefer .rtf attachments." [E-mail:]. Deadline: "Until anthology is full."

From Gila Queen #117, April 3, 2003

City Slab, Urban Tales of the Grotesque - City Slab Publications, 1705 Summit Ave., #211, Seattle WA 98122. Editor: Dave Lindschmidt. Update. Note that the apt. number has changed. "*City Slab* is pleased to announce that we will be going to a full color cover with issue #3. We're a magazine in adjustment, trying to find our market and our model for doing business. We've decided that starting with issue #4 (our first anniversary!), we will be marketing lesser-known names as Feature Fiction. It's an opportunity to follow up our first feature authors-Poppy Z. Brite and Brian Hodge. The pay range will still be 1 through 5¢, depending on the work and the author. However, be forewarned that our first priority is to stay in business so that we can continue to offer a venue to deserving writers and artists."

"Also... All submissions should now be sent to Submission@CitySlab.com ."

"Queries and business related questions may still be sent to Dave@CitySlab.com."

"Issue #3 will be coming out in June of 2003. That issue is now full. We continue to read for future issues." [E-mail: Submission@CitySlab.com ; Dave@CitySlab.com ; www.CitySlab.com]. RT-"Response times have loosened up a bit due to our current mess. Certainly, if you have not heard from us in more than two months, query."

From Gila Queen #117, April 3, 2003

MORE BOOK STUFF:

Altered Carbon Gets Optioned

First-time author Richard K. Morgan's SF novel *Altered Carbon* has become a hit in the United Kingdom and impressed producer Joel Silver (*The Matrix*) enough that he optioned the film rights, USA Today reported.

Warner Brothers has the project in development.

Altered Carbon is compared with Philip K. Dick and is set in the 25th century, when scientists have found a way to digitally distil a person's identity into data, the newspaper reported. Newborns are outfitted with a "stack," a lipstick-size data-storage device at the base of the brain's cortex, and the wealthy have their memories regularly saved and transmitted wirelessly to a backup copy so they can be refreshed.

A second book in what is envisioned as a series is due this month in the United Kingdom, ahead of a U.S. release next year, the newspaper reported.

SCIFIWIRE via Michael Morbius, March 25, 2003

WIN FABULOUS PRIZES

TIPTREE AWARD. This year's winners are M. John Harrison's novel *Light* and John Kessel's story 'Stories for Men' (*Asimov's* Oct/Nov 2002). [FM]
Ansible 189, April 4, 2003

THOG'S MASTERCLASS.

Physics Dept. ... no, affinity wasn't quite the right word, it felt more like they were two north poles of a bipolar magnet, each vigorously, automatically repelled by the other.' (Jo Clayton, *Blue Magic*, 1988) [PM] [] *Dept of Anatomy.* 'Ace crept back down the corridor, her heart pounding in her neck. She swallowed, trying to push it away, concentrate on what she was doing, but it wouldn't shift.' (Dale Smith, *Dr Who - Heritage*, 2002) [LC] [] *Dept of Genealogy.* 'Lord Voldemort - who is the last remaining ancestor of Salazar Slytherin ...' (J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, 1998) [AS] [] *Dept of Bunker-Busting Metaphor.* 'If the interior of the cone is lined with copper or other metal, this melts and squirts forward with the plasma jet, giving it teeth to punch through armour plate like a fire hose through sand.' (*New Scientist*, 8 March) [TW] [] *Classics Dept.* 'We are between the wild throat of certainty and the mad zittidar of fact - we can escape neither.' (Edgar Rice Burroughs, *The Gods of Mars*, 1918)

from *Ansible* 189, April 4, 2003

The Goth House Newsletter March 21/03, Vol. 2 no. 6

"Today is not part 3 of the return of the supervillains. Today is, instead, topical, as denizens of Goth House Land comment on the war."

See <http://www.gothhouse.org>

"Other additions: Astrogoths t-shirts

http://www.gothhouse.org/agoths_tshirt.html

"It's not a happy week. Not only are we at war, but I just found out the Norwescon art show was full when I sent in my registration (so I won't have an exhibit - the new plan is to wander the halls wearing various paintings like a sandwich board).

"And, my beautiful Halloween "bat crave" travel cup (which made a guest appearance in the 2001 Christmas special

http://www.gothhouse.org/ghstrip5_1.html) broke. Weirdest thing. I filled it with coffee and left it sitting on the counter while I went to put on my shoes. Then when I returned to it, there was a huge crack in the plastic and the coffee was seeping into the paper design. It was perfectly intact when I left.

"The whole thing was eerie. Ominous."

- Julie McGalliard, info@gothhouse.org

The Goth House Newsletter April 4, 2003

"Okay, this time, back to the supervillains! Not only do they summon that fabulous demon babe, but they also share their supervillainy opinions about the war:

http://www.gothhouse.org/gh_online/2003/gh0304_04_b00.html

"Also, last week I was running so far behind that I rushed the links in the newsletter and got some of them, ahem, a little, er, wrong. So, just to make sure we've got 'em this time, the Astrogoths T-shirts:

http://www.gothhouse.org/gh_stuff/agoths_tshirt.html

"The comic with the special appearance of the dear, departed, 'bat crave' travel mug:

http://www.gothhouse.org/gh_online/ghstrip5_1.html

"Julie McG" <julie@gothhouse.org>

ANDREW MURDOCH, who is a candidate for the 2003 Canadian Unity Fan Fund to travel to Torcon 3, has his birthday on the 5th of September [1972]. His kind of SF and fan activities are "Conventions, fanzine publication, club activities (when other commitments don't get in the way)." The biggest thing he has done in fandom was to "Get nominated for an Aurora Award for my fanzine, ZX" (now under a new title). Asked for a BCSFA activity or *BCSFAzine* column he would like to see revived, Andrew would "love to see the return of a column by Stan Hyde, and the one to do with real space science."

If someone made up stories featuring him as a starring character, Andrew would rather feature in a political satire. His fifteen minutes of fame were about "Being nominated for the Aurora (again). His secret crime-fighter identity is "The Croupier.... ridding evildoers of their proceeds of crime before they can do anything else with it." He explains the international privatization/globalization/cutback movement by "Market forces in current and emerging free-market economies." He thinks our provincial premier is "Part Ivory Castle Idiot, part Evil Mastermind." He also thinks Iraq's head of state is a "Front man pretending to be an evil mastermind to cover up that he's an Ivory castle idiot.

Andrew reveals that the four major food groups (besides coffee) are "Alcohol, Chocolate, Caffeine, and Sugar."

The Reel Horror Party

(Saturday 8 February 2003)

by Michael Morbius



(Photos were sent to *Michael Morbius 2000*, *Richmond Goth*, and *The Ether Patrol*.)

This was a party to celebrate Reel Horror's new downtown location. I was invited by my friend and

fellow horror fan Gowan, who knows the owners. I brought Joe and Ryan.

Comic artists Robin Bougie and Colin Upton were there. Bougie had brought copies of the latest issue of *Cinema Sewer*, his zine, for sale. I bought one, thus achieving closure on the time that I met him at a Comic Con and couldn't afford to buy one. Ryan and I talked to Upton for a while about Richmond. Upton remembers Ryan from the time that Ryan was editor of the University of British Columbia Science Fiction Society's pro-zine *Horizons*; Ryan had commissioned Upton to draw a cover for the magazine.

I also met an artist whose painting was on display. Her name was Raven. (She has an MSN group called Restless Dead Souls.)

To add to the party-like atmosphere, music was played and interesting flavours of popcorn - lemon, orange, and grape - were served.

Michael Morbius "Hero of the Beach",
morbius@vcn.bc.ca.

Other Media News

RIGHTS OR WRONGS?

"James Follett put out an incandescent release about current BBC7 digital radio repeats of his 1981-82 sf radio series *Earthsearch*. These were apparently 'authorized' by the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society, originally set up to collect fiddly sums like blanket fees for academic textbook photocopying, and to distribute the take to ALCS-registered authors. Follett writes:

'The BBC had not renewed their broadcast rights. The previous year [2002], without my knowledge, the BBC had held secret meetings with a company called ALCS Ltd and appointed them to act as my literary agent and the literary agent for several other writers! Furthermore, without any reference to me, ALCS Ltd had agreed a fee scale of £10 per broadcast hour [rather than £450 per episode plus 50% for broadcasting them twice a day, as negotiated in 1980] for the BBC to repeat my work, without my consent, without my knowledge, and without the boring necessity of the BBC having to worry about securing copyright. My total fee for the BBC7 repeat of the entire serial would be £100! Needless to say, I'm not a member of ALCS and never have been. [...] To say that my agent and I were "incandescent with rage" would be a mild understatement. Together we would've provided a respectable firework display except that it was the BBC doing all the

celebrating. Imagine waking up one morning to discover that an estate agent that you had not appointed had put your house on the market without telling you and, furthermore, was selling for 2 percent of its 1980 value!

Further developments are nervously awaited; I have asked the Society of Authors to comment.

(*Ansible* 187, April 4, 2003)

BUFFYTUDE

Sarah Michelle Gellar has confirmed reports that she will quit *Buffy* at the end of the current seventh season. The series will wrap up in May with a five-part story, which will include the return of Faith (Eliza Dushku) and of Buffy's first love, Angel (David Boreanaz). The final episode will air on May 20 on UPN.

Creator Joss Whedon is planning a spinoff that may include some *Buffy* cast members, and he will pitch it first to UPN, *Buffy*'s home for the past two seasons.

Nathan Fillion, star of Whedon's failed series *Firefly*, is joining the *Buffy* cast for a key role in the final five episodes. Fillion will play Caleb, a former preacher who now follows the First. Said Whedon, "Nathan Fillion has a leading man's looks, but he's actually horribly evil, so he makes Caleb the epic foil for Buffy that he needs to be. Caleb calls himself a preacher, but his habit of murdering girls and his alliance with the darkest evil known to man makes him exactly the sort of guy whose ass Buffy needs to

kick." Caleb first appears in the episode "Dirty Girls."

Voyageur #144 March-April 2003

ZONE STAR HALL SUED

"*The Dead Zone* star Anthony Michael Hall is being sued for more than \$612,000 by the show's insurer, which says he failed to disclose a mental illness, the Associated Press reported.

"In the negligent misrepresentation lawsuit, Chubb Insurance of Canada claims production of the series in Vancouver, B.C., was disrupted when Hall was admitted to St. Paul's Hospital on May 11, 2001, following an episode of "bipolar affective disorder depression with psychotic features," the wire service reported.

"Hall was discharged from the hospital a day later and returned to his home in New York, according to documents filed last week in British Columbia Supreme Court, the AP reported. Hall had stopped taking his prescribed medication for the illness, previously known as manic depression, according to the court filing.

"After filming on the USA Network show was delayed until Aug. 14, 2001, the production company, Lions Gate Film Corp., submitted an insurance claim and received \$912,042.28 in Canadian dollars, which Chubb is trying to recover, the AP reported.

"Lawyers told the AP that Hall would respond to the lawsuit. No trial date has been set.

"USA Network is owned by Vivendi Universal, which also owns SCIFI.COM. *The Dead Zone* also airs on the SCI FI Channel."

FROM SCIFIWIRE via Michael Morbius, March 25, 2003

DARK ORIGINAL DRAMATIC SERIES for Sci-Fi Channel's 2004-2005 season:

"CLIVE BARKER'S THE EVIL ONE – A new exploration in thriller fiction. It's not always easy being the bad guy – and, frankly, it's hard to get truly evil help these days. Told from the perspective of an evil demon, this new series from Barker turns traditional narrative on its ear – where each week, the forces of good and evil do battle. However, in this weekly series, the Anti-Hero often wins. Produced by Seraphim, Inc. Executive produced by Clive Barker. Format by Barker. Distributed by USA Cable Entertainment.

"DEAD LAWYERS – A hotshot defense attorney is run over by a bus and finds himself in a law firm composed of unscrupulous lawyers who must return from the dead to redeem themselves by defending everyone they screwed when they were alive – pro bono. The Zanuck Company and DreamWorks Television executive produce. Christopher Murphey and Andy Lieberman are credited for story, Murphey scripts. DreamWorks Television produces. Distributed by USA Cable Entertainment.

"THE DIVIDE – What if the weirdest trio you could imagine – a late night DJ, his dead twin sister, and the local coroner – teamed up to fight crime? In this new mystery series, a knowingly bogus late-

night radio psychic discovers his abilities are real when visited by the ghost of his twin sister. Together with the aid of the local female coroner, they put together the missing pieces of unsolved crimes. A little supernatural vision from beyond the grave mixed with forensic science here on earth – a perfect recipe for solving the intriguing mysteries of the dead and the living. Produced by Lions Gate, executive produced by Stan Brooks and written by Frank Military and Dean White.

"LEGION – Whoopi Goldberg, Stephen Garrett and Jane Featherstone executive produce this series about a young man who sells his soul to the devil to save his daughter's life. He soon discovers the price he has paid is higher than he thought possible. He must leave his family – and wander the world with the terrifying ability to recognize other demonically possessed souls. Our hero begins an action-packed adventure to destroy the minions of darkness, and perhaps free himself from eternal damnation. Produced by Kudos Film & Television, Ltd., Whoopi, Inc. and Tom Leonardis, written by Tony Jordan, and distributed by USACE.

"SUTURE GIRL – Developed from the Gretchen Culver character in the Spawn comic book series, the series centers on a former advertising executive who was murdered by a serial killer and finds herself stitched back to life and imbued with special powers by a mysterious gypsy woman. Suture becomes a voice for the oppressed and a court of last resort as she fights evil with the help of a handsome crusading lawyer. Alan McElroy wrote the pilot, which will be executive produced by Fireworks Entertainment and Edmonds Entertainment's Tracey E. Edmonds, Kenny "Babyface" Edmonds and Sheila Ducksworth. Todd McFarlane will also serve as a producer.

"TOTAL ECLIPSE – Jeremy Cross arrives at his new teaching and research position at Greylock, a beautiful and prestigious college, only to discover that the school is a nexus of the otherworldly, arcane, and supernatural. As if tenure wasn't hard enough to get, the faculty's IQ goes up every year, intelligent wolves roam the forests, and the research covers time travel, extrasensory perception, and anything else on the edge of science. Distributed by USACE. Executive produced and written by Steve Aspis

"Wonder what happened to the movie of Clive Barker's THIEF OF ALWAYS? Here's part of the answer in an article about the aborted project's director Bernard Rose (who directed CANDYMAN). http://www.moviecitynews.com/columnists/klady/gb_030319.html."

"Paula Guran" <darkecho@darkecho.com>:
DARKECHO #20

Gor Titles that have never yet been published (cont'd):

A Brief History of Gor
Microcephaly of Gor
Lawyers of Gor
Aldermen of Gor
Slugs of Gor
Leafy Green Vegetables of Gor
False Gods of Gor
Infomercials of Gor
Rugby Finalists of Gor
Galactic Assholes of Gor
Dead Bodies of Gor
Zombies of Gor
Backbenchers of Gor
Collectibles of Gor
Godzilla v. Gor
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(a product of FRED, November 1, 2002)

SOME WORDS FROM OUR ADVERTISERS

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Book Reviews

by Donna McMahon

TECHNOGENESIS, Syne Mitchell (Roc, Jan/02)
THE CHANGELING PLAGUE Syne Mitchell (Roc,
Feb/03 mm)
SHADOW OF THE STORM, Kurt R.A. Giambastiani
(Roc Mar/03, mm)
WINDOWPANE, Steve Perry (Five Star, Feb/03 hc)

TECHNOGENESIS, Syne Mitchell (Roc, Jan/02)

Nobody geeks like Syne Mitchell.

A Seattle web developer with a Master's in solid-state physics, Mitchell knows her technical stuff, but the thing that makes *Technogenesis* rock is her unerring feel for the people who populate the computer universe. From university researchers to corporate software developers to hackers, Mitchell paints her characters vividly and realistically.

Jasmine Reese is brilliant, and even better she's a "natural." As her boss says: "You slip into network protocols like the computer's clock cycle is the beating of your own heart." Jaz spends all her waking hours connected to the net, and most of them working at her job as a "data miner" for a software company.

But when her top-of-the-line data mask breaks down, this arrogant workaholic is unwillingly thrust into a real Seattle where she can't go anywhere or do anything without a connection – she can't even switch on her own apartment lights. It's a frustrating and unpleasant experience, which quickly turns alarming when she starts to notice that the crowds

of connected people around her act as if they're being controlled by some intelligence.

As a homeless man whispers to her: "the beast is watching" – and when Jaz notices, the beast notices Jasmine. Now it's trying to stop her from sharing her discovery with anyone else.

This is a brisk, atmospheric set-up for a clever novel about humans, technology, society and artificial intelligence. There's lots of solid technical detail and social observation in here, but what drives the book is Jaz – a flawed and sometimes irritating protagonist who is up against scary and increasingly complex problems, including a shadowy government organization that kidnaps and blackmails her, a secret group of university researchers she must infiltrate, and ultimately an artificial intelligence named "Gestalt" which may be the best thing ever to happen to humanity – or the worst.

Jaz doesn't know who to trust or believe, and neither does the reader, which keeps the suspense high right through to the fast-paced conclusion of this book. This is an unusual hard SF novel – full of cool gizmos and cyberspeak, but also populated by strong, believable characters and driven by real human dilemmas. This novel is definitely a keeper.

THE CHANGELING PLAGUE, Syne Mitchell (Roc,
Feb/03 mm)

Geoffery Allan is a young man with everything to live for, but he's dying of cystic fibrosis. With nothing to lose and a huge fortune at his disposal,

he bribes a genetic researcher to engineer an illegal cure for him – a viral treatment that will repair his defective DNA at the cellular level.

It works, but instead of rewriting his DNA and then stopping, it keeps rewriting. And the virus is highly contagious. Soon everyone Geoffery's been in contact with is suffering from rare diseases and deformities – and the plague is spreading at terrifying speed.

This deadly virus must be stopped at all costs before it kills everyone on Earth. So Dr. Lillith Watkins, a conventional middle-aged researcher, finds herself making a secret alliance with a renegade hacker who has a disturbing obsession and his own agenda.

This is a good, gripping start for what is essentially a racing-the-clock disaster novel with a hard SF foundation. Unfortunately, the novel loses steam partway and events become more and more far-fetched, leading to an unsatisfying finish.

The fundamental problem with *The Changeling Plague* is that none of its three viewpoint characters is very compelling. It's oddly difficult to empathize with Geoffery, a bland rich white kid, and equally hard to feel much for Dr. Watkins, whose complete obtuseness about politics gets more annoying as the novel goes on. And the hacker Idaho – while interesting – is just too weird to share headspace with for very many pages.

The secondary characters are good, though. Mitchell has a better feel for counter culture than mainstream, and does a great job with Idaho's network of hacker geeks, goths, and extreme body piercers, (especially Idaho's girlfriend).

Their social/political context is also well drawn, and very timely. With the United States seething in post 9-11 paranoia, it's no stretch to imagine the government dealing with plague victims by rounding them up into concentration camps.

But this is a hard SF novel and while the bioscience starts well, it soon stretches to the snapping point. Programmers may look on DNA as just a lot of code, but, in fact, it's enormously more complex. And every geek should know that no program runs the first time without bugs and crashes – it's ridiculous to postulate hacking large changes to human DNA that work perfectly on the very first try.

Without a central, compelling human drama to keep the reader focussed, and with the pace of the novel lagging, these credibility problems become especially conspicuous.

The Changeling Plague is rich in cool ideas but not nearly as strong a novel as Mitchell's previous book, *Technogenesis*.

SHADOW OF THE STORM, Kurt R.A. Giambastiani (Roc Mar/03, mm)

I'm not a fan of alternate history, and American history in particular glazes my eyes right over, so Kurt Giambastiani wins my grudging admiration for pulling me all the way through *Shadow of the Storm*,

a novel in which George Armstrong Custer is President of the United States.

It's 1889, and the U.S. is still a small nation crowded along the Atlantic coast. Spain controls California, and the Great Plains are the dominion of the Cheyenne – fierce warriors who ride immense dinosaur-descended lizards. But the Americans have technology, industry, and a huge population of immigrants desperate for land. Under the leadership of Custer, they have pushed the Cheyenne and other tribes back to the banks of the Missouri River.

Custer's son, George junior, captured three years ago by the Cheyenne (in *The Year The Cloud Fell*), has learned Indian ways and joined their side, taking the name One Who Flies. Young George understands that the Cheyenne must gain recognition as a legitimate "nation", so when a shipwreck delivers the Spanish ambassador into his hands, he seizes this opportunity to forge an alliance.

That's the "big" action, but initially I was most interested in a second plot thread, which follows an Italian family struggling to survive in the tenements of New York. When Cesare, the oldest son, murders a man to rescue his sister from prostitution, the family flees the city for the frontier, following rumours of free land.

Giambastiani's depiction of the grinding poverty, brutality and prejudice of the times is vivid and very well researched. He paints many layers and complexities of American society – showing, for instance, the ruthlessness of the industrial magnates, but also the callous avarice of union leaders.

Equally strong is the author's depiction of the Cheyenne and their culture. George makes an excellent viewpoint character here – living among the Cheyenne and admiring them, but still an outsider who trips over unfamiliar beliefs and customs.

Finally, the characters in this book are strongly written – from President Custer, who is ruthless but unexpectedly insightful in his dealing with the Indians, to Storm Arriving, a proud warrior who must lead changes to his society that he does not like or understand.

Having said all that, I didn't enjoy this book very much. Part of my difficulty was the almost unremitting gloom. Cesare sinks from a brave, idealistic young immigrant to an amoral brute (not entirely convincingly, either). President Custer, hardly a likable character anyway, juggles nasty industrialists and venal advisors. And young George and his Cheyenne friends suffer setbacks and heartbreak.

This is also, unquestionably, a guy book – mostly war, politics, and macho posturing – and the few women characters exist solely in the context of the men.

Nonetheless I kept hoping for a redeeming wrap-up, but – silly me – this is the second book in a trilogy. A few characters get killed off, but nothing significant is resolved. The last line should read: "stay tuned for the next episode...."

Enthusiasts of American history will probably appreciate the solid writing and strong historical detail in *Shadow of the Storm*. However, to save on aggravation, I'd suggest waiting until the third book comes out so you can read the whole story.

WINDOWPANE, Steve Perry (Five Star, Feb/03 hc)

When Flint McClelland plays his platinum flute, magic breaks out all over. Flint didn't set out to become a homeless busker. Only a few years before he was a high school teacher in Baton Rouge. But a mysterious old man and his flute changed everything, and now Flint is on a mission to find ten talismans – objects that represent the magic of the 1960's. When he finds all ten years, the evil that "short-circuited" the Age of Aquarius will be defeated, and a new age will dawn.

There's a catch, of course. The evil forces have their own champion – the "Logician" – and she is out to stop him. As Flint nears his goal, her power increases, and her weapons of violence, immoral science, and bureaucracy converge on him.

He has faith that he'll make it, though – with a little help from his friends.

Set in 1988, *Windowpane* follows the adventures of Flint and four forty-somethings drawn to his healing magic: Eddie, a nurse who used to live on a commune; Kyle, a Viet Nam vet and outlaw biker; Larry, a Hollywood screenwriter; and Grace, a former black radical turned real estate saleswoman. Their four life stories build an intriguing portrait of a generation, and their gradual conversion from weary cynicism back to idealism generally rings true.

Perry's central question is simple: what happened to the optimism of the Sixties? How did America lose its momentum toward social justice and instead sink deeper into disparity and violence? His description of East Village in New York – erstwhile centre of Sixties counter culture – sums it up well.

"Mostly the neighborhood was dead gray; it was a car permanently parked by a cement plant; it was the brick and concrete and cruddy windows of a house forty years next door to a crematorium and never once cleaned. It was a war zone."

"It was a war zone, but the warriors who stalked the sidewalks and wandered into the streets were soldiers of the dark: addicts, dealers, gang members in colors, stand-up or kneel-down street whores, and winos with huge livers and stewed brains. Here gathered the dregs of America's dream, come

out in the dark to occupy their special place."

I suspect this Fantasy novel will land squarely on the emotional buttons of many Americans born between 1945 and 1955. Unfortunately, I'm Canadian and a little too young to have been part of the Sixties, so although I enjoyed the book, its central premise came across as rather, well... quaint. I guess you had to be there.

Nonetheless, you don't have to be a Sixties nostalgist to find *Windowpane* a good read. The novel has a strong theme, compelling characters, brisk pacing, and lots of action, nicely leavened with humour. The end is a bit of a let down, but I didn't seriously expect Steve Perry to save the world in 412 pages.

I've got to like him for trying, though.

Comments? Questions? Rebuttals?

donna_mcmahon@sunshine.net

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Fanzines!

by Ted White

Fanzines are a basic part of science fiction fandom, having been in existence as long as fandom itself – the past 70 years. Fanzines are a reflection of many fans' interest in the printed word and amateur publishing. The publication you are reading this in is a fanzine, but a specialized one. A variety of other fanzines are also available – many of them by request – and this column will cover some of them each issue.

All fanzines are published as a hobby and lose money. Their editors appreciate money to defray their expenses and sometimes list single-copy or subscription prices, but they appreciate even more your written response – a Letter of Comment, or LoC. Feedback – better known in fandom as “egoboo” – is what fanzine publishing is all about.

Check out the fanzine below and broaden your participation in fandom.

BURSTZINE #2, April 2003 (Michael A. Burstein & Nomi S. Burstein, P.O.Box 1713, Brookline, MA 02446; e-mail to burstzine@nomiburstein.com; PDF files of this fanzine are available from its website at www.burstzine.net; printed copies available “for either a printed fanzine in trade, a letter of comment, or via surface mail for US\$3.00 (and please add US\$3.00 for non-North American addresses).”)

Burstzine is a modest genzine with a twist. Simply but well produced, it occupies 24 pages (including covers), 21 of which are double-columned in an easily readable computer-set type. *Burstzine* is printed on folded sheets twice letter-size and saddle-stapled to the conventional letter-sized fanzine. Michael's editorial opens the issue and is followed by four articles. Nomi's editorial (in smaller print so it all fits on the inside back cover) closes the issue. There are no letters, but these are promised for #4, the projected “all-LoC issue.”

All but one piece in this issue is oriented to a common theme, “fans and our parents,” and Michael says he received so many contributions that the theme will be extended “into issue #3. #5, he tells us will launch a new theme.

To a large extent articles about fans and their parents are articles about How I Discovered Fandom (with or without parental help). These have a limited appeal when read en masse (see my December, 2001 review of *Contact!/Spirits Of Things Past* by Dick Smith & Leah Zeldes Smith), but the three here do offer some variety of experience, opinion and approach. The best is David B. Williams' “Napoleon, Tucker, and Me,” which links a number of disparate facts to reach an amusing punch line. Janna Silverstein's “My Parents and Fandom: A Personal Alternate History” is more conventional (pun intended) and Steven H. Silver's “Xenogenesis” is littered with footnotes (46!) – even the title is footnoted.

The longest piece (at 9 pages) in the issue is the only one not directly connected with this theme, but a parent remains its dominant topic. This is “‘...And In This Corner, The Florida Health Care System!’ An Ongoing Battle,” by Mike Resnick. After a brief introduction it consists of copies of Mike's correspondence with various people involved with the care of his dying father in Florida. Most of the correspondence concerns late-tendered bills and questionable billing practices by various health concerns. This is *real* correspondence (I assume), so it is not presented for humorous effect – which is fortunate, since it's not only not funny, the endless re-recitations of previously stated facts and complaints (we see only Resnick's side, no letters from those to whom he is responding) gets fairly tedious halfway through. His father's death would seem to moot most of these issues, but the last letters are to an oblivious Social Security Administration.

Michael's editorial deals with a perennial issue for fanzine editors and their editorials: schedules and Why This Issue Is Later Than I Said It Would Be. *Burstzine #2* comes about 6 months after #1, but the Bursteins hope to get out “one issue per season.” I hope so too. Four issues is a long time to wait to see one's letter of comment in print.

—Ted White

And from our fanzine trades ...

Lake 83 Varves #2, from Vincent, at P.O. Box 1113, Winnipeg, MB (email address withheld by request)

After his forgettable stint as a stand-in FanGoH for VCon 18, Vincent vanished from the Lower Mainland fan scene. We *thought* we'd never hear from him again, but we were wrong. He found the BCSFA website, and must have fond memories of the days before he moved to the wilds of northwest Manitoba to pursue his career in geographical survey. *Lake 83 Varves* is a sprawling, rambling perszine whose 4 ½ essays, spread over 16 pages, present unique insights into topics as disparate as blackfly contraception and the Michelson-Morley experiment. Vincent spent five years in parts of the country so obscure the lakes don't even have names, and there is rarely anyone around to tell you which of your wild ideas are merely *dumb* ideas. Fortunately, he has just the sense of humour to pull most of them off. If you thought there was nothing funny about post-modernist music, check out his article “Aurora Borealis Meets the 12-Tone Scale and Wins!”

Ottawa SF Statement April 2003, c/o 456 Gladstone Ave., Ottawa, ON K1R 5N8

Pulsar, April 2003, P.O. Box 4602, Portland, OR 97208, U.S.A.

Thyme March 2003 (written as 2002), P.O. Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Vic. 3005 (written 8005), Australia

Vanamonde #498, John Hertz' apazine, 236 S. Coronado St., No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057, U.S.A.

Voyageur, c/o Lynda Ciaschini, 7050 Weston Road, Ste. 30, Woodbridge, ON L4L 8G7; www.voyageur.idic.ca

Archivist's Report

on Vancouver clubs in the 1950s, Part 2:

VANCOUVER COUNCIL OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING GENERAL WELFARE MOVEMENT.

by R. Graeme Cameron

Recently 8 newsletters of the Vancouver Area Flying Saucer Club were donated to the archives by a former member of the VAFSC. They were described in part one of this series. Along with them came 7 newsletters of the Vancouver Council of Social Engineering General Welfare Movement, or 'VCSEGWM' (and some people think 'BCSFA' is hard to pronounce!). I shall refer to VCSEGWM as 'VC' from now on.

What was the VC? How many members? What were its activities? Only the first question is answered in the VC newsletters.

"In 1948 a retired English Civil Servant, Mr. Albert 'Bert' Taylor, living in Chorley in Lancashire conceived an idea for bringing together the efforts of many people scattered over our world who were working for the general betterment of all mankind. A monthly journal called *General Welfare* was the result." It seems to have been a kind of *Readers Digest* compendium from diverse sources of like-minded material serving Bert's goal: "To list, link, and help good causes, making them known locally, nationally & internationally; to ascertain and express true public opinion on matters affecting general welfare, human happiness and world peace; to build all that is good and right into a world lateral association."

In 1952, one year before his death, Bert endorsed one Professor Jezierski who called for a "World Institute For Reform" to bring about "lateral association to supplement pyramidal organization which will enable public opinion to be mobilized on a world scale to empower bodies and individuals in authority to effect much needed changes in established systems." ... And we all know how well that turned out!

Then along came W. Marc Gaines, who after two years "in the US Navy Air Arm Intelligence... and eight years in a Lhamasary in Sinkiang." (...in Communist China! Must have looked good in his 1950's McCarthy-era résumé ...) proposed the "Trans World Research Centre of Earth: A Brain Trust of the New World Order" in order "to arouse public opinion everywhere so that it conforms to the to the principles of brotherhood, world unity, religious tolerance and mutual dependence – producing right basic changes everywhere." Sure, why not? Got nothing else to do.

The VC newsletters would appear to be an offshoot of all the above. First, it's a digest of material from other sources as was the *General Welfare Journal*. And secondly, its selection of quotes reflects the social engineering aspects of both the

'WIFR' & the 'TWRCE', albeit with an emphasis on spiritualism and 'new age' science (the latter a term dating back to the 1950s, if not earlier). In this the VC newsletters resemble the Vancouver Area Flying Saucer Club newsletters. They're also printed on the same paper and exhibit identical editorial techniques. I assume one editor prepared both.

I am tempted to think there was no organization as such, and that the VC editor simply printed and forwarded his 'private hobby horse' to members of the saucer club as a kind of freebie supplement, but the saucer club was founded in 1956, and the VC newsletters filling out the year 1957 are labelled series seven, no. 1, etc, which would imply that previous series predated the saucer club by 5 years or so. At any rate, no members or activities are listed. So while I assume somebody must have been reading these newsletters before the creation of the saucer club, I have no idea who. Perhaps it was traded fanzine-style to like-minded individuals after the fashion of the original *General Welfare Journal*.

The VC newsletters have virtually nothing in the way of editorial comment. They consist almost entirely of reprinted excerpts from other sources. Three themes can be discerned: 1) Anti-atomic power advocacy, 2) Aliens are among us, & 3) the need for mankind's spiritual rebirth.

The anti-nuclear aspect includes quotes from prominent activists like Lord Bertrand Russell: "The only apparently valid argument (to avoid a test ban) made by the west, is that our side is endeavouring to make what is called 'clean bombs', in which there is a minimum of fall-out... but everybody knows that in war it is 'dirty bombs' that will be used since they are both cheaper and more destructive – this argument is therefore illusory..." and warnings of the like reprinted from the Rosicrucian newsletter: "...all fission processes leave an 'ash' or end-product that is highly radioactive... Even the most limited atomic power industry will create radioactive wastes vastly faster than they can decay to harmless levels..." A wake-up call from 1957!

It is the references to alien activity that appeals most to me. After quoting from the Bible – "And the fire from the EVER-LIVING God fell upon and devoured the offering and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water..." – the editor asks: "If one is to concede that the foregoing MAY have occurred – could there be any parallel between it and the 'heat' reported by two Starfighter pilots over New York State, and the incident told by the doctor motoring in Arizona with his family, and the burning bridge in Idaho?" Hmm, beats me. The style

reminds me of... shades of Criswell & Ed Wood Jr!
Hmmm.

Direct quotes from Alien Spacemen are the most fun, most of them emanating from Yucca Valley in California for some reason. 'Contamarra from Arcturus' informs us "Some of our planets are of different temperatures, owing to variable speeds in rotation between them." Say what? ... 'Desca' says "In the age-old controversy among physical beings, let me tell you this: You cannot sustain physical form without assimilating this life force from the substance called food. This food may vary from vegetation to gas substance known to you as air." But we knew this already. Why is the need to eat and breathe controversial to aliens?... 'Kortan of Mars' offers these soothing words: "We are here to help you... Do not be deceived. Do not be waylaid. Do not alter your course.. Do not permit yourselves to become unbalanced. Maintain a standard daily life. Be alert. Prepare to expect many strange things to happen. Under no circumstances be alarmed." ... NOW I'm worried!...And finally this friendly notice from 'Ashtar and Associates': "There are Space Men within call at all times. In a sudden emergency do not hesitate to call on us for help....We are willing and eager to serve you. That is why we are here." Yeah, right, TO SERVE MAN! (if you remember that famous *Twilight Zone* episode).

But overall, the general thrust of the VC newsletters is compassionate and optimistic, reflecting the third theme, mankind must evolve to a new level, a spiritual level, as witness the following quote: "We can only be saved by a nucleus of men who are so centred in truth, at the source, that their wisdom is a part of all-wisdom, therefore so conscious of the Universal Mind and so integrated at the centre that they will be able to think clearly in many fields and not be limited by one field alone. Such a group of men, if they seek each other out, and share their wisdom, will be able to chart a course that will save the world."

You know, this reminds me a lot of the 1930s SF fans who tried so earnestly to unite fandom in order to socially engineer the mundane world into a scientific utopia. Naïve, but with the heart in the right place. Very refreshing compared to the dark conspiracy theories so in vogue today.

Next time, Part Three: The Vancouver Science Fiction Society of the 1950s.

Gor Titles that have never yet been published (cont'd):

Again, Dangerous Gor
Starbucks of Gor
Franchise Agreements of Gor
Chapter House Gor
The Man who Fell to Gor
Karaoke Bars of Gor
Pool Sharks of Gor
I Know Why the Caged Gor Sings
Music Critics of Gor
Shigata Gor Nai
Plan G from Omer Gor
Buckets of Gor
The World According to Gor
Dental Prosthetics of Gor
Regional Equalization Payments of Gor
Vogon Sonnets of Gor
Food Substitutes of Gor
Sediments of Gor
Soup Kitchens of Gor
Egg Marketing Board of Gor
Vaccination Programs of Gor
Coles Notes of Gor
Post-it Notes of Gor
Gor for Dummies
Golf Pros of Gor
Empire-Busters of Gor
Neuroses of Gor
Viagra of Gor
Ration Coupons of Gor
Divorce Consultants of Gor
Moving Days of Gor
B-Movies of Gor
Egg Foo Yung of Gor
Waste Reclamation Projects of Gor
Yentas of Gor

(a product of FRED, November 1, 2002)

Creative Sociology

by Garth Spencer



Abstract

One of the several things science fiction authors do is to invent future, alternative, even alien societies - either to satirize our own foibles, or to play about with ideas, and explore how a society could be different and still work. This segues very easily into inquiring how some kinds of people *could* meddle with other people's affairs, treating their own culture the way mechanics treat cars. How have stories like this worked out?

Some basic assumptions have to be observed here, such as: "Human behaviour is different in different places, and at different times, and not obviously rational anywhere, but you *can* make sense of how humans behave, if you accept that it is patterned, has causes, even without being rational; you can predict, and even influence what people do, if you just observe the relevant factors. In fact, we pay some people good money to do this to us (politicians, preachers, advertisers, con artists, other people like that."

Disposing of Misconceptions

Why *explain* behaviour? Some of us think human behaviour is obvious, makes "common sense" and needs no explanation. But apart from demonstrating no sense of history or travel, this attitude fails to explain why those of us living right here and now do the things we do at Easter and Hallowe'en and Christmas; it fails to explain political ceremonies, or the uniforms

businessmen wear, or the dress and customs that have become traditional in modern slums.

Some of us, not just immigrants from other cultures, do not find much sense in the behaviour around us, and in fact *need* an explicit intellectual construct to serve in the place of so-called "common sense". Much more often, though, people are simply mismatched to the demands placed on them in their own societies; not all graduating eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds, for instance, can be expected to choose our life's work when we're graduating from high school - to know either our own potential, or to guess what professions will be in demand when we get out of college, or BCIT.

(I also have deep suspicions about what passes for "common sense", but let's leave that point aside for the moment.)

In case you think I'm going to dive into an endless examination of satires, going right back to *Gulliver's Travels*, or famous novels that no-one reads, starting with Thomas More's *Utopia*, or moralistic fables like *1984* and *Brave New World* ... don't. I'm not interested in them.

I'm about to dive into an interminable examination of science fiction and fantasy stories about societies that are slightly, or wildly different from ours; and I want to ask: how plausible, or even how practical, are these societies?

Pseudo-scientific Sociology

(Some of what follows was previously published in the program book of Westercon 44, Vancouver, B.C., July 1991)

A number of science fiction stories actually conceive of a future social science, in which trained professionals regularly describe, predict, and modify group behaviour, on almost the same terms as chemists and physicists work with their materials. So many stories do this that one might speak of a "tradition" or stream of thought in the SF field.

What assumptions do these writers have in common, and what does this kind of writing tell us?

Isaac Asimov's Foundation Series

Probably the most famous such stories are in Asimov's *Foundation* series (conceived and published in the late 1930s/early 1940s). (1) In the far future, when one Empire governs the whole human galaxy, it becomes possible

to found a science of "psychohistory." This discipline views mass behaviour as something that can be statistically predicted, on the grand scale, at least for galactic-sized populations, as much as a thousand years ahead.

Despite the fairly rigid picture one gets of "psychohistory," the actual story text admits that crisis points have to crop up, at which political, economic and demographic events might take different directions. In the references to "psychohistory" are mentions of psychological "equations," the use of which is exclusively Second Foundation property.

... Red symbols glowed out from the gray. [Seldon] said, "That represents the condition of the Empire at present." He waited.

Gaal said finally, "Surely that is not a complete representation."

"No, not complete," said Seldon. "I am glad you do not accept my word blindly. However, this is an approximation which will serve ... Add to this the known probability of Imperial assassination, viceregal revolt, the contemporary recurrence of periods of economic depression, the declining rate of planetary exploration ..." (2)

Robert Heinlein's stories

We encounter a similar image in various stories by Robert Heinlein, starting in the same decade. However, Heinlein used a somewhat different notion of future sociology. In one story, written in the early years of the Second World War, one of his characters writes:

There is no science of sociology. Perhaps there will be, some day, when a rigorous physics gives a finished science of colloidal chemistry and that leads in turn to a complete knowledge of biology, and from there to a definitive psychology. After that we may begin to know something about sociology and politics. Sometime around the year 5000 A.D., maybe... (3)

I have been told that this rather reductionist, limiting model reflects the attitude of the time when Heinlein wrote. "Solution Unsatisfactory" (quoted above) was written in the early 1940s, and can be considered to reflect a contemporary, reductionist, atomist understanding of "science."

Other stories in Heinlein's future history (written from the 1940s through the 1950s) developed the speculation that a rigorous psycho/sociology, with a formal logic/symbolic system, would indeed be in use by the end of the 20th century. One short story, "Blowups Happen," is set in a fictional fission plant. (For Heinlein's story purposes [writing in early 1940], he assumed that any power-generating atomic reaction was a sustained, barely controlled explosion, which later turned out not to case.) Not surprisingly, eventually the technicians require the attentions of a specialist (who happens to be a man as much at home in semantics and formal logic as in psychology). He explains himself:

"Man lives in a world of ideas. ... Human reaction is almost entirely reaction to symbols, and only negligibly to phenomena. As a matter of fact... it can be demonstrated that the human mind can think only in terms of symbols.

"When we think, we let symbols operate on other symbols in certain, set fashions - rules of logic, or rules of mathematics. If the symbols have been abstracted so that they are structurally similar to the phenomena they stand for, and if the symbol operations are similar in structure and order the operations of phenomena in the real world, we think sanely. If our logic-mathematics, or our world-symbols, have been poorly chosen, we think not-sanely.

"In mathematical physics you are concerned with making your symbology fit physical phenomena. In psychiatry I am concerned with precisely the same thing, except that I am more immediately concerned with the man who does the thinking than with the phenomena he is thinking about. But the same subject, always the same subject. (4)

Eventually, Dr. Lentz determines that the technicians' problem is unsolvable - as a *psychological* problem. The reactor simply cannot be operated with any reasonable safety, anywhere on the face of the Earth. But it can be operated as a power source *off* of Earth's surface. To make that solution attainable, Lentz has to correlate, not just psychological, but sociological factors:

"Very well. Bear with me ..." He obtained a sheet of paper from King, and commenced to write. They watched in mystified impatience. He continued briskly for some minutes, hesitating only momentarily. Presently he stopped, and spun the paper over to King. "Solve it!" he demanded.

King studied the paper. Lentz had assigned symbols to a great number of factors, some social, some psychological, some physical, some economic. He had thrown them together into a structural relationship, using the symbols of calculus of statement. King understood the paramathematical operations indicated by the symbols, but he was not as used to them as he was to the symbols and operations of mathematical physics. He plowed through the equations, moving his lips slightly in subconscious vocalizations. He accepted a pencil from Lentz, and

completed the solution. It required several more lines, a few more equations, before they cancelled out, or rearranged themselves, into a definite answer. (5)

Dr. Lentz has worked out not only the physical, but the economic and political, means to get the reactor into orbit. (In practice, this subsequently means going to the power corporation's board of directors and presenting a two-pronged case: the PR job Lentz and company will use to sell the orbital move as the initiative of responsible, public-spirited executives - versus the smear job they will otherwise perform on the board.)

In other stories ("If This Goes On —," "Methuselah's Children"), Heinlein assumed that a symbolic sociological discipline develops, as in Dr. Lentz' exercise, but carried to the nth degree. For example, in "Methuselah's Children," when a secret society of extremely long-lived people is persecuted - even though mainstream culture has undergone several generations of "semantically-sound" education, and social psychologists thought everybody was past this sort of thing - we get the following explanation:

"... Eve is in no danger from her neighbors and friends, and I am in no danger from mine. But she is in danger from my neighbors and friends—and I from hers. Mass psychology is not simply a summation of individual psychologies; that is a prime theorem of social psychodynamics—not just my opinion; no exception has ever been found to this theorem. It is the social mass-action rule, the mob hysteria law, known and used by military, political, and religious leaders, by advertising men and prophets and propagandists, by rabble rousers and actors and gang leaders, for generations before it was formulated in mathematical symbols. It works. It is working now.

"By the time we were sure, it was almost too late. Socio-psychological trends grow or die by a 'yeast growth' law, a complex power law. ... As nearly as we can measure it, the rate has doubled in the past thirty-seven days and the rate itself has accelerated ..." (6)

Heinlein's notions of a rigorous future sociology are less deterministic, more flexible, than Asimov's, but equally programmatic; there is a standard model of functional society, a standard mode of analysis and symbolism, and a class of elite professionals who dispense law, or psychosocial intervention - the distinction is somewhat blurred.

The judge turned to MacKinnon. "Do you have anything to say for yourself?"

"I certainly have, Doctor," he began eagerly. "There isn't a word of -"

Bang! The gavel cut him short. A court attendant hurried to MacKinnon's side and attempted to explain to him the proper form to use in addressing the court. The explanation confused him. In his experience, "judge" naturally implied a medical man - a psychiatrist skilled in social problems. (7)

The major difference between Heinlein's and Asimov's speculative social science is that psychohistory is (superficially) almost purely predictive, and relates to the largest statistical groups; Heinlein's symbolic sociology is, apparently, a means of analyzing perhaps any social situation, and planning any intervention you decide upon.

When the "Methuselahs" make their escape, their leaders have to explain the presence of a political leader, who is strongly associated with their persecution. One of their number is asked to prepare a story that is not only reasonably factual, but reasonably acceptable:

Ralph Schultz hesitated. "The truth of a proposition has little or nothing to do with its psychodynamics ... The notion that 'truth will prevail' is merely a pious wish; history doesn't show it. The fact that Ford really is a martyr to whom we owe gratitude is irrelevant to the purely technical question you put to me." He stopped to think. "But the proposition *per se* has certain sentimentally dramatic aspects which lend it to propaganda manipulation, even in the face of the currently accepted strong counterproposition. Yes ... yes, I think it could be sold."

"How long would it take you to put it over?"

"Mmm ... the social space is both 'tight' and 'hot' in the jargon we use; I should be able to get a high positive 'k' factor at the chain reaction - if it works at all. But it's an unsurveyed field and I don't know what spontaneous rumors are running around the ship. If you decide to do this, I'll want to prepare some rumors before we adjourn, rumors to repair Ford's reputation - then about twelve hours from now I can release another one that Ford is actually aboard ..." (8)

I suppose some technicians talk like this. I don't know psychologists or sociologists who do. (9)

(To be continued)