

BCSFAzine #361

\$3.00

Vol. 31 No. 6

June 2003



In this issue:

MANSFIELD VS. CUFF RE-RUNS * GARTH VS. IMITATION FANDOM™

* THE UNIVERSE IS FLAT! * WHAT BECAME OF ARN SABA *

PURPLE VS. GOR JOKES

Colophon

BCSFAzine – *Something to ~~offend~~ interest everyone!*

BCSFAzine © June 2003, Volume 31, #6, Issue #361 is the club newsletter published by the B.C. Science Fiction Association, a social organization. Single copies \$3.00 each. For comments, subscriptions, suggestions, and/or submissions, write to: *BCSFAzine*, c/o Box 15335, VMPO, Vancouver, B.C. CANADA V6B 5B1, or email hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca.

BCSFAzine is distributed monthly at WHITE DWARF BOOKS, 3715 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 2G5, tel. 604-228-8223; email whitedwarf@deadwrite.com

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The shortcut URL to this list is

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

F.R.E.D., the weekly gathering of BCSFAns and all others interested in coming, happens every Friday at 8:00 p.m.

Until further notice

at the Jolly Alderman Pub, 500 West 12th Avenue (entrance on Cambie Street, just south of 12th Avenue), in the ground floor of the Plaza 500 Hotel (diagonally across from Vancouver City Hall).

WEB PAGES

BCSFA's Web page may be viewed at <http://www3.telus.net/dh2/bcsfa/>

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

The V-Con Society Web page may be viewed at <http://www3.telus.net/dh2/vconsociety/>

Graeme's **Canfancylopedia** page can be viewed at <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html>.

Andrew Murdoch's **Canfandom** page can be viewed at www.fandom.ca.

The CUFF website can be viewed at www.vcn.bc.ca/~hrothgar/cuff

The Royal Swiss Navy website can be viewed at www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn

White Dwarf Books/Dead Write's website can be viewed at www.deadwrite.com

Any other websites by BCSFA members and friends can be listed here!

CLUB EVENTS

June 13 - BCSFAzine deadline

June 14 @ 7pm: Feeding Frenzy at The Pantry, 425 6th Street, New Westminster. Something a little different this time: Home-cooked meals the North American way!

June 19 @ 7pm: Book Discussion Group at Blenz Coffee, 2506 Granville on Broadway. Book for discussion: *Roadmarks* by Robert Zelazny.

June 27 - BCSFAzine production

BCSFA EXECUTIVE

President: R. Graeme Cameron

Vice President: –

Treasurer: Doug Finnerty

Secretary: Alyx Shaw

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Editor: Garth Spencer

Members at Large: Randy Barnhart, Alan Ferguson

Keeper of FRED Book, Vcon Ambassador for Life: Steve Forty

BCSFA/VCS Webmaster and Modem Retrieval Specialist: David Hale (dh2@telus.net)

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subscribe to .PDF version by e-mail: \$15.00

New: \$26.00

Renewal: \$25.00

New Family (2 votes): \$32.00

Above prices include subscription to *BCSFAzine*. Make cheques payable to WCSFA (West Coast Science Fiction Association), c/o 86 Warrick Street, Coquitlam, B.C. CANADA V3K 5L4.

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

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ART CREDITS

Cover, p. x, p. xx: Taral Wayne

p. 1, Michael Morse

p. 2, God knows who (it's clipart)

METROTOWN WRITER'S GROUP

is open to new members.

IF YOU ARE: Serious about your prose, short stories, novels, etc., and want constructive advice ... Then this is the supportive peer group you've been looking for. Meetings are held twice a month at the Metrotown library, on Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. For information call Ken, 604-876-5751; email ktran@vcn.bc.ca

Plain Speaking



COMMANDER
RICK

CHANGES

Much to my disgust, I am told that people have repeatedly failed to *see* upcoming events announced in *BCSFazine* ... because they *still* expected to see them listed on the inside front cover!! Okay, I can bow to practical necessity as well as the next person. Inside of the front cover it will be.

Even if I think the necessity is kind of stupid.

MORE MISTAKES I made, specifically in the last issue:

I repeated the mistake I made in the masthead, listing White Dwarf at its old address.

I seem to have left the wrong page break after the Locs column in the last issue, and a half-page was left blank.

The wrong page numbering is an artifact of the new section breaks I am using – instead of putting the whole document into double-column format at once, I imposed the format only on the text under each column heading. Let's see if I can avoid the same mistake in this issue.

We are going to have to brainstorm about new, interesting activities for BCSFA – activities that we can advertise, and that will stimulate recruitment. MonSFFA, for example, is producing a joke B-movies video trailer. I've been suggesting to Graeme and Doug that BCSFA field an entry in the Bathtub Race, or hold a dirigible contest, or start an Evil Mad Scientist Crank Invention competition, or maybe

restart BCAPA or the Ether Patrol. Have you got some better ideas? (Please!!)

IN SEARCH OF INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION

What sort of baggage do ~~you~~ we bring to fandom?

I ask this because, in fanzines and conventions and art and I know not what else, I have seen different people bringing popular misconceptions to their fan activity. I've run into fans who thought, well, of *course* fans were wannabe writers, or they thought, well, of *course* fans are pantingly anxious to meet television/film actors, or they thought, well, of *course* cons are supposed to be big-budget money-making events. You can probably think of any number of people who equated science fiction with *Star Trek*, or with spacecraft and aliens, or even confused science fiction with UFOlogy. I remember a few stories about convention committees convinced that any SF con *had* to have a television actor as a Guest of Honour, or that any SF con *had* to be the biggest deal they could hype it up to be.

And then, of course, there are personal agendas. There are any number of stories about fans compelled to be the biggest fish in their little ponds, and who then felt compelled to throw their weight around, until other fans stayed away in droves.

Speaking for myself ... My baggage was thinking that fandom was likely to consist of bright, educated, ironic, humorous, creative, active minds, like some of the groups of brilliant and impoverished students I joined at the same time. Anticipating the same company at FRED was expecting a bit much.

So: I would like to see someone restart the weekly coffee group that used to compete with FRED for fan attendance on Fridays. Or a MENSA subgroup, or a Cacophony Society, even. I would like to go *somewhere* for some intellectual stimulation!

But I now appreciate that I myself may be the least good person to lead such an initiative. I couldn't lead three fans into a bookstore. (Some days I even think my assigned role in our fannish ecology is "Asshole from Another Planet", but that probably just says something about my medication.)

Question: do we know any good SF fan jokes? How many fans does it take to change a lightbulb? If you have two fans, what does the government make you do with them? Why does an SF fan cross the road? What does St. Peter do with SF fans at the Pearly Gates? Three fans walk into a bar, and ... what happens next? What does a fan say when he spots a fly in his soup? What does a fan do when he rubs a lamp and releases a genie? What happens to aliens who abduct SF fans? If fans ran your government the way we run SF cons ... then what?

This is, like, a contest, eh?

Littera Scripta Manet



John Mansfield pqh@mts.net, April 26, 2003

RE: CUFF Ballot: So now we can boast the CUFF is the first place where if you win once, you can run again... and again. The American/UK/Australian fans that admin DUFF, GUFF, TAFF, MAFF and the fans that go with them will be impressed with the shallow number of deserving Canadian fans.

((You're not satisfied unless you impute that something is wrong, are you??

((You needn't worry. Chances are I will have alienated so many Vancouver fans by the time you read this, I will have no chance to win the fan fund.))

Lloyd&Yvonne Penney" penneys@netcom.ca, May 8, 2003

I'm a little slow off the mark actually getting to *BCSFAzine* 360, but I've printed it out, and I'm responding now. Seems I've got lots of time on my hands ...

Julian Castle refers to a past letter of mine, and as I see it, I should know better than to make generalizations about Trekkers. I recently logged onto a Trek-oriented Usenet area, and I was surprised by the numbers of members of that Usenet area who criticized *Enterprise*, and its inability to stop contradicting the original series, and stepping all over its established history and timeline. This does say, though, that they do watch it; it's just that they don't like it much. But, they do watch it. Maybe it proves my point after all ...

I have a theory, subject to revision, of course ... SF clubs are becoming mere structures to maintain a social framework for its members. There seem to be no other club projects, or outreach programmes to increase the club's size, or increase the value members get for their money. I would like to think that BCSFA is different, but many clubs can barely hold their members together.

((Editor comments: it may be easier to corroborate the statement, "there are SF clubs (number unfixed) which are no more than a social framework for their members". The fact that we could stand to do some outreach and publicity and recruitment has been plain to BCSFA executives for some time now. What isn't so plain is just what BCSFA offers to contemporary fans; Doug and I have tried to establish what our main interests are, or what mainly interests contemporary fans, but without much result.

((It may also be fairer to contemporary fans to say that they aren't really aware of fandom outside their special interests, or outside their geographical area. One of the very odd things that came out of VCon publicity efforts last year was the number of fans who had never heard of VCon before ... and VCon has been going for nigh-on thirty years.

((If contemporary fans are mostly into gaming, or comics, or anime, or sliced processed artificial imitation near-Fandom™ product, brought to you by Paramount and Fox ... then where is the fandom I meant to join? In Madison, or Seattle, or San Francisco?? In London or Melbourne, Ghu help me??))

I gather that filking has gained a foothold in the Vancouver area. Judith Hayman, one of the senior filkers in Toronto found a small group in the Vancouver area, and is making efforts to get in touch with them. I hope future VCons will give local filking a chance to express themselves with programming at future conventions. Yvonne and I have worked with the local filkers at helping with their convention for the past 13 years; next year, we'll be running at-con registration for them.

((It may be truer to say, "there are some filkers in Vancouver, even among BCSFA members". Whether or not VCon committees were aware of it, filk got very low priority, and little space, at past VCons.))

Convention list ... Toronto Trek 17 has lost James Marsters as a guest, but he has been replaced by Anthony Stewart-Head, Giles from *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*.
((One of my role models. Like Dudley Doright.))

When I first started receiving fanzines in the early 80s, I wasn't quite sure what to do with them. While others consciously decided to keep me ignorant, some patient fans showed me the ropes, and when I thought I might start with the letter column, I was shown the letters of Harry Warner, Jr. as a sterling example of how to respond to those fanzines; make some constructive comments, and add in some news, humour and fresh ideas. I tried to follow Harry's example, and I hope I succeeded at least once. When some Montreal fans referred to me at Canada's Harry Warner, I was embarrassed, but later, I felt very honoured. Some have commented that with the death of Harry Warner, the heart has been torn out of fanzine fandom. I hope the rest of us can pull together to try to heal that hole, but there will be a Harry-shaped hole left.

((Aww. You just exploded one of my favourite crank theories: that you were the secret love-child of Harry Warner Jr., godfather of all fandom, and Gina "Dutch" Ellis, who was the celebrated "Dutchess of Canadian Fandom" and arbiter of fannish taste, in Former Fandom.))

Latest Bakka-Phoenix news ... Chris Szego says that the re-launch of Bakka has been postponed slightly; the grand reopening of Bakka-Phoenix Books should take place some time in June. ...

Hugo ballots are out ... check out www.Locusmag.com for the nominees. Only Canadians on this Hugo ballot are Rob Sawyer and Karin Lowatchee. FAAn Awards have been given out ... go to www.eFanzines.com, and the winners are on the top of the page. Aurora nominees? Any day now on Dennis Mullin's website.

A question ... do you feel that it might be time for another national fannish newszine, especially post-Torcon? I am considering it, and plan to make a list of what I might like to put in it. I am thinking that I would e-mail it to fans

across the country, print up some copies, and store back issues on Bill Burns' eFanzines site.

(I think that might be an excellent suggestion. In fact I think there's been a crying need for a Canadian national fan newszine ever since Xenofile, and then Under the Ozone Hole, gave up the ghost.

(Part of the fannish landscape that a fan newszine in Canada faces – and here I am speaking mostly of my 1980s experience, so maybe something has changed – is the distance between different interest groups, filkers and anime and comics and Camarilla and gamers and I don't know what-all, who only have some local conventions in common; not even that, if they see only special-interest cons. Another part is the geographical distance between population centres, which is unlike anything in the U.S., except maybe in the western desert states. Still another part is a sort of gulf between the fans in Canada and the gaggle of writers, and staunch but somewhat struggling independent publishers, of SF and fantasy in Canada. Set beside this, the English-French or North/South divides in Canada are a bit irrelevant.)

Michael Morse, May 16, 2003

Non in Commotione Deus: So that's William Rotsler's art! It must have been him that did that "Kill a gafiate for Christ" cartoon that I saw in *The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette*.

There's a big space under Doug Finnerty's bio; I guess I didn't get his portrait submitted in time! ☹

(Editor responds: Or I put a page break in the wrong place.)

Cur, Quomodo, Quando: Robert L. Forward: If I recall correctly, his son (also named Robert Forward), is also a writer, for television.

Is Print Dying?: I don't know about the rest of the world, but the where the bookselling industry lost me is the cost. I can't pay over \$5 for a book or a magazine. In my day (the eighties), a new SF book or magazine was \$4.95—that's Canadian dollars, and there was no GST back then. Now it's more like \$10: too rich for my blood. This is not to say that the books aren't worth the price; I just can't afford them.

To Market, To Market: Urban setting seems to be recurring requirement in this section, and I'm glad. Too many otherwise good premises get sabotaged by being set in a small town, the desert, or a postapocalyptic wasteland.

The Reel Horror Party: Excellent use of my photo with my article, Garth! ☺

Other Media News: I'd like to see a television adaptation of the Marvel Comics mini-series *Blaze: Legacy of Blood*. It's the story of John Blaze, the original Ghost Rider, discovering more than he ever wanted to know about his family line. I think it's just dark enough and what I call "runchable" enough that it would stand a chance of being done right even in today's style.

Book Reviews: As intriguing as the premise is, it sounds like the protagonist of *Technogenesis* is too unlikable to make me want to read the book. On the other hand, *The Changing Plague's* premise is just too depressing—I get tired just imagining the amount of effort the characters would have put in to stop something like that. I have a bit of a dilemma in that I like alternate history but not period pieces (*Shadow of the Storm*). *Windowpane* sounds awesome!

Archivist's Report: "A Brain Trust of the New World Order"—that sounds so sinister, but I guess I have to factor in that this was the fifties, and it probably didn't have that connotation then.

"Naïve, but with the heart in the right place. Very refreshing compared to the dark conspiracies so in vogue

today." There are still philosophies and organizations that upbeat today—in fact Ashtar (not the playful robot who can put his arm back on!) is still around. Philosophies that say that "it's all good" are unconvincing; those that suggest seeking out others and charting a course to save the world are more productive, but one still has to overcome the cynicism that comes from seeing that the world is still a scary and depressing place after all these decades.

(What is "Ashtar"? Inquiring minds want to know.)

Creative Sociology: Aha! This is the article I was reading at the FRED at Joe's Place, which I didn't get to finish before you needed it back.

Wild animals only need a year or two to go from being born to being ready to face the world and start their adult lives; we humans need about thirty.

"Isaac Asimov's *Foundation Series*": I loved the *Foundation* trilogy, especially the first book; I haven't read the latest installment—the last one I read was *Foundation's Edge*, where Asimov started to cross over his *Foundation* stories with his robot stories.

"Robert Heinlein's stories": After reading this part of the article at the FRED at Joe's Place, I borrowed my Dad's copy of the Heinlein collection *The Past Through Tomorrow* and read "Blowups Happen" and "Methuselah's Children." The stories are sorted in chronological order (within Heinlein's Future History universe). His carefully-worked-out timeline chart doesn't make for very good reading, but I guess it pays off in that it's fun to begin each new story with knowledge gained from the last one (for example, the nuclear power plant in space Lentz proposed in "Blowups Happen" has become a reality, then exploded before "The Man Who Sold the Moon").

I'm looking forward to the next part of this article!

We Also Heard From Vera McIntyre

Ads Libitum

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Coming Attractions

June 2003

June 16: The new series *Taken* is to appear on CBC.

June 21: *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is scheduled to appear in bookstores.

July 2003

July 3 – 6: Westercon 56 in the SeaTac DoubleTree aka the Seattle Airport DoubleTree Hotel in SeaTac, Washington. Artist GOH : Lisa Snellings, Editor GOH : Claire Eddy, Fan GOH : Saul Jaffe, Writer GOH : Bruce Sterling, Science GOH : Dr. Michio Kaku, Toastmaster: Connie Willis. Full membership: \$50. Write Westercon 56, P.O. Box 1066, Seattle, WA 98111, U.S.A. Postal Mail: Westercon 56, P.O.Box 1066, Seattle, WA 98111; Phone: (206) 723-9906; Email: info@wester56.org. See www.westercon.org .

July 5, 7 p.m.: Aphelion Party at Kathleen Moore-Freeman's place in Richmond, BC.

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

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

July 12-13: Animethon 10, Hotel TBA, Edmonton, AB. Animé convention. Guests and memberships: TBA. For more information, www.animethon.org or www.anime-alberta.org/animethon .
(Lloyd Penney's con list, Jan. 03 update)

July 13: Next V-Con Society meeting at Marilyn Blew's place in Burnaby, BC.

August 2003

Aug. 15-17: Con-Version XX. Westin Hotel, Calgary, AB. SF convention. Guests: Terry Brooks, Esther Friesner, Charles deLint, Robert J. Sawyer. Memberships: TBA. For more information, www.con-version.org .

(Lloyd Penney's con list, Jan. 03 update)

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

September 2003

Sept. 11-14: **Gatecon 2003**, Best Western Richmond Inn, Richmond, BC. For more information, www.gatecon.com.

(Lloyd Penney's con list, Jan. 03 update)

Sept. 19-21: **Foolsap V** - Bellevue, Washington (General SF with an emphasis on written SF - more information and link coming soon)

*(Northwest SF Resources, © Jack Beslanwitch,
Apr. 03 download)*

October 2003

Oct. 10-12 - **VCon 28**, Hotel TBA, Vancouver, BC. SF convention. Guests: TBA. Memberships: Can\$25/US\$20 to May 31, more after. For more information, write to VCon 28, c/o 2116 Macdonald, Main floor, Vancouver, BC V6K 3Y5 or vcon@shaw.ca .

All the News that's Print to Fit

MONTREAL FAN NEWS

As of May 2003, MonSFFA ceased mailing paper copies of *Impulse* to people who normally received it by e-mail: the Internet service provider, Videotron, has settled its labour troubles.

Back issues of the news bulletin will be available on MonSFFA's website (URL below).

In other news: Café Eidolon opened May 1st at 4830 Wellington Street (Verdun), offering a medieval/fantasy-themed café and playhouse; costumes are optional, but encouraged. A medieval fair was scheduled for May 3rd and 4th at the Hippodrome, featuring demonstrations, fashion shows, music, and a dealers' row; more information from La Compagnie Médiévale appears at www.nemesis.qc.ca/ciemedievale/. William B. Davis, "The Cigarette-Smoking Man" on *The X-Files*, appeared May 6 to June 1st in the Centaur Theatre's production of "Copenhagen", a play about the physicists Werner Heisenberg and Neils Bohr, who found themselves on opposite sides during the second World War.

Impulse 7:4, April 2003 (www.monsffa.com)

VIDEO PROJECT IN MONTREAL

Members of the Montreal SF and Fantasy Association have been planning since April to produce a club video, a trailer for a 1950s/60s-style monster movie – with a Canadian bent: it is titled *BEAVRA!*

Impulse 7:4, April 2003 and 7:5, May 2003

A MEMORIAL FANZINE FOR BRUCE PELZ will be edited by John Hertz, and Len and June Moffat, including writing by and about Mr. Pelz. John Hertz will distribute a flyer soliciting contributions and suggestions for material; he can be contacted at 236 S. Coronado St., Apt. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057, U.S.A.

Ulrika O'Brien, *Chunga* #4, April 2003

SEATTLE FANNISH MUSEUM COMING UP: The Seattle Experience Music Project announced on April 17, 2003 that the vacated former James Brown Soul Party wing will be devoted to the history and cultural impact of science fiction. Greg Bear was in attendance, wincing whenever someone said "sci-fi".

Ulrika O'Brien, *Chunga* #4, April 2003

IS THIS AN ONLINE-ONLY SF MARKET?

NFG: THE MAGAZINE (email mrspeabody@nfg.ca; registration, membership and submissions via <http://www.nfg.ca>) is a new magazine based in Toronto looking for fiction, poetry, art, comics and strips, articles and interviews; they are particularly looking for fantasy, horror, slipstream, science fiction, historical fiction, "character driven stories you can't stop thinking about".

The submission format: All submissions are accepted on-line only, after registering on the web page. Submissions have to be in plain-text format. Acceptance or rejection will be indicated within a few weeks by e-mail. Payment is 2 cents/word for fiction and poetry, upon acceptance.

Burnaby Writers Society Newsletter notes that NFG doesn't indicate whether it's a print or electronic magazine, but NFG appears to be the latter.

From Jobs in Hell via
Burnaby Writers' Society Newsletter, May/June 2003

GREG PICKERSGILL, the man who invented the Memory Hole fanzine preservation project, wants to sell about thirty

linear feet of his fanzine duplicates. *Chunga* (the Seattle fanzine) reports, "if you or anyone else wants to send me \$50USD (or even multiples thereof) I will send them a foot of fanzines, more or less. Maybe even with some change." Detailed want-lists are also welcome at 3 Bethany Row, Narberth Road, Haverford West, Pembrokeshire SA61 2XG, U.K.

Ulrika O'Brien, *Chunga* #4, April 2003

FIRST ANNUAL DRACO AWARD

Double Dragon Publishing, PO Box 54016, 1-5762 Highway 7 East, Markham, Ontario L3P 7Y4 Canada. Publisher: Deron J. Douglas. "The first annual Draco Award for excellence in sf/f/h will be awarded to the authors of an unpublished or self-published title in each genre."

The Finalist Judges: "Piers Anthony-Fantasy; Mike Resnick-Science Fiction; and Michael Arnzen-Horror."

The Preliminary Judges: "Kate Saundby (author); Mark Sutton (author); Mae Argilan (author); Sheri McGathy (author); Jason Brannon (author); J. Crispin-Ripley (author); Jeanine Berry (author); Darrell Bain (author); Peggy Jo Shumate (author/editor); and Susan Robinson (editor)."

Entry Rules: Send in .RTF as E-mail attachment or on CD-ROM or floppy disk. Two entry limit. You can pay for your entry either by online shopping cart (see Web site) or by sending a personal check, international money order, or cashier's check in US funds. Note: If you are sending your entries via E-mail attachment, please indicate your name and the title of the work being entered. Entries sent via E-mail attachment will not be processed until payment is verified."

"Either unpublished or self-published works are eligible, no longer than 100,000 words. Please include a synopsis and Inside the Flap description (see our book listings for examples). Short story collections as well as novels are eligible. Please double space your entry, using 12 pt. Arial or similar. Also, download the Draco entry form provided on the Web site for your submission." Entry fee \$25. [E-mail: Info: peggy.shumate@double-dragon-ebooks.com; Submissions: draco@double-dragon-ebooks.com; www.double-dragon-ebooks.com]. Deadline: November 30, 2003.

Gila Queen #119, May 2003

THE UNIVERSE IS FLAT!

Astrophysical cosmologists meeting in Washington and Chicago offered data from the winter of 1998 / 1999 that supports an everlasting, inflationary universe.

Ever since Albert Einstein, there has been some question whether the universe can be described as geometrically "closed", "open" or "flat"; Einstein proposed that space may be "curved", that is, whether the parallel straight lines described by parallel light beams would, after an indefinite distance, diverge, or converge, or stay parallel.

The balance of evidence suggests a "flat", inflationary universe, such as the universal background radiation measured by a telescope suspended from a high-altitude balloon over Antarctica from Dec. 29, 1998 to Jan. 8, 1999. Elizabeth Holden, *Ottawa SF Statement* #305, May 2003

WHAT HAPPENED TO ARN SABA:

Fans of independent comics in the mid-1980s must have wondered where Arn Saba (creator of *Neil the Horse*) disappeared to. Arn Saba resurfaced recently in San Francisco, as a transsexual charged with drug dealing.

San Francisco narcotics cops raided the modest Russian Hill apartment of one Katherine Collins, 55, on May 13, 2003. They found 6 ½ pounds of magic mushrooms and four pounds of marijuana, and confiscated \$7,569 in cash. Clues to Collins' previous identity included framed Arn Saba originals in the apartment.

San Francisco Examiner, May 15, 2003
Forwarded by Taral Wayne

TORONTO TREK (July 11-13, 2003) announces more guests:

Robert Burnett - Crash Into Me: The World of Roswell (October 2002) Edo van Belkom - Scream Queen (April 2003) <http://www.vanbelkom.com/> Julie Czerneda - Hidden in Sight (April 2003) <http://www.czerneda.com/> Kat Hankinson - Children of the Plague (Feb 2003) Nikki Stafford - Bite Me (September 2002) <http://www.ecwpress.com/books/buffy2.htm>

Toronto Trek is also pleased to announce the science guest: Robert D. Richards - Director, Space and Atmospheric Division, Optech Incorporated. Information Line: (416) 410-TCON (8266) E-MAIL: tcon@icomm.ca WEB: <http://tcon.icomm.ca>

T-Con Newsletter: Volume 17, Issue #8 (2003-May-15)

POTLATCH 13: 27-29 February 2004, Seattle, WA, <http://www.potlatch-sf.org>

We're back at the Best Western Executive Inn, close to the Seattle Center, the Space Needle, and the Experience Music Project. We even have the same rates as 2002: \$79 for single/double and \$99 for triple/quad. ...

WEBSITE: Our website is up and running: <http://www.potlatch-sf.org>.

DISCUSSION LIST: We've set up a discussion list. To subscribe, send a blank message to p13disc-subscribe@yahogroups.com and we'll get you signed up. Thanks!

MEMBERSHIPS: \$40 until September 30 postmark; \$20 for people aged 11 to 17. (Under 11 free when accompanied by an adult.) \$10 supporting (convert to attending at rate in effect at time of conversion.)

Luke McGuff, chair (lukemcguff@yahoo.com). <http://www.potlatch-sf.org>

SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT:

DREAMS & VISIONS: *New Frontiers in Christian Fiction* - Skysong Press, 35 Peter St. S., Orillia, Ontario Canada L3V 5A8. Editors: Steve and Wendy Stanton. "Dreams & Visions was founded in 1988 to provide an international showcase for short literary fiction written from a Christian perspective. No literary genre is excluded from consideration by the editors. We have published metafiction, science fiction, humour, fantasy, and magic realism, as well as stories of a contemporary or inspirational nature. Where else can you find stories that uplift and challenge, stories that question and probe without compromising the foundational Christian doctrines of Biblical faith?"

"All work submitted should be based on orthodox Biblical norms or traditions but should portray spiritual truths in new, innovative, or unique ways. The ultimate purpose of our publishing company is to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ and to lead readers into a deeper or more meaningful relationship with Him; however, authors must remember that we are in the entertainment business, not preaching from a pulpit."

"We do not publish poetry; we do not publish stories that glorify violence or perversity; we do not publish Bible

stories in modern or ancient garb; and we do not publish work for children, teens, or young adults."

"The more familiar you are with our publication, the better chance you will have of landing a story with us."

2000-6000 words; pays 1¢/word, upon publication, for first North American rights and non-exclusive reprint rights at the same rate as first printing. "All submissions must include an SASE with sufficient Canadian postage for a reply. From outside Canada, send a disposable manuscript with one US dollar for a letter response. Do not send US stamps! We do not accept submissions by E-mail or fax." Simultaneous submissions ok; "will occasionally accept previously published material." [E-mail: kysong@bconnex.net ; www.bconnex.net/~skysong/]. RT-2-6 months.

Gila Queen #119, May 2003

WAS Anyone in Portland fluent in Klingon?

Steve Greenfield reported on the SF Northwest listserv a serious ad for a Klingon interpreter this May, adding, "It just keeps getting weirder. Jedi is an official religion in England, and the KLI gets funding from the US Govt. So this was only a matter of time."

CNN.com reported on May 10th that

"The language created for the 'Star Trek' TV series and movies is one of about 55 needed by the office that treats mental health patients in metropolitan Multnomah County."

The Associated Press later reported that "Officials in Multnomah County, Ore., have rescinded a call for Klingon language experts after news reports revealed the plan to hire interpreters for county mental health patients".

Steve Greenfield alienrelics@yahoo.com, from CNN.com, May 10, 2003

Michael Morse, from SciFiWire, May 13, 2003

ALTERED CARBON GETS OPTIONED

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

Warner Brothers has the project in development.

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

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

via "Mike" <morbius@vcn.bc.ca>

THE N3F SHORT STORY CONTEST 2003

The National Fantasy Fan Federation once again announces its annual short story contest. There is a \$2 entry fee per submission, and the deadline is December 1, 2003. Announcements and notifications of winning entries will be made in January of 2004; the cash awards are \$50 (US) for first place, \$30 for second place, and \$20 for third place. Questions and submissions may be sent to Elizabeth Caldwell, 685 South Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48103-9332, sales@penncentral.net.

Nice Distinctions #1, Arthur Hlavaty, © 2003

The Other Media News

Chewbacca, C-3PO, R2-D2 Return In Star Wars III

Episode III will further connect the *Star Wars* saga, bridging the prequel trilogy to the original trilogy bringing back familiar faces and places in the new *Star Wars* film, which is currently in pre-production. Reprising their classic roles from the original trilogy are actors Peter Mayhew as Chewbacca the Wookie, Anthony Daniels as C-3PO, and Kenny Baker as R2-D2.

Mayhew said, "I think his re-appearance in this film is a fitting way to tie the whole saga together, especially for Wookie fans." Daniels has played See-Threepio in all of the *Star Wars* movies. In the original trilogy, he squeezed into the tight confines of the golden suit to play the prim and proper protocol droid. For Episode I, he lent his vocal talents for an incomplete puppet version. In Episode II, he returned to the costume. Though the role of R2-D2 has become increasingly automated, it's been a *Star Wars* tradition to include Kenny Baker as the droid at some point in the movie. Having Baker inside the suit has brought "an element of humanity" to the classic character director George Lucas has said.

from Animation World Network

<http://www.awn.com>

forwarded by Michael Morse, May 3, 2003

ASTRO BOY ON KIDS' WB!

Kids' WB! announced Wednesday it will air 26 episodes of Japan's *Astro Boy* during the 2003-2004 season.

The announcement was made today by John Hardman, Senior Vice President, Kids' WB! Programming, and Tara Sorensen, Vice President of Creative Affairs, Sony Pictures Television.

Astro Boy was created 50 years ago by Osamu Tezuka, the pioneer of Japanese animation and known as the "father of manga."

"One of the most recognizable icons in animation history, *Astro Boy* has become a beloved hero for all ages," Hardman said. "We are thrilled to be working with the studio that brought us Jackie Chan Adventures on the latest portrayal of this timeless hero. *Astro Boy* is sure to continue his astronomical ride to the top of the ratings charts when he joins our powerhouse hit schedule. His strong moral center and selfless bravery are the perfect compliment to the other heroes and champions on Kids' WB!"

Astro Boy is produced by Sony Pictures Entertainment Japan and Tezuka Productions, and distributed in the U.S. by Sony Pictures Television.

Here's how the show is described:

"Based on the original manga character from the most popular comic book series in the early 1950s, *Astro Boy* is a futuristic story of an atomic-powered robot who must fight for justice and peace in a society that scorns his kind. Created in Metro City,

he lives among a 'retro-futuristic' society populated by humans and robots. Some robots live in harmony with mankind, some rebel against it and others are manipulated by evil forces to become machines of destruction. Ironically, mankind's only hope of surviving the onslaught of wicked robots is a robot himself...the fearless, selfless, incorruptible champion known as *Astro Boy*.

"*Astro Boy* possesses superb strength including jet rocket feet and arms that allow him to fly at extreme speeds; however, the secret to his victories is not his super-powers. *Astro Boy* is the first robot with an advanced intelligence and human-like emotions. He's clever, resourceful and has a strong sense of justice, always attempting to reason with his adversaries. Defending humanity, with the help of his friends and family, Metro City...the world...and now Kids' WB! have a new hero - *Astro Boy*."

Astro Boy has a rich history on television. In 1963, this robotic boy with the strength of 100,000 horses became the star of one of Japanese TV's first anime shows. The show was a smash hit and *Astro Boy* became the first Japanese show imported to the U.S. The series debuted in September of 1963 on WNEW, N.Y., and was shown in over 40 cities. *Astro Boy* became one of the country's top rated syndicated shows. In 1965, *Astro Boy* spread out to other countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Australia. A second *Astro Boy* series (color) ran on NTV from 1980 to 1981.

The new *Astro Boy* debuted in Japan on FUJI TV on April 6 to encouraging ratings. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of *Astro Boy*, and ironically, as the original series was set in the future, *Astro Boy*'s fictional date of origin was the year 2003.

<http://www.comicscontinuum.com/stories/0304/30/index.htm>,
May 3, 2003

New Crow Movie Starring Boreanaz

According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, Angel star David Boreanaz is joining the cast of *The Crow: Wicked Prayer*, the fourth instalment that is being released by Dimension Films. Boreanaz is joining Edward Furlong, Dennis Hopper and Tara Reid in the film, which is being directed by Lance Mungia.

Wicked Prayer tells the story of ex-con Jimmy Cuervo (Furlong) and his girlfriend, who are murdered by Luc Crash (Boreanaz) and his satanic gang Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse as part of a ritual for Crash to become an immortal demon.

Production will start in June.

<http://www.comicscontinuum.com/stories/0304/30/index.htm>,
May 7, 2003

Freedom of the Press Belongs to the Fan Who Owns One

FANZINES by Ted White

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

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

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

EASTER WINE – A Fanthology for Seacon 03 (Claire Brialey & Mark Plummer, editors; published by Seacon '03, 8 The Orchard, Tonwell, Hertfordshire SG12 0HR, United Kingdom; no price, but I suggest at least a couple of dollars to cover mailing costs)

I'm only recently returned from Corflu, the fanzine convention, held this year in late April, in Madison, Wisconsin. As usual, I had a great time, and also as usual I returned with a big batch of fanzines I'd been given there.

One of the most impressive is *Easter Wine*. It was published for the members of this year's British national SF convention, the Eastercon. (Each Eastercon, like each Worldcon, also has an individual name. This year's Eastercon was “Seacon,” but since this name has been used before – most notably for the 1979 Worldcon in Brighton – the “03” has been appended for clarity.) Co-editor Mark Plummer was passing out extra copies at Corflu, and I was pleased to get one.

The basic idea behind *Easter Wine* was to reprint some of the best (or most appropriate) material from fanzines which had been written by Eastercon Guests of Honor. The purpose was twofold: to give an idea *why* these people had been so honored, and to expose convention attendees to some of the fanwriting of the past and in so doing to the idea that Good Stuff could be found in old fanzines.

The result is a publication which exemplifies the purpose of this column. Here is some of the cream of fanwriting, skimmed from fanzines, the oldest of which was published 50 years ago. That fanzine was Bob Silverberg's *Spaceship* #22, which was published in July, 1953. And the reprinted piece, “The Wrong Slant,” is a portion of Silverberg's editorial, written when he was 18. As Robert

Silverberg he has gained fame as an author of SF, but even as a teenager Silverberg was acute: in this short piece he identifies the origins of the subsequent bloating of SF conventions.

Most of the 28 contributions to this fanthology (not counting the editorial bookends) are reprinted from much more recently – typically from the 1970s, '80s and '90s, with a couple from the current century – and one, by Ian Watson, is new. While the majority of the contributions are articles, four artists – Jim Barker, Pete Lyon, Rob Hansen and Chris Baker (“Fangorn”) are represented with reprints of some of their fanzine-published art.

Both fans and professionals are included (as the editors note, in some cases the people in question are *both*). They are (in order of appearance): Ken Slater, Ethel Lindsay, Peter Weston, Peter Roberts, Robert Silverberg, Leroy Kettle, Graham Charnock, Jim Barker, Dave Langford, Ian Watson, Avedon Carol, James White, Christopher Priest, Greg Benford, Linda Krawecka, John Jarrold, Pete Lyon, Greg Pickersgill, Rob Hansen, Pam Wells, Roger Robinson, Colin Greenland, Paul Kincaid, Maureen Kincaid Speller, Martin Tudor, Chris Evans, Mary Gentle and Chris Baker (“Fangorn”).

Since another criterion in the selection process was that these pieces had not been previously republished in a fanthology, this volume is guaranteed to contain material you've not read before – unless, of course, you read the original fanzines. I recommend it highly for everyone who wants to find out what the shouting has been about.



Of Making Many Books There Is No End

Reviews by Donna McMahon



BITTER WATERS, Wen Spencer (Roc May/03)
THE EYRE AFFAIR, Jasper Fforde (Penguin, 2002, hc
374p)
WEST OF JANUARY, Dave Duncan (Red Deer Press,
2002, trade, 318p) (originally published 1989)

* * *

BITTER WATERS, Wen Spencer (Roc May/03)

I keep expecting Wen Spencer to knock my socks off. So, when I encountered the third instalment in her Ukiah Oregon series my socks were already loose with anticipation, but once again the novel didn't quite make it. Damn.

I almost didn't read the first Ukiah Oregon novel I saw. The badass cover of *Tainted Trail*, showing a be-muscled hunk with a big handgun posed against a shiny SUV and dark cityscape, reminded me of an ad for prime time television. Then the cover blurb nearly finished me. A boy raised by wolves and trained as a private investigator? Ack!

But, incredibly enough, Spencer makes this improbable pastiche of elements work. Ukiah Oregon, feral wolf child and alien, raised near Pittsburgh by lesbian moms, and befriended by a

rogue biker gang, is a surprisingly beguiling character. So what if he's a gorgeous superhero who has an eidetic memory and bleeds mice? Trust me, read a few chapters of *Alien Taste* and see if you don't get hooked.

Spencer's characters are all capably drawn, from the modest, naive Ukiah to his world-weary partner, Max, and even the wolf-evolved biker pack (don't ask). Big plot problems are huge and the bad guys are Really Really Bad (in *Bitter Waters* they're a religious cult out to save the Earth from demons, but likely to destroy the planet in the process). Nonetheless, Spencer keeps the story focused on an emotional scale readers can relate to, such as Ukiah's struggles to gain independence as a young adult or Max's grief for his dead wife.

Underpinning everything are meaty issues. What is individual identity and why does it matter? Where is the line between individual freedom and group responsibility?

All the elements are present for an epic story, and yet Spencer keeps missing the mark. The rocketing pace of *Bitter Waters* had me glued to the pages, but in this third Oregon instalment character development takes a disappointing back seat to action and Ukiah spends far too much time reacting to events or engaging in long chases. (Note: there's only so many times you can kill your hero before readers get jaded.) Finally, this novel fails to stand alone, reading instead like the first half of a double episode.

But hope dies hard, and I'll be waiting for the next book with socks at the ready.

* * * * *

THE EYRE AFFAIR, Jasper Fforde (Penguin, 2002, hc
374p)

Focused as I am on genre fiction, I would have entirely missed *The Eyre Affair* if it weren't for my book club at work. This novel by British author Jasper Fforde has been marketed as mainstream literature in Canada, even though it's a Fantasy/alternate history novel with a very Douglas Adams-ish style, and content that fondly reminded me of Poul Anderson's *A Midsummer Tempest*.

But heck, we know that Margaret Atwood does NOT write science fiction so why should time travel be labelled as SF?

Thursday Next lives in an alternate Great Britain of 1985, where Literature is the pop culture of the masses. Thousands of people change their names to "John Milton," vending machines recite "Othello", and proselytizers go door-to-door recruiting converts to the theory that Francis Bacon really wrote Shakespeare's plays.

Technology has gone in odd directions, too. The popularity of dirigibles has stifled airplane development, but cloning is advanced enough that dodos have been brought back as house pets and are becoming a nuisance. And then, of course, there's time travel – policed by the Chrono Guard whose job it is to make sure that eccentrics (like Thursday's father) don't go back and alter the past.

Thursday herself works for SO-27, the Literary Detective Division of Special Operations. It's an unglamorous job confiscating counterfeit Fieldings or busting a Samuel Johnson theft gang – until the original manuscript of *Martin Chuzzlewit* is stolen by an evil genius named Acheron Hades. When Hades manages to lay hands on a bookworm device that allows real people to enter novels and snatch characters out, the stakes become even higher.

You don't have to be an English major to enjoy this rollicking novel – in fact, you don't even need to have read *Jane Eyre* – but it helps. *The Eyre Affair* is chock-full of literary references and in-jokes, and makes an especially enjoyable read for that segment of the population that has studied "Richard III" and also taken in midnight showings of the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

There are darker elements in this novel – such as the rapacious megacorporation Goliath, or the one hundred and thirty-year long Crimean War which drags on like an endless Viet Nam – but mostly this is a big romp populated with characters like Paige Turner and Jack Schitt (a Goliath executive, of course).

Fforde's prose style is tight and sparse, as might be expected of someone who writes for the film industry, and his habit of referring to characters by name, without other cues or reminders, occasionally makes it hard to keep track of the large cast. Also, readers familiar with SF and Fantasy will not find the novel wildly innovative, although Fforde has certainly created his own distinctive universe.

The sequel, *Lost in a Good Book*, is out now, but read *The Eyre Affair* first.

* * * * *

WEST OF JANUARY, Dave Duncan (Red Deer Press, 2002, trade, 318p) (originally published 1989)

Raised in a nomadic herding family, young Knobil is an oddity – a fair, blue-eyed blond playing among browner, dark-haired and much larger companions. Ignorant and uneducated, Knobil doesn't think much about his uniqueness, until his dying mother reveals that he is the son of an angel who visited their camp long ago, and who has left a token that will admit Knobil to Heaven – if he can get there.

This is the beginning of Knobil's life story – not so much a heroic quest as a series of fateful accidents that thrust him from place to place and

tribe to tribe across the planet Vernier. This story has all the elements of historical fantasy, and yet the setting is a science fictional world, settled two thousand years ago by human colonists whose technology has been lost. Vernier's rotation is so slow that daytime inches around the planet, taking centuries to complete one revolution. And as the sun moves across the land, the entire ecosystem must travel with it.

Vernier is divided into twelve longitudes named January to December. Knobil was born in the west of January, and by the time he is a very old man the grasslands have entered June.

This is the entirely fascinating setting of *West of January*, an epic tale of misadventure and cynicism that reminded me very faintly of *Candide* or perhaps one of Lina Wertmuller's more mellow films. Dave Duncan's primitive societies are very credible, and he depicts them with all their dirt and lice. Though the herdspeople, sea people, miner "ants", traders, and forest dwellers all have varying degrees of colourful charm, Duncan is at least as interested in how rigidity, cruelty, and bigotry are fuelled by isolation and ignorance.

This will be a hard novel for many female readers to take. Almost all Vernier's societies are rabidly misogynistic, and Knobil also undergoes grim trials which seem endless by about midway through the book. Moreover, although we know from the start that Knobil will eventually reach Heaven (a university in the high dark latitudes which trains "angels"), there is no central plot problem other than survival. Knobil is propelled by events, and each time he moves on encounters a whole new cast of characters.

Although Knobil is a vivid and wonderfully flawed character, he is not always easy to like, and most readers will instinctively shrink from empathizing with him when he is brutally victimized. Moreover, it's hard to build dramatic tension in a situation where Knobil isn't driving the plot and the other characters are transitory. Duncan's morsels of humour (for example, Heaven is carried on the back of a gigantic turtle) are not enough to leaven the bleakest segments of the story.

Still, this is a thought-provoking novel. For instance, the weak and understaffed Heaven which struggles to preserve knowledge and peace among peoples can be viewed as a sort of United Nations, making Knobil's eventual social revolution into an interesting political statement.

West of January was originally published in 1989, and is a fine choice for the new Bakka series of speculative fiction reprints.

Comments? Questions? Rebuttals?
donna_mcmahon@sunshine.net

In Honourable Defence

A response to the "unpublished Gor titles" list

Verbatim from: "Purple Crow - Master Reptoid"
reptoid@hotmail.com (April 28, 2003)

Dear *BCSFazine* writers, contributors and readers,

I know many of you personally, and I meet many of you every Friday at FRED. Yet I am concerned with a reoccurring trend of behaviour that has gone on for, well, as long as I have been attending FRED this year (2003), and if memory serves me well, as far back as when I was the co-host of "the Ether Patrol" in the early to mid 90's. (Still I hear this subject goes back even farther I am told) If you, dear reader, are unfamiliar with me, please bear in mind that I am no stranger to Science Fiction nor it's creators, distributors or fans, although I usually keep to myself and my close friends for the most part, and this is why I might seem unfamiliar to you presently.

As you read my words I can only ask that you take a moment to see things from my honourable perspective before you judge myself or my people, we are a noticeable minority group and often are refused any possible forum for open discussion, publicly or sometimes even privately (small gatherings such as FRED) without unnecessary chortling from the audience, which disturbs those who have an eager heart to learn more about what might be a new concept to them. We are ridiculed shamelessly by those who know nothing of our lifestyle, yet we have been around as far back as time itself, longer than most SF fans have gathered to drink publicly and ponder such ideas to be mocked at FRED or in *BCSFazine*.

Dear reader, I wish to utilize some examples and comparisons here that may be uncomfortable for you - please step outside of yourself, step outside of your anger or frustration for a moment and understand that these are only examples of what it might feel like to be a part of my home community.

Let's say you happen to have chosen to become Christian and follow the Bible, for whatever reason. (Family indoctrination, personal choice later in life, whatever) Even when it is in jest, how does your heart feel when others make fun of your religion? What crosses your mind when you think about those who have not only mocked your religion repeatedly, but when you approach them privately to seek some sense of closure on this matter, the continue to misunderstand you and quote lines from your Bible in humorous jest and say to you, "lighten up, it's just a book". Do you, dear reader and SF fan, think it would be considered acceptable to have a list of alternate Bible names in *BCSFazine* as a joke? Such as "The book of Morons" or "The testament according to Garp", or perhaps "The 4 chapters of Mathew, Mark, Duped and Conned"? Perhaps this is considered "fair game" by most of you reading this right now, but there are those amongst you (again a

minority in all likelihood) who have just had their blood pressure raised by 3 degrees. No doubt that at least one reader has already probably discontinued their reading of this particular article and has flipped the page in total disgust. This is a perfect example of what it's often like for my people to read *BCSFazine*, attend your average SF convention or gather at engagements such as FRED. I'm sure that most of you laughed or at least smirked when you read this first example, however, I shall continue to explain my perspective for you to better understand me.

Let's now suggest that some of you are considered "nerds" by popular cultural standards, something that you cannot possibly avoid as a label perhaps. (Prepare yourselves, this might hurt a little) Remember how you felt the first time you watched William Shatner on *Saturday Night Live* "diss" ALL Star Trek fans on national television only to be reminded that he has a contractual obligation to continue pleasing and patronizing his own fans against his own will? Remember how that felt, even though it was only "in jest". Also note that Shatner's idea for this very sketch is based upon real instances at actual conventions where he has publicly stated (past tense) that "these *Star Trek* nerds ought to grow up, move out of their parents basements and get a real life!" (etc). Yes, we all have our moments, but this was a little much to bear for some people, sending them into depression and even rage at times. (Perhaps striking such open nerves is not wise and someone should have warned Shatner ahead of time) Humour is an acquired taste when the joke is about your own world, even from friends, even in jest. Sure, many of you despise Shatner anyway, so I'll dig a little deeper now.

Imagine if instead of the letter that I am writing to you here, I wrote a story about how much I happened to agree with Shiner's sentiments in that moment and how funny I think SF fans are, allowing myself to laugh constantly when SF fans and convention directors (etc) around me provide me with perfect examples of what William Shatner was making a mockery of in the first place. Then let's just suppose I created a list of great stereotypical nerd profiles and habits and had them published in *BCSFazine*, purely for my own amusement and the amusement of my close friends, backing this action with words such as, "Hey, it's just in fun - Don't tell me you actually take SF seriously?!"

An example: I can imagine Steve Erwin, "the Crocodile hunter", following a regular *BCSFazine* member or perhaps a FRED attendee from home as s/he makes his/her way to FRED: "Here we are, just outside the classic Science Fiction fan's home, sometimes referred to as a "nerd". Now... these nerds often have absolutely no social life, sex partners of any kind or healthy bodily hygiene. That's why they are considered outcasts by their own people in

society and thus they eventually gather to support each others neurosis, so remember to be careful when dealing with nerds because tempers have been known to... Oh wait! There s/he is now! Look! Look at how s/he makes his way to the bus stop, this is classic nerd posturing, what a beauty! Note the items they carry with them and they way they hold them - this is magnificent. Hold on... Oh crap, s/he's spotted the camera and is getting rather aggressive towards me. Oh. s/he's a feisty one, this nerd. Nerds are rarely known to actually bite, but since 9-11 we have to be extra... Wait... Listen closely... The nerd is attempting to insult me by comparing me to some kind of character in a *Star Trek* episode - INCREDIBLE! Let's see if I can make contact and attempt to communicate with it, follow me. (Steve slowly walks towards the nerd, hands outstretched and down) It's OK... You're alright, nerd, yeah, you're alright. Get back on your bus and go to FRED now, that's right. (Steve watches the doors of the bus close as the nerd presses their face against the window and gives Steve the finger) Even though I know that nerds attend a pub nights at FRED, I'll never understand why they rarely if EVER enjoy a good ol' frosty one... otherwise I might be tempted to join them... but then again, NAH! I'll never understand your logic, nerd." Are you laughing at this point or is your stomach turning over with frustration? I suppose it's partly funny, but it is mostly just plain pathetic. It's an old joke that just refuses to shut the hell up and die, and perhaps this type of humour never will. As I look over the last issue of *BCSFazine*, I see that I am correct in this assessment.

By now you should have a clear idea what it feels like to be completely misunderstood and ridiculed unnecessarily by one of your own attendees of said SF gatherings. It's not a good feeling, is it? Do you feel a sense of unity or companionship right now? Nope. I don't mean to do anything other than remind you of this feeling just long enough for you to understand and empathize with my own perspective on these matters. I am not attacking any of you personally, rather I am reaching out to your heart and asking that you comprehend what this article's deeper subject matter consists of. I realize that some writers and contributors to *BCSFazine* are often unaware of how their "jokes" (even the very funny ones) often affect other readers - I am taking this into account here.

Humans are a hypocritical species - and I don't mean by these simple examples alone, for there are millions to chose from within SF subcultures, but by the entirety of society as its own example. Humanity's disregard for cultural diversity and blatant attacks on it's own citizens... People attack people, and it's shameful and without true honour.

So often I have held my tongue when I have witnessed such posturing on the street or at a Science Fiction related events. I prefer to live and let live, even when I don't understand why someone does what they do - who am I to judge them?

Some time back while I was with my close friends at a FRED meeting, I was approached by a

younger female who attempted to make me an offer. She claimed she was from some sort of collective who was in charge of WorldCon for Vancouver, Canada. She was gathering as many people as possible to help out with WorldCon by gathering volunteers for their committee. She spoke to me and absolutely insisted that I join with her on this venture. I read her documents over the period of about 15 minutes or more, then I turned to her and said, "Sounds great, I'll consider it." She then begged and pleaded with me to assist her as she felt they needed as many volunteers as possible to pull this event off the ground. I am a very busy person and have little time to volunteer for anything lately, so I decided to make her a deal. I spoke, "OK then, how about this?... If you PROMISE me that you'll have John Norman as a guest speaker at WorldCon, I'm in for sure, absolute promise, I'll make time for your convention." She immediately rolled her eyes at me, took the papers from my hands and turned to her other comrade who was beside her for support on her attitude towards Goreans. My blood boiled, but again I held my tongue. How could she possibly manage such an affair with this attitude, I wondered... She turned to me eventually and said that she didn't think that I was a real Gorean anyway, whatever that meant. Again my blood boiled - I was getting tired of this routine and desired no debate with one such as her as it served absolutely no purpose. I ignored her, got up, and went to sit next to my friends who only partly witnessed her dishonoring behaviour. Why would I wish to support WorldCon if this is how I'd be treated if I spent my hard earned cash at such a convention? How could I enjoy myself with my friends in tow if this was the general attitude of most SF fans regarding John Norman's books? Science fiction is science fiction, and I WANT to meet John Norman myself, whether anyone else wants to or not. (And I KNOW by the fact that His selling over 26 books means that I'm not alone on this front either) It was all I could do to withhold my natural desire to take the girl outside and have a word with her about true honour in private. I am beginning to see the bigger picture over time as to what is going on here within Science Fiction circles, and I don't like it one bit. Prejudice and ignorance sucks no matter how you slice it.

Just last night at the last FRED gathering, one person (who occasionally attends FRED) was spouting off his/her discontent with the books of Gor and Gorean fans only to be followed in tow by the majority of the table all nodding in complete agreement and chortling endlessly adding their tag line snide comments to add to the collective pile of bad vibes. I'm sorry I thought FRED was a SF club, correct? Yea or nay? Is not *Gor* considered Science Fiction? Yea or nay? Whether the majority of SF fans consider the books on Gor well written or "worthy of the word *PULL*" is not the discussion here. It's about the people who are amongst you who have heard this tired old argument for decades now - what about them and their perspective? Is it not a free country to have your own ways of living, to live in peace, unflustered by one's own people?

Especially a group of "social beings" who all enjoy a good SF book or movie on occasion?

Later on after the smoke had once again cleared and after reading more, and I'll admit, rarely albeit occasionally funny comments about possible Gor book titles, I decided to ask the person across from me what s/he knew about the relationship of *Star Trek* fans to certain BDSM scenes within the same TV series. He/She was completely baffled by the words "BDSM" indicating to me that this person had no idea what s/he had been slandering earlier to begin with. This made me realize what I would have to do just to explain what BDSM is, let alone their global culture both on-line and in real life - which would still not be an accurate description of what Gor actually consists of. How could I possibly begin to explain then how these connections are often overlooked by SF fans although more often than not fantasized by these same fans in something called "slash lit". If you like to read about your favourite characters in sexual roles then you are one step away from Gor books to begin with. Just add the BDSM scene and you are almost right on top of Gor. What a contradictory dilemma we have created here with our own hypocrisy. How could I even begin to explain my valid rational views when there is clearly not even a common language or compassionate understanding to begin with? Those who do not even know, let alone those who have NEVER even experienced any type of BDSM position in life are not those who should be going around making a mockery of Gorean people in a free world. If one was never in a church, one who never felt the presence of God in their lives, or ever experienced any sort of "miracle"... you are NOT the one to decide what or who "God" truly is. Not even close, my friends. Talking and debating what something or someone is WITHOUT being one yourself is a waste of time in my honest opinion. If you wish to travel to Rome, DO as the Romans do or go back home where it's safe - but I you never even leave home to a new land, you cannot possibly say anything negative about said land without making a total mockery of your OWN HOME and people. perhaps this is an alien perspective to some readers of *BCSFazine*, although I hope you are now beginning to understand my words.

Meanwhile, back at FRED: I decided to explain that I was about to leave and didn't have the time for any lengthy heated debates over such matters that night and soon finished my beer and departed with my gang of comrades. By the way, if you look at the cover of the previous issue of *BCSFazine* you will see some of my close friends on the cover. I have many friends all over this city and in all types of cultures - I am not the judgmental type so my contacts are vast and of diverse opinion and experience.

To be factually detailed about the similarities and differences within BDSM and Gor would be quite an undertaking and far to lengthy for the point that I am making here, so I shall simply refer you to my website - <http://Geocities.com/CityOfAkakor> - where you can read as much as you wish about our "on line city".

Yes, I am a Gorean and quite proud of myself. I honour myself as I know fully who I am and can speak clearly and clearly about my paradigm in peace without the urge to ridicule others personal free will. I honour my fellow Goreans in defence of our chosen lives just as much as a Christian honours their own people, as much as a Muslim defends their own people, and hopefully as much as SF fans defend their personal rights to free assembly and free speech at conventions such as VCON or WORLDCON. Perhaps Goreans are the real Klingons of the SF subculture, and we'll never be fully understood by the "federation" - oh well, so be it.

Why do we gather at any sort of SF event? Because we are honoured by those around us who share a common interest and bond. Our friends who join us at our selective gatherings remind us that it's OK to be who we are and to be proud of who we all are as long as we continue to respect other cultures and individuals, whether we understand them or not. If you cannot understand what I am speaking of here and now, then perhaps you don't have the right kind of friends or "community" to begin with and should look for a deeper more meaningful relationship with your fellow Humans.

In Gor I have found such relationships. A camaraderie for our decisions and acceptance of the true nature of Humans. I respect who I am and who I have always been since birth. Gor might be more easily understood by some readers of *BCSFazine* as the difference between a Klingon warrior's personal life path and sense of "family" with His community and that of Quark attending his dishonourable two faced "establishment" on DS-9. Vastly different cultures as depicted on the same TV series - and we all know how often they have had serious problems due to the "weakest link" syndrome. (I mean to express that weakness is not a virtue that gets the USS *Enterprise* from one side of the quadrant/galaxy to the other, rather it is this very same weakness that allows for such a great SF series to wrap itself around a possible plot riddled with trauma and personal strife as their world constantly falls completely apart and has to be rebuilt once again before the end of each episode, which is why we watch it to begin with. If those who lived and worked aboard the USS *Enterprise* were always working together to their best personal ability with great honour there would be no plot and thus no "entertainment value" as it seems "impossible" to most Human minds to fathom such a culture, let alone make the effort to build one in peace. This is what separates SF from real life at times - the number of daily traumatic events. Life can be dull, so we seek SF to entertain our active imaginations. I assure you, my personal life is FAR from dull as a Gorean male who owns two kajiras [slave girls].)

Gor has been attacked by SF fans ever since it first came upon the SF scene with the books of John Norman. These attacks were not initially because of Norman's writing style itself, but because of the SUBJECT matter: the total and complete slavery of female Goreans by male Goreans. That very subject came upon the SF scene right in the middle of the

60's, a time when in Earth history (not Gorean history) female Humans were rebelling against males *en masse*. It was a time of great upheaval. Tensions were high from wars in other countries and the threat of Nuclear war at any moment right in people's back yards was too much for many to take. It was not the ideal time to publish any books about what Norman feels is Humanity's true nature. This is something that Norman feels He couldn't and shouldn't avoid any longer before the world destroys itself, so He set out to write the first book, "The Tarnsman of Gor" as a work of fiction with a deep underlying message. Perhaps it was His hope that His words would stir that part of the ancient Human psyche and stimulate it into reawakening. Gor is not for everyone, it is for the few who are awoken by it. Star Trek is not for everyone either, although it tries to please so many people with it's generic flavour and publicly accepted norms that it assures it's popularity by the masses of SF fans anyway.

Whether John Norman felt compelled by His vision and purpose to seek out the role of Science Fiction writer in order to get His message out is not the main body of this message to you, dear reader of SF zines. That is for another debate on another day. Perhaps asking Mr.. Norman yourself might acquire you some deeper sense of truth. Either way, the message HAS been received and globally accepted as a way of life by many - although as I have pointed out here, Gor is just a SF series, the lives of true Goreans have been in existence since the dawn of Human kind. We can see examples of this right here in Vancouver with the majority (60%) of our own population, the Asian communities. Ask any Asian you know to explain how their grandfather ran His home long ago, how he handled His wife and family affairs and how his people have managed their homes for a millennia; or perhaps you know a Native elder with whom you might speak with about these same ancient ways of living upon the Earth in harmony. Then perhaps and only then will some of you begin to understand how far back Gor truly goes in real life. (Not the SF books) Or if you prefer the scientific method perhaps you can study the true nature and differences of Human brains and their subtle complexities. You might then learn that it's far easier to get a female to submit under certain stimulatory conditions (and that she will experience a deep sense of joy in this sense of forced submission at times) than it is for a male brain to submit under these same conditions (who would rather die fighting than submit to anyone typically). Genetics and Human brain development cannot be denied any more than your sexual organs themselves, they are what they are, like it or not - unless you involve a scalpel and hopefully a very wise and patient doctor, then you are in yet again a whole other level of existence. Either way, life is not what we WANT it to be, it is what it already is - we can either deny truth or rebel against it. Each has it's own conclusion, although one is far more self destructive than the other for the most part.

Let me remind you the words of Einstein, the great philosopher and genius of both social and

technological ideals made manifest within this very generation... "Great spirits have always found violent opposition from mediocre minds. The latter cannot understand it when a man does not thoughtlessly submit to hereditary prejudices but honestly and courageously uses his intelligence." - also - "Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts." If you understand and agree with Einstein's sentiments written in history, then you will know that I am an honourable person with very honourable intent who respects the lives of those around me who are non-Gorean as much as those who are Gorean. I'm no different than Einstein as for his thoughts on this matter of Human culture and it's lack of wisdom and tolerance. Yet, whether I accept your "sense of humour" about Gor or not, I actually LIKE many of you who are reading this article right now. Why do I say this? Because my INTUITION tells me that many SF fans are actually quite nice people, and after meeting many over many years of SF active participation, I have learned this to be true - truth cannot be denied. I have always hoped, perhaps foolishly, that these same SF people could honour myself and my people with this same truth - to realize that many Goreans (not all) are actually quite wonderful people as well, that it's worth making an effort to listen to our words without fear of ridicule from either culture - to understand us both completely, without prejudice.

We are all the same, yet different. Each of us has a role to play, and we ALL have a right to each chose our lives in peace and non-interference. If we chose to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, or the open practice of ancient Pagan rites, it is OUR decision alone to make, and no amount of peer pressure or ridicule should interfere in our private choices to be who we are naturally. The same goes for Goreans and SF fans. I'll remind you once again how often I have held my tongue at the "FRED" gatherings while I have had to listen to hours upon hours of the majority of these attendees slam my personal choices, often right in front of my friends and my personal property, my dear kajira - I believe many do this without even knowing they are taking shots at myself, my girl and my people. Let me remind you that my friends fully support and cherish my personal choices in life and I honour them with my life (protection) and support their choices to be whoever they are in kind. Even as a Gorean I am not like other Goreans, and some of them have had to accept my unique views within Gor. We are all individuals, even Goreans accept this with honour - if they don't then they are not with honour and are therefore not a true Gorean, but a game player. When one acts in accordance with true honour, your actions will prove yourself to others. However, always remember my words: Goreans will not stand for abuse, trust me one. Dealing with a Gorean of honour does not mean you have license to belittle him without there being some form of consequences for your actions.

Hopefully you have read and understood my views clearly enough for this article to make sense so that I don't have to hear any more slamming of

Gorean lives, period. I say this as one who stands right next to you at SF meetings, and as one you barely even know. And please, have some respect for your fellow SF writers wish to experience their own world, even if it's a Gorean one.

I shall leave you with another thought from the mind of the great philosopher, Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world." With His sentiment I personally challenge YOU, dear patient reader, to imagine SF fans and Goreans actually getting along for the first time in Human history - just IMAGINE what we could achieve as a collective of great minds if we did! If you wish to accept this personal challenge, I know a Gorean who's brave enough to listen to your questions and to reply as best He can, expressing His personal life choices openly without fear or prejudice. He is also strong enough to live and let live and simply walk away from SF fans never to return knowing He is, above all, being TRUE to Himself.

Purple "Reptoid" Crow is a freelance investigative journalist who delves boldly into the hidden truths where few will dare to travel alone. He is a radio show producer, a professionally trained audio engineer and album producer who worked alongside Sarah McLachlan and Skinny Puppy at Nettwerk records in 1992-1993. Purple is an "audio artist" (of

the very peculiar variety) and an experimenter of the paranormal on a regular basis. He lives in Vancouver "No fun city", Canada with His kajira, Lydia, where they share a Gorean-Pagan lifestyle that is almost completely unique to their own ideals. Purple is a vegetarian who loves life in all its forms and respects the true natures of each animal's needs. He is also a bold Nudist (although He dislikes being stared at for the wrong reasons) as He knows that being Nude means you can't conceal a gun nor lie to others about your feelings as easily, therefore Nudism invokes true peace. Purple enjoys a very rewarding and open-minded sex life as He is non-judgmental of others personal choices and easily shares mutual realities with others. Purple is currently practicing His script writing (in)abilities with a new local comedy team. Previously Purple worked with a collective of writers who created a script for "V - the return" which is still under consideration for publication. Purple will speak about His life and experiences, but only when he feels he will be understood by His audience, otherwise He is quite content working elsewhere where the vibrational energy is alive, awake and zen. Purple is known to spend a great deal of time tinkering with His computer and audio programs lately as well as He is working on many new and old projects at once. Purple would like to thank His close friends whom He considers His "Earth family" for all their encouragement and support throughout the years.

Ex Templum Librorum ***Semper Aliquid Novae:***

Archivist's Report

Part Three: On Vancouver Clubs Of The 1950s



THE VANCOUVER SF SOCIETY

by R. Graeme Cameron

For many years I have from time to time heard rumours about the existence of a Science Fiction club in Vancouver during the 1950s. Here follows the results of my research.

**

The 9th Worldcon, called Nolacon, was held in New Orleans in 1951. An 18-year old Vancouver teenager by the name of Norman G. Browne decided to attend Nolacon and hitchhiked his way to the convention, a feat which impressed everyone greatly. As Harry B. Moore, Chairman of Nolacon put it: "It is an exceedingly rare thing to find a fan with guts, self-respect, tenacity, responsibility, dependability, or honour. Your feat of hitch-hiking... stands out astonishingly amidst such a morass of pseudo-persons..." (It's a wonder the rest of the congoers didn't take this as an insult!)

Feted and celebrated beyond all reasonable expectations, Browne later wrote: "For 5 years I had read STF, but had no knowledge that fandom existed, and had never met anyone who even read STF" (Scientifiction). "On Aug 31st at 3:00 PM, 1951, I walked into the lobby of the St. Charles hotel in New Orleans and met my first fan. I consider that date & time as my entrance into fandom."

All the same, he experienced some difficulty: "At the Nolacon, I was an outsider, an onlooker; I knew nobody and nothing. I felt strangely set apart from these people who were fans. They talked and acted beyond the powers of my comprehension and understanding. They talked about people, places, and events of which I had no knowledge. To me they seemed to be talking on a higher plane; a plane far,

far beyond my reach. Knowing so much about what they discussed, they seemed to be combining telepathy and speech in their conversation. It was interesting – in a tantalizing sort of way."

"I left the Nolacon with an overwhelming desire to become a fan; to become one of them, to talk with them in their own language, to understand what they understood, to enjoy what they enjoyed."

"My first act when I got home from the Nolacon was to organise a S-F club. This took considerable time due to the fact that I had no knowledge or experience in fandom or sf and knew nothing about organizing clubs. But by dint of sheer work and luck, the club was organized and had its first meeting in December of that same year (1951). At a later meeting I was installed as President of the club."

"As President of the Vancouver SF Society I pushed sf and my club as hard and strong as I could in my immediate area. Thus, from an utter unknown, I had made myself known and had created a sphere of influence to cover the Vancouver area. Gradually, I extended this sphere of influence to cover the whole of British Columbia."

"As President of this club, I became contact man with outside fandom. Through a prozine letter-column, I learned of the existence of the Canadian S-F Association and contacted them. Also, through the same medium, I learned of the existence of the Seattle SF Society 100 miles to the South of us and got in touch with them..."

Browne certainly possessed sufficient ego and motivation to get things going. In February 1953 he wrote: "My original ambition was to become a fan – a relatively simple goal. But, although that ambition has been realized, my final ambition has not. For as I progressed into fandom, as I studied & learned, as I matured, my final goal raised accordingly. In my first year I progressed from a non-fan to a fringe-fan, to a neophan, & finally to a master-fan. Who knows how far I will go in my second year? Would anyone deny me the ambition of becoming a BNF or a super-fan?"

After Browne founded the Vancouver SF Society, 'The Hibited Men' became the informal name of the club. 'Hibited' is the opposite of 'inhibited', so I guess this was a declaration that the Vancouver SF Society was not composed of introverts such as are often found in SF clubs.

On the other hand, the term may well derive from a short story by L. Sprague de Camp, titled 'The Hibited Man', which appeared in *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in Oct 1949. I've not read the story, but an illustration from it appears on pages 214/215 of *The Visual Encyclopedia Of Science Fiction* (Harmony Books 1977). It depicts 14 bare-breasted women, possibly showgirls in their dressing room, recoiling in horror from a man wielding a paint brush. This smacks of excessive prudery rather than lack of inhibition, so I'm at a loss to see how it relates to the Vancouver SF Society.

Browne also functioned as the club's newsletter editor. And, given the informal name of the club, it's

not surprising that the title of the newsletter was *Hibited Happenings*.

The first issue of *Hibited Happenings* was published in March of 1952. It consisted of a single sheet offset printed. Its two pages probably dealt with club natter such as minutes, election results, upcoming meetings, and possibly contained references to other clubs & the proposed affiliation with the Canadian SF Association.

The second and third issues came out in April and May of 1952. Both were also edited by Browne, and both had expanded to four mimeographed pages. This may possibly indicate the presence of locs by such as Chester Cuthbert, who was active in the CSFA at the time.

The fourth issue probably came out in June of 1952. This time it was edited by Frank Stephens, taking over after Browne moved to Edmonton. It also consisted of 4 pages, probably mimeographed. The club continued into 1953 at least (I know this because they were still affiliated with the Canadian SF Association that year), so there may have been further issues.

That the clubzine was so small indicates it was intended strictly as a club newsletter, all evidence of greater fannish ambition consisting entirely of member's contributions to Browne's perzine *Vanations*. He seems to have been the only one in the club interested in fanpubbing as such. Highly unlikely any copies of *'Hibited Happenings'* survive now, but there was sufficient widespread awareness of its existence in the 1950s to guarantee its inclusion in the 'H' section of the Pavlat/Evans Fanzine Index published in February 1958. Browne was proud of the contacts he had established with other clubs, and it is undoubtedly the act of trading *Hibited Happenings* for other clubzines that brought it to the attention of Pavlat & Evans.

The primary activity of the club, apart from its newsletter, seems to have consisted of monthly meetings in members' homes. At one club meeting, Browne revealed, he and Curt Lang "got into quite an argument over the relative merits of certain comic books. Curt has taken fencing lessons and I own two swords..." Lang's description is a bit more vivid:

"The smoke was thick and blue, curling and riding to obscure the ceiling. Men ringed the hall, silent, withdrawn, eyes flickering from one to the other of the intense looking youths facing each other across the dim room. The younger of the two drew a long breath, everyone tensed, he spoke, 'It's crud, pure undiluted crud.'"

"The other sneered, and began to speak, his voice dripping with contempt, 'That sir is the opinion of an untutored clod.'"

".....Screaming horrible imprecations the younger and more hot-tempered leapt from his chair, and with one slash laid open the cheek of his opponent. The other swiftly drew his rapier, but too late, one vicious, ripping thrust and he was crumpling to the floor, a gout of gore welling from his mouth..."

"Now the room is empty, and on the floor lies a stiffened corpse, clutched in its pale hand is a blood stained copy of *Pogo* comics."

In explaining how the first nine months of his fan activity after Nolacon brought him to the point of feeling qualified enough to start work on his perzine *Vanations* "the fanzine for tendrillless fans", Browne wrote: "I had spent nine months studying and learning about fandom. I had learned about fan publishing and editing by studying fanzines and by editing a club newsletter...."

What is clear about the Vancouver SF Society's involvement with *Vanations* is that the members of the club early on devoted their resources to helping Browne produce his first issue. They contributed art, articles, and a cover which was printed in Vancouver. The issue was actually mailed from Edmonton, where Browne had moved, in June of 1952. In #2 he commented: "The planning for the first issue of *Vanations* covered a period of four months. The actual construction and work was done over a period of another three months." This would appear to indicate he started planning the zine the very month he formed the club, and that fellow members contributed by April, if not earlier.

Browne produced 6 issues of his well-regarded fanzine from June 1952 to Jul 1953. Highlights included articles by Robert Bloch, Harlan Ellison, & Marion Zimmer Bradley. The archive's complete run of *Vanations* (donated by Chester Cuthbert) is my primary source of information for this article.

The club seems to have faded during or shortly after 1953. Apparently the loss of its enthusiastic founder proved fatal.

So, who actually belonged to the Vancouver SF Society? Norman G. Browne, Alfred W. Purdy (later a famous poet), Victor Samoila, Frank Stephens, Jim (James) Wills & Curt Lang are known members.

Close reading of issues of *Vanations* suggests other prospects, some probable, others merely possible. Of the probable members I include two Vancouver fans in touch with Browne: Vic Miller & Bill Galliene, three Vancouver fans known across Canada: Alan Child, Gordon Peck & Shirley K. Peck, & two fans located outside Vancouver but who contributed to *Vanations* & may well have belonged to the club: Terence Barker (of Westview, B.C.), & L. Lockhart Layton (of Prince Rupert, B.C.).

Of the possible club members, I quote from the *Canadian Fan Directory* (donated to the B.C.S.F.A. archive by Chester D. Cuthbert) published by the Canadian Science Fiction Association in Fall of 1952. This includes the names & addresses of Vancouver fans who were members of the Vancouver SF Society which was affiliated with the CSFA, single members of CSFA not involved with the VSFS, and well-known fans not members of either organization.

Unfortunately the directory does not indicate the individual status of those named. Consequently the following list merely consists of Vancouver fans contemporary with the VSFS, but since the basic source material used to compile the *Canadian Fan Directory* was undoubtedly the membership of the affiliated organizations, it is highly likely that most of the following persons named belonged to the Vancouver Science Fiction Society:

Allen Baratelli, M.S. Barnett, P.L. Booke, Robert H. Bowman, Edward Bowser, Mary Brock, E.J. Broome, H.O. Clarke, Yvonne Cooper, B. Creer, Roy Davidson, Peter Duncan, Donald Foster, Rose Frew, Gordon Fatcher, Gordon Gibson Jr., Terry Graham, Peter Grant, Gordon Hackett, Rose Hafley, Arthur Harris, Terence W. Hibbert, James Hill, James C. Hinds, Brian Hurst, George M. Kerr, C.R. Mackenzie, Don Maclaren, Claude Mayes, S. McIntyre, Tom McKitch, G. McPherson, Barry Nelson, J.W. O'Connell, Otto Pfeifer, Jim Polson, S.R. Price, Ralph Redden, Gordon W. Rix, Eric Rogerson, Tom Rosenburg, Helen Smith, Charles Stephens, George Stephens, Peter Whalley, R. White, & Bob Wilson.

(Note; the names I listed as 'known' & 'probable' members of the VSFS are also listed in the *Canadian Fan Directory*, with the exceptions of Victor Samoila & Shirley K. Peck.)

In sum, I have listed sixty fans who, if not all members of the VSFS, were known active fans, most of them from Vancouver. I haven't even mentioned the fans living in Victoria, Squamish, Penticton, Kelowna & elsewhere in B. C., some of whom may also have been members, given Browne's statement he "extended this sphere of influence to cover the whole of British Columbia."

Sixty fans! It appears Science Fiction fandom was alive and thriving in B.C. in 1952!

Creative Sociology (Part 2)

By Garth Spencer

Let's take a momentary break from Asimov's and Heinlein's versions of psychohistory, and weigh a couple of concepts.

In one of his nonfiction articles – which I utterly fail to locate, these days – Asimov pointed out one of the reasons why people keep intuiting a pattern to history, one that *just* escapes our grasp. There are times when history very nearly repeats itself, as when a nation's political revolution mimics a previous revolution, right down to most (but not all) critical details; Asimov illustrated this with a sort of plot summary, with blanks for specific names, dates and places, which generally described the English Puritan revolution, the French Revolution, and the Russian Revolution. This was not the first such observation; many historians, from the Classical era onward, observed a repeated cycle in the history of Mediterranean city-states, in which a king was overthrown by an aristocratic oligarchy, who were then overthrown by a republic, who were then succeeded by ... well, a Caesar. And more than one observer has traced the similar sequence of events that produced the Ku Klux Klan in the American South, the Afrikaner Broederbond in South Africa, and the 1930s fascist movements across Europe, including the famous Nazi party. Given the preoccupations of the generation who survived the 1930s and the 1940s, it is hardly surprising if science fiction writers in this generation began to construct "future histories", inspired to some extent by historical patterns. Asimov and Heinlein were hardly the only such authors; James Blish, H. Beam Piper and Poul Anderson also were well-known for the future histories that gave their stories a coherent background.

Another concept, however, took time to be appreciated. It could be argued that it has taken the whole 20th century for us to begin to appreciate what complex, dynamic systems are: systems – such as societies – in which every event has *complex* causes, and *complex* effects, and no-one can do just *one* thing. Reading H. Beam Piper's fiction is oddly comforting because, in some ways, it is a simplistic engineer's dream: rebuilding a community, for example, appears to be just a matter of stimulating domestic investment and rebuilding a self-reliant capital plant, in *The Cosmic Computer* and *Space Viking*. Unforeseen consequences, such as pollution or radioactive fallout or aboriginal rights activists or holy warriors, just don't exist.

The Psychotechnic League (Poul Anderson)

Poul Anderson's collection, *The Psychotechnic League*, similarly assumed that a symbolic sociology is developed in an alternate 20th century. "Marius," the opening story, does not explain what developments led a Professor Valti to produce this system - especially in the middle of the world events leading to a late-1950s nuclear exchange. By the time of "Marius," Valti's "matrices" have somehow been used to help plan the successful French Resistance strategy against invading Soviet armies. After the Free French have won, though, they have to start laying policies with other surviving governments, and plan the peace; and the hero of the Resistance, the leader Jacques Reinach, has not been making the right policies. His friend Etienne Fourré goes to remonstrate with Reinach to start listening to his opponents and to Valti.

"I'm sorry, Etienne." Reinach shook his head. "I simply cannot believe that. Turning human society into a ... what's the word? ... a potential field, and operating on it with symbolic logic: it's too remote. I am here, in the flesh — such of it as is left, on our diet—not in a set of scribbles made by some band of long-haired theorists." (10)

"... The devil with your generals! The common people know me, they know I stand for them first — and hell take your misty futures! We'll meet the future when it gets here."

"That is what man has always done," said Fourré. He spoke like a beggar. "And that is why the race has always blundered from one catastrophe to the next. This may be our last chance to change the pattern."

Reinach began pacing back and forth behind his desk. "Do you think I like this miserable job?" he retorted. "It simply happens that no one else can do it."

"So now you are the indispensable man," whispered Fourré. "I had hoped you would escape that." (11)

While they are talking, Reinach has been isolated from his supporters, and his opponents have staged a coup. Reinach himself was a problem, and has to be removed. But instead of being peaceably retired, Reinach is inadvertently shot before Etienne's eyes.

...Valti's matrices were not concerned with a man's heart. They simply told you that given such and such conditions, this and that would probably happen. It was a cold knowledge to bear. (12)

In related stories in the same future history, the nations that survived the Third World War have started to construct a world government. (13) The theory is that only this will prevent another nuclear war, maybe fifty years down the pike. Naturally this is resisted by nationalists, fascists, and special interests with a stake in national sovereignty. By a generation or two after the Third World War, the United Nations has a thinly-spread intelligence unit operating in a rapidly-changing society. More than that, one Institute of advanced science is using breakthroughs in symbolic sociology — and is wondering what to do with them ...

.. [This] science goes back a long way, actually. Francis Bacon speculated about a genuine science of man. Boole did some work along those lines as well as inventing the symbolic logic which was to be such a major tool in solving the problem. In the last century, a number of lines of attack were developed. There was already the psychology of Freud and his successors, of course, which gave the first real notion of human semantics. There were physiological, chemical, and physical approaches to man as a mechanism. Comparative historians like Spengler, Pareto, and Toynbee realized that history did not merely happen but had some kind of pattern. Cybernetics developed such concepts as homeostasis and feedback, concepts which were applicable to individual man and to society as a whole. Games theory, the principle of least effort, and Haeml's generalized epistemology pointed toward *laws and the analytical approach. The new symbolologies in logic and mathematics suggested formulations—for the problem was no longer one of gathering data so much as of finding a rigorous symbolism to handle them and indicate new data. A great deal of the Institute's work has lain simply in collecting and synthesizing all these earlier >g>.^o
(14)

This is Dr. Tighe, a member of the Institute taken prisoner by a fascist group, stalling them instead of putting a weapon in their hands.

Meanwhile, an assistant of his is trying to rescue him—and talk around an FBI mole in the group, who is far from convinced the Institute is on the side of the angels.

"I take it you favor libertarian government," he said. "In the past, it's always broken down sooner or later. And the main reason has been that there aren't enough people with the intelligence, alertness, and toughness to resist the inevitable encroachments of power on liberty. The Institute is trying to do two things—create such a citizenry and simultaneously to build up a society which itself produces men of that kind and •ces those traits in them. It can be done, given time. Under ideal conditions, we estimate it would take about three hundred years for the whole world. Actually, it'll take longer." ...

"It's a worse tyranny than whips and barbed wire," she snapped.

"You've never experienced those, then."

"You have got that knowledge," she accused. "You have the data and the equations to be - sociological engineers."

In theory," he said. "In practice, it isn't that easy. The social forces are so great that - well, we could be overwhelmed before accomplishing anything. And there are plenty of things we still don't know. It will take decades ... (15)

"Look, Elena." Dalgetty leaned on one elbow and faced her. "... All right, we've got some special knowledge. When we first realized we were getting somewhere in our research, we had to decide whether to make our results public or merely give out selected, less important findings. Don't you see, no matter what we did, it would have been us, the few men, who decided? Even destroying all our information would have been a decision."

His voice grew more urgent. "So we made what I think was the right choice. History shows as conclusively as our own equations that freedom is not a 'natural' condition of man. It's a metastable state at best, all too likely to collapse into tyranny. The tyranny can be imposed from outside by the better-organized armies of a conqueror, or it can come from within—through the will of the people themselves, surrendering their rights to the father-image, the almighty leader, the absolute state.

"What use does Bertrand Meade want to make of our findings if he can get them? To bring about the end of freedom by working on the people till they themselves desire it. And the damnable part of it is that Meade's goal is much more easily attainable than ours.

"So suppose we made our knowledge public. Suppose we educated anyone who desired it in our techniques. Can't you see what would happen? Can't you see the struggle that would be waged for control of the human mind? It could start as innocuously as a businessman planning a more effective advertising campaign. It would end in a welter of propaganda, counterpropaganda, social and economic manipulations, corruption, competition for the key offices ..." (16)

The good doctor is rescued, of course, but his rescuer from the Institute has exhibited phenomenal strength, speed, endurance and perception in rescuing him. He confides that he himself is an Institute experiment, in

exaggerating normal human capacities; and again, the Institute is not convinced the findings should be published.

"It's a discovery of the Institute for which we don't feel the world is ready. It'd be too big a temptation for too many people, to create followers like me." He looked away, into the windy dark. "The scientist is also a member of the society and has a responsibility toward it. This – restraint - of ours is one way in which we meet that obligation." (17)

The Moon Goddess and the Son (Kingsbury)

Donald Kingsbury's *The Moon Goddess and the Son* (1986) tackles the question of how one society can understand another, on the *other's* terms, evaluate its problems on those terms, and satisfy their mutual security needs, without requiring mutual trust or rationality. The setting is our own world and our own century, starring perhaps a few years ago. One of the three braided stories in *The Moon Goddess and the Son* is Shantech Conglomerate's attempt to break the Russian-American deadlock, not by new weapons technology but by exposing critical people from cultural system to key concepts from the other, until they find more successful ways to deal with each other.

Applied sociology in Kingsbury's novel is less a matter of formally analyzing social factors than of applying games theory. Various decision-makers, among them the games theorist Jacob Synmann, want to move the superpowers from Mutual Assured Destruction to some strategy that does not assure their destruction, because:

"For 200 billion we would get a system that would take them a trillion dollars to beat... But it is buying the fourth iteration of the response to the counterdefense that is not affordable, neither for us nor for the Soviets." (18)

Game concepts aside, much of this story strand explores Russian culture as if it were a program. From a certain vantage point, perhaps culture (in the anthropological sense) mimics a program: a set of values, laws, and more-or-less patterned actions and responses, passed on sometimes with astonishing faithfulness. One member of the Shantech enterprise, thrown into the recreated role of a Russian political prisoner, finds that it may not matter what century it is:

"Kaisel was visited round-the-clock by agents of Ivan IVs 'private court', the *Oprichina*, by Mongol torturers from the 'authority for the extermination of rebellion,' by investigators from *Cheka*, 'the extraordinary commission for the suppression of counterrevolution,' by the agents of Peter the Great's *Preobrazhenskii Prikaz*... they never let him sleep....

"When Kaisel spent time [at the terminal suddenly installed in his cell] trying to trace the laws against slandering authority back in time... through wisps of paper... and diaries ... and scandal and exile and murder ... and back ... and back ... he came to the splendor of the court at Sarai and a Russian martyr who would not be quiet, swinging in a cage with his tongue cut out and his nose cut off..." (19)

At the same time, the Shantech enterprise is spreading *samizdat* computer game disks in the Soviet Union. Although untraceable to the West, the game's victory conditions impart hidden assumptions that one Air Force Colonel sees quickly — and then keeps to himself.

"The game forced a man to ask questions. What if those military officers murdered during the [1930s] purge hadn't been denounced? ... What if Oshchepkov had been allowed to continue the development of radar ... What if rocket expert Korolev and other aeronautical people had escaped prison? ...

"And at the height of his rage [against Stalin], Colonel Savichev suddenly understood the design of the game. It was holding out the goals of the Russian soul—the strong and moral socialist world that might have been—and saying: You followed Stalin instead..." (20)

In the end, an accidental nuclear exchange is averted only because Colonel Savichev has been exposed to another of Shantech's computer games — this one implying the "deviationist" concept that an apparent nuclear attack might be an accident, or a terrorist attack—and he is in a position to withhold response.

(To be continued)