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BCSFAzine

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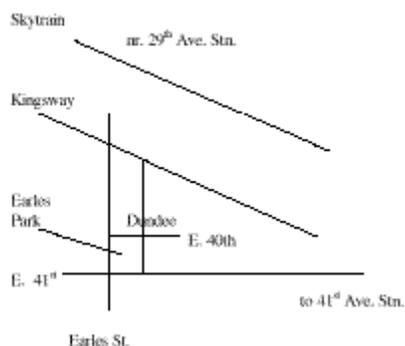
UPCOMING EVENTS:

V-Con Society General Meeting - August 4th, 1:00 p.m. at the Renfrew Public Library, Renfrew St. & East 22nd Ave. *unless rescheduled*.

FREFF (Feeding Frenzy) - August 11th, 7:00 p.m. at Tigalos, 1157 Davie St. (Portuguese cuisine at its best). Phone Doug Finnerty at 526-5621.

BCSFAzine 340 Deadline: August 17th

Barbecue party - August 25th, 4:00 p.m. at Cindy Turner's once again, #4 - 5430 Dundee St., Vancouver (tel. 454-0804, email shaddy@telus.net). Bring something to barbecue, something to drink, and/or something to share.



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Modem Retrieval Specialist	David Hale

This month's cover artist:	Linda Hardy
Page 1:	Garth Spencer
Pages 5 & 6:	varied, mysterious and forgotten sources of clipart

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BCSFAzine Mailout: August 31

BCSFAzine 341 Deadline: September 21

Mailout: October 5

Deadline: October 19

Mailout: November 2

Deadline: November 16

Mailout: November 30

Deadline: December 21

Mailout: January 4, 2002

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

PLAIN SPEAKING

According to my membership information, the following memberships are due for renewal:

Last month: Doug Finnerty, Stephen Samuel, Dawn Stewart

This month: Frances Higginson, Sue Luoma, David Manning

Next month: Bonnie Gayle, Ray Seredin

Of course I may have missed a renewal, or new membership, already submitted to Doug Finnerty. Please advise if you have renewed - and if you haven't, what would you like to see featured in these pages?

**

BCSFazine is open to submissions of fanart. Wide open. Please submit stuff soonest. Please. Pretty please?

**

Another matter of interest, or concern, to most of us in B.C.'s Lower Mainland is that ten-digit local calling will go into effect this month. I first encountered this in 1999 in Portland: dialling the local area code as well as the seven-digit local number, even for calls within the same city.

**

Now for some plain speaking.

First, let's acknowledge the hard work many people put in to VCon 26: Chris Sturges, for acting as chair; Nicola Sturges, for her work on registration and bookkeeping; Lorna Appleby, for erecting and maintaining the VCon 26 website; Chilam, for his work on the dealers' room; Clint Budd, for his work on publicity, and chairing the Convention Business Meeting; R. Graeme Cameron, for his contributions to the fanzine lounge; Rick Arino, for overseeing gaming; Barbara Scutt and Tamara Midttun, for programming; Nico Iormetti, Jeff Hartt, and volunteers beyond counting.

Next ... I'd like to ask if we could do some things to make future VCons better? I ask this because, despite the hard work and sustained effort people have put into VCons, these events require *more* work and sustained attention than we are quite able to give them. As yet.

You might reasonably think that fans attending, or holding conventions must pay a lot of attention to *what it takes* to hold science fiction conventions. But that is not necessarily the case. Some fans have become nearly professional conrunners, the only difference from professionals



being that they aren't paid; and other fans ... aren't so professional. How do you think we measure up?

VCon's attendance has fluctuated erratically in the 1990s. For another thing, we have had rather little continuity in our convention committees. (That would explain some of the lapses of sustained attention to critical details, like keeping WCSFCCA a registered society with the provincial government, at the beginning of the 1990s, or the occasional failures to take care of guest-of-honour and financial business.)

I'm concerned not only by the erratic profits and losses of VCons, but the erratic level of manpower and competence on our concoms, over the past ten years - and the burnout and alienation among several members of previous committees. (You want names and phone numbers?)

I attribute these problems to our failing to get enough live, warm bodies to VCon *at all*, let alone quite enough volunteers for concoms. You may correct me if I'm wrong - in fact, I assume all of you know more than I do - but we have not consistently met our local convention with the sheer manpower that it requires. Granted that conventions as fans run them are uniquely dependent on volunteer labour - and that volunteer labour these days is at a premium - is it really a surprise if our concoms get somewhat overwhelmed, when the convention arrives?

So far, this doesn't make our community of fans very different from a great many other conrunning fan groups. So, we could borrow an idea or two from other groups, such as mounting a membership drive, as the Portland SF club is now doing.

Come to think of it, Clint Budd was doing a lot of work to publicize VCon 26; and Graeme's video lectures accomplished a lot, by drawing people to his events at the Planetarium. We could do with even more ideas!

Comments?

LETTERS OF COMMENT

Lloyd&Yvonne Penney <penneys@attcanada.ca>, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2, July 5, 2001

I've hardprinted issue 338 of *BCSFazine*, and I'll try my best to whip up a good loc. Stranger things have happened, or may be about to happen ...

Just my personal preferences, but ... list all expiring memberships, new memberships, plus birthdays and anniversaries the membership provides you with. It adds that bit more of community, and keeps people informed. Listing changes of address will allow people to keep their club directory and personal address books up to date, too.

((But that would make sense; is that allowed here? [As I used to say at work, before I got fired.]))

Go for the summer relaxicon ... one of the purposes of the club is to provide services and activities for its members. Go, do, have fun, all.

I know what you mean about the SF ghetto in Canada. Is this just a good place to produce television episodes and movies (I think so, yes) or is Hollywood importing the weird stuff up here? Some Canadian actors seem doomed to be in nothing but SF series. Michael Ironside comes to mind ... Maybe one reason the SF series come here is good SFX companies like Core Digital and Gajdecki Effects. Don't know, but I think all of the above applies.

Tonight, as I type, is the regular fannish First Thursday pubnight and the Doctor Who pubnight. As soon as this is in the e-mail, I'll be on my way. Then, Third Monday is coming up, and Toronto Trek has settled on the Second Wednesday of the month for their pubnights. Do Toronto fans want something central, as far as such an event goes? Well, I would, but then, Yvonne and I have made a point of getting to know as many groups as we can get a hold of. Unfortunately, not many of the other groups really know one another, and they seem content to stay with their own groups. Even if there was a central club in Toronto, like a BCSFA, I doubt the various groups would come together.

((You think BCSFA is central??))

Yvonne has a regular e-notice called "Pubnites and Other Events" she sends out to a list on a monthly basis, reminding people of the various pubnights, conventions, readings, and anything else she gets told about. The e-mailing list is about 70 people, and they are a cross-section of various groups and individuals. Some will go to one pubnight, others to the other, and a few will go to several. One fan has said he will never go to any of the pubnights, but wants to stay on the mailing list because it gives him a sense of community. Another growled at us, and demanded that we cease and desist such spam. Some just find that

pubnights aren't to their tastes or budgets, some come from time to time when they have the time and cash, and others firmly believe that if you go to a pub, you have to *ick* drink alcohol!, which is nonsense. We expand the mailing list from time to time, and we should do so again.

((Gee, that sounds sort of familiar ... ☺))

(Yvonne and I go to First Thursday and Third Monday, and attended the last Toronto Trek Second Wednesday. We would like to go to the Doctor Who First Thursday one month. We also know most of the people who run SF, media, anime and gaming conventions in town, and we attend many of them. From what I see, we're the only ones who make the effort to see a cross-section of what's happening here.)

((After Michael Skeet gave up publishing MLR, some fanzines in Calgary and Victoria occasionally picked up the slack and ran some Canadian fan news, but then it sort of petered out. It seemed as if relatively few fans felt [or recognized] a need for a Canadian fan news organ. BCAPA was suspended in the late 1980s and nobody revived it; The Ether Patrol, the local SF radio show, was suspended and nobody revived it; I wonder if anyone would pick up the slack and keep Toronto fan groups in mutual contact, if you and Yvonne moved to France or got abducted by aliens or something.

((What motivates people, and how do you detect it without, say, losing your shirt?))

A rape at a Norwescon? I never heard of that, but then, I've never been to a regional convention like a Norwescon, or Westercon, or DeepSouthCon. Bigger cons have much more function space and room blocks to worry about, I would imagine, so perhaps there [is] the impression that a rape or a theft can be committed because of the larger crowds.

((Con News, the short-lived convention newspaper from Colorado that showed up at some Northwest conventions in the late 1980s/early 1990s, once mentioned an alleged Trekker trying to molest a 14-year-old in a hot tub, at an unspecified convention; not a very large one, I inferred from the context.

((Let me ask everyone reading this – do we all have the same ideas, here, about what is a local, or a regional, or a perambulating ~~Godzilla~~ con? I used to have the impression that most local annual cons, either across Canada or throughout the Northwest, averaged 500 or 600 members; that described VCon until the mid- to late 1980s, after which our attendances fluctuated a lot. My current impression, and you are all free to correct me, is that Norwescon and SakuraCon average 2000 or 3000 members; Orycon and Rustycon over 1300; VikingCons and recent VCons

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averaged about 250 members. Westercons, like Worldcons, roam from place to place and average 2000 and 8000 members respectively, leaving death and destruction in their wakes ...)

Don't get me wrong, high school wasn't that much fun for me, but the nostalgic aspect of the whole reunion was exciting. This was the city I grew up in, and it was mightily changed. It was better in some ways, and more run-down in others. The high school had some renovations, and needed more. I even found rooms in my high school that I never knew existed. There were some people I wanted to see again, and even though I saw only a few, it felt great. I had my reservations about going, but I am very glad I did.

((Now why didn't I get into hacking buildings when I was in high school? ... Probably because I instinctively feared to discover the Dread Secret behind the humiliating waste of time that is High School, one grey temple of an awful rite under the gym floor, devoted to sucking the mind and life from us in our best and most vital years ...))

I would call B5 a success because of its popularity, and its ability to bring what literary fans would call a good story to the small screen. Many surprised litfen I know sampled

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it, and were hooked by the story first, and characters second. With that in mind, I hope the newest B5 TV movie can share in that success.

((Will someone please explain to me what we think we mean, when we say "literary" to describe a con? When did "litfen" become a word, anyway? As far as I can tell, all it currently means is "not media/ gaming/ comics/ costuming/ filk-oriented".))

Toronto fans Christina Carr and Martin Hunger renewed their wedding vows on June 9 in a mediaeval setting in Morningside Park in the east end of Toronto, and Yvonne and I were in charge of the quasi-mediaeval feast set to celebrate the event. About 60 people attended, and brought food that we accepted as the day went on. The feast was serve-yourself, and we had enough leftovers to feed another 60. The bride and groom renewed their vows at about 1pm, the feast began at about 4pm, and starting with a well-roasted pig and lots of salads, meats, fruits and veggies, and drinks of varying strengths, including some home-made mead. We set up for the day at 11am, and closed down just before 11pm. The couple had the day they always wanted to have, and we were happy to be a part of it.

continued on page 11

NORTHWEST CONVENTIONS

AUGUST 2001

AUG 4-6: COMIC BOOK, SCI-FI AND FANTASY CONVENTION in VICTORIA, BC at the Victoria Conference Centre, Science Fiction, TV/Media Convention, \$35 till 4 Jul, \$40 at door. Anime \$2.00 show, Movies \$5.00/show. Actors pass \$30.00 Full Pass \$150.00 till 4 JUL. Media Guests: Pat Tallman (B5) and Marc Alaimo (DS9). Info: www.victoriacomicon.com

August 10-12: Con-Version 18 at the Metropolitan Centre and International Hotel in Calgary, AB. GoH: David Drake; ArtGoH: Jean Pierre Normand; Scientist GoH: Dr. Bill Brooks. Membership rates (for those 17 and up) are now \$55 from May 1 - July 31, and \$60 at the door. All pre-reg memberships prior to July 31, will receive a free t-shirt at the con! Family memberships: \$130 (inc. 2 adults and up to 3 children) (available at con, shirts not included) The website address is <http://www.con-version.org>. The new mail address for Con-Version is P.O. Box 20098, Calgary Place RPO, Calgary, AB T2P 4J2. Fax (403)277-4251.

August 17-19: VikingCon 18 at the Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. Guests of Honor: Writer GoH: James P. Hogan (<http://www.jamesphogan.com>); Special GoH: JD Frazer aka 'Illiad' (<http://www.userfriendly.org>); Fan GoH: Jon Singer (<http://www.bazilians.org>); Science GoH: To Be Announced; Art GoH: To Be Announced. Memberships (150 to date): \$32 through July 8, 2001; \$36 at the door. Mailing Address: VikingCon, Viking union box V1, Bellingham, WA 98225-9106. For more information: <http://www.vikingcon.org>. To post a message: VikingCon@yahoogroups.com; to subscribe: VikingCon-subscribe@yahoogroups.com; to unsubscribe: VikingCon-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com.

August 17-19: Can-Con 2001 at the Chimo Hotel in Ottawa, ON See www.achilles.net/~cancon

August 24-26: MosCon XXIII at the University Inn Best Western in Moscow, ID. Author GoH: Jack Chalker. ArtGoH: TBA. Fan Guests of Honour: Tam & Shelly Gordy. Scientist GoH: TBA. Memberships: U.S. \$25 to Aug. 21, 2001; \$30 up to the door. See www.geocities.com/moscow_scifi_con, phone Jon Gustafson at (208) 882-3672 (9 a.m. to 9 p.m.), or write Miscon XXIII, Box 9622, Moscow, ID 83843, U.S.A.

Sunday, August 26 (11am to 5pm): Comix & Stories at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. A day of alternative and small-press comics, publishing, artwork & culture. Special Guests (as of 5/5/01): Ralph Alfonso (*Ralph*), Jason Lutes (*Berlin, Jar of Fools*), Ariel Bordeaux (*Deep Girl*), Rick Altergott (*Doofus*), Smell of Steve, Inc (*Smell of Steve*), David Lasky (*Boom Boom, Urban Hipster*), Greg Stump (*Urban Hipster, Dwarf Attack*), Brad Yung (*Stay as You Are*), Jeanette Ordas (*Queen of the Universe*), Owen and Terry Plummer (*Rubber Popsicle Factory*), Randy Wood (*Kitties in the Engine*), Craig McKenney. Admission: \$3.00 per person (Free for kids under 14). Dealers Tables: \$40. Creator/Publisher Tables: \$15/\$30 For information about any of these shows, please call 604-322-6412 or email ls Wong@uniserve.com. <http://users.uniserve.com/~ls Wong/Comicon.html>

SEPTEMBER 2001

September 15-16: ConSpec 2001 at the Best Western Cedar Park Inn in Edmonton, AB. GoHs: Allen Steele and Michael Bishop. NOTE: Allen Steele and Michael Bishop will lead a writing workshop on September 13 and 14; sewats are limited to 16 people. The \$90 fee will cover both the course and attendance at ConSpec 2001. Rooms: write Best Western Cedar Park Inn, 5116 Calgary Trail North, Edmonton, AB T6H 2H4, or phone (780) 434-7411, and quote #103-176 when booking a room. Memberships: \$45 plus GST until September, \$55 plus GST to the door. Write ConSpec, Box 4727, Edmonton, AB T6E 5G6; email conspec@canada.com; or see <http://www.compumart.ab.ca/clear/conspec.htm>.

September 20 - 23: GateCon 2001, "A Gatecon Odyssey"; venue TBA. A benefit convention for Make a Wish Foundation. NOTE: The international group holding Gatecon talks about "tickets" rather than memberships. See <http://www.gatecon.com>

September 28 - 30: FoolsCap III (a Flat Stuff con) at the Southcenter Best Western in Tukwila, WA. ArtGoHs: Phil and Kaja Foglio. Author GoHs TBA. Banquet \$20 now, \$23 at the door. Memberships \$41 to Sept. 21, 2001; \$45 at the door. Cheques to Little Cat Z in U.S. funds only. Write foolsCap III, c/o Little Cat Z, P.O. Box 2461, Seattle, WA 98111-2461. URL <http://www.alexicom.net/foolscap/index.htm>

FANZINE REVIEWS

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.

::

WABE (Jae Leslie Adams, 621 Spruce St., Madison WI 53715; Bill Bodden, P.O. Box 762, Madison WI 53701-0762; Tracy Benton, 108 Grand Canyon Drive, Madison WI 53705; available for trades, contributions, letters of comment – “the usual” – or “editorial whim; no price given but you could try a begging letter or an email to jaleslie@aol.com, billzilla@mailbag.com or Benton@uwalumni.com)

Wabe is a fanzine with three editors (all of whom live in Madison, Wisconsin), and a loose, informal approach reminiscent of the fanzines of several decades ago. But despite the warmth and informality, this is a neatly designed and attractively laid-out fanzine (the work of Jae Leslie Adams, a calligrapher whose work adorns the back cover). Its text is produced on a computer, printed out, and the art is pasted in. Then it’s electrostenciled and cleanly mimeographed on white paper.

The third issue, the most recent, is dated March. Its cover, by Stu Shiffman, “Three Faneds in Search of a Focus,” renders the three editors in cartoon form with some acuity. The 22-page issue presents three editorials (placed at the front, in the middle and at the end) and six articles – all thematically concerned with travel on one level or another.

There’s travel in the mundane world – Pat Hario’s “Schooner Women” describes a voyage on a 101-foot sailing ship with a crew composed exclusively of women and tells of how the experience changed her life. And there’s travel among fans – Jae Leslie Adams’ “A Passion for Travel” details her experiences in Britain last November, centring on her stay with John and Eve Harvey in their



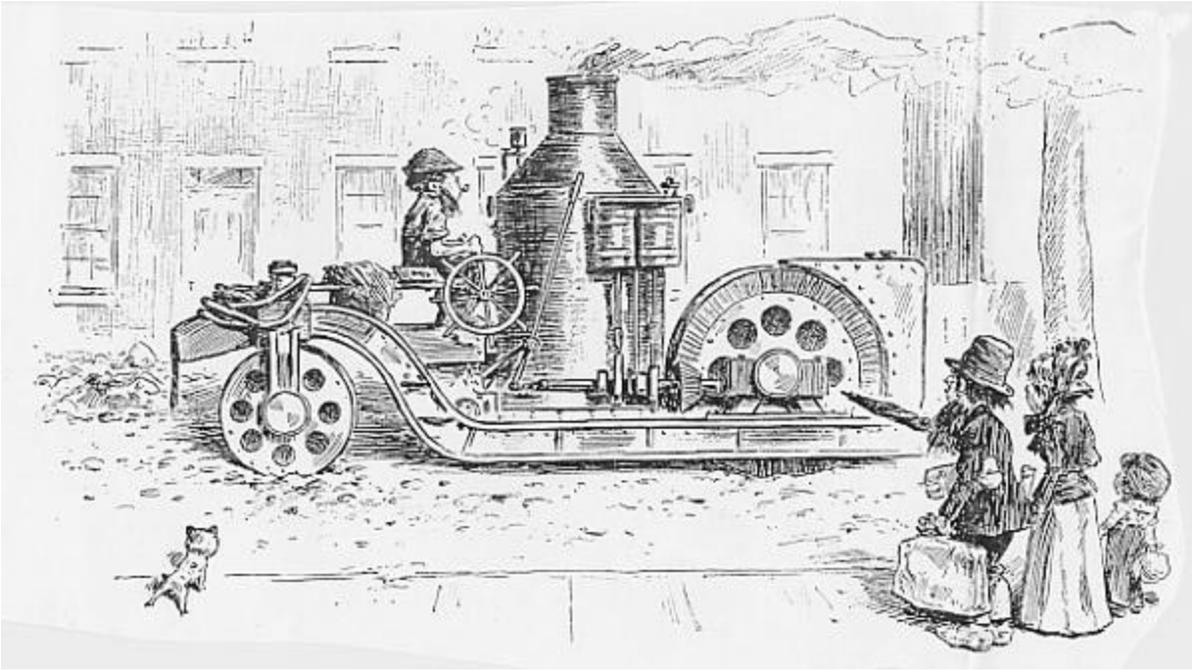
village home. Maybe because I too have visited with and enjoyed the Harveys’ hospitality, I particularly liked that piece. Jae has the ability to describe things well: “I had only just mastered getting into the left side of a vehicle as a passenger, so now simply getting used to being on what still seemed the wrong side of the road, with the faster passing lanes on the right, and so forth, made it an exciting trip for me, and roundabouts were still nerve-rackingly exotic.” [*sic* - GS]

Scattered through the issue are six “The 22 Second Fanzine Review”s – short, solid, one-paragraph reviews of six fanzines by the three editors, which appear boxed as page-enders. A clever idea, nicely done. The issue is finished off with a four-page letter column, the letters divided into topics. The lead topic is the e-zines vs. paper fanzines controversy.

This situation arises from the increasing expense of mailing physical copies of fanzines to a mailing list of 100 to 500 people (the typical fanzine’s circulation falls within these numbers). The alternative is to post fanzines by e-mail, or put them up on a website. And there are other choices in format and presentation. Because most of fandom’s e-zines are done by fans who like paper fanzines – they like holding them, turning the pages, perhaps check-marking an engaging topic for response – they are being produced in a PDF format which allows the editor to control the appearance and design of the end-product when it is printed out by a recipient (except, of course, for paper colour). This situation continues to evolve, but probably points the way toward fanzines’ future.

—Ted White

We have also received recent editions of Australian SF Bullsheet, Con-TRACT, DASFAX, FOSFAX, Monster Attack Team Canada’s newsletter, Opuntia, and a bilingual German/English poetry chapbook from Lloyd Michael Lohr, Murmurs from the Book of the Dragon



CRANK THEORIES

by Garth Spencer

(Part I in a serial)

Over the past five years, or much longer, you may have noticed a lot of ... well ... crank theories showing up on television, and in films, and at newsstands. Sometimes, they are marketed as science fiction and fantasy. It might be a good idea to clear up what is *real* science, and what is *pseudo*-science, not even science fiction.

The recent release of Disney's *Atlantis: The Lost Empire* is hardly the first thing to bring this subject to my mind. Five years ago and more, a wave of disaster movies appeared – and simultaneous TV documentaries – about meteor strikes, and tidal waves, and UFO abductions, and catastrophic volcanic eruptions.

We've seen all this before. In fact there seem to be irregular waves of crank theories and fake science and popular nonsense, as in the late 1960s and early 1970s; or in the 1920 and 30s, or in the 1890s, for that matter. (But I've got my own theory about that.)

Now, I *love* crank theories. I collect them the same way I collect conspiracy theories, with the same detached, sardonic enjoyment I get from science fiction. But a crank theory is any theory, idea, or belief that can make you think the person expressing it has some mental problem. Usually, there is at least a kernel of fact to start the whole ball rolling; but doubtful information, some outright lies, not to mention some very dodgy reasoning, soon become part of the theory.

One problem with crank theories in science fiction stories is, how many readers can tell where the actual science leaves off, in novels like *The HAB Theory* and James Hogan's *Giants* trilogy? How many can tell where the crank theories – or the science fiction – take over? Not everybody can, and not all writing makes the transition plain.

Anomalies in General: Fort, de Camp, Ivan Sanderson, et al.

Crank theories often start out by detailing some curious, little-known facts which don't fit conventional scientific models. We should start by paying due attention to the kind of anomalies they use.

Charles Fort, who began a career of detailing anomalies in the 19th century, was avowedly seeking to bring up anomalous evidence and phenomena – which conventional scientists brushed off. His books included reports of rains of fish, apemen and dinosaurs, spontaneous combustion, human footprints and civilized artifacts in fossilized rock, places where cars roll uphill, mystery airships, people vanishing into thin air, and much more. I find Fort hard to read, but even more entertaining and readable catalogues of novelties have been published by Ivan T. Sanderson and one of our own tribe, L. Sprague de Camp.

"Anomalies" is the right word, I guess. On the one hand, you have to admit that the stories published by Fort, de Camp and Sanderson seem to contradict the standard-science accounts of evolution, human prehistory, ancient technology, even the behaviour of mass and energy and

time. They are *embarrassments*. If you've been taught a dogmatic standard-science by mostly ineffective science teachers, they are also a delight.

On the other hand ... the standard-science accounts seem to be based on *the largest collection of consistent evidence*. If someone finds a shale fossil of a dinosaur footprint and human footprints, side by side in the same strata ... or a gold thread, or a machined bearing, in coal strata vastly predating modern man's time period ... how much does the one point of evidence count?

The problem here seems to be with *standards of evidence*. It takes a whole body of evidence, not just one item, to argue a case for lost civilizations, or unknown species, or visitors from outer space, to make a convincing case; especially when a conflicting, conventional standard-science account already exists.

Cranks often seem not to have gotten the word.

Classic Crank Theories

My definition of a crank theory is one that is more spectacular than it is well-grounded in fact, or more an exhibition of conviction than of close reasoning. Mind you, that isn't to say that a crank theory is necessarily *wrong*.

I know what you're probably thinking. *Yes*, the ideas that planets move around the Sun, or that stones fall from the sky, or that continents move from place to place, used to be crank theories – if you define a crank theory as anything denied by established authority. But extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence; or, each of the new theories required a paradigm shift, an entirely new way to make sense of a range of phenomena; or, in order to be generally accepted, new scientific evidence mainly required that an older generation of scientists retire and die off.

The Flat Earth, The Hollow Earth, Perpetual Motion Machines, and Garage/Basement Inventors

One of my favourite characters in fiction, Evan Michael Tanner, not only joined every screwball nationalist organization on the Earth, not only studied all sorts of languages, but was a card-carrying member of the Flat Earth Society. As Lawrence Block had Tanner say himself, the Flat Earth Society was less about believing that the Earth is actually flat than it is about not believing things simply on authority, but believing the evidence of your senses. This classic crank theory was founded in (where else?) England, and now has members worldwide.

The idea that the Earth is hollow is one of several crank theories used by Edgar Rice Burroughs in his fiction; after it showed up in the 1920s, and was incorporated for a time in (where else?) Nazi ideology. One enthusiast even lobbied the U.S. Congress to send an expedition to find a hole in the Arctic leading to the inner world.

The United States Patent and Trademark Office, among others, is burdened with hundreds of patent applica-

tions – if not more – for machines that will allegedly produce energy forever. It's hard to say why the belief persists that such machines are possible. I have read a suggestion that one of the first European visitors to China saw a sort of municipal water clock, and not understanding the motive power behind it, came home talking about a machine that moved ceaselessly of itself.

Perhaps we should include among classic crank theories the idea of the Garage or Basement Inventor. This is, let's face it, a classic mythic figure in the United States, and other industrial societies. Perhaps Thomas Edison, who was actually an entrepreneur and corporation manager far more than an inventor, is most to blame. Or perhaps the writers of the Tom Swift boys' novels share some responsibility. In fact, as a very little thought will convince you, most research and development seems to require a large capital investment, which is why government institutions and large corporations dominate the field. (Research and development at universities seems to require public or private investment; at least, universities such as I'm familiar with are government dependents, and do not command their own pools of capital.)

But there *are* special circumstances when independent inventors can become successful garage entrepreneurs, as witness Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs, the founders of Apple Computers. What are the special circumstances? Perhaps that requires a whole separate article.

(to be continued)

SPEAKING OF THE INEXPLICABLE:

Daniel Gomes <bizarrona@yahoo.com>, Wed, 11 Jul 2001

Caros amigos e colegas,

Bizarrona está voltando a ativa, para isto, estamos respondendo todos os emails que temos recebido e atualizando nossa lista de endereços.

Por isto, gostaríamos que todos aqueles que tem interesse de receber informações sobre nosso fanzine e outros assuntos ligados a literatura, que responda este email confirmando e/ou atualizando seu endereço.

Por enquanto é só, em breve estaremos divulgando as novidades do fanzine e de nossa página.

Um abraço a todos,
Daniel Gomes - Editor de Bizarrona
<http://www.geocities.com/bizarrona/>

(Is that Spanish, or Portuguese? What does it mean?? -Ye Ed.)

A VERY SHORT MEDIA FILE

by Raymond Seredin (July 16th)

First: Sorry about last month's title, I was thinking one thing and was writing down another. Two, I'm Too Busy!

I just spent the last two weeks planning a camping trip to a little bay just over the next hill to the north-east from Powell River (Oh God, please let the Vancouver bus strike end) and tomorrow night I'll be sleeping under the stars. So I had no time for this month's Media File.

Still, I can show you how to get the official Paramount news on the upcoming Star Trek: Enterprise series. It's at <http://www.angelfire.com/trek/startrekenenterprise/>. Enjoy.

JOHN BARTLEY SENDS DR. WHO NEWS - FILM AT 11:00

Rejected 'Dr. Who. Show to Reach Fans Online

Monday, 11 June 11:11 GMT LONDON (Reuters) - Cult TV science fiction hero Doctor Who returns next month — but only over the Internet. BBC online will transmit a one-off radio drama, "Death Comes to Time," as a downloadable audio file for listeners to tune into on their home computers.

"There is a huge 'Doctor Who' fan base out there who have for a long time wanted to see 'Doctor Who' back at the BBC," said a BBC Online spokesman.

It will be the first time the BBC has run an audio play exclusively over the Web.

Originally written as a pilot for a planned six-episode series, it was rejected by Radio 4 despite an all-star cast including Stephen Fry and John Sessions. The 30-minute show has languished without being broadcast since it was recorded last October.

The official Doctor Who Web site said the play was rejected by Radio 4 because it did not fit the station's "current audience profile." The cast also includes Sylvester McCoy as the time-traveling Doctor and Sophie Aldred as his companion, who are reprising their roles for the first time since the BBC television series ended in 1989.

The BBC says Doctor Who is the longest-running science fiction series in the world.

The first episode was broadcast on Nov. 23, 1963. Since then, seven actors have played the wandering Time Lord in his battles against fiendish aliens, most memorably the Daleks and the Cybermen. Audio trailers will be available at www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho.

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From: jb3@palm.net (John Bartley) 11 Jun 2001

DON BASSIE REPORTS:

* The Sci Fi Channel has announced casting for its TV-movie *Babylon 5: The Legend of the Rangers*. Dylan Neal, Alex Zahara (*Dark Angel*), Myriam Sirois (*Babylon 5*), Dean Marshall, Warren T. Takeuchi, Jennie Rebecca Hogan, David Storch, Enid-Raye Adams and Gus Lynch will join Mackenzie Gray and Andreas Katsulas (G'Kar) in the movie. *Legend of the Rangers* began production in mid-May in Vancouver and Toronto. Vancouver-based effects house Gajdecki Visual Effects (*Total Recall 2070*) is providing the computer graphics and other effects for the movie. Gajdecki won Gemini Awards for its work on the miniseries *The Arrow* and the TV series *TekWar*, and received Emmy and Gemini nominations for *Stargate SG-1*.

* MGM has made a deal with Victor & Grais Productions for a big-screen version of *The Outer Limits* TV series, which was shot in Vancouver during its six-year run. The project will be co-produced under the Trilogy Entertainment banner. MGM president Michael Nathanson said, "The idea of an *Outer Limits* film is extremely exciting, and we look forward to seeing where these veteran producers take us." Producers are seeking a writer.

* The supernatural thriller movie *They* began filming in April in Vancouver. The film, starring Laura Regan as a woman who battles terrifying night terrors and a fear of the dark, co-stars Marc Blucas (Riley on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), Ethan Embry (*Freakylinks*) and Dagmara Dominczyk.

* Further news on *American Psycho 2: The Girl Who Wouldn't Die*, reported on in the April Media File: William Shatner has signed on to play the part of Professor Robert Strickland. Movie rumour site Coming Attractions reported that Shatner's character was one of the best profilers of serial killers at the FBI before taking a teaching position at York University. His last FBI case dealt with Patrick Bateman, the mass-murderer who is the film's main character. Filming of Shatner's scenes has reportedly already started at the Glendon College Campus in Toronto, where the rest of the film is also being shot.

On the Box:

* Despite an excellent finale (and a cliffhanger to boot!), *The Lone Gunmen* did not get picked up for a second season by Fox. However, *Roswell* (starring Winnipeg's Brendan Fehr as a regular) was picked up by UPN for a third season after being cancelled by the WB. All the *Roswell* cast will be back next season, with the probable exception of Emilie DeRavin (Tess). Here's the *Lone Gunmen* and *Roswell* story on the Mr Showbiz site. A few

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AND NOW THE NEWS

Vancouver stuph

Stan Hyde writes about local monster modelling news:

“If you missed the June MONSTER ATTACK TEAM MEETING, you should know that there will be a second OF HORRORS AND HEROES in 2001 - coming this October 28th in association with THE VANCOUVER TOY AND MODEL COLLECTIBLES SHOW!

“While we’re on the subject of the first OF HORRORS AND HEROES show, there’s a way to visit the show even if you missed it first time or live out of town.

“Visit <http://community.webshots.com/user/stanghyde1>

“There you’ll find two photo albums that constitute a “virtual” walk-through of the convention and a look at all the neat stuff on the tables. (And if you’re into Godzilla, you can always check out my other 4 photo albums as well - particularly the GODZILLA ATTACKS album with its nifty

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things that the *Lone Gunmen* actors would’ve liked to happen in their series: “I made this little fantasy up that my character had been married and then his wife left him, because he’s been hanging out with these two losers. So I’d like to see my ex-wife show up in a future script” (Bruce Harwood, “Byers”); “I’d like to see us get a new office, above ground, with windows. We have quite the cave we live in” (Tom Braidwood, “Frohike”); and “I’d like to see a bigger van, to tell the truth. That thing starts to get on your spine after a while” (Dean Haglund, “Langley”). These and other comments can be found in an interview done while the show was still in production. But all is not lost for the *Lone Gunmen* characters: Fox has renewed *The X-Files* for a ninth season (minus David Duchovny). Fox also renewed the hit series *Dark Angel* for a second season.

* *Stargate SG-1* is in the midst of shooting its fifth season in British Columbia. In an interview, producer/star Richard Dean Anderson (Col. Jack O’Neill) looks back over the past four seasons and tantalizes fans about the possibility of new-and-improved special effects coming up on the fifth season, but warns, “I can’t give away any plot lines; that’d be ludicrous. Nobody’d tune in.”

The Media File needs YOU! Please send your Canadian media news clips, tips and rumours to canadian_sf@hotmail.com.
(Don Bassie, *Made in Canada* #14)

new picture of GAMERA fighting GAYOS at night, a very cool rendering of my model diorama as digital art by the talented Angelo Loperfido. Is that ever cool, Angelo!)

“Finally, it’s summer and G-FEST is soon! For those who want to check out the flavour of the guests and events at this year’s giant monster party, there’s a description in the Shows, Shows, Shows section at the end of the newsletter.

“And there’s the really exciting prospect of the new Godzilla film by Shusuke Kaneko, *GMK - Daikaiju Soukougeki*. Am I excited? Yes, and I’ve devoted a number of pages to GODZILLA in WEB-WRANGLING this time around this time around . . . but I’ll probably have even more to say about it after the G-FEST is over.”

(*Monster Attack Team newsletter* #12, July 10, 2001)

The BCSFA Members’ Handbook, etc.

Belatedly I realized I had only made and sent out a few copies of the *BCSFA Members’ Handbook*, and the first (February 2001) edition was full of holes almost as soon as it was printed. After a lot of hesitation I have finally sent copies to our trades, with insertions listing the errata: updates on the S’harien and *Ottawa SF Statement* addresses, new information on VikingCon 18. (Some copies of this edition have been available for sale at White Dwarf Books.)

BUT I have decided to move up the date for the new edition. The *BCSFA Members’ Handbook* #2 will be somewhat reorganized, with more information on fanzine publishing and the V-Con Society and some SF writers’ markets in Canada; and this will (*FINALLY*) be sent to those BCSFA members who have not received one. On my own dime.

And yes, I’m still finishing up *Confabulation*, the faanfiction anthology.

I am also working on materials for a V-Con Society members’ handbook, but said materials may appear first on the V-Con Society website at <http://www3.telus.net/dh2/vconsociety/>.

Fan News Further Afield

John Mansfield writes of Keycon (Winnipeg’s annual May convention):

“With this years KEYCON attendance was almost 400 and with many buying at the last moment, Keycons future looks good.

“However, while programing was all over the fanish spectrum from readings to tv reviews to club stuff, it was very light and the guests talks few.

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SCIENCE STUPH

Since May I've been receiving email digests of interesting science news, although the Science & Technology Daybreaker digests (EMAZING <scitech-text@rtn.emazing.com>) have been subsumed by a more general Top Stories Daybreaker service as of June 12th. More information should be available at <http://www.emazing.com/>.

In trying to boil down the science news by subject, I find the interesting recent tidbits:

Anthropology

New genetic studies suggest all Northern Europeans are descended from a small band of hunter-gatherers who survived the last Ice Age – possibly as few as 50 individuals. Europeans' ancestors may have left Africa as recently as 27,000 years ago.

BBC News, May 18

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_1334000/1334512.stm

Early humans' fish-based diet may have given them an evolutionary edge over red-meat-eating Neanderthals: Red meat diet may have held Neanderthals back.

MSNBC.com, May 23

<http://www.msnbc.com/news/576466.asp>

DNA shows One in 100 Britons directly descended from Africans or Asians: possibly the legacy of the Roman slave trade.

CNN.com, May 23

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/TECH/science/05/21/britain.black.white.reut/index.html>

Astronomy & Astrophysics

Astronomers have found a star that “burps” immense, perfectly spherical gas bubbles.

ABCnews.com, May 18

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/scitech/DailyNews/starbubbles010516.html>

The Earth and Mars are headed for their closest encounter in more than 12 years.

CNN.com, May 18

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/TECH/space/05/17/mars/index.html>

Scientists peer under Titan's thick fog: Saturn's big moon may have mountains of frozen organic compounds.

CNN.com

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/TECH/space/05/18/titan.spot/index.html>

Comet's Spectacular Death May Illuminate Birth Of Solar System: First-ever look of disintegrating comet dazzles

astronomers.

Science Daily

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2001/05/010518084040.htm>

Astronomers reach the 'edge' of Universe: Subaru Telescope looks through a 'borehole' in space.

BBC News, May 23

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/special_report/newsid_1343000/1343171.stm

First Evidence that Comets Filled the Oceans: A Dying Comet's Kin May Have Nourished Life On Earth: Observations of dying comet bolster theory that impacts brought water to the young Earth.

Science Daily, May 23

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2001/05/010521072649.htm>

What Was God Thinking?: Scientists have begun to wander where only saints and philosophers once dared tread with speculations about what came before the Big Bang. Before the Big Bang, There Was . . . What? Physicists offer new answers to Augustine's old question.

New York Times, May 23

<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/22/science/22BANG.html>

Computer Science & Technology

Quantum computing is coming closer, thanks to University of Rochester researchers.

MSNBC.com, May 18

<http://www.msnbc.com/news/574495.asp>

IT Rejuvenating the Reservation: Hewlett Packard grant to help SoCal American Indians establish Digital Village.

Wired News, May 23

<http://www.wired.com/news/school/0,1383,43718,00.html>

Earth Science

Did devastating droughts doom the ancient Mayans?

MSNBC.com, May 21

<http://www.msnbc.com/news/574984.asp>

A growing volcanic bulge is the talk of one small Oregon town. Big bulge doesn't scare Oregonians, though.

CNN.com, May 22

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/TECH/science/05/20/volcanic.bluge.ap/index.html>

An immense lake of hardened lava has been found beneath the Indian Ocean.

BBC News, May 23

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Lorna Appleby's VCon report sounded very positive. Garth, your report seemed fairly positive, but illustrated that there were some minor problems that needed to be solved. Signage problems are common at conventions that use a lot of function space; the last Ad Astra I chaired had rooms on a lower level few people got to see, even with signs and a detailed map. Some people just don't look ...

((Signage problems are also common here, never mind the amount of function space used.))

Ray Seredin will probably report in his "Media File" column that the actors' strike has been averted with an 11th-hour agreement. Perhaps Torcon should get in touch with the BBC if they'd like to preview their new Doctor Who series.

((Right, now I'll expect to see you suggest it to the Torcon committee.))

The report on JMS and the new Babylon 5 series is great. I hope that given how fan-friendly Straczynski is, perhaps he can distribute news to all clubs in the Pacific Northwest. It would get rid of rumour, and those clubs can redistribute this news through trades.

Our itinerary ... Yvonne and I will be doing panels at Toronto Trek in a couple of weeks, and we have made the decision to go the Philadelphia Worldcon, but only for the middle three days to save some cash.

I've gone on much longer than I expected, so I will fold up and fire this off into the e-ether. Take care, all, and see you next issue.

Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740, USA, July 10, 2001

Two issues of *BCSFazine* arrived in the same mail in separate envelopes on a day that is embarrassingly far distant. I hope it's all right to avoid any stigma of favouritism by commenting on both in the same letter written on the same somewhat latter day. I also seem to remember another fanzine from you having impacted my mailbox recently, but I'll need to wait until an evening when my scattered brains have to their bony home gone to find it and write about it.

The May issue contains a remarkably long list of conventions and organizations in Canada that don't get enough fanzine space to keep me informed, down here, about what they're doing and who is doing it. Reading about the Northern SCA group, for instance, made me feel guilty for having failed to take a look at an SCA do only about a thousand feet from my home last month. Some branch or other set up a lot of events in the park that runs close to my home and the public was invited to watch and learn. Conceivably, a fanzine fan or two might have been in their midst. But the weather was quite threatening and I no

longer feel even as semi-comfortable in crowds as I did a few years back, so I stayed home and read a fairly decent news story about it in the local daily the next day.

((If life is a banquet, then we have a right to pick and choose what to put on our plate. Even a necessity, considering that we cannot digest a sample of everything.))

((Events of the Northern SCA organization in Western Canada may be more varied and frequent than in the Northeastern States – my understanding is that the organization in the Northeast holds one big annual event called Pennsic, where Pacific Northwest SCA members hold several smaller annual events, including regional ones in May, July, September and December. In fact a regular complaint has been that VCon usually conflicts with the May Crown event.))

((I'm not sure why, but self-publishing never developed as prominent a place in the SCA as in SF fandom. May be just my notion. Then again, SCA events may have had some organizational advantages over SF conventions. Again, it may be just my notion.))

As usual, Donna McMahon's book reviews were a feature of this issue. I think I was surprised when I found the review of *The Fox Woman*, because I seem to remember that this same title was among the posthumously published novels of A. Merritt. Donna has a fellow-delinquent in me, because I've never read *Ender's Game*, either, and so I've delayed reading several sequels to that novel that I've acquired recently. I'm glad she didn't pick on the author for his religious and political views.

I started to fill out Doug Finnerty's survey pages but chickened out when I saw how long it would take to do properly. Then I had the inspiration that it was better not to participate in the survey because an American response would adulterate the accuracy of the viewpoints of Canadian fandom. ...

All the material in the June issue about the lady who got slugged at Norwescon is somewhat confusing. The lack of full names for the people involved makes it hard to keep straight who was on whose side, but I suppose the webbish origin of this material makes that inevitable.

((The lady who wrote that report seems to have assumed all readers already knew whom she meant, which is a pretty large assumption when you post something to a Web page. I also made a large assumption, that I already had permission to publish her report, in whole or in part; I only found out I was wrong after I had sent that BCSFazine out.))

I hadn't heard previously that The National Network is to be running all those Star Trek spinoffs in rerun form. Since it has already changed its name from The Nashville Network, maybe it will undergo another change of name to The Interplanetary Network, because much of its daily schedule seems likely to be filled with Trekking adventures.

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“Several MEDIA fans were disappointed as the media GoH was Michael Sheard for the third straight year and the suggestion that he will be returning again in 2002!!

“As always the 15th floor rang with parties and talks. With members from 5 provinces, 4 states, and 4 countries, you could take part in an entire party was just aimed at how Keycon should be changed (yet again), to another that had a 200 lb pig, hot off the spit.

“Keycon certainly deserves its reputation as a party con, as the parties get more numerous and the guests less known and repetitive.

“Money was still there when the Art show made \$4,500. The Chairity dance \$540. And the auction for the 2003 membership donated by Canadian went for \$350.00.

“Bitch session was mainly individual personal problems, unlike the previous year when you could smell the tar bubbling. Everyone seems to have had a great time.”

John also wrote about other Canadian conventions:

“The June issue of the BCSFS zine is out and the only comment on the recent V-Con, was from someone who wasn't there. .. I think that's that. Atlanticon was cancelled for the second time in a row. .. FANDOM.COM, who bought Crationcons and promised to bring them back to Canada, has shut down citing lack of financing. .. UofM Anime club had its web site hacked telling everyone that their con was cancelled. Its a lie. Have you looked at yours lately?? ..”

(Con-TRACT #13:5, July-August 2001)

((He must have written this before the July issue came out, with two conreports on VCon 26. -Ye Ed))

Sharon Fall in Ottawa writes:

“Would you please send future copies of *BCSFazine* to the President of OSFS (currently Joel Polowin)? Joel's address is as follows:

18 Norice Street, NEPEAN, Ontario K2G 2X5

“Thank you for being so helpful during my tenure as editor, and I wish the best for you, your club and its members. Please convey my best to Al ('Ask Mr. Science').”

Sharon Fall <olympus@storm.ca>, 29 Jun 2001

Portland costumers on-line: A costumers' group centred in Portland, Oregon have started an on-line email list. For information, send to GPACG-general@yahoo.com.

Australian con-planning program: Julian Warner reports that David Arblaster has developed a convention programming programme. “Anyone who has run, or intends to run, a convention may be interested in the level of sophistication in the database. Beta testers are welcome. E-mail David direct at mercury@netcon.net.au if you would like to try it out.

David notes “Some of the nicer features are the ability to create standard e-mail form letters and send them to selected people in the database there is even a field parsing facility that will personally address each e-mail as in Dear [email name], I represent blah con The mail function should work with any MAPI capable e-mail package. I know it works with Outlook and Pegasus. The overseas testers so far seem to have had some trouble understanding the interface for this so it may need re-working.

You can also get what I call a Master Program View for each day showing all events that day across all venues to scale (venues horizontally, time vertically) with clashing items in the same venue highlighted. Items can be double clicked in this view and have their times changed and will then fly away to the new time/location back in the MPV. It can be made available for testing in either Access 97 or Access 2000 formats. Some local testing might speed things along a bit.”

(Australian SF Bullsheet #168, May 11, 2001)

Writers' Stuph

Robert J. Sawyer writes:

“You were kind enough to send me E-mail about my science fiction, so I hope you won't mind this little note to let you know that my twelfth – and, I think, my best – novel is now out IN PAPERBACK: *CALCULATING GOD* by Robert J. Sawyer, Tor Books, New York; lead science-fiction paperback for July 2001. ISBN 0-812-58035-4 / US\$6.99 / Cdn \$8.99.”

Robert J. Sawyer (July 10th, 2001)

from the Made in Canada Newsletter (May 31, 2001):

On Sunday, June 3rd, at BookExpo America in Chicago, DAW author Julie E. Czerneda will be appeared at the exhibition booth of DAW's e-publishing partners Palm Digital Media, signing her new novel, *In The Company of Others*.

SF Award News

* Charles de Lint's *Forests of the Heart* and Guy Gavriel Kay's *Sarantine Mosaic* are both finalists for the 2001 Mythopoeic Award for adult literature. Winners will be announced on August 5th at Mythcon XXXII.