

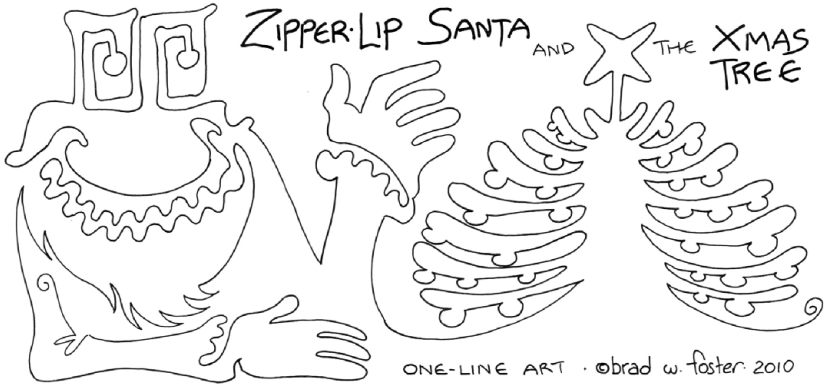
# BCSFA Zine

The Newsletter of the British Columbia Science Fiction Association

#451

\$3.00/Issue

December 2010



## In This Issue:

This Month in BCSFA.....	0
About BCSFA.....	0
Letters of Comment.....	1
Calendar.....	5
News-Like Matter.....	9
Media File (Ray Seredin).....	15
VCON 35 Report (Part 2) (Joseph Picard).....	17
Book Reviews [...] (Garth Spencer).....	22
Zines Received.....	23
E-Zines Received.....	25
Art Credits.....	26
Why You Got This.....	26

*BCSFAzine* © December 2010, Volume 38, #12, Issue #451 is the monthly club newsletter published by the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, a social organization. ISSN 1490-6406.

Please send comments, suggestions, and/or submissions to Felicity Walker (the editor), at [felicity4711@gmail.com](mailto:felicity4711@gmail.com) or #209-3851 Francis Road, Richmond, BC, Canada, V7C 1J6. *BCSFAzine* solicits electronic submissions and black-and-white line illustrations in JPG, GIF, BMP, PNG, or PSD format, and offers printed contributors' copies as long as the club budget allows.

*BCSFAzine* is distributed monthly at White Dwarf Books, 3715 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6R 2G5; telephone 604-228-8223; e-mail [whitedwarf@deadwrite.com](mailto:whitedwarf@deadwrite.com). Single copies C\$3.00/US\$2.00 each.

## This Month in BCSFA

Thursday 16 December @ 7 PM: **December Book Discussion** at the Grind gallery & café, 4124 Main Street (near the corner of Main and King Edward), Vancouver. Book to be discussed will be *Spare* by Michael Marshall Smith.—[Doug Finnerty](#)

Sunday 12 December @ 7 PM: **BCSFA meeting and Christmas party**—at Ray Seredin's, 707 Hamilton (Recreation Room), New Westminster (not the Old Spaghetti Factory this time). Note that the date is one week earlier than for the regular meetings. Bring food or a few dollars for pizza delivery. Call 604-521-0254 for directions.

Friday 31 December: **'BCSFAzine' production** (theoretically).

## About BCSFA

The incumbent BCSFA Executive members are:

President & Archivist: R. Graeme Cameron, 604-584-7562

Vice President: TBA

Treasurer: Kathleen Moore, 604-771-0845

Secretary: Barb Dryer, 604-267-7973

Editor: Felicity Walker, 604-448-8814

Keeper of FRED Book: Ryan Hawe, 604-448-8714

VCon Ambassador for Life: Steve Forty, 604-936-4754

BCSFA's website is at <http://www.bcsfa.net/>. The BCSFA e-mail lists are BC SciFi Assc ([http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc\\_scifi\\_assc/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/)) and BCSFAnet (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bcsfanet/>).

## Letters of Comment

[Editor's responses in brackets.]

**Steve Green**

33 Scott Road,

Solihull,

UK

B92 7LQ

[ghostwords@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ghostwords@yahoo.co.uk)

Saturday 6 November 2010

Hi Felicity,

Michael Bertrand's evaluation of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century science fiction as "solely the domain of tiny press runs and low production values" is staggeringly unfair to the genre. Although it wouldn't be widely perceived as inhabiting a separate literary bracket until at least the mid-1930s (long after Hugo Gernsback tried—and failed—to rally us under the clunking banner of "scientifiction"), there was already a rich history of "scientific romances" with mainstream literary credentials. Surely he must have heard of H.G. Wells, Jules Verne and Jack London?

[Oh, well, sure, if you include them...]

The Stewart/Colbert rally did receive attention in the British press, but then—unlike much of the US press—we're actually aware there is a world outside our shores.

[Last week a friend phoned me and told me to check the news because North Korea had attacked South Korea. Only BBC World was covering it; however, the presenters seemed bored by Korea, and much more excited about the forthcoming royal wedding.

[Alert reader Julian Castle submitted the following clipping from local free newspaper 24 Hours.]

### 14 24H ▶ ENTERTAINMENT

MONDAY  
NOVEMBER 1 2010

## Comedians' rally fires up Washington

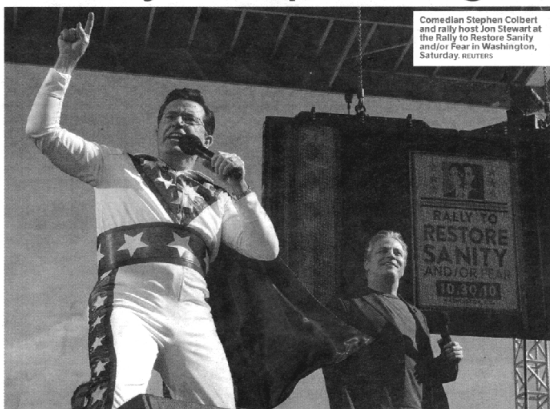
REUTERS—Two of America's best-known television comedians drew tens of thousands of people to a rally Saturday that was part variety show, part Halloween celebration and part political rally to call for common sense before Tuesday congressional elections.

Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert, hosts of late-night cable TV shows, posed fun at politicians for stoking partisan fever.

Performing in front of the U.S. Capitol building, the pair were joined by crooner Tony Bennett, rocker Ozzy Osbourne, singer Sheryl Crow, and Yusuf Islam, formerly known as Cat Stevens, who was refused entry to the United States in 2004 for alleged ties to Islamic extremism.

In a moment of seriousness, Stewart said Americans were more united than the media made out.

"We hear every damn day about how fragile our country is on the brink of catastrophe, torn by polarizing lies. The truth is, we work together to get things done every damn day."



Comedian Stephen Colbert and rally host Jon Stewart at the Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear in Washington, Saturday, Reuters

## New Zealand law passed to keep Hobbit amid protests

The New Zealand government on Friday passed legislation clearing the way for two Hobbit films to be made in the country despite stiff protest by opposition lawmakers who said it was a "day of shame."

The government's decision to rush through amended labor laws, part of the deal made with Warner Bros. Pictures to keep director Peter Jackson's lucrative project in his native New Zealand, has split public opinion.

Some union officials reportedly received death threats in the wake of a short-lived international boycott over working conditions.

Warner Bros. executives said they would consider moving the production elsewhere, a move that could have cost the country \$1.5 billion and damaged the reputation of its fledgling film industry. They flew down to New Zealand earlier this week to negotiate with a delegation led by Prime Minister John Key. — REUTERS

Given his interest in intellectual property issues, Dave Haren has no doubt picked up on the online firestorm over the idiot editor of the New England freesheet *Cooks Source* and her attempt to dismiss accusations of plagiarism by claiming all material posted online is automatically in the public domain. Unsurprisingly, this is unlikely to sway the lawyers now acting on behalf on some of those she's allegedly ripped off, among them NPR, Martha Stewart and the Disney Corporation.

[*Thank goodness for fair use.*]

Incidentally, the nominations process for the next TAFF race launches next weekend. It's a westward race this time, with European fans vying for the chance to attend next year's Worldcon in Reno. Full details at [taff.org.uk](http://taff.org.uk).

Kind regards

—Steve

**Sheryl Birkhead**

Friday 19 November 2010

25509 Jonnie Court,  
Gaithersburg, MD 20882  
USA

Okay—can't find several issues, but I did find three—so on with the show. Ah—all three I see (446, 447, 449) have nice, always appreciated, *Foster* cover illos.—Congrats to Brad on another rocket...

Sigh—more and more I see notices of zines going totally electronic. I understand—but...old fashioned—I can't imagine that a fan ed gets the same rush/sense of satisfaction in visiting a site as holding a print copy. So far computer print copies are *not* the same thing.

[*I know I wouldn't get as much satisfaction out of publishing an e-zine, or printing out PDFs of other zines.*]

I'm not fluent “with” steampunk—but being pointed at *Cowboys & Aliens*—and taking a short look—I get a little idea.

ST—I've always seen all of the series. I tend to agree with *The Big Bang Theory* TV show—Picard over Kirk, original over second generation. All subjective and personal likes...

Just taped *Battlefield Earth* this past weekend. I *must* admit that, with the digital converter box (i.e.—no cable) it is better than even money that there will be *some snow/poor-terrible reception—now—does that help or hurt?*

I, intermittently, watch *Doctor Who* from *Netflix*. Since I am not a Whovian, I just enjoy whatever disk arrives. Hence, sorry, I have no idea what I've seen and what I haven't. Just in case—I'll skip the *Who* news for 8/10.

[*Sheryl refers to “Media File” from BCSFAzine #447.*]

I also saw the *Torchwood* *Netflix* selections—maybe I need to double check and see if I've actually watched all available so far. I'd be happy to see Vancouver based episodes!

I keep looking for a portable computer (Mac-Intel chips) I can afford so I can go back to typing. So far this is not going to happen (anything older than that is incompatible with the iMac and I don't want to get caught up in *that problem*).

I am guessing the podcast “fanzine” win, and the Fred Pohl “fanwriter” win have created controversy there as “here.” Sigh.

I believe the latest *Harry Potter* installment hits the big screen tomorrow. I figure that about the time the *last* installment is ready to go, I will see a Netflix copy of tomorrow's film—clear?

[*Yup!*]

So, for right now I need to go to winterizing—and hope we don't get the same messes we had last winter—

*Thanks* for all the work you do—

Sheryl

**Lloyd Penney**

1706–24 Eva Rd.,

Etobicoke, On.

M9C 2B2

[penneys@allstream.net](mailto:penneys@allstream.net)

Tuesday 23 November 2010

Dear BCSFen:

Thank you, Felicity, for another *BCSFazine*, issue 450 this time. I am kinda decompressing from a new convention in Toronto called SFContario. With guests like Michael Swanwick, Geri Sullivan, Billy Tackett and TM [*Toastmaster*] Robert J. Sawyer, can't go wrong, and it was a great time, extremely successful, and lots of fun. The date and place (same hotel and weekend) has been announced for next year, and SFContario 2 will be next year's CanVention. More in the next paragraph...

My loc...besides the aforementioned SFContario, we got to do a little costuming there. We're still having some fun with the steampunk costumes, and the con was costuming and filk friendly. Didn't go to CanZine...sometimes, I think problems arise to ruin my carefully planned schedule. Murphy must be in charge.

I've been Facebooking back and forth with Christina Carr...Steamcon II was this past weekend. I read that it had attendance of 1700, and the Seattle papers gave it good coverage. We've got our own steampunk con this coming April...hope it succeeds like Steamcon does!

Michael Bertrand...I am 5'4", so I face into the crowd just about anywhere. Yvonne is 4'8", so it's even worse for her. No more big gateshow conventions for me, unless we're doing something special or performing or something like that.

Just before the new con, Yvonne and I caught an early performance of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1*, making eight movies out of seven books... The movie was quite enjoyable, and will set up *Part 2* very well, which premieres the day before Polaris 25 in Toronto, so I will be just as sleep-deprived this coming con as I was for the one just past. To add to the deprivation, we look forward to the new *Narnia* and *Tron* movies.

[*The new Tron looks potentially OK, but I miss the old graphics.*]

Interesting con review of VCon, mostly because there's not much of VCon in it. It's mostly prep for the dealers' room and hotel room. I hope *Part 2* next issue will make things seem more familiar.

[*I think it will. I also have Michael Bertrand's blog entries from VCON 35 archived, and I could write a capsule review of my VCON 35 experience.*]

I've been reading about Quick Response codes lately, and there's been more on the CBC, too. Of course, I can't use them unless I have a smartphone, and I doubt I

will have one of those for some time to come. These days, I see them everywhere and on everything.

[*QR codes are to 2010 what URLs were to 1995.*]

All done for the moment, got the page done. Take care, and see you next issue.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

**Michael Bertrand**  
[fruvousfox@gmail.com](mailto:fruvousfox@gmail.com)

Thursday 2 December 2010

Finally, the need to write a LOC had forged upstream through my usual flood of thoughts to the headwaters of my consciousness and into the capital city of my will!

In other words, I am finally getting around to writing this.

I agree with Steve Green that claiming *Avatar* would shame some previous era of science fiction is a bit over-reverential. Sturgeon's Law was in effect far before he pronounced it. Every era has its art and its crap, and the ratio remains roughly the same.

From Lloyd's letter, I get the feeling that steampunk, as a fandom, is still going through some growing pains. It's still the place to be if you want in on the Next Big Thing.

David Haren wrote:

"The whole issue of copyright has turned into a barroom brawl where a lot of the casualties are bystanders being hit by flying debris."

Exactly true and well put! Sadly, when the comet hits and all the old dinosaurs are fighting it out in their dying days, us mammals are not on their radar. It is all about them, as though somehow, the winner will survive. Not gonna happen.

There's a Red Hulk now? How many colors does this make? Is the world ready for Burnt Umber Hulk?

[*Which would be "Buulk," which was also the name of a character on Mighty Morphin Power Rangers—he even spelled it that way.*]

Sad to hear of Remy Couture's problems.

"Couture is charged, under Section 163 of the Criminal Code, with moral corruption and distributing obscene material."

It saddens and enrages and flabbergasts me that in this day and age, someone can be charged with something as antique and antiquated as "moral corruption." The entire concept of free speech precludes any concern about moral corruption. It assumes whether you are corrupted or not is your own damn business.

If you don't want to see realistic horror-gore films, don't go to his site. Other than that, STFU.

I guess that's all my chatter for this time. Seeya next issue, folk!

**We Also Heard From:** Nalini Haynes, Keith Lim, Duncan McGregor, Kathleen Moore, and Garth Spencer.

## Calendar

Note to print readers: underlined events have an associated URL. Links included in the PDF version at <http://www.efanzines.com/BCSFA/>.—Julian Castle

### Already in Progress

6 July–23 December 2010: [From Pong to Pokemon: Video Game Exhibition](#) at the Surrey Museum, 17710 56A Avenue, Surrey, BC. Artifacts from history of video games in four hardware categories: arcade (*Computer Space*, *Street Fighter II*), home console (*Super Mario Bros.*), computer (*World of Warcraft*), and handheld (Game & Watch). “Play days” (where visitors can play the games): “The Moderns,” 17 July 2010—Nintendo 64, Playstation 3, etc.; “8- and 16-Bit Era,” 25 September 2010—Nintendo Entertainment System, Sega Genesis, etc.; “Early Days,” 27 November 2010—Atari 2600 [*E.T.*], Intellivision, ColecoVision, etc. Register at <http://www.surrey.ca/>.—Julian Castle “Enjoy this look at how video gaming has changed people’s recreation time and opened up new industries and career opportunities. Find out how gaming itself has changed from arcade days and *Pac-Man* to the latest handheld devices and *Pokemon Platinum*. Adults \$5, seniors/students \$3.75, child/youth \$2.50, five & under free. Space is limited, so registration is recommended by calling 604-592-6956.”—Keith Lim

### December 2010

1 December 2010: VSteam: Winter Ball benefiting BC Cancer Foundation at Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver, BC (moved from 2 December 2010). “VSteam is hosting a Winter Ball to benefit the BC Cancer Foundation. Live bands, DJs, and enough steampunkery to fill a ballroom, we’ve got an amazing night planned to help out an amazing cause!...steampunk music playing all night. In addition, we’ll bring a bar, snacks, and enough tea fill a zeppelin. Also, to raise money for the BC Cancer Foundation, we will be auctioning off some steampunk tree ornaments (as well as other donated prizes). If you have anything to donate, or wish to make an ornament for our tree, let us know! 100% of all profit will be donated to the BC Cancer Foundation, so come out for a night of top-hats, gowns, dancing, and all sorts of steampunkery!” [Vancouver Steampunks Calendar/Vancouver Steampunks Forum/Facebook](#).—Keith Lim

3 December 2010: Premiere of film *Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale* (fantasy).

3 December 2010: [Trumpeter Games Night](#), 7 PM at Bonsor Recreation Complex (by Metrotown), 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby. Non-members: first meeting free, \$6 drop-in fee thereafter.—Keith Lim

3 December 2010: [One-Man Star Wars Trilogy](#), 8 PM at the [Vogue Theatre](#), 918 Granville Street, Vancouver, 604-569-1144.—Georgia Straight “Charles Ross is coming to Vancouver, once again, to improvise a galaxy far far away on stage with

nothing, no props, no sound effects, no background music, but just his pure talent. Upper circle \$27.50, orchestra/dress circle \$29.50. Vogue Theatre/One-Man Star Wars/Vancouver Battlestar Galactica Fan Club/Sci-Fi Creations.”—Keith Lim

4 December 2010: Pop Culture Collectibles Fair, 11 AM–4 PM at Scottish Cultural Centre, 8886 Hudson Street, Vancouver, BC. New & vintage comics, toys & collectibles, records, CDs, VHS, DVDs, manga, anime, books, video games, magazines, *Star Wars*, Hot Wheels, wrestling, Canucks. Free parking. Door prizes. \$3.—Keith Lim

5 December 2010: Day of the Ninja. Watch a 1980s Golan/Globus ninja movie.

5 December 2010: Crafty Geeks: Gingerbread Dollhouses, 1 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. “Laura made a brilliant suggestion. We will spend the afternoon making our own Dollhouses out of gingerbread for Christmas. Laura is going to make the gingerbread and bring it to Fontana’s where we will glue it together (with icing). I’ll get Chad to make bases for us to construct them on. We need someone to bring icing for gluing the buildings together and gluing the candy decorations on to them. The rest of us need to bring candy for decoration. Post what kind of candy you will bring and bring enough to share.”—Keith Lim

5 December 2010: Tron-a-Thon, 5:00 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. Showing of the original *Tron* (1982) before the release of the new *Tron* movie. This movie is about a hacker who is literally abducted into the world of a computer and forced to participate in gladiatorial games, where his only chance of escape is with the help of a heroic security program. (Previously scheduled on Friday 3 December 2010.)—Keith Lim

6 December 2010: **Cindy Turner**’s birthday.

7 December 2010: Letter Writing Day.

7 December 2010 and 4 January 2011: Greater Vancouver Boardgames Meetup Group Monthly Meetup, 7 PM. [Location shown only to members of the Meetup group.] The games played depend on what everyone brings. If there is a game that you would like to play let it be known and we’ll see if someone can bring it. Also if you have a great game to share we’re always excited to try it out. \$1.—Keith Lim

8 December 2010 and 12 January 2011: Valinor, A Vancouver J.R.R. Tolkien Monthly Meetup, 7 PM. [Location shown only to members of the Meetup group]. Meet several of the organizers of Valinor to learn about continuing events (such as the Reading Group and RPG) and events to come in the future. \$2.—Keith Lim

9 December 2010 and 13 January 2011: Vancouver Astronomy Monthly Meetup, 7:30 PM at HR MacMillan Space Centre (downstairs auditorium), 1100 Chestnut



Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3J9. Royal Astronomical Society of Canada—Vancouver monthly meeting, shared with the general public at no charge.—[Keith Lim](#)

10 December 2010: Premiere of film *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (fantasy).

10 December 2010: [IPMS \(International Plastic Modellers Society\) Vancouver meeting](#), 7:30–9:30 PM at Bonsor Recreation Complex, “Arts Studio” (second floor), 6550 Bonsor Avenue, Burnaby, BC. Christmas party—prizes, prizes, prizes. (Must be a full paid member to attend.)—[Keith Lim](#)

11 December 2010: [Browncoats Celebrate the Season—Steampunk Style](#), 11 AM at HR MacMillan Space Centre, 1100 Chestnut Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3J9. BC Browncoats’ annual Christmas brunch bash. Theme is steampunk. “Lunch will be pot-luck. Please give us an indication of what you’ll be bringing in your RSVP or the comment section of this meetup...In keeping with our long-standing tradition, we’ll be celebrating the shiny holiday with a Chinese gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped, Whedon-themed gift worth up to \$10 for the tree.”—[Keith Lim](#)

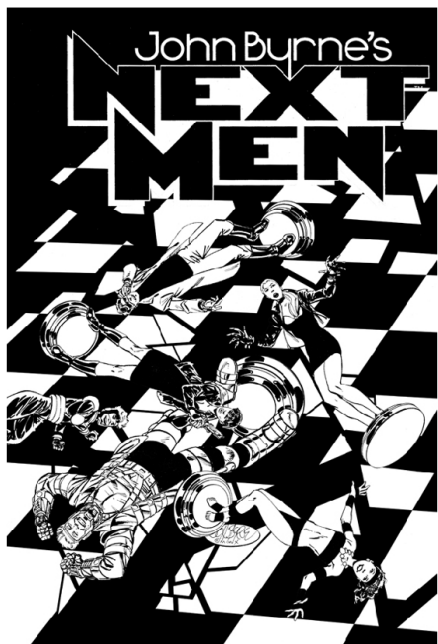
11 December 2010: Black Steam in the Secret Garden, 4:30–6 PM at the Secret Garden Tea Company, 5559 West Boulevard, Vancouver, BC. “High tea will begin promptly at 4:30 PM (but please show up early), and will include tea, miniature pastries, sandwiches, scones, jam and sweets. The Secret Garden is located in Kerrisdale, located just off of 41<sup>st</sup> and West Boulevard (Arbutus) and can be accessed on transit by catching the 16 or the 41.” \$26.95 adults, \$16.95 children 8 and under. [The Steampunk Empire/Facebook](#).—[Keith Lim](#)

12 December 2010: [Creative Geeks: Ab Fab Crafting](#), 1 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. “We’ll continue with our wonderful Sunday afternoon sessions—knitting, crocheting and telling yarns! Since I’m so sorry that I’m going to miss the Christmas ornament session, I’ve decided to reprise it again here. If you started an ornament that you’d like to show off, or finish, bring it along. If the last session inspired you to make other things, bring them along. Bring your supplies and see that evolves. If you’d rather stick with your cross/crochet/knitting, that’s good, too.”—[Keith Lim](#)

14 December 2010: **Danielle Stephens’** birthday.

#### **RANDOM NOSTALGIA**

**BETTY BOO "DOIN' THE DO"  
THE APPLE IMAGEWRITER  
IRMA FROM "TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES"  
METAL "DRUG LORD" BRIEFCASES  
"FIST OF THE NORTH STAR"  
LIPSCALE FERN BARS**



15 December 2010: Release of comic *John Byrne's Next Men* (#1 or #31 depending on whether you're a new or an old reader). Story, art, and lettering font by John Byrne. Fan-favourite saga of genetically-engineered super-soldiers, time travel, virtual reality, comic books, diabolical politicians, black-budget agencies, and shape-shifting androids is back after a 15-year hiatus!

16 December 2010: *Tron: Legacy* meetup and midnight viewing, 9 PM. [Venue not chosen yet.]—Keith Lim

17 December 2010: **Neil O'Brien's** birthday. Premiere of films *Tron: Legacy* (SF) and *Yogi Bear* (computer animation/furry).

18 December 2010: **Fran Skene's** birthday.

18 December 2010: Vancouver Comic Jam, 8 PM–12 AM at the Wallflower Modern Diner, 2420 Main Street, Vancouver, BC. The Vancouver Comic Jam provides a venue for local comic artists to meet and socialize, creating a unique experience and furthering the sense of community. Participants each take a turn drawing a panel before handing the page off to another artist. The result is a collaborative story, built by several artists.—Keith Lim

19 December 2010: Creative Geeks: tentative—craft supplies swap meet, 1 PM. [Venue to be announced.] “John says his aunt wants to hold a clothing sale at the Caffè on December 19<sup>th</sup>. I think the clothing line is ‘my girlfriend’s closet.’ He’s going to ask if we can come too. I also thought that, instead of sitting around crafting, we might bring out our extra crafting supplies and see if we can do some trading. I know I have extra 5.00 crochet hooks. I’ll post this as an event when I’ve heard back from John.”—Keith Lim

22 December 2010: Premiere of film *Gulliver's Travels* (fantasy).

23 December 2010: Festivus.

25 December 2010: Christmas.

26 December 2010 and 30 January 2011: Vancouver Roleplayers' Collective Monthly Social Gathering, 3 PM at the Grind Gallery and Coffee House, 4124 Main Street, Vancouver, BC, V5V 3P6. The purpose of the recurring meetings on the last

Saturday of every month is to meet and greet and chill, to share a drink or two with fellow gamers, talk about your common interests and maybe even find yourself a gaming group.—[Keith Lim](#)

29 December 2010: Premiere of film *Beautiful* (supernatural).

## January 2011

9 January 2011: [BC Browncoats: Thrilling Dance Rehearsal #1](#), 4–5 PM at La Fontana Caffè, 3701 Hastings (at Boundary), Burnaby, BC, V5C 2H6. Rehearsal for Thrill the World 2011 (Saturday 29 October 2011). “We will spend one hour and learn lessons 1 & 2, covering clips #1–12 of the instructional videos. (The first five clips are introductory.) We’ll meet again on February 6<sup>th</sup>, March 6<sup>th</sup>, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 29<sup>th</sup> to continue learning the dance, so mark your calendars.”—[Keith Lim](#)

22 January 2011: [Babylon 5: Shadow War](#), 1 PM. [Venue to be announced.] “Together we’ll watch the end of the Shadow war. We’ll watch season 3 episode 4, ‘Falling Toward Apotheosis,’ episode 5, ‘The Long Night,’ and episode 6, ‘Into the Fire.’ We’ll order pizza or have a potluck, to be determined later. Those that RSVP ‘Yes’ will receive directions and location information via email a few days before the event. It will be in North Vancouver.”—[Keith Lim](#)

22 January 2011: [Cthulhupalooza II: Son of Cthulhupalooza](#), 1–11:55 PM. [Venue TBA, possibly VanCity Theatre.] “[Second Level Wizards](#) present a Cthulhu film showcase, live performance by the Darkest of the Hillside Thickets and more. The first Cthulhupalooza included a *Rock Band* contest, a screening of the HPLHS’ *The Call of Cthulhu* film, and a live performance by the Darkest of the Hillside Thickets. This year we will have more films, more diversity, and another live show by the Thickets. If you have a film you’d like to submit or an idea for a performance or activity at this year’s Cthulhupalooza, please contact the Second Level Wizards ([info@secondlevelwizards.com](mailto:info@secondlevelwizards.com))!” (Previously scheduled on Saturday 4 December 2010.)—Toren Atkinson/[Keith Lim](#)

22 January 2011: [Browncoats RPG](#), 2 PM. [Venue to be announced.] “Second RPG session will be posted soon, but save the date!”—[Keith Lim](#)

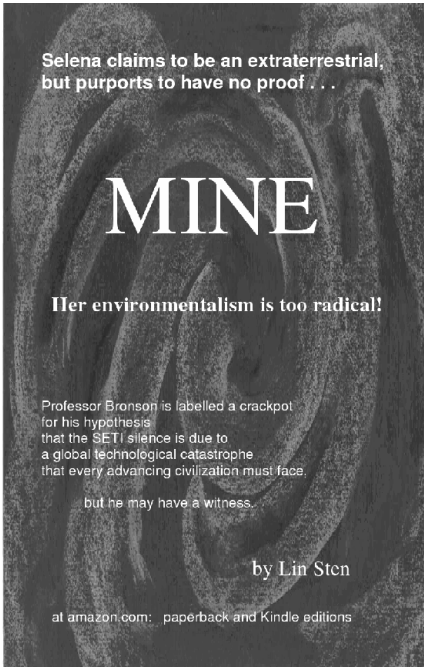
## News-Like Matter

### New SF Novel ‘Mine’

Garth Spencer forwarded the following message (originally addressed to “Garth Spencer, Webmaster, British Columbia Science Fiction Association”):

Dear Garth Spencer:

Inside the front covers of the November 2010 issues of *Analog* and *Asimov’s*, you may have seen the attached advertisement for my science fiction novel, *Mine*.



*Mine* (305 pages) is a fun idiosyncratic story that I think will appeal to a sophisticated audience with an environmental inclination.

A reviewer writes: “Wow; fabulous and awesome book.”

(Incidentally, Paragon House published my nonfiction futuristic book, *Souls, Slavery, and Survival in the Mole-tech Age*.)

*Mine* is available at amazon.com in paperback and Kindle editions.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Lin Sten

Lin Sten via Garth Spencer

Tuesday 9 November 2010

### Notes from the November 2010 BCSFA Meeting

In attendance were Ray Seredin (host), Graeme Cameron (president), Felicity Walker (editor), Keith Lim (VCON chair), and Stu Smythe. Unusually, Kathleen Moore (treasurer) was absent; Stu used his cell phone to call her, and left a message.

Club business: We set the date of BCSFA December meeting and Christmas party for Sunday 12 December 2010, one week earlier than usual to avoid conflicting with members’ holiday plans, and for the first time in a few years, we set the location at Ray’s building’s rec room instead of the Old Spaghetti Factory. Determining factors included the difficulty of finding parking at a major transit hub in downtown New Westminster, the desire to support a variety of smaller restaurants in the neighbourhood, and the fact that last year we made too large a reservation versus the number of members who actually showed up. (This intereferes with the manufacture of spaghetti.) This year, guests are invited to bring food for the party or a few dollars for takeout/delivery from the aforementioned neighbourhood restaurants.

Graeme generously donated several videos that became duplicates when he bought newer-format versions of them. I snagged *Alien*, *Aliens*, *Alien<sup>3</sup>*, *Army of Darkness*, *Blade Runner*, *Predator*, *Predator 2*, and *Terminator 2* on VHS, and *20 Million Miles to Earth*, *300*, *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, and *Plan 9 from Outer Space* on DVD. Keith wanted *Pitch Black*, while *The Mummy* (1999) went to the apartment to be offered to Jenn. After I’ve watched *300*, *20 Million Miles to Earth*, and *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, I would like to pass them on to someone else; failing that, I’ll give them a loving home myself. Contact me if you would like them.

There were three other items relating to video formats and Graeme. First, Graeme said that there’s colour film from the 1930s of John F. Kennedy dating Marlene Dietrich. Second, Graeme discovered that not all Blu-Ray discs are compatible with his Blu-Ray player, and he sometimes gets an error message telling him down-

load new software or hardware. (He finds the latter suggestion amusing.) Third, Graeme bought the new *Star Trek* (TOS) DVDs with the updated special effects; we were all relieved to hear that the set contains both the new and original versions of the episodes. Oddly, the sound cuts in and out. Some Blu-Ray discs behave this way with Graeme's player, which he finds very annoying. Also, Graeme notes that with Blu-Ray's higher resolution some of the effects in old movies and TV shows are more obvious—the wires holding up a floating meteorite in an old *Outer Limits* episode are visible, for instance. (Maybe there should be a blur option.)

Ray added that *Doctor Who* fans are not so lucky, as he bought a Jon Pertwee episode on DVD recently and found that the effects had been replaced, with no original version available. I noted that the episodes of *Red Dwarf* on TV for the past several years have had the same problem. Hold on to your VHSes, people. They're the only things that haven't been Lucased.

Stu and Graeme talked about the same thing happening in editions of books, such as E.E. "Doc" Smith's *Lensman*. Some of the revisions were because of scientific advancements that made the original text seem dated, and some were because of social changes that had occurred between printings, such as the unacceptability of the term "Negro." "Bipolar sexuality" was also mentioned, but I don't know if the context was that Smith had to coin it to describe bisexuality, or whether it had to do with the next topic: Smith's idea of a human race with a "perfect gene pool" with no recessive traits, whose breeding stock consisted of just five people—four brothers and one sister. This reminded Graeme of the time someone in the audience at a Samuel R. Delaney panel stood up and loudly defended incest. That reminded me (unfortunately) of *Slapstick of Another Kind*, Steven Paul's 1982 film adaption of Kurt Vonnegut's book *Slapstick*, starring Jerry Lewis. (In checking the IMDB for *Slapstick*'s correct title, I see that Paul is known for *Baby Geniuses* and *Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2*. However, I will always remember him for *Eternity*, the 1989 reincarnation movie starring future Republican activist Jon Voight as a naive hippy.)



*Comedy minus  
timing equals  
tragedy.*

The mention of Jerry Lewis made Graeme think of *The Day the Clown Cried*, the unreleased 1972 movie in which Lewis plays a clown in a Nazi concentration camp who tries to entertain Jewish children before leading them to the "showers." Neither Lewis nor the copyright holders want the film released. Graeme didn't feel that Lewis could be believably serious, but I thought that Lewis made a very believable asshole in the 1983 stalker drama *The King of Comedy*. In my opinion, that was the Jerry Lewis that Martin Short keeps playing.

Two of the DVDs Graeme gave away—*20 Million Miles to Earth* and *It Came from Beneath the Sea*—had special effects by Ray Harryhausen. Graeme said that Harryhausen didn't credit his employees, so that it's impossible to tell who designed what monsters. That was part of the deal for anyone who wanted to work for Harryhausen's shop. According to Stu, Martha Stewart did the same thing, and I added that so did Bob Kane with *Batman* comics.

Stu remembered the year that it seemed like the same movie came out four times: *Big*, *18 Again*, *Vice Versa*, and *Like Father, Like Son*.

Graeme said that for years he hated actor/pop star Anthony Newley, because he'd gone to see the movie *Can Hieronymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?* and found it to be pretentious and self-indulgent (for example, at one point Newley treated the audience to a five-minute shot of his hairy ass). I know the name "Anthony Newley" only from the brilliantly schmalzy song "A Clown in the Sky" from *Mystery Science Theatre 3000* experiment #303, "Pod People."

In 1977, a young Stu went to a convention in Seattle to see the original Robbie the Robot prop with his own eyes, only to be told by its owner, Bill Malone, "Sorry, but my glass-headed friend is in the possession of the transport company and won't be here until Monday." (Also present at that occasion was Butch Day, in an olive drab *Star Trek* uniform and Buddy Holly glasses.) This formative experience was what came to Stu's mind at Westercon 44 when Howard Cherniak told him that the con had had to refund one fan's membership because C.J. Cherryh, the person the fan had come to see, had cancelled.

## CAN HIERONYMUS MERKIN EVER FORGET MERCY HUMPPPE AND FIND TRUE HAPPINESS?

*I haven't seen the poster,  
but I assume it looks like this.*

Apropos of Roddenberry, Stu asked if Harlan Ellison had ever shown the world his original script for *Star Trek's* "The City on the Edge of Forever," before Roddenberry had it rewritten. I replied that in the 1990s (around the time of the Eugenics Wars), Ellison wrote an entire *book* about the incident, which included the original screenplay. Graeme added that the TV episode won a 1968 Hugo, and Ellison's version won a Writers Guild of America Award, though the teleplay Ellison submitted to the WGA was itself a rewrite of his original draft. Someone said that in Roddenberry's defense, the original script was too long and too expensive to film; the special effects and the large number of speaking parts would have pushed it seriously over budget. (As it was, even the trimmed episode that got made cost 35% more than the normal budget per episode.)

Graeme was asked to recount the story of his "feud" with Ellison, which was more of a misunderstanding. As Graeme remembers it, a local fan mistakenly told



*Specifically, the line "Servo, if you don't stop doing your Anthony Newley, I'm going to throw you against the wall."*

Ellison that Graeme had led a boycott against Ellison at VCON (Graeme hadn't). Ellison then mentioned this on stage (adding something about "BCSFA" being an example of the fannish tendency to create unpronounceable acronyms). Graeme wrote to Ellison to tell him that he had not led a boycott against him, that he was a great admirer of Ellison, and that even if that were not the case, he didn't believe in that kind of censorship. Graeme received a reply on his answering machine from Ellison; everything was fine. Graeme wishes he had saved the tape.

A previous "BCSFA/Elison feud" occurred when someone submitted a scathing review of "I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream" entitled "I Have No Brain and I Must Write" to *BCSFAzine*. Though the editor, Mike Bailey, was not the critic, Ellison held Bailey responsible for printing it and wrote long, angry letters, which Bailey ran in the letter column. Eventually, Ellison showed up at a BCSFA party and Ken Wong famously took a photo of Bailey's reaction. In reality, Ellison and Bailey met and made peace; in some "embellished" retellings of the story, Bailey ducked into a cabinet.

Graeme brought a VCON 3 program book. In those days, the convention was small enough that every member's name was listed in the program! I showed the new issue of *Opuntia* we received in trade for *BCSFAzine*, plus two zines I'd acquired at the last Vancouver Comicon—*50 Uses for an Astro-Mech Droid* and *Jobnik Manifesto*—and finally the Tommy Hilfiger catalogue in the form of a zine that I'd received in the mail. (See "Zines Received.")

Keith reported that he'd been to Canzine West at Storyeum and found that there were tons of zines, showing that zine culture is alive and well. However, the majority of them were not for SF fandom, but for things like crafts. Keith speculated that perhaps this was because SF fans, being a technically savvy lot, had moved to online publishing a long time ago.

Graeme read editor Dale Speirs' comment in *Opuntia*'s letter column about the lack of paper zines and the atomization of subcultures in Canadian fandom, and Graeme felt that Vancouver seems to have it pretty good, in that case.

Kathleen returned Stu's call. She hadn't realized that the meeting was tonight.

We reminisced about places FRED has been kicked out of: the Burrard Motor Inn went out of business, Bosman's Motor Lounge made such an outrageous false accusation that we could no longer bring ourselves to go there, and there was an Irish pub on Broadway, near the hospital, where someone offended Jean, the barmaid, by ordering Scotch or English whisky (I didn't catch all the details).

In 1991, Ray, Dave "Murdock" Malinski, and two others dressed up as vampires and drove from Vancouver to Victoria in a black vintage Thunderbird. At one point they chased after a car carrying a tourist and his son. When the tourist reached the nearest police station in Saanich he reported that he was being pursued by vampires, and the incident was circulated on the national news wires as a wacky item. At the next convention Ray attended, Ray was sharing a room with the man who had made Ray's vampire fangs, and Ray told him the story, including the detail that he had been wearing a Hawaiian shirt. When a man then came to the fangmaker in the dealer's room to file a complaint that his boss was scared by blood-drinking vampires following him onto the ferry, including one in a Hawaiian shirt, five nearby customers were so impressed that they bought fangs on the spot. Since Ray was

partly responsible for this windfall, the fangmaker gave Ray a discount on his share of the room cost.

I asked Ray to retell the story of the Robotech politician, which Ray had last told me eight years ago. It seems that in 1986, Powell River/Sunshine Coast MLA Don Lockstead (NDP) got a little drunk and started playing with his children's Robotech toys while singing the "Robotech...to the rescue!" song from the ads. Ray believes that Lockstead lost the next election by the same number of votes as there were people who saw that incident on the ferry (you knew a ferry had to be involved somehow, didn't you?). The saga has a happy ending, though, as Lockstead went on to become the most beloved mayor in Powell River history. When he died, the town turned out for his funeral procession; Ray, who was on a bus at the time, watched it pass right by him. I love stories with happy endings.



Felicity Walker

Sunday 21 November 2010

## SF-Related Deaths

Leslie Nielsen (1926–2010): It's not goodbye; it's just that we'll never see him again. Canadian-born Nielsen's genre film credits began with *Forbidden Planet* (1956) and included *Project: Kill* (1976), *Prom Night* (1980), *The Creature Wasn't Nice* (1983) (AKA *Spaceship*, AKA *Naked Space*), *Surf Ninjas* (1993), *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995), and *Superhero Movie* (2008), to name just a handful. You might notice a subtle trend towards comedy there; one was never sure if Nielsen had. That was part of his genius.

Irvin Kershner (1923–2010): Kershner is best known to SF fans for directing *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), thereby rescuing us from a George-Lucas-directed *Star Wars* sequel for at least three more years. For that, and for the exhilarating experience that was *Robocop 2*, he has my eternal thanks.

Ingrid Pitt (1937–2010): I first noticed her in the Peter-Davison-era *Doctor Who* episode "Warriors of the Deep" (1984), by which time she was already a cult figure admired by fans of Hammer Film Productions' gothic horrors. How will you remember her—as a sexy vampire, or as a prim scientist bravely karate-chopping a deadly sea dragon?

Felicity Walker

Sunday 28 November 2010

## RANDOM NOSTALGIA

JANICE CHIANG  
THE CITROEN DYANE  
DENISE BRYSON



## Media File

Ray Seredin

Sorry, but no *Torchwood* for Vancouver.

OK, I started to hear this around VCON 35, so you may have already heard it.

Even though the producers of the *Doctor Who* spin-off *Torchwood* took tours of the major studios in Metro Vancouver and found them ideal for filming the series, the BBC's unions' contract states that the series should only be co-produced with another public broadcaster—meaning unless *Torchwood* is a co-production with the CBC, the unions can declare the series “hot,” meaning the BBC crews working on it in Britain will refuse to work on it and the technicians working in the broadcasting center will refuse to broadcast it.

OK, as we all know, the first four series of the renewed *Doctor Who* and the first two series of *Torchwood* were BBC/CBC co-productions. However, since neither series' stories took them to the Great White North, and the only story that was going to even partly film here (with us playing the U.S.) was annulled due to the CBC's (and other Canadian media outlets') own labour troubles, the CBC withdrew from the deal at the end of 2008.

So who knows, maybe BBC and Starz were looking at the CBC and would have made *Torchwood* a three-way co-production. However, they probably knew that the new series' adult content would force them to air it in a late-night (after 11 PM) timeslot, and that, plus the fact that the series will hit the air in the summer months (when TV viewership is low), and the high production cost, are the likely reasons why Canada's public broadcaster politely said “No thanks” to it. (There are unconfirmed rumours that the French-language CBC, Société Radio-Canada, is still interested in this proposal.)

However, this also means that the *Torchwood* team will not land in any American cities either, and most of the series will be filmed in Upper Boat, Wales. Even so, the producers will send second units with about twenty BBC production staff and a few cast members to cities around the world. Also, the same CGI team behind “The Daleks in Manhattan” will be doing the CGI on *Torchwood* series four, so to you and most other viewers at home it may look like Captain Jack is at the corner of Pike Street and First Avenue in downtown Seattle, though he's actually on a soundstage a few kilometres outside Cardiff.

As for the adventures of the Doctor himself: work on the first two episodes to be broadcast of series six (or 32) of *Doctor Who* is underway. The still-unnamed two stories take place in the mid-1960s in Utah and once again bring the Doctor, Rory, and Amy together with the mysterious River Song. Most of the scenes that will be taking place in an American city were shot in and around Cardiff (with CGI filling in the blanks); however, a 55-person second-unit crew and some of the main cast travelled to Monument Valley in the real Utah in late November for five days of shooting. This marks a first for the long-running series: the first story set in the U.S. that was (partly) filmed in the U.S.

Speaking of the U.S., the Doctor himself, Matt Smith, was a guest on the late-night American talk show *The Late, Late Show with Craig Ferguson* on Novem-

ber 16<sup>th</sup>. Ferguson, who's British, is a long-time fan of *Doctor Who* (in fact, he has a classic series Dalek on the show's set), and a good number of fans dressed in costumes were in his audience. Matt Smith makes a great guest on any show (please, please, please, please do *The Colbert Report!*) and even tried to play the *Doctor Who* theme on a mouth organ.

*Doctor Who*'s executive producer and head writer Steven Moffat said we will find more about the mystifying River Song in the upcoming series, saying, "You will find out who she is and what's going on and how it all makes sense and that will explain a number of things. I'm writing the episode right now where the Doctor finds out who she is. We're not just going to endlessly tease."

To return to the present, the upcoming *Doctor Who* Christmas special will be entitled "A Christmas Carol." I know a few of us out there will start sending hate mail to the Space channel the moment we see it in our TV listings; however, this is a *Doctor Who* take on this classic holiday tale, penned by the one and only Steven Moffat, so it's likely to be a great story. (Come on; the only other versions of "A Christmas Carol" that would out-do this one are "A Buffy Christmas Carol" written and directed by Joss Whedon or "A Simpsons Christmas Carol" made back in the 1990s when the series was actually good.) This story also stars Sir Michael John Gambon, best known to fans of British media as either Hogwarts' Headmaster Albus Dumbledore in the latest *Harry Potter* movies or as Philip E. Marlow from BBC's *The Singing Detective* series. The special will be broadcast on Christmas Day on BBC 1, as well as BBC America in the States and Space here in Canada on Boxing Day at 6:00 PM Vancouver time.

OK, I want to see as much as I can of my *Doctor Who* series five (or 31) DVDs before I lend them to Kathleen Moore, so have a happy holiday season, and if you see me ringing bells for the Sally-Ann please try to put a few bucks in the kettle. I'll be seeing you in the new year.

Cosmic Ray Seredin

### Late-Breaking 'Torchwood' News

A deal has been reached to partly fund, then rebroadcast the new *Torchwood* series (after its first two runs on Starz) on America's public broadcaster PBS. With this news, the series is moving to Los Angeles.

Ray Seredin

10–29 November 2010



## VCON 35 Report (Part 2)

Joseph Picard

[See [BCSFAzine #450](#) for Part 1. To be concluded in [BCSFAzine #452](#).—Felicity]

### Saturday, Part 1—Return to the Vendor Room!



The vendor room was pretty much as we had left it, as far as my table went, except that my poster of Regan had fallen off the wall.

I had also laid down my display of books the night before, and moved flimsy things like bookmarks away from the edge, lest someone walk by and toss them asunder, so I had to set those up.

It didn't take long for the war of bookmarks to resume with Steve Fahnestalk, and for visitor flow to pick up better than any period of Friday. With dry Fruit Loops now pumping into my veins, washed down by a little concentrated taurine poisoning, my lack of sleep didn't matter. It was party time!

Suddenly, Danielle Golden joined the party! Level ??? dual-wielding ranger:

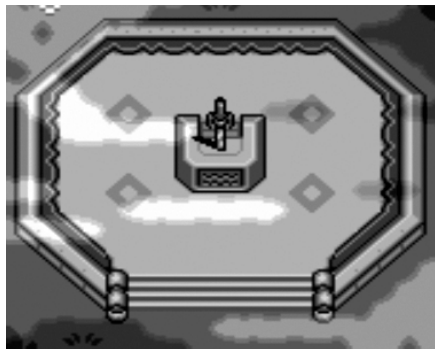
I hope they don't mind me ripping this pic from their Facebook gallery... "they" being the Border Guardians of Ackernon. She was there in costume, promoting their stuff! She impressed my aunt on Friday. "Joey, there's this girl in this funny costume, she's cute, you should draw her!"



Okay, I figured my aunt had just run into her first cosplayer, but when I met Danielle, the pieces clicked together. We chatted for a fair while. Some time later, I heard someone nearby commenting on her awesome outfit, and I said "I *know*, yeah? It makes me want to play her!...*in a game*, I mean. In a game!"

I don't know if anyone believed me.

Many of the Orbiters came around a few times, including Gabe, the young man seeking his destiny! A quest, an epic quest!—whom I mentioned in a previous blog entry. He made me an offer I couldn't refuse...but I told him to be patient. One more day, and his destiny would be fulfilled. Assuming the U.N. didn't interfere...more on that in coming blog entries...



In the end, there can be only one. Or something.

This was the longest and busiest vendor shift. Sales were decent, and I remembered to give away some nice juicy posters of my art when (1) they bought more than one book, *and* (2) they looked like they might like one, *and* (3) I remembered to offer.

It was always great to talk to people who'd read some of my stuff, and were up for the next book—be that the newest one, *Echoes of Erebus*, or they were a book behind, needing *Watching Yute*. Heck, two people bought all three at once. The first time it happened, I thought “Oooh! A hat-trick! My first ever! I wonder why this never happened at previous VCONs!”... Oh...yeah...I never had three books before. Fair enough.

Wanna know the devious sales tactics I had developed by mid-day? A person walking by glances at my table, and I tell them something like “Well, *there's* the hardened stare of someone seeking a free bookmark!”

About half the people would grab one. Among the other half were people who politely declined, and a very minor...uh...minority who ignored me. Among those who grabbed them (and I was always interested to see which of the three they would grab—tip: blood catches the eye) most would read the bookmark, then look at the books.

As chatty as I am, I had to let them read the back of a book for a bit before yapping away. I'd then maybe mention, “Technically, they're a trilogy, but I went out of my way to make them all readable as stand-alones...” and some discussion would normally start snowballing from there. When I realized I was doing a similar thing repeatedly, I felt like a bit of a shmuck...but it started some fun discussions, and the odd sale...so who am I to complain?

Next post: the after events—my visit to the gaming room, the party with the SciFi Canada crew, and the dance...!

## Saturday, Part 2—Game Room and Cosplayers

As the vendors' hours were wrapping up, Gabe (you know, Gabe, young man seeking his destiny; a quest, an epic quest) and his brother Donn (young man not necessarily seeking any destiny that I knew of) asked if I was going to the gaming room. I *did* kind of plan on checking it out, and I had a bit for time before I was expected elsewhere, so...why not.

Besides...Donn looked like the type whom one might not like when he became angry.

Or something. He never said what he was going for with his outfit, and I never asked, hoping that I would



clue in on my own eventually. At any rate, once the vendor room was all “tied down,” I headed over, a few doors down.

I used to be pretty heavy into pen & paper RPGs, but I really only ever played a system I made, and to a lesser degree, D&D Second Edition. I *bought* Third Edition mostly to see what was different, and to gawk at the pretty, pretty pictures. Alas, I don’t think anyone plays Second Edition anymore, and I didn’t have time to get into any hardcore questing anyway. The best sessions take at least eight hours, right?

Conveniently, the game that Gabe and Donn had in mind was...oh frig, I forget, and Google isn’t helping me...“Yes My Dark Lord” or something...Everyone is a lowly goblin, and the game master is the chief goblin. The game begins as something has been found to have gone wrong. No one knows whose fault it is, and it’s the player’s duty to blame any other player by making up stories based on the clue cards you get. If you’re doing a bad job, or speak out of turn or something...the GM gives you a...I think it was called a “disdainful glower” card. If you get three of these cards, you’re toast.

Confused? We were too, it was the first time for all of us. Without full understanding, we leapt in and began. Soon Gabe and I were blaming each other for all kinds of things, from being a secret evil sorcerer, and screaming like a little girl as our hot air balloon was going down. I have no idea what the original problem was. It was fun. I lost. I’m not even sure how anymore; it didn’t matter. I didn’t have time for another game, but that didn’t stop me from jabbering on anyway.

Yeah, next up was the SFCanada meeting/party in the other building. By now, my sleep deprivation and taurine-based metabolism had me in a pretty silly condition. I think this was when I ran into a handful of random people outside, and being slowed by a crossing car, ended up talking for ten or so minutes about nothing.

Did I mention I was already late? I was invited to this party last year, and couldn’t go due to having to commute home after the book launch event. So I was now one year and twenty minutes late. Bear in mind, gentle reader, my memory is akin to a goldfish swimming in beer, so I may have messed up the order of some events.

I got into the other building, on the floor of the SFCanada meeting. Here, I encountered several cosplayers. I think. Know what? Let’s take this opportunity to mention some of the cosplayers.

Earlier in the vendor room, I spotted one miss Amelia Pond:

I should have gotten her to pose next to Professor Whovianart. Alas, hindsight. For those not in the know, this is how adult “Amy Pond” appeared first in the latest incarnation of *Dr. Who*. She isn’t a cop, she’s a singing telegram girl, or something. Not a strip-



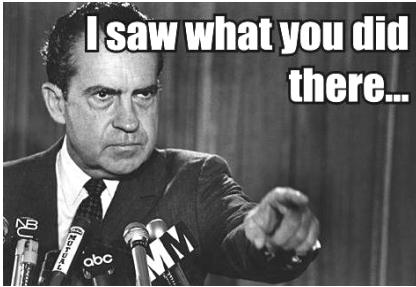
per, heavens no, the BBC would not stand for that in a *Dr. Who!* As it was, many people had their feathers ruffled, in one way or another.

By the way. Knock knock.

Who's there?

Doctor.

Doctor w—



Yeah, that's the cheapest joke I've learned lately. Or maybe this one: Did you hear the "me neither" joke? No? Me neither.

Yeah, I'm sorry. Now go inflict those jokes upon others. All right, back to cosplayers...I saw this one guy a lot earlier in a crowd. Just a glance, and I thought, "Geez, I'm not gonna tell him what he looks like...that might be his usual look."

But later I saw him posing up a storm, and I got a good look.

Why yes, it's *Mathew Patel!* *Ramona's first! Evil! Ex!*

He had the moves, he had the speech down pat, it was right on. Unfortunately, I didn't get a great shot. If my camera went off when I hit the button, as compared to a second later...oh well...sorry.



Of course, I had to get a shot of someone from the 501<sup>st</sup>. For those of you who didn't know, these guys number in the thousands all over North America. They's is big. We had a handful of Storm Troopers at VCON, at least one Boba Fett, a couple Storm Trooper variants...I didn't spot any Sith this year though.



Someone who dressed inspired by *Team Fortress 2*:



And Ezio from *Assassin's Creed 2* (John Gustav Klinger won the costume contest; and who'd dare vote against him? That knife on his wrist really retracted and deployed like the character...!):



Not that I'm much of a fan of *TF2* or *AC2*; they were just neat costumes. I also got a shot of this girl, who wasn't playing as a character—she just wanted to dress like that. I thought she looked like she could be a character from *Scott Pilgrim*. The comic...maybe not the movie.

Whew. I think this entry's gone on long enough. Next entry: SFCanada party, and the dance...!

Joseph Picard

Ozero

Thursday 18 November 2010

## Book Reviews I've Been Putting Off for a Year

Garth Spencer

(This column is also being published in Garth's fanzine *One Swell Foop* #1.)

**Evolve: Vampire Stories of the New Undead**, Nancy Kilpatrick ed. Calgary: Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, 2010. Trade paperback. This is a really sharp collection of contemporary vampire stories, and I've pretty much gone off vampire stories.

**Pretenders: Part Three of the Okal Rel Saga**, by Lynda Williams. Calgary: Edge Science Fiction and Fantasy Publishing, 2006. Trade paperback. For some reason I found this unreadable. Maybe I'm just the wrong reader; the text reads rather like a fantasy or romance with lots of unfamiliar space-opera words and names, maybe much too many. To give the good Ms. Williams her due respect, I



think she must have readers who appreciate her work, she has several novels out in this story universe. (Note to Felicity: Could you get someone else to do a *decent* review of Lynda Williams' work?) [*Check the shared universe panels at VCON, which are well-attended by Okal Rel authors and fans.—Felicity*]

**The War of the Apocalypics**, by Jim McPherson. Vancouver: James H. McPherson, Publisher (2009?). Trade paperback. This is truly unreadable. It seems to be a bunch of pointless fights between unpronounceable FRP game figures who interrupt every step or move with a paragraph of exposition. And the writer has self-published a number of novels like this. Beware.

Garth Spencer

Tuesday 30 November 2010

## Zines Received

**'VCON 36 Progress Report Zero'** (3 October 2010). Published by VCON, Box 78069, Grandview RPO, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V5N 5W1, <http://www.vcon.ca/info@vcon.ca>.

"Dates" (30 September–2 October 2011); "Theme" (Visions of the Future); "Guests of Honour" (Jean-Pierre Normand, Richard Arnold, Lisa Lassek); "Rates" (\$35); "Chairs" (Keith Lim, Cindy Turner, Jenni Merrifield); "Concom"; "Volunteers"; "Contact."

I received this at the end of VCON 35 and meant to write it up last month, but then misplaced it temporarily. I like the fact that it's a single sheet folded into a 5½×8½-inch format, that it's in the same font as the VCON 35 publications (even though I don't like that font), and that it contains drawings of the Robotter, the cute robot otter VCON mascot.

**'Jobnik Manifesto'** (2004). Published by Miriam Libicki, <http://www.realgonegirl.com>. A four-page introduction (*also* a single sheet folded into a 5½×8½-inch format) to Miriam's main comic/zine, *Jobnik!*, which documents her experiences as an American-Israeli ex-soldier (currently living in Vancouver).

**'Opuntia' #70** (November 2010). Published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Sercon issue.

"Seen in the Literature": interesting items from scientific journals noticed by Dale. In this issue, he also adds his summary and comments, which are the best part of this column. The idea that "Irrelevant Events Affect Voters' Evaluation of Government Performance" is, as Dale says, "nothing new," but I was still surprised that when local sports teams win within 10 days before an election, incumbents get slightly more votes. Thank goodness the difference is only 1.61%.

"Letters to the Editor": Lloyd Penney writes that he would like to publish a zine, but that reaction to the offer of a national fannish newszine was either neutral or negative. I would like to read such a zine (and even did so, except 20 years after publication, when I bought Garth Spencer's *Maple Leaf Rag/MLR* back issues at his zine sale). How do you like the idea? Lloyd says that "I still want to do a zine, but I'd like to find a focus for it." Suggestions? Meanwhile, Dale replies that "e-zines

have been replaced by blogs.” Compared to PDFs, blogs are certainly easier to read on a computer screen, easier to reply to (each article has its own comments section), and offer more immediate feedback rewards for doing so. I’ve tried once or twice in the last ten years to convert blogs or Yahoo! Groups into paper zines. It can be done, as long as threaded comments are excluded.

Also: “The Exciting Trip of Professor Lowe” (Thaddeus Lowe, Civil-War-era American balloonist); “Rubber Stamp News”; “The Billion-Dollar Rare-Earth Mining Club” (by Jack Lifton); “Why Rare Earths Matter”; “Johnson’s Prologue Considered as Science Fiction” (Samuel Johnson’s “Prologue at the Opening of the Theatre in Drury Lane, 1747”); “The History of Mail Bombs Redux” (Dale’s book).

**‘Tommy’ Fall/Winter 2010.** [Presumably published by the Tommy Hilfiger Corporation—no credits or contact information listed.] This sewing-bound 5½×8½-inch fashion catalogue arrived in the mail. The first sixteen pages are colour photos of models. The last four pages are black-and-white, quasi-photocopied, and typewritten/hand-lettered. The latter section is titled “Interesting Reading” and begins with the description: “This section is our homage to DIY zine culture. It contains articles on current topics we find intriguing. You’ll find it each season inside our catalog. Please enjoy and pass on the newly-acquired wisdom.” There are two articles: “Eat Like a Local” (a few sentences about the “locavore” movement, with a photocopy collage of a sunglasses-wearing cow on a skateboard ramp) and “Master Vintage: Mix It Up” (a few sentences about how to choose and mix vintage clothing). The last page is “At These Prices Who Could Resist?” (the clothing prices, which are not irresistibly low, as it turns out) and “What We’re Listening to Now!” (music tracks—some mainstream, some obscure). Fashion criticism: I liked the opaque yellow tights. I wish I looked like the model wearing them. Font criticism: I loved the old typewriter font, but someone at *Tommy* forgot that in typewriter fonts, em-dashes look the same as hyphens. Thus, a mark that should be interpreted as a pause actually causes the reader to speed up. The correct way to indicate an em-dash in a monospaced font is with two consecutive hyphens, with no space before or after them. Perhaps the error was part of the homage.

**‘Opuntia’ #70.1A** (December 2010). Published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Reviewzine issue.

“Book Reviews”: *False Impressions* by Terri Thayer (a mystery starring a professional rubber stamper); *Night of the Living Trekkies* by Kevin David Anderson and Sam Stall (a zombie story set at a *Star Trek* convention—Dale says “You don’t have to be a Trekkie or even an SF fan to enjoy the book,” and from the review, it sounds like it would help if you were not); *Aunt Dimity Slays the Dragon* by Nancy Atherton (set at a Renaissance festival); *Dying to Write* by Judith Cutler (set at a writers’ workshop); *When Money Dies* by Adam Ferguson (hyperinflation in the Weimar Republic; Dale relates this to modern fiat currency); *Out of the Inner Circle* by Bill Landreth (autobiography of a 1980s computer hacker); *Sherlock Holmes and the King’s Evil* by Donald Thomas (Holmes pastiche collection); and *The Scroll of the Dead* and *The Veiled Detective* by David Stuart Davies (Holmes pastiches; *Detective* sounds particularly cool and interesting: not set in the normal Holmes universe, it explores the premise that Holmes’ entire life was planned by Moriarty to

keep him busy, and all his friends were Moriarty's agents, keeping him under observation. It's like Arthur Conan Doyle meets Philip K. Dick!).

Also: "Zine Listings."

## E-Zines Received

**'One Swell Foop' #1** (November 2010). Published by Garth Spencer, 82 East 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V5W 1L4, [garthspencer@shaw.ca](mailto:garthspencer@shaw.ca), <http://www.efanzines.com/RNSG/oneswellfoop1.pdf>. Garth's personalzine, which "supersedes *The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette*."

"Monkey Mind": Garth says: "I am entertained by playing with ideas; are you?" Yes, though I've given up on trying to convince Garth of it.

Garth says: "There are lowbrow memes going around, either the tendency to bash religion or the tendency to overreact to any critical comment about religion, and I keep being surprised by people who aren't *past* it." People *were* past it, but then the debate coarsened. Now the militant atheists and religious right are becoming more cruel to the rest of us, so we're all dragged back into it.

Garth asks: "Is television just an addictive drug nowadays?" It's more like self-medication.

Garth writes: "One dead issue that keeps resurfacing is the tendency of fiction—and screen and broadcast entertainment—to resort to American names, institutions and settings." I don't understand.

"Steampunk from Alchemy to Zeppelins": An A-to-Z of steampunk terms and concepts. Garth writes that in *The Difference Engine*, "Gibson and Sterling imagine an alternative 19<sup>th</sup> century, in which a rather sinister British Empire uses information-gathering and data processing to enhance its power at home and destabilize rivals abroad." Is *that* what was happening? It was never made clear in the book. It was buried too deeply in all the depressing verbiage about the heatwave, the riot, and the prostitute being dragged around by one cold-hearted user or another. My only pleasant memory of the book is the tea ceremony with the *karakuri*. The *Simpsons* episode "Last Exit to Springfield," with its Victorian flashback in which Mr. Burns' grandfather unwisely disregards the Japanese as future industrial competition—"Those sandal-wearing goldfish-tenders?"—reminds me of that passage.

Also: "Sound and Fury"; "Tales of the Mullah Kintyre"; "Other People's News"; "Towards a Current Fanzine Index"; "Reviews"; "Reinventing Myself."

**'Statement' #379** (October 2010). Published by the Ottawa Science Fiction Society, 18 Norice Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K2G 2X5, [osfs@ncf.ca](mailto:osfs@ncf.ca), <http://osfs.ncf.ca/>. Edited by Grant Duff. Ottawa events; "Conventions and Gatherings"; movie theatre listings; "Obituaries"; "Did Mars Have Water?"/"Our Earth's Twin?"/"Mars Calling..." Interesting reading. Landscape format appreciated.

## Art Credits

Sheryl Birkhead.....	Masthead
Brad Foster.....	Cover
Clip art ( <a href="#">24 Hours</a> via <a href="#">Julian Castle</a> ).....	Page 1
Clip art (John Byrne at <a href="#">Byrne Robotics Forum</a> ).....	Page 8
Clip art ( <a href="#">Lin Sten</a> via <a href="#">Garth Spencer</a> ).....	Page 10
Clip art.....	Pages 11, 12 (top), 14, 16
Felicity Walker (font by <a href="#">Ray Larabie</a> ).....	Page 12 (bottom)
<a href="#">Joseph Picard</a> .....	Page 17 (top)
<a href="#">Border Guardians of Ackernon</a> via <a href="#">J. Picard</a> (photo)....	Page 17 (bottom)
Clip art (via <a href="#">Joseph Picard</a> ).....	Pages 18, 20 (top)
<a href="#">Joseph Picard</a> (photos).....	Pages 18 (bottom), 19–22

## Why You Got This

- \_\_\_ You are a paid subscriber.
- \_\_\_ You trade with us.
- \_\_\_ You carry sample copies of *BCSFAzine* to advertise us.
- \_\_\_ You bought a copy in person.
- \_\_\_ You contributed.
- \_\_\_ I bought you a copy.
- \_\_\_ You are the club archivist.
- \_\_\_ You are Library and Archives Canada.