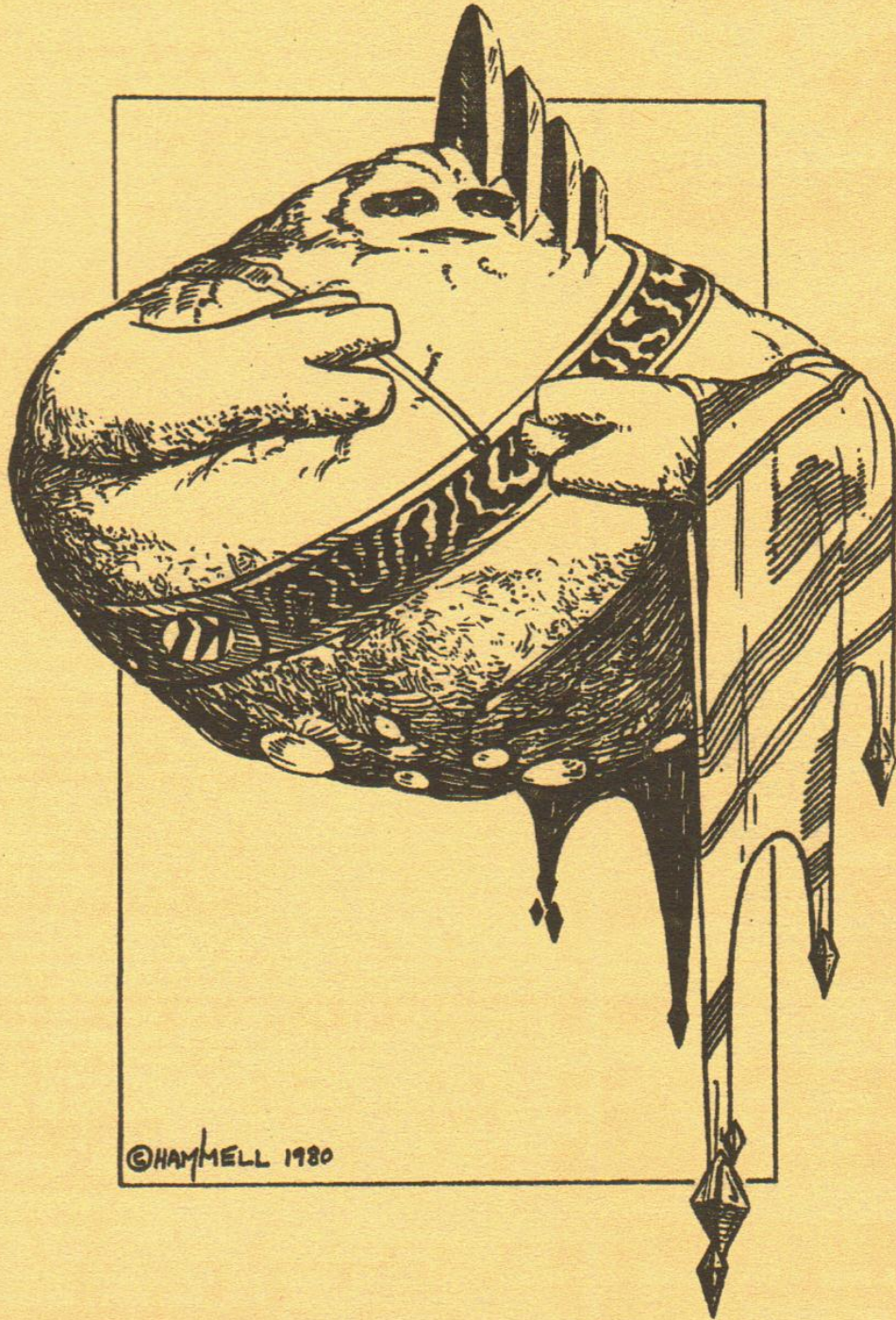


BCSFAzine



194

BCSFAZINE # 194
JULY 1989



Published Monthly By The
BRITISH COLUMBIA
SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 35577, Stn. E
Vancouver, B.C.
V6M 4G9

Full Membership \$15
Family (2 votes) \$18

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UPCOMING

JULY 7, 14,.....F.R.E.D. EVERY FRIDAY

TIME OUT LOUNGE, Centennial Motor Hotel, 898 West Broadway, Vancouver, one block east of Oak Street, starting 8:00 PM. All fans and metamorphs welcome!

JULY 8, WRECK BEACH PICNIC

To celebrate our win/loss of the Westercon bid. From Place Vanier dormitories on UBC campus (bus stop in front) cross Marine road to the cliffs & descend the path with wooden steps (200 ft down), turn right at the bottom & look for our group in the logs under the trees. **WARNING!** Wreck Beach is Vancouver's nude sunbathing beach. Pasty-skinned types should bring plenty of sun-block lotion to protect their naughty bits. **WARNING!** Police may inspect for alcohol and confiscate same. **PARTY ALERT:** Chris Bell will host post-picnic recovery party beginning 8:00 PM at #2, 3575 W. 4th Avenue. If a hot beach isn't to your liking, come to a hot party! Info: 738-2593.

JULY 15, BCSFA GENERAL MEETING

Starting 8:00 PM at Allan Kelly's house, 6480 Grant St, Burnaby. Exec meeting earlier at 7:30 PM. Sauna, swimming pool, and a night of gaming. Info: 299-0080

JULY 17, (MONDAY) WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Under the assault of Don H. DeBrandt! 8:00 PM Shadow Gate Manor, 4336 E. Georgia St, Burnaby: 294-9092.

JULY 21-23, CON-VERSION 6

Westin Hotel, Calgary, Alberta. GOH: Harry Harrison. Workshop GOH: Barry Longyear. CDN GOH: Guy Gavriel Kay. Membership: \$20 till Jun 30, then \$25. For info write: Conversion 6, Box 1088, Stn. M, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2K9. (403) 242-1807.

JULY 22, LUNAR LANDING DAY PARTY!

Celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first landing on the moon! Shadow Gate Manor, 4336 E. Georgia St. Burnaby. Come as you were 20 years ago! 294-9092

*** JULY 28 (at Fred) BCSFAZINE DEADLINE! ***

JULY 28-31, MYTHCON XX

At Gage Towers, University of B.C., Vancouver, B.C. GOH: Guy Gavriel Kay. Scholar GOH: Raymond H. Thompson. Workshop GOH: Eileen Kernaghan. Theme: Mythic elements in fantasy. Papers presented, art show, dance. Membership: \$30. Write: Mythcon XX, Box 806, Stn. A, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5N2. (MORE DETAILS, SEE MYTHCON UPDATE PAGE 23 IN LAST ISSUE # 193)

JULY 28-30, MAPLECON 11

Carleton University, Tour & Confr. Centre, Ottawa, Ontario. GOH: Kim Stanley Robinson. Comics GOH: John Romita. Artist GOH: Martin Springett. Fan GOH: Andrew Porter (of SF Chronicle) TM: Larry Stewart. Membership: \$25 at door. For info write: Maplecon 11, Box 3156, Stn. D., Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6H7.

JULY 30, WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Again at the mercy of Don H. DeBrandt! 2:00 PM and same address as before. Your ego will be played!

AUGUST 6, COLLATION OF BCSFAZINE

Printing begins at noon, collation at 2:00-2:30 PM. See S.40 curse his machines! 1129 Spruce Avenue, Coquitlam. Phone (936-4754)

AUGUST 11-13, ZERO G: A RELAXACON

Cavanaugh's Motor Inn, Moscow Idaho. GOH: John Dalmas Fan GOH: Jon Gustafson. Membership: \$12 US to Aug 1, then \$14. S/bed room \$32 per night. D/bed \$38. For info write: MosCon-2, P.O. Box 8521, Moscow ID 83843

AUGUST 19, BCSFA PICNIC

Locarno beach. BYOF, but Hibachi & cooking pots to be provided. Party afterwards. Info next issue.

MANY THANKS TO JUNE COLLATORS

Ed Hutchings, Con Heibner, Doug Finnerty, Steve Forty, Debbie Miyashita, Jason Harris, Dan Dubrick, Kathleen Moore-Freeman, Sidney Trim, Garth Spencer, Sara Brearley & R. Graeme Cameron.

EDITORIAL

WHY I AM SUCH A WONDERFUL EDITOR

Oh, mostly because of my inherent modesty I guess. Actually, I have a bone to pick with the previous editor, S.40. He promised me I wouldn't be able to count the money that would come pouring in, and he's right, I have not -- there isn't any. Haven't accrued much in the way of power either. On the other hand, I'm more than satisfied with the number of groupies who have come my way, so I guess I'll stick with the job a little while longer.

I hope people like what I'm doing as editor. Steve Forty did a magnificent job building BCSFAzine up to 28 pages by his tenacious pursuit of the local BCSFA talent, and I'm simply trying to cram more into the same number of pages. Some people feel the result is too text-dense. Well, that's what I want. To me, the ideal zine -- in the sense of a model one should imitate -- is FOSFAX (currently a Hugo nominee, and deservedly so). Getting FOSFAX in the mail is an event. You find the time to read it. You don't -- as with so many zines -- just flip through it, skim-reading, admiring the layout but not the substance, and then toss it away. No, you settle down for a reading experience. You curl up in your best chair, your favourite beverage at hand, and shut out the mundane world for a pleasant hour or so. People look forward to getting their next issue of FOSFAX. I want people to feel the same way about BCSFAzine. Such is my policy.

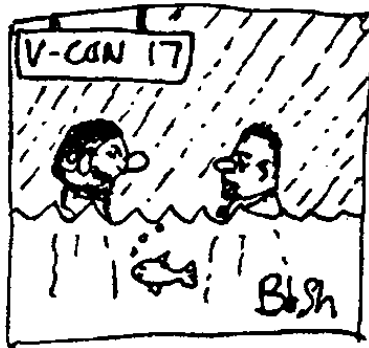
V-CON 17 is over, and it went wonderfully well. So many people to thank, both ConCom and volunteers, that I lack the space to include all, but know that if you're not mentioned, you are well and truly appreciated all the same. Kudos to: CON HEIBNER & LISA SMEDMAN for their excellent Co-chairmanship, EVELYN BEHESHTI for liaising with the GOH's in so soothing a manner, JASON HARRIS & DAVID GEORGE for surviving AV, LANCE MUNRO for operating OPS, KELLY WHITEHOUSE for tackling HOSP, OPS, SEC & AV and still managing to look bored, DEBBIE MIYASHITA for unleashing the volunteers, STEVE ENS & MAVERICK for securing security, STEVE BARCLAY for programming, and: TERRY FOWLER-Treasurer, STEVE FORTY and FRANCIS HIGGINSON-Registration, CHRIS BELL-Dealers, ELIZABETH JONES-Art Show, AL BETZ-Video, RICK SMITH-Gaming, KATHLEEN MOORE-FREEMAN-Bacchanal, RHEA ROSE-Writing Workshop, & STAN EVANS, DON H. DEBRANDT, SARA BREARLEY, WARREN ODDSON, IAN ROBERTSON, JACKIE WILSON, ALLAN KELLY, PATRICK QUAIL, TOM BARR, GARTH SPENCER, FRAN SKENE, PATRICIA WOODLAND, SIDNEY TRIM, HOWARD CHERNIACK, DAN DUBRICK, DAVE MANUEL, DOUG FINNERTY, JOHN RAY, SUE TOM, GREG GROSS and JO-ANNE MCBRIDE, to name just a few. Not to mention the wonderful guests: SPIDER & JEANNE ROBINSON, BOB SHAW, ROBERT SHECKLEY, DONNA BARR (such a shy girl), JOHN DALMAS, WILLIAM GIBSON, EILEEN KERNAGHAN, MICHAEL CONEY, and a host of others. Thanks to each and every one of you ...

THE GRAEME

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V-CON 17 BY BoSh!



"WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT
RAINS A LOT IN VANCOUVER?"

Dear Con, (Heibner)

From: BOB SHAW

I have arrived safely back in England, and have -- almost -- recovered from the jet lag, so I thought I would take a few minutes to express my gratitude to you and the entire V-CON committee. Please read this letter aloud at an appropriate time and place, or pass it around, because I know that some people were so busy that I scarcely got to say hello to them.

The convention was absolutely great, and I had a week-end I will remember all my life. I was touched by the amount of sympathy shown to me over the matter of my hacking cough, which made me incoherent at times. (Or more incoherent than usual, I should say) Incidentally, the cough vanished altogether the moment I stepped off the plane in England! Perhaps I am allergic to something in your local pollen or fanzine ink or Molson Canadian.

Anyway, I would like to add a special word of thanks to Evelyn for her considerate ways, and to Lisa and Steve for all the time and trouble they devoted to showing me around the most beautiful city I have ever seen. Steve, in particular, was heroic. He got me for a day longer than we had planned, and because of my research program into international boozing patterns he was obliged to accompany me into numerous drinking dens at all hours of the day and night. Not only did he bear this burden with forty-tude, he actually managed to appear as if he was enjoying it -- just to put me at ease. What more could a visitor ask?

All I can say is: Thank you, my friends!

Yours sincerely, Bob.



"THAT'S CON HIEBNER, CHAIRMAN OF V-CON 17. JUST THINK! THERE WERE NO POLICE RAIDS, NO ROOMS WRECKED, NO LAW SUITS, NO SEX SCANDALS, NO AUTHORS MADE PIGS' ASSES OF THEMSELVES, THE PROGRAM BOOK WAS ON TIME, THE CON PASSED THE BREAK-EVEN, THE CON COM STILL LIKE EACH OTHER, NOBODY BARPED IN THE CORRIDORS. THE POOR GUY! HE'S JUST CHAIRED HIS FIRST CONVENTION -- AND NOT A LEGEND TO SHOW FOR IT! WHY, WE CAN EVEN COME BACK TO TOTEN NEXT YEAR ..."



ASK MR. SCIENCE

Mr. CH, of North Vancouver, B.C., asks:

Is it true that "...music has charms to soothe the savage breast?"

While this statement is not generally true, there are some notable exceptions. Any music in which the bass line pulsates in approximate imitation of a beating human heart is likely to possess this remarkable property. As an experiment, Mr. Science suggests that you carry a tape player on your person at all times. On the next occasion in which you are about to be attacked by a savage breast, quickly put on a tape of "Oxygene" by Jean-Michel Jarre, and watch the immediate soothing effect this music has.

Mr. EH, of Vancouver, BC, asks:
What is the Philosophers' Stone?

Cannabis Sativa.

Mr. TB, of East Thatford, VT, asks:

Ever since those clowns discovered 'cold fusion' the price of gasoline has been going up a nickel a week. How come?

You are a victim of memory loss induced by the deliberate addition of aluminum salts to your drinking water by greedy politicians. You have forgotten that the price of gasoline was going up a nickel a week even before those clowns called their press conference. One tenth of one per cent of the increase is caused by a non-coincidental rise in the price of palladium, used in the catalytic cracking of petroleum products. The rest of the increase is caused by higher taxes collected now, before cheap fusion energy, hot or cold, drastically reduces the government's "take."

AN OPEN LETTER TO DR. NICK ADAMS AND DR. CRAVEN UNDERFOOT:

Mr. Science emphatically denies the accusations you have made, and asserts that he is a victim of mistaken identity. The true perpetrator of the crimes you have described is Dr. Science, who, with his faithful assistant, Rodney, fled Canada a decade ago, and is now believed to be an itinerant actor in San Francisco. We trust that this information will dispel any untoward imputations against the sterling character of Mr. Science.

Yours truly,
Mr. Lawyer

If you have a question concerning life and the true nature of the universe, please send it to: Ask Mr. Science/BCSFAZINE, P.O. Box 35577 Station E, Vancouver, B.C., V6M 4G9.

THE LIGHTHEARTED VITUPERATOR AND JOLLY REVILER

NEWSFRONT: I love covering films that are announced "in production" but there are so many that I'm saving production starts till next issue. All the films in this issue have actually been made, which is no guarantee you'll see them in theatres. Some of these turkeys will go direct to video, often under different titles ... some of them may already be in video stores. If so, 'scuse me.

CANNON films has lensed ROCKULA. (Anybody could have told them that the idea sucks)...COLUMBIA has shot LORD OF THE FLIES, the William Golding novel, which is a great book if your English teacher didn't spoil it for you. (The novel impressed Stephen King so much that he finished it, got up, walked into the house, and vomited) It won the World Fantasy Award when it was published and was the primary reason that Golding later won the Nobel Prize for literature. A previous BBC television film version exists, but is much too polite....DISNEY has made an animated version of Hans Christian Anderson's story THE LITTLE MERMAID....ITC has shot a sequel to THE STEPFATHER (The film that proved modern slasher films could be interesting). It's called STEPFATHER II and probably exists only to milk more pounds from the video nasties crowd...NEW WORLD has filmed Marvel Comics' THE PUNISHER with Dolph Lundgren in the lead role. Gone is the nifty skull-faced jumpsuit from the comic book. (Dolph, for the uninitiated, played HE-MAN in the movie of the same name. His acting ability runs a close second to his command of the english language)...ORION has a really weird film finished, BORIS AND NATASHA with Dave Thomas and Sally Kellerman in the lead roles. Yes kids, it's based on the Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoon show created by Jay Ward. (I want to know: where the hell is Bullwinkle?)...TRISTAR is finally snooting TOTAL RECALL, based on a Philip K. Dick novel. The director is Paul Verhoeven, who directed ROBOCOP. (He and Peter Weller will not be back for Orion's ROBOCOP II) Verhoeven is also planning a dinosaur movie at Disney. By the way, for all of you who were hoping for a Philip K. Dick adaptation that would at least rival BLADERUNNER (which, I'm forced to admit after many viewings, is okay), the suspense is over. The star of TOTAL RECALL will be that subtle man of the people, Arnold Schwarzenegger, a star with real depth (at least between his pecs and shoulder blades) and just the right kind of existentialist angst --- sheeesh....UNIVERSAL has shot BACK TO THE FUTURE II with all the principals from the original cast. Rumour has it that to save production money, BACK TO THE FUTURE III was shot at the same time. (But how do they know we even want to see BACK TO THE FUTURE III? Are we really that predictable?)...Bill Cosby and Denise Nicholas star in GHOST DAD, to be directed by Sidney Poitier. Sounds like a dumb idea, but after Cosby's last movie the only way he can go is up.... Among independent productions the ubiquitous Fred Olan Ray directs ALIENATOR which sees genre veterans John Philip Law and Robert Quarrey returning to the screen....Other independent productions of note I list by titles and leave the contents to your imagination. But remember, these suckers have been filmed! So why aren't you writing a film script? ASTROFORCE, BEVERLY HILLS BODY-SNATCHER, BEVERLY HILLS VAMPIRE, CLASS OF 1999, DEMON HUNTERS, DEMON SWORD, DR. ALIEN or I WAS A TEENAGE SEX MUTANT, DR. HACKENSTEIN, FUTURE FORCE, FUTURE FORCE II, THE GIRL IN A SWING (based on a Richard Adam's novel and script, with Gordon Hessler directing. This one may actually be good), JOHN TRAVIS: SOLAR SURVIVOR, LASER MISSION, LEGAL ALIENS, LOBSTER MAN FROM MARS, MIND FIELD, MONSTER HIGH, MY LOVELY MONSTER, MY MOM'S A WEREWOLF, PLANET GONE MAD or SPIRITS OF JUPITOR, THE RETURN OF THE SWAMP THING, REVENGE OF THE LIVING ZOMBIES (Isn't 'living zombies' a contradiction in terms?), REVENGE OF THE RADIOACTIVE REPORTER, TEEN VAMP, TEEN WITCH, TIMEBURST-THE FINAL ALLIANCE, TO DIE FOR or DRACULA THE LOVE STORY, WITCHCRAFT, WITCHERY, and WIZARDS OF THE LOST KINGDOM. I bet some of you don't believe these films are real. They are ... Who'd a thought it?

FROM THE MUTE DECADE TO THE BALLARD-DICK COLLABORATIVE DECADE: THE DECLINE OF SCIENCE FICTION (PART TWO)

The seventies were over, the eighties begun. In the real world, Jimmy Carter was replaced by Ronald Reagan, who remained President/King for a full eight years. (Would you be surprised to learn he was an audio-anamorphic android and that Walt Disney was running the White House from his cryogenic kingdom?) I can't comment on the real eighties, except to say that it was exactly the decade we needed to make the seventies look like they had soul. I think I'll leave the real world to the reviewer who said,

by Stan G. Hyde

"If the world wants to stop being taken for a J.G. Ballard novel, it will have to stop acting like one..."

In the reel world, and in the world of SF and fantasy in general, things were starting to look black. The fantasy world of Reaganomics needed an appropriate fantasy world, a place where the highs were high, and the lows were low, and yuppies came out on top.

STAR WARS was made in 1977, and movie-making was remade for all time. The movies got stupid.

After STAR WARS we have some more of the biggest grossing SF pictures ever made. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND, ALIEN, THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, E.T. (the single highest grossing picture ever, but think for a moment what that means, that a pleasant little film earned 228 million dollars for a story that pales in comparison to mid-range Disney -- DUMBO, LADY AND THE TRAMP, etc.), SUPERMAN, GHOSTBUSTERS, BACK TO THE FUTURE, RETURN OF THE JEDI...

All of them genre films, all of them making big bucks, all of them delivering emotional thrills at the cost of even an iota of an idea.

STAR WARS - well, George Lucas' announced project was called TRIPLANETARY at one time, and it's an appropriate name, because Doc Smith land is the land of STAR WARS, pure space opera. ALIEN is ripped off from IT, THE TERROR FROM BEYOND SPACE and PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES. The science in it is stupid. It's just a haunted house story in space. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS treated flying saucers seriously for Chris'sake. SUPERMAN was a comic book (and not a good one. Check out Alan Moore's WATCHMEN if you want to read a good comic book).

They knew what we wanted. Lotsa special effects, cheap thrills, one about every ten minutes like pornography. Human beings too, but only for an emotional frisson.

You're allowed to hear the call and sculpture mountains of mashed potatoes in their living rooms, but God forbid you think.

Lest you argue that movies have always been entertainment, and that things have always been the same, I commend to you some films from the sixties and seventies that both entertained and made you think. (I'm sticking only to genre films here, if we moved into mainstream cinema my argument would be easier to prove, but this is an SF fanzine) Let's start small, SILENT RUNNING, despite being somewhat dunderheaded, has the ecology movement in the guts of its story and an examination about what the 'right' thing to do is. THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN, presented a government-military complex scientific conspiracy in convincing terms. PLANET OF THE APES presented a savage and cynical view of man along with some of the last real satire to be done in an SF film. (A few of the follow-up films were passing fair allegories)

And then there's 2001, a film where the ability to think is required.

It may be that some of you think that there were SF films of integrity and intelligence produced after STAR WARS. It may be I'm unaware of them. But frankly, I don't think there were any.

None. Nada. Zip.

I'll end by quoting Steven Bach from the book FINAL CUT, about the disastrous filming of HEAVEN'S GATE. Though this book isn't about the STAR WARS phenomena, this quotation easily could be:

"Characters and story were sacrificed to the filmmaker's love of visual effect and production for their own sakes. The 'look' of the thing subsumed the sense of the thing and implied a callous or uncaring quality about the characters for whom the audience was asked to care more than the film seemed to. Whether those characters were well or ill conceived, they seemed sabotaged by their creator's negligence of them as he pursued the "larger, richer, deeper" things that surrounded them, obscuring them, making them seem smaller, poorer, more shallow."

SF filmmakers pressed your buttons better than the makers of HEAVEN'S GATE, but in the seventies, they no longer pressed the buttons that make you question your society, like PLANET OF THE APES or SOYLANT GREEN; nor did they press the buttons that make you question whether intelligence itself doesn't doom the intelligent being -- the dark theology of 2001.

Instead they were content to press the "what if I'm Moses?" button in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS, or the "what if old yeller dies?" button in E.T., or -- with darker implications -- the TRIUMPH OF THE WILL button in STAR WARS.

All the old, all the easy, emotional responses.

(NEXT ISSUE: Who is behind the decline of Science Fiction and why)

WHAT TO READ FROM THE GOLDEN AGE

(Continued from last issue)

-- E.E. SMITH: Not exactly an unknown author, and his stuff is easy to find. I mention him here because if you haven't tried him yet, there are a couple of awful truths about ol' E.E. : a) the LENSMEN series is the best and in fact about the only really good thing he wrote; b) book versions of the LENSMEN novels have prefaces that give the plot away. Smith claimed that he did this because the series was not space opera but was really about the Kinnison family but nobody believes this. The novels absolutely need their original mood of mystery and galactic conspiracy, and the 'spoiler' preface screws things royally. The best thing is to try to get the original pulps (not easy); failing that, try to avoid looking at the prefaces until you've finished the whole series. If you get the paperbacks, tear out the prefaces and burn them.

-- JOHN TAINE: Still turns up in anthologies occasionally. this is the pseudonym of the ERIC TEMPLE BELL who wrote the suave and monumentally grouchy MEN OF MATHEMATICS and was in fact a math prof at Caltech. He wrote a lot of stuff; as with many authors listed here you might find that his ideas get repetitious if you read a great deal of him. I'd recommend SEEDS OF LIFE (it was a 50's Galaxy novel and still turns up in dealer's rooms) and if you like that you can attempt THE TIME STREAM which is available as a Dover reprint (and in the Vancouver public library). TIME STREAM is powerful and has a marvellous mood -- I'd call this the greatest example of the "sense of wonder" in SF -- but it builds to a climax of startling snobbishness and misanthropy with which the author seems to identify, and to appreciate the story, the reader has to be able to come to terms with the fact that the author is willing to expose himself as a childish son-of-a-bitch. A unique and important story which incorporates a kind of final exam for the reader.

-- CLARK ASHTON SMITH: Famed for his 'sense of wonder' and for an ironic tone which often approaches undergraduate humour, this is a hard author to recommend and a good example of a problem that often turns up with Golden Age writers. When Smith is good, he can do what nobody else does -- but he's only good sometimes and, frankly, his range is so limited that I can't even recommend his good stuff in toto. He's definitely worth reading, but if you find a few stories that you like, leave it at that. Smith helped to set the style of gibberish names ('xqtzl the Martian') in SF: a pronunciation of some of his story titles is indistinguishable from a coughing fit.

-- S. FOWLER WRIGHT: Yet another author who has a reputation for irony but probably just plain didn't like people. The grumpy mood of his stories can wear you down and I wouldn't advise reading a lot of him, but his best work is excellent. I strongly recommend THE WORLD BELOW, which I think you can get from Hyperion (and there was a two-volume version from Galaxy novels). This is one of the great stories of SF and shouldn't be missed. I also like THE ADVENTURE OF WYNDHAM SMITH which you'd have to get from a dealer -- The only place I've seen it is in a 40's FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES.

-- EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS: I had never read Burroughs until I hit MOSKOWITZ's collection UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS. This contains the first 30,000 words of the "John Carter Of Mars" stories. I was knocked dead, went out and got the set, then found that those first 30k words were, with a few exceptions, the only really good thing in the series. I'm willing to agree that Burroughs really is one of the great pulp writers; but like LESTER DENT he always seems to be writing below his best form, and he gets repetitious very fast. His

(PART TWO) by Ed Hutchings

later stuff is variable (and he may have been 'saved' by editors). If you're a Burroughs fan, more power to you; but if you're looking into his work for the first time I'd say limit yourself to the first three Mars novels. Most people haven't looked into TARZAN at all and I suspect they're disappointed if they do. The Tarzan in the novels really does philosophise interminably, just like the PHILIP JOSE FARMER'S Lord Grandith.

-- IGNATIUS DONNELLY: This is the guy who wrote reams of stuff on Atlantis and was more or less responsible for its present eminence in mystical circles. But something definitely worth reading is CAESAR'S COLUMN about a proletarian revolt in the northeastern U.S.A. Vancouver public library has a copy.

DEPARTMENT OF FAINT PRAISE

This is not quite ignore-at-all-costs but

-- GARRET P. SERVISS: You often see references to his EDISON'S CONQUEST OF MARS. So help me this really is about Thomas A. Edison leading an expedition to conquer Mars (in retaliation for the attack in WELLS'S WAR OF THE WORLDS). The idea is so nutty that it's tempting to look up the thing up, but the book is bad to an extent that defies description.

-- PHILIP FRANCIS NOWLAN: Wrote the original Buck Rogers story ARMAGEDDON 2419 plus a sequel WARLORDS OF HAN. This is disappointingly poor; in fact I think the comic of the 30's is better.

-- RAY CUMMINGS: Cummings is still occasionally praised for his GIRL IN THE GOLDEN ATOM, but my feeling is that he is best avoided. See index references in Fred Pohl's autobiography for further comments.

-- RALPH MILNE FARLEY: Avoid the RADIO MAN series like unto the plague.

-- NEL R. JONES: (Not to be confused with RAYMOND F. JONES, who is better) Undeservedly famed for his "Professor Jameson" series of short stories. These are AWFUL -- dull space travelogues whose characters are all robots who talk like Robby and have names that look like bit-net addresses -- ARRGH!

-- OTIS ADELBERT KLINE: A Burroughs imitator (only using Venus instead of Mars). You need to be a clear-quill Burroughs fan before you go near this guy.

Last and not quite least ...

-- STANTON COBLENTZ: Wrote titles like LORD OF TRANERICA; his stuff is all the same -- but here I'd say get one out and read it. He's not great, but what redeems his writing is that it's political satire, a rarity in this period.

ATTENTION B.C. AUTHORS!

Robin Van Hack (a pun in there somewhere), the book review editor for the B.C. Library association, wants to review books by local authors, especially if they're published out of province, as these could otherwise be overlooked. Send review copy to her c/o Cdn Journal of Education, faculty of education, 2125 Main Mall, UBC, V6T 1Z5. Or phone 228-3895 (work). So: Spider, Jeanne, Bill, Michael, Rhea, Donna, Eileen, Mary, Crawford, Bob and others; PLEASE TAKE NOTE! (Info courtesy Burnaby Writer's Society June Bulletin)

CIDER: OUR FRIEND AND YOURS by Don H. DeBrandt

THE FOLLOWING -- REPRINTED FROM ISSUE #2 OF 'THE DAILY BLURB', THE OFFICIAL DAILY INFO SHEET OF V-CON 17 -- WAS WRITTEN FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL OUR AMERICAN FRIENDS BY DON H. DEBRANDT, CIDER-PUNK:

Cider has grown in popularity these last few years, especially in British Columbia. In 1986, we consumed 6,939,000 Litres of this tasty beverage, about the same as we had for the previous three years; the next year it jumped to 8,491,112 Litres! The reason?

Some say V-CON 15.

It's true that this drink, with an alcohol content ranging from four to seven percent, is a perennial favourite with our American visitors; perhaps because until prohibition, cider was considered the national drink of the U.S.A. Since then, it has been replaced by other liquids, notably coffee and wine coolers.

Perhaps it's because of our orchards in the Okanagan, which produce fruit with a relatively high acidic content, perfect for concocting this fruit wine. Cider is made from the pulp of apples or pears and fermented in much the same way wine is -- there is even a champagne cider, fermented a second time in the bottle. There are, however, some misconceptions about cider which should be cleared up.

First, flavoured ciders, such as apple-lime or strawberry, are not made from fermented berries or citrus fruits -- they have these flavours added to an apple cider base. Other popular flavours include peach, blueberry, root-bear and kokanee. The berries used in kokanee cider grow only in the Kootenay mountains, and are sometimes called "sasquatch berries" because of their heavy brown pelt.

Second, the bubbles in cider are not carbon dioxide, as in other sparkling beverages, but methane, which gives cider its distinctive aroma. Trained Smurfs are fed a special diet of burritos and sodium bicarbonate, then added to the fermenting mixture, which they stir briskly by performing synchronized swimming routines from old Esther Williams pictures. Most Smurfs are good for seven or eight hours before they absorb enough alcohol to go belly up. Don't worry, it isn't as bad as it sounds; at this point they are fished out, dried, shredded, and used as artificial blueberry colouring. Kittens are occasionally added for extra sparkle, flavour, or just for the hell of it. Dead winos that have been found in the gutter and are too smelly to bury are sometimes used to enhance fermentation, and an age-old tradition in the cider business, passed on from father to son, is "straining the vat for spare change." Leper's underwear is (CONTINUED ON PAGE 72)

ATTENTION BLOOD-SUCKING POETS!

Lewis Sanders, Editor of WALPURGIS NIGHT, is now editing a small chap-book (editor's note: will big guys be allowed to buy it?) of VAMPIRE HAIKU for Dracula Press. He wants Haiku relating to and/or about vampires and Dracula, preferably in classical Haiku form (3 lines & 17 syllables, in a pattern of 5/7/5) tho variables and variations will also be considered. Send c/o him at 125 Taylor Street, Jackson TN, 38301 USA. DEADLINE IS SEPT. 1ST! but 'the sooner the better.' Info courtesy June 89 Burnaby Writers Bulletin.

BCSFZINE IMITATOR GETS LUCKY!

Yep. Of course I'm talking about ABORIGINAL SCIENCE FICTION. Nominated for a Hugo twice (like we will be), circulation tripled in a single year (heck, we can do that in a month), they made a deal to be distributed in bookstores (I'm working on it). Nov/Dec will be "the holiday blasphemy issue in honour of S. Rushdie & A. Khomeini."

IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD by Don H. DeGrandt

INVASION OF THE BRITISH BODY PULPERS (PART ONE)

WARNING! This column is not for the squeamish! If decapitated bodies, rivers of blood or violent sexual perversions bother you, read no further. If you are one of the millions of readers who have helped make Stephen King rich, please continue. This column is devoted to horror; well-done, thoughtful horror that is well written but not available at most bookstores. I am talking about a genre that is growing stronger every year -- the horror comic.

Stop! Don't turn the page! I know, you're thinking of all those corny anthology comics, with a narrator named something like Mr. Tombstone and three or four short horror stories, all of them with "shocker" endings that were usually predictable. When I was a kid they terrified me; rereading them now, they bore me. They faded quietly away in the late seventies or early eighties and few people noticed.

Then a writer named Alan Moore appeared.

I discovered Moore in the pages of THE SWAMP THING, a horror based comic that had recently been revived. I was impressed -- anyone familiar with Moore's style knows why. In no time at all, he turned the title into a blockbuster and went on to other projects: MIRACLEMAN, V FOR VENDETTA, and THE WATCHMEN to name a few. He combines a lyrical expository style with mythic and archtypal themes, and has a truly macabre ability to evoke a gruesome and terrifying image in one panel -- and then contrast it with an image of stunning beauty in the next. It's these writing techniques, plus an ear for details like sound effects and a real understanding of how the comic book works as a medium, that makes Moore remarkable. Issue #15 of MIRACLEMAN is a great example of all of the above. Imagine a man with the powers of Superman; heat-vision, super-speed, invulnerability, strong enough to juggle subway cars.

Now make him a homicidal maniac and turn him loose on London for a day.

All I can say is, this comic disturbed me. Mr. Moore and the artist, John Totleben, didn't hold back. They didn't just have their villain kill people; he tortured them for his amusement. Amputated hands and feet rain from the sky, bodies are impaled on the hands of Big Ben; the skins of a mother, father and child flap in the breeze, pinned to a clothesline next to their laundry ... but Moore has more than grue in his repertoire. In the middle of an epic battle more like that between Gods than superheroes, the Bank of England is dropped on one of the combatants: "The Bank of England's mass of debt and credit could contain him not at all. Erupting in a water-spout of Krugerrands, he showered in blood and gold while from a thousand fluttering notes the Queen looked on, as ever, unperturbed."

Sadly, Moore will be leaving MIRACLEMAN after issue #16; however, his successor, picked by Moore himself, is Neil Gaiman, another Britisher with entirely too much talent. Gaiman is currently writing SANDMAN for DC; another high quality horror comic, SANDMAN is very well written but not for the faint of heart. Issue #6 contains: nudity, a lesbian love affair, homosexual prostitution, an orgy, decapitation, amputation, a hand nailed to a countertop, a man who rips out another man's throat with his teeth, a woman who rams meat skewers into her own eyes and a graphic description of necrophilia. There's more to SANDMAN than horror though; in Gaiman's own words, what he had in mind when he began was "a comic that wasn't strictly horror, wasn't fantasy, wasn't a super-hero title, but was a strange amalgam of all three. A comic in which the boundaries were as distant as the frontiers of dream..." So far, this is a weirdly accurate description of the book. See for yourself.

Next month we'll look at another great Brit, Jamie Delano, and a lad from Glasgow by the name of Grant Morrison.

THAT 'TIME' AGAIN

MOVIES AND TV

"Many boys have their first sexual experience while watching sadistic slasher films at gross-out parties. By age 16, a child has seen 200,000 acts of violence on television."

COMIC BOOKS

"Women in scenes of bondage and torture are standard fare today. Some of the females are nasty too -- even Lois Lane, who has been drawn kicking a man in the groin."

Do you find the two above statements disturbing? Annoying? Outrageous? Monumentally stupid? I do. How many boys? Doing what? And what constitutes an act of violence? Tweety Bird nipping Sylvester? Dan Rathers mugging at the camera? Is kicking a man in the groin nasty? Suppose it were self-defense? The items above are hardly factual statements, yet many readers picking up the June 12th issue of TIME MAGAZINE and turning to an article by Anastasia Toufexis on the causes of juvenile crime (meant to be the cover story titled "OUR VIOLENT KIDS" but shoved aside by events in China) and seeing the above boxed items in bold white letters on black background, are no doubt liable to believe what they read. Good grief! For anyone who loves books, films, television and comics, the general thrust of the article is frightening, especially when backed by so prestigious a news magazine. I will quote extensively and comment on same.

"MORE AND MORE TEENAGERS ... ARE RUNNING AMUCK ... IN PART, THIS TREND MAY RESULT FROM BETTER REPORTING, BUT SOME EXPERTS BELIEVE IT REFLECTS A TRUE INCREASE IN VIOLENCE ... POLL: 'DO YOU THINK TEENAGE VIOLENCE IS A BIGGER PROBLEM TODAY THAN IT WAS IN THE PAST?' ANSWER: YES: 88%" (How far in the past? Teenage gangs in short leather vests and hair slicked back Hun style used to terrorize Constantinople in the 6th century A.D. ... I have a book of photographs taken by crime reporter Jacob A. Riis in the slums of New York in the 1890's. Several depict "GROWLER GANGS," teenage gangs with names like "The Montgomery Guards" and "The Short Tail Gang," notorious for fatal muggings for the sake of beer money. As Riis states, "IT HAPPENS EVERY DAY, ESPECIALLY IN SUMMERTIME, THAT A BODY FLOATS ASHORE WITH THE POCKETS TURNED INSIDE OUT..." and the Growler gangs were responsible. So casual murder by teenagers is not exactly new. And oh yes, the poll above was conducted with 506 people. Only 4.5% chance of error, says Time. Right)

"ADOLESCENTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN VIOLENCE PRONE ... EXPERTS OFFER A RAFT OF REASONS ... BY THEMSELVES NONE OF THE EXPLANATIONS ARE WHOLLY SATISFACTORY (but we'll pick the weirdest in our never-ending search to avoid sensationalism just to give you something to chew on) A FREQUENTLY ADVANCED -- AND HOTLY DISPUTED -- THEORY IS THAT AGGRESSION IS A BIOLOGICALLY ROOTED IMPULSE OF YOUNG MALES ... SOME EXPERTS SUGGEST TESTOSTERONE PRODUCTION RISES DRAMATICALLY DURING PUBERTY, A PERIOD MARKED BY INTENSE SEXUAL DESIRE AND STRONG AGGRESSIVE TENDENCIES" (Okay, boys will be boys? The bigger the balls, the greater the danger? What's the hidden message? Universal castration will solve the problem?) "BUT IT IS TOO EASY TO SAY THAT BIOLOGY IS DESTINY" (But of course, that would spoil the search for scapegoats.)

(So what does cause Juvenile delinquency? Is one cause) "THAT CHILDREN DO NOT GET THE NUTURING, GUIDANCE, OR SUPERVISION NECESSARY TO INSTILL A SET OF VALUES AND A PROPER CODE OF BEHAVIOUR." (What provides a good set of values? A proper Christian upbringing, right? Ted Bundy was brought up in a devoutly Christian home, yet) "IT WAS ONLY RECENTLY REVEALED THAT BY THE TIME HE WAS THREE, HE WAS PUTTING KNIVES IN HIS AUNT'S BED." Hmm, and what did he do with the spoons, I wonder? Well, maybe he and others turn because) "WHEN CHILDREN MISBEHAVE, INDULGENT PARENTS MAKE EXCUSES AND FORGO PUNISHMENTS." (There may be something to this. An entire generation was reared on the basis of the child psychology books of Dr. Spock, who called for a loose, no punishment system of encouragement. Not so long ago he publicly admitted his method had proved a dreadful mistake, said it produced the biggest bunch of self-centred spoiled brats he'd ever seen. Ah, the rewarding joys of fad child-rearing theories)

(Perhaps outside influences are to blame? TV for example?) "TODAY'S CHILDREN, UNLIKE EARLIER GENERATIONS, ARE FED A STEADY DIET OF GLORIFIED VIOLENCE ... VIEWERS SEE NO CONSEQUENCES. VICTIMS NEVER BLEED AND NEVER

by R. Graeme Cameron

SUPPER." (Cartoons she is talking about. I detect a slight contradiction here. Normally people protest gory violence, arguing it encourages sadistic imitative behaviour, while here it's being argued that non-gory violence dehumanizes the young morons watching. Ah, silly me. She implies that ALL forms of violence should be cut from TV. Of course, then there wouldn't be any more violence in real life! Like that professor who argued that if we banned police, the need for criminals would disappear. Or the other Profs who said, that to defeat poverty, we must allow poor people to take what they want from department stores. Not to mention, if the West throws away their nuclear weapons, everybody else will do the same. Great zot! I had no idea the world's problems were so easily solved! Has anybody told the U.N?)

(To prove her point, she describes a 22 year study of 3rd graders in New York state -- Some must have reached grade 4 by now! -- who watch TV.) "ABOUT ONE QUARTER WERE CONSIDERED VIOLENT AT 30 -- THEY HAD BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME, HAD MULTIPLE TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS ..." (Multiple traffic violations? I had no idea TV had unleashed such hideous evil on the world!)

(And there's films of course) "AMONG THE MOST OFFENSIVE PURVEYORS OF BRUTALITY TO WOMEN ARE SLASHER FILMS." (I don't entirely disagree with this) "IN SOME FRATERNITY HOUSES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES, SLASHER MOVIES PLAY CONTINUOUSLY IN LOUNGES, ALONG WITH PORNOGRAPHIC FILMS." (You mean ALL frat houses, or at least, MOST. Well, We all know advanced education encourages the worst kind of degeneracy. This is nothing new)

(And comic books?) "WHILE PARENTS MAY FONDLY REMEMBER THE DATING SHENANIGANS OF ARCHIE ... THEIR CHILDREN ARE NOW BEING OFFERED A TITILLATING BLEND OF SADISM AND SEX" (First problem, yet another journalist who doesn't know anything about comics, their history, how they evolved, and how most are now aimed at young adults. Second problem, if this is how modern teenagers become deranged, what unhinged the Growler gangs back in the 1890's? The newspapers? The penny dreadfuls? Ragtime music?)

My point is, the real problem is difficult and complex, but people want simple, instant solutions, and so now the hunt is on for scapegoats so that cheap and sleazy (not to mention, gutless) politicians can masquerade as problem solvers. I'm old enough to remember the RCMP raids on private homes when personal libraries were seized in order to see if they contained prohibited books, such as the works of Henry Miller. It could happen again. It IS happening again. Take the following item reported in the June issue of Locus: "THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE PASSED A SALES TAX OF 1% ON BOOKS AND PERIODICALS CONTAINING NUDITY, AS PART OF A CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION BILL." I believe in victim compensation. It's a wonderful idea. But do you see the outrageous assumption underlying this bill? THAT EXPOSURE TO DEPICTIONS OF NUDITY CAUSES CRIME?! Not depictions of violent sex, not depictions of hardcore sex, just plain nudity in and of itself! Well, I guess people in WA state will pay extra for their 'Larousse Encyclopedia Of Ancient Art' or 'History Of World Sculpture', but if they have such depraved tastes, serves them right. It's up to the state governor to squash this puritanical nonsense. Wonder if he has enough Testosterone to do it?

Well, toward the end of her article Anastasia states that even censorship activists admit that 'cleaned up' TV, films, etc., wouldn't necessarily solve the problem of teen violence. Nevertheless, the article appears to imply it's worth a try. If it's not already part of accepted 'CONVENTIONAL WISDOM' then Time has certainly given it a boost in that direction. And I find that rather irresponsible.

What does cause teenage crime? Let's go back to the 1890's and listen to Jacob Riis: "THAT SUCH CONDITIONS AS WERE ALL ABOUT US SHOULD RESULT IN MAKING TOUGHS OF THE BOYS WAS NOT STRANGE. RATHER, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN STRANGE IF ANYTHING ELSE COME OF IT ... THESE ARE THE FELLOWS THAT START OUT WITH THE IDEA THAT THE WORLD OWES THEM A LIVING, AND THAT THEY ARE GOING TO COLLECT IT AS EASILY AS THEY CAN." In such conditions, anything that fights poverty, provides education and engenders self-respect and respect for others, would likely be of use. But such programs are expensive and take time, people prefer cheap and quick 'guaranteed' solutions, like censorship. I'm afraid the popular mood currently supports this. Oh well.

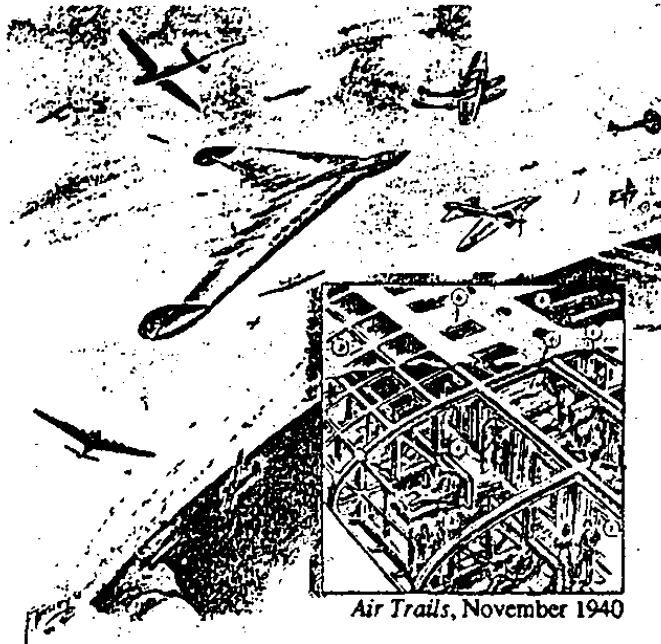
The article also mentions that "MANY AMERICANS ARE CALLING FOR STRONGER LAWS AND PUNISHMENTS." The same in Canada. So I'll close by mentioning the most haunting page in Jacob Riis' book of photographs, shows eight teenagers, average age 17, all of them convicted of crimes, all of them hung at 'The Tombs'. The youngest, age 13, was hung for being a pick pocket. Obviously, such Draconian laws had little deterrent effect, but at least New Yorker's pockets were now safe from that particular 13 yr old.

Archaeo-SF-ology

By Doug Girling

Whatever happened to the giant aircraft of pulp SF? (part 2)

In the June issue of *BCSFazine*, we saw yet another case of science fiction correctly prophesizing what became an engineering reality a mere decade and a half later. The case in point being the huge propeller-driven aircraft intimated in the '30's pulp SF were flying by the early 1950's. In this concluding issue, we investigate some of the reasons for this apparent triumph of SF.



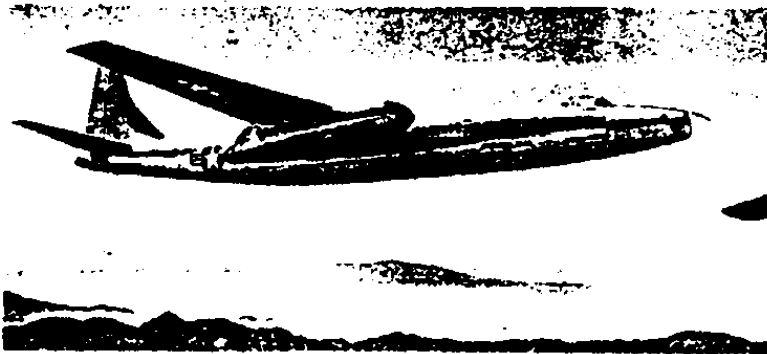
Air Trails, November 1940

Several explanations are possible. A concept called "memes" states that ideas literally have a life of their own, and use people only as a vehicle for their manifestation. This is supported by the fact that many times, the same idea appears simultaneously across many disjoint cultures. So, if one adheres to the concept of memes, then it was simply time for huge propeller aircraft. (As Mark Twain once said, "It steam when it steam time.") What makes memes unpalatable to some is that they seem only to describe only a "symptom" or manifestation, but not the underlying cause.

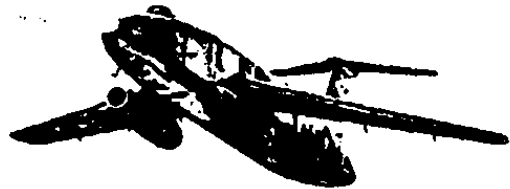
Another possibility entirely pragmatic: jet engine technology was in its infancy, engines were small, expensive, unreliable, and so fuel inefficient that only the military could afford to own and operate them. As a result, the civilian (airline) market was forced to look to the mature technology of big propeller-driven aircraft. Besides, WWII, with all of its long-range heavy bombers not only gave this technology its impetus, but also kindly flooded the market with a huge cadre of trained mechanics and technicians that the airlines would need to service them.

A further possibility is that the kids who read the pulps of the '30's went on to invent the future the way they "knew it was supposed to be". While an attractive proposition, it is unlikely that the impressionable youths in their early teens would have reached a sufficiently high position in the engineering firms by the mid to late '40's to have had more than a passing influence on the overall designs. More likely, it was the college students, with their eager acceptance of new ideas, who were affected by the vicion of the pulps. With a decade of seniority in the aircraft firms by the '40's, they would have been in a

position to influence the designs. This idea is supported somewhat by looking at the aircraft of the '50's. That period would allow the teens of the '30's to graduate and gain engineering positions similar to those that the college students of the '30's had in the '40's. Indeed, many of the aircraft, especially the experimental ones, were extremely Buck Rogers-ish in appearance.



Consolidated-Vultee XB-46

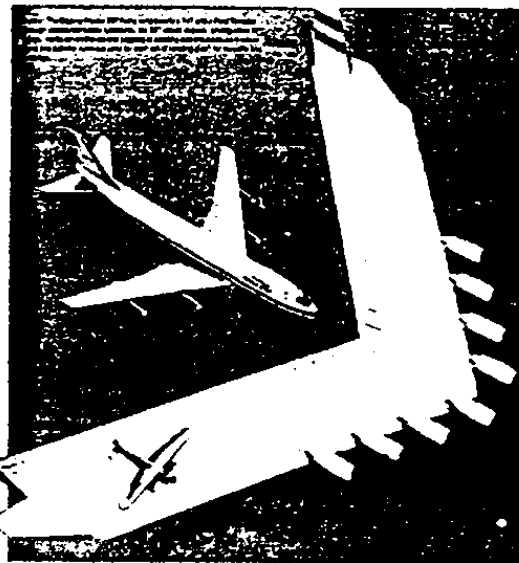


Martin XB-51

While the huge aircraft of the '50's were impressive, they fell somewhat short of the 3000-passenger, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile-wingspan airliners of the pulps, but the trend was there. It was, after all, just mere engineering detail to get to the next step. This way of thinking prevailed, culminating in our current 450-passenger jumbo jets.

So what prevented those huge, 3000-passenger airliners of the pulps from becoming reality? It wasn't for lack of technology or materials as both had evolved to produce wonders beyond the old engineers' wildest dreams. Instead, it was a combination of factors, mostly social. Bigger aircraft needed bigger runways, terminals, baggage handling, etc., and people became increasingly unwilling to see the entire country paved over, or to wait for hours for the tons of baggage to be sent to the wrong cities, or put up with the truly awesome noise that a superairliner would make. The arab oil embargo and the resulting "energy crisis" put the whole superairliner concept on the skids, and by that time nobody would consider nuclear aircraft anymore.

Aircraft are just another engineered product and like all engineering products, are built to serve a need, rather than for the æsthetics of the engineering art. Essentially, the world matured a little to realize that the 450 passenger jumbo jet was really quite adequate, and that there was no need for an airliner that could haul a small town across the planet. Of course, engineers continue to design some truly enormous aircraft that dwarf today's jumbo jets; just in case society should change its mind...



Boeing 907 (proposed)

SPACE REPORT →

DUNDERHEADS UBER ALLES

(with apologies to Brian Earl brown)

Every so often I come upon something that I would like to reprint verbatim as my article that month. Sometimes it says something so perfectly that I couldn't hope to improve on it, other times it will contain something I'd like to put on billboards. I found such an article in the May 1989 issue of SKY & TELESCOPE. The article is on Page 464, has no byline and is titled "Reactors In Space Threaten High-energy Astronomy". Despite its title it tells a quite different, and more disgusting, story.

This story begins in 1976 with an astronomer named Walter Lewin -- a pioneer in the field of X-ray astronomy -- and an X-ray astronomy satellite called "Small Astronomy Satellite 3" (also called SAS-3, SAS-C and Explorer 53). Every so often the detectors on this satellite were being saturated by extremely penetrating radiation, penetrating enough to go through the satellite's skin and the casings of the instruments inside and effect instruments aimed in different directions. Mr. Lewin (the article never refers to him as "Dr. Lewin" so I won't) thought he'd discovered a repeating Gamma-ray Burster and put out a report on it.

The name Gamma-ray Burster is given to the unknown sources of mysterious gamma-ray bursts that arrive at random times from random directions. The fact that they're random makes them almost impossible to study, you can't watch the whole sky at one time. So the discovery of a repeating Gamma-ray Burster would be a big breakthrough. Knowing when the bursts would come would mean you could be properly set up to observe them. You might be able to locate the source, train the optical and radio telescopes on it and maybe find out what the heck is going on.

Later, Lewin and an (unnamed) colleague concluded that the readings were caused by high-energy electrons, not gamma rays. At this point there came a very mysterious call from Los Alamos National Laboratory from a person the article refers to as "Mr. X". The phone call said "Don't publish this. It's classified" adding that the radiation source was not of scientific interest "and we prefer you don't even talk about it." If they had published their results someone with the right information would, in 1979, have come up with the answers I'm about to give you.

The Russians use Radar Ocean Reconnaissance Satellites (RORSATs) to track American ships with a 3-5 kilowatt radar beam. This is extremely powerful for a piece of space hardware. This radar is powered by a nuclear reactor called Topaz. This reactor uses 50 kg. of weapons-grade uranium to produce 85 kw. of heat, 5-10 kw. of which is converted to electrical energy. This reactor powers a RORSAT for approx. 6 months before being disposed of by being rocketed into a higher orbit. Like most reconnaissance satellites these are operated in a low orbit. (The source for this information is an article called "Soviet Nuclear Powered Satellites" from the journal of the British Interplanetary Society, Vol. 36 pp. 457-462, 1983.)

It's a truism of spaceflight that you don't carry unnecessary weight into space, and radiation screening is heavy. So when using atomic power you use what's called a "shadow screen" and only put radiation screening between the reactor and your equipment (or crew if any). Radiation leaks out into space in all the other directions and is never heard from again.

It should be so easy. Fission reactors emit several types of radiation two of which are of interest to us here, gamma-rays and positrons. Gamma-rays first. RORSATs emit enough gamma radiation to effect detectors close by (close by in this context means within a few hundred miles), fortunately this doesn't happen very often; there's a lot of space out there.

Positrons are the anti-matter equivalent of electrons, they're identical to electrons except that they have a positive charge instead of a negative charge. Being electrically charged they can be trapped by the Earth's magnetic field and form a weak version of the Van Allen Radiation Belts at low altitude. They have one other characteristic, they are attracted by the electrons in normal matter and when an electron and

by Sidney Trim

a positron meet they destroy each other in a burst of (what else?) gamma-rays. So any object in low earth orbit (LEO) will encounter these positrons and emit gamma-rays. Thus LEO is about the last place in the universe you'd want to put a gamma-ray observatory, so guess what we're doing?

In 1980 when the Solar Maximum Mission (Solar Max) went into orbit, its Gamma-ray burst detector was being swamped by occasional interference, this has gotten worse until now the instrument is mostly useless. This problem was classified.

Lewin says the mysterious Mr. X worked on equipment for Japan's Ginga high-energy satellite, despite this it was launched into the (Soviet created) positron belt in low orbit where its gamma-ray-burst detector "is now crippled." (SKY & TELESCOPE quoting SCIENCE magazine).

Cheer up, it gets worse. NASA's space science program is largely built around their "Great Observatories program"; a series of four large astronomy satellites to be launched into LEO. The first, when it's finally launched, will be the Hubble Space Telescope, the second will be the Gamma-ray Observatory (GRO). By now you can guess where it's going. This satellite is complete and awaiting launching. NASA only learned of the problem when the satellite was nearly complete so it isn't possible to make major changes, like putting it in high orbit above the positron belt, but they're looking for ways to compensate for the interference.

All this brings us, once again, to the old question of what are they trying to keep secret and who they're keeping it secret from? All I know is that they better have a damn good reason! They knowingly sacrificed Japan's Ginga satellite and were ready to sacrifice NASA's \$500 million Gamma-ray Observatory to keep this secret.

So let's speculate on the reason for this secrecy. It can't have anything to do with the RORSATs themselves, the Russians know they've got nuclear powered satellites (they build them), we know they've got nuclear powered satellites (one crashed in Canada), they know we know (the Canadian government hit them up for damages). Information on fission reactors, gamma-rays, positrons and how charged particles can be trapped by the Earth's magnetic field can be had with a library card. So the secret must have something to do with the positron band itself. All we know about it is that it fouls up gamma-ray detectors. But what's so important (except to astronomers) about that?

On the face of it, you wouldn't expect this to be kept secret because you'd assume the U.S. government would be too busy -- these were the Reagan years after all -- hiring billboards to say look at what those dirty, evil commies are doing now, polluting near-Earth space with anti-matter positrons from their crummy nuclear satellites.

But it WAS kept secret. Why? Consider the other reason (apart from astronomy) why people are interested in detecting gamma-rays in space. In 1963 the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was signed prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere and in space. In order to verify that the treaty was being adhered to, the U.S. launched a series of satellites called VELA. These satellites, it was claimed, could detect a nuclear explosion as far away as Mars by detecting its gamma-ray flash. But if -- because of the Soviet RORSATs -- gamma-ray detectors in LEO will no longer work, (and this at a time when many nations (Israel, Pakistan, South Africa) are threatening to "go nuclear"), it could very well mean that:
THE U.S. HAS LOST ITS ABILITY TO DETECT CLANDESTINE NUCLEAR BOMB TESTS!
To support this theory our mysterious "Mr. X" hails from Los Alamos; where, among other things, they do nuclear weapons research.

I don't like this theory, if only because over ten years you'd think they would have solved the problem. So I'm hoping that someone out there will have a better one. The alternative is stated in my (stolen) title. NEXT MONTH: Voyager 2 at Neptune. NOTE: Voyager 2 is already sending back interesting pictures of Neptune, so take a look at the Astronomy magazines.

NIBBLES by John Mullock

2061: ODYSSEY THREE by Arthur C. Clarke, Ballantine Books, 268 pages, \$6.50

Ever since the publication of 2010: Odyssey Two with its long awaited return to the world of Heywood Floyd and HAL there has been a clamouring for Clarke to tell us more. 2061: Odyssey Three is a response to that pressure but not necessarily a satisfactory response.

Following the conversion of Jupiter into another sun by the monolith and the posting of a 'no trespassing' sign on Europa in 2010, mankind has been curious about just what was happening on that world. Fifty-one years later, an elderly Heywood Floyd is busy playing scientific host on a space tour destined to make the first landing on Halley's comet while, elsewhere, a research scientist makes a startling discovery about Europa. Using connections he manages to make a close fly-by of Europa to prove his theory. Things go rapidly wrong when his space craft is hijacked and forced to crash land on Europa. Only Dr. Floyd and his party are in the right position to effect a rescue, if the monolith will let them. What happens, how they are rescued and other developments I'll leave for you to find out.

As books go this really isn't anything special. If you break it down you have two major sections. One is little more than an educational primer outlining the latest scientific theories about Halley's comet. The second is pure science fiction but really only contains minor intrigue and action. While there is a little more information given about the monoliths, the overall feeling of this book is that it was written as an interim edition designed to bridge the gap to the next book in the series. The ending of 2061 suggests that there is another book coming and that this is when things are finally going to happen. We'll just have to wait and see.

CRISIS OF EMPIRE II: CLUSTER COMMAND by W.C. Dietz and David Drake, Baen Books, 1989, 276 pages, \$4.95.

Commander Merikur had been pleased to finally receive an appointment. What surprised him was to be promoted to General and assigned as Cluster Commander to Harmony Cluster. The military is not known for its benevolence and this appointment was no exception. In addition to his regular duties, Merikur had to ride herd on the new Governor of the Cluster, Senator Winsdsor, who was radical enough to believe in full equality for aliens. Harmony Cluster was not to live up to its name and it didn't take long for Commander Merikur to find himself up to his ass in rebellion, assassination and intrigue. Added to this was an arranged wife who didn't believe the sun rose and set on his head.

As space opera goes the CRISIS OF EMPIRE series is getting interesting. Written in author pairs, we are given stories of an empire coming unraveled due to plain old age and a crisis sparked by the assassination of the Emperor. The writing style suggests that the co-authors have a lot of control as to how the story unfolds so that we are getting stories presented from all points of view, patriots to rebels. This particular story follows traditional military space opera lines in that the character development is limited by the need to get the action in. Still it was a rousing story with a strong, sympathetic hero operating in a plot in which we could find instant empathy. Nothing beats escapism on a slow day.

VETTIUS AND HIS FRIENDS by David Drake. Baen Books, 1989, 304 pages. \$4.95

David Drake's writing career has now reached that all too familiar pinnacle when publishers begin to recycle previously published works, both good and bad. It's a way to increase profits based on sales derived from the author's name alone.

What we have in this book is a collection of swords-and-sorcery tales set during the time when the Roman Empire was beginning its long slide toward oblivion. This book consists of 12 short stories published between 1974 and 1985. The majority of the stories feature two main characters, Vettius, a war-hardened soldier, and Dama, merchant and friend. Their adventures are the usual S & S fare -- evil creatures, rotting undead, trolls, etc. These tend to be dull, thinly plotted, and only marginally interesting. Two stories, "Killer" and "Ranks Of Bronze" are notable for having been expanded into full length novels. I found only the two newest stories, "Dreams In Amber" and "King Crocodile" to have any merit at all. This can be attributed to the fact they were written in the 1980's and David Drake had become a much better writer. Not a particularly good investment for five dollars.

BOOKENDS by Dan Davidson

THE IOWA BASEBALL CONFEDERACY by W.P.Kinsella, Totem books, 310 pages \$5.95

From the B.C. author who wrote the book from which "FIELD OF DREAMS" was made. Kinsella's fascination with baseball may or may not be purely commercial, but this is the second of his novels for which it has provided an excellent backdrop. Once again Kinsella has a hero hot on the track of an illusive baseball mystery. In this case, time itself seems to have conspired to wipe out all knowledge of the Iowa Baseball Confederacy, the little country league that fought the 1908 Chicago Cubs to a near stalemate in a game that ran for a phenomenal 2614 innings.

Gideon Clarke knows the details of this game and of Big Inning, where it took place, like he knows his own home or the wandering ways of his wife. He learned all about it the instant his father died, killed by a line drive after years spent with the same obsession. The elder Clarke had learned what he knew after being hit by lightning, a process that seemed to short-circuit the spell which has caused everyone else in Onamata to forget that their town ever had another name.

Matthew Clarke used to wonder if there weren't cracks in time. Gideon Clarke found a way to slip through them, and midway through this book he and baseball buddy Stan take a little time trip to 1908, to relive what Gideon knows so well.

That's part of what the story is about. The rest is about devotion and obsession and what it costs a person. "Nothing bleeds quite like devotion." runs the quotation that Kinsella uses to open part one of the book. In this case it's true.

So this is a sad story, but it's also a story of love and triumph. I had trouble getting into it. The first few chapters left me lukewarm and I went back to it because I knew it had to get better. It did and I ended up enjoying it, staying up late to finish it.

PUDDLEMAN Story by Ted Staunton, illustrations by Brenda Clark, Kids Can Press, 32 pages, \$10.95

PUDDLEMAN is an excursion into a child's fantasy. "One morning Michael filled his sandbox with water and jumped in." That's the last we see of him for quite a few pages. In almost comic book tradition (the Joker, Swamp-thing, and many others) Michael is transformed into Puddleman, the nemesis of all that is clean, especially Michael's little brother, the nice lady next door and the Glassgrinder twins.

Clark's solution to portraying the resulting monster is in the best tradition of old horror films. She doesn't show him at all for several pages. Instead we see the reaction he causes in other people as he terrorizes the back yard; we see the world through his eyes. The lady faints, the twins run and little brother stands and screams. Puddleman has fun making mud castles and being a total slob, completely divorced in his mind from the neat kid in shorts and T-shirt who jumped into the box. But the mud looks like peanut butter and that makes him hungry and Michael's mother refuses to feed a monster.

"If you see Michael, tell him his peanut butter sandwich is ready," she tells the muddy marauder. This is such serious business that even the garden hose counter-attack by the Glassgrinder twins merely drives him back to the sandbox to patch his spotty epidermis.

Then he spots a talisman, Michael's hat, which had fallen off on page one. As he puts it back on his head (in order to look more like Michael and score that sandwich) it begins to rain, and by the time he gets to the house most of his monster outfit has been washed away. Food at last!

The story isn't over of course. Temptation strikes again, and Michael doesn't simply fall for it, he takes a flying leap. The adventures of Puddleman have just begun.

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THE MAN IN THE WHITE SHIRT

by Dale Speirs

Democracy, it seems, is bursting out all over. The Russian and Polish governments have conceded the inevitable and allowed in the opposition, albeit in a junior role. China is not moving so smoothly, as party elders are refusing to recognize the part of the people in governing that country.

One of the most arresting images of the Chinese troubles is that of a man walking out unarmed and standing in front of a column of tanks. It is easy enough to gun down or crush under tank treads a mob of people. Killing one man face-to-face is far more difficult. The man in the white shirt and brown pants stood in front of the lead tank. The column ground to a halt. The lead tank turned one way, but the man in the white shirt quickly ran in front of it. The tank turned another way and was again stymied. The man in the white shirt climbed on top of the turret. After jumping down, he was hustled away by his friends. The tank crew learned a little better than before that it is easy to kill hundreds but very difficult to kill one.

The photographs of the man in the white shirt were transmitted around the world within hours. If the hardliners eventually fail, it will be partly because of that photo. Marcos was brought down not by armed intervention but by the white-hot glare of the news media minicams. Haiti had a change in dictators due to the sudden interest of the rest of the world. It was not that these dictators went unnoticed before, it's just that finally they came to the attention of the North American and European Lumpenproletariat.

Why the sudden conversion of the communists to capitalism? The economies of those countries are staggering along under a burden of mismanagement. The people of those countries are poor by our standards, but as long as they didn't know it, they could be kept in their places. If you don't know what you are missing, then you cannot complain about missing it. As satellite communications became easier and easier over the past two decades, it was harder and harder for the communist dictatorships to hide the truth. Radio stations are well and good for transmitting propaganda, but humans are a visual species, and nothing beats television for immediacy in seeing what is happening. East Germany can hardly hide from West German television, the Russians have no way of stopping information from spreading, and the Poles have reminded us what labour unions originally developed for.

As electronic recording and transmitting devices became smaller, cheaper, faster, and better over the 1970's and 1980's, it became impossible to keep the news hidden for long. As the global village develops, it also produces gossip and news. Everyone becomes interested in everyone else's affairs. Europeans shut down Newfoundland sealing, the New Zealanders tell the Americans what they can do with nuclear ships, and everyone feels obligated to tell others how to run their business.

Although Orwell meant his book '1984' to be more of a warning than accurate prediction, it seems that technological advance will liberate the future more than it will enslave it. Science Fiction has never been very accurate of course, but the countless novels of distopias are not as likely to come into being as predicted. The role of Science Fiction is not to predict, but to extrapolate and warn what will happen if this goes on. Dictatorships will continue to exist, just as monarchies still exist next to republics and tribal homelands, but the spread of faster and more reliable communication networks means that democracy will have a better chance.

V-CON REVISITED by Steve 40

This year's V-CON was one of the better ones in my books. It struck me as being a large Moscon in flavour. At no time did I feel crowded or terribly rushed. I had time to visit with people I knew, to meet with new people, and still put in a few hours volunteering, especially at the bar (I had forgotten what a great meeting place that is).

The programming could have been stronger, but it was still enjoyable (from the opinions I heard while at the bar). However, I think it is time to kill the NorthWest Fandom Panel -- one of two I was on -- as it has been done to death by every convention in the NorthWest for years; it had such low attendance we adjourned the panel and reconvened at the bar. I was also on the Neofan Panel (which came off reasonably well, but again did not draw many people). I attended several other panels (a first for me) and really had a good time. I enjoyed Bob Shaw's talk, but it would have been much better if he hadn't had such a bad cough and raw throat.

The various function rooms were not too crowded, and the Art show and the Dealers' room were easily accessible. I wish we didn't have the border problem though, as many of our U.S. artist friends were not willing to send things across the border. This means our art show is smaller than it should be. I guess our only hope is for "Free Trade" to work. On the other hand the Dealers' room was well stocked (in fact several of the dealers said they want to be back next year because they did moderately well).

A good start to the convention was the 'Rocky Horror Picture Show' on Friday night. It set the mood for some very good parties. I especially enjoyed Spider and Jeanne's "Bring Your Own Instrument Party". We sang mostly Beatles songs for hours. The five guitars, flute, banjo, and whatever else was present worked very well together (some beautiful voices too). The Virus Con people -- their programming made a good impact this year -- ran a whole floor party all weekend which was a lot of fun. Seattle area people also ran a great party, as did the Orycon fans, and the Westcon folks, and many others. I was really pleased at how many parties there were, and how much fun I had going to them.

Despite the numerous parties, there was no trouble all weekend long. Security was not much in evidence, yet everything was under control. That to me is how security should be, ie: be available if you need it, be invisible if you don't.

There were many other pluses from my point of view; the biggest being: I really liked Totem this year because we were isolated and did not have to share facilities with any other group; as a result, V-CON was virtually problem free. The one major beef was that there were no nearby eating places. I wish we could move a restaurant in next door. I guess the other beef was the weather -- sorry, but we couldn't do anything about that.

I think this year's V-CON was my #2 all-time favourite Con.. The Con Com still like each other, and are even talking about future years. Con, Lisa ... you did a good job. (Everyone else too!)

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AUTHOR'S READING!

Guy Gavriel Kay, author of the Fionavar Trilogy, will give a FREE reading on Thursday, 27th of July, at 2:30 pm in the SFU multi-purpose building. Info: Eileen Kernaghan 435-6500 or Mason Harris 291-3127.

FOR SALE!

One official BCSFA boat anchor! Ie: Ollivetti Praxis 35 portable electric typewriter with daisy wheel printing & hard shell carrying case, needs approx \$150 repairs, for \$25 or best offer. BCSFA members only.

Dear Graeme: That was NOT a 'dead dog' party that Virus-Con held, it was a dead HOST party! ... Kathleen Moore-Freeman.

DEBBIE DOES BIRTHDAYS

Hello and welcome to another exciting episode in the continuing saga of "As the birthday turns"! This month's story finds us post V-CON with a new and energetic executive (Hah!) for BCSPA, two great parties coming up and the whole summer of fun and debauchery ahead of us. Whoopee!

First on my agenda for this column is a huge and humungous THANK YOU! to the following people who volunteered their services, time, energy and expertise at V-CON.

Starting with, of course, the Con Comm who spent many hours before and during V-CON working their butts off for a good con. They are: (EDITOR'S NOTE: Oh no you don't, Debbie. We arm-wrestled at Fred, remember? I lost so I got to write em up editorial fashion (go back and read it, you cur's!) AND sew the leather curtains. Life ain't fair sometimes.)

Second, "THE WE TRY HARDER BUNCH" A.K.A. volunteers: KELLY WHITEHOUSE (who singlehandedly kept Mav & Steve Ens on their toes), TREV SEWELL (a proverbial rock!), CHERYL GRAHAM and LISA COHEN (Rockettes!), DAVE LAUREN, ELAINE BROWN, PUN-I-TIVE, VICKI OATES, DAVE STUART, ACE HIGH, WHIRLWIND, CAPT. DEVLIN SIDE, BARBARA GORDON, GLENDA AFFAN, MICHAEL CHANDLER, DON MCGOVERN, SHELLEY GORDY, MICHAEL MARTIN, R. GRAEME CAMERON, MICHAEL ALLK, DAVE EINSTEIN, RON WOODS, ERIC FELLOWS, ALAN FERGUSON, ARLAN DOUGLAN, BILL DIXON, KEN BURROUGHS, GREG JONES, TOM JONES (Mist Dragonbait), MAUREEN GOLDMAN, PAMELA ?, JIM (Yojimbo) COWLING, ATHENA ROBERTS, IAN HAGEMANN, MARK TRUEMAN, TINA AFFAN, CLAYTON, ELLEN TITMAN, BRYAN QUINN, DAVID MALINSKI, DONNA MCMAHON, BETH and MIKE FINKBINNER (and the rest of the Banff 1990 crew who helped out at hospitality for two days!), RAY CRYDERMAN, CRAIG DYCK, KATHY CHRISTIE, KEN WONG, DIXIE MUELLER, LONNIE DAVIS, CHRYSALIS, JOAN DAVIES, ADAN MELZAK, DANIEL ROGERS, SYLVIA SKENE, ELAINE GRIFFITH, JILL PRUETT, ED HUTCHINGS, NORMA BEAUREGARD, RICHARD AFRICA, KATHERINE ?, CRASH, DAVE DEZOTEL, WILLIAM (Bill) MCLURE, MORRIS, ROD SPRAGUE, BLAINE, "G", JEFF PLOTNIKON, and STEVE KAWAMOTO.

I am sure many names were missed as my system was just in its first year of testing and assignment slips were lost, misplaced, not signed and returned, etc., so the 75 or so folks listed above is not an exhaustive list of all exhausted volunteers, and many, many, many thanks for all of your generous offers of assistance and time committed!

And now for the moment you've all been waiting for ... the JULY BIRTHDAYS:

- 8 - Tom Balabanov, Kelly Whitehouse, Don H. DeBrandt.
- 9 - Donna Markbride.
- 10- Mark Wells (Portland fandom)
- 15- Janet Dawson.
- 25- R. Graeme Cameron, Nico Iormetti.
- 26- Leia Cairns, Anita Paavilainon.

(If your name is not on the above list and should be, drop me a line! The column continues -- the saga continues)
So.o.o.o.o.o.o.... Clear throats!..... Pucker lips!.....
H..E..R..E.. WE GO.....!!!!!!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!! HAPPY BIRTHDAY(S) TO YOU DEAR Tom, Kelly, Don, Donna, Mark, Janet, Graeme, Nico, Leia, and Anita. HAPPY BIRTHDAY(S) TO YOU!!!!!!!

Rumour has it that the lovely Miss Rose Stadnyck a.k.a. "Rose-o-cop" and the handsome Mr. David Wilson have tied the knot in a small, private ceremony and are the proud new owners of a HUGE house in Maple Ridge. All the best Rose and Dave!!!!

AUTHORS UPDATE by Steve Forty

Local Author Robert Charles Wilson's latest book "GYPSIES" (currently available in hardcover) was reviewed in the May 28th NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW! Good for you, Bob! Next step, New York Times best seller list! GYPSIES will be available in paperback in December, as will Bob's novel "A HIDDEN PLACE." Both were displayed by Bantam Books at the AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS CON in June side-by-side with Bill Gibson's MONA LISA OVERDRIVE and Arthur C. Clarke's RAMA II! Bob's "THE DIVIDE" will come out in 1990! His first book "MEMORY WIRE" is still around, and he is currently working on a fifth SF novel! Keep up the good work, Bob! All the best!

V-CON LOST AND FOUND

Seems Conventioneers lost lots of items: D&D figures, books, clothing, jewellery, and a camera. Make inquiries to reservations at U.R.C., call 224-9363. Be sure to describe item in detail to prove it belongs to you.

LOCS FROM BEYOND

From: ALEXANDER R. SLATE
1847 Babcock #406, San Antonio TX 78229 USA

Dear BCSFazine,

This letter is in the way of a goodbye to Steve Forty. Old fanzine editors never die, their ink just sort of fades away. Steve has made BCSFazine into a fine clubzine. It's main strength was the consistency from month to month, something very hard to accomplish. Speaking from experience I know this. Vaya con dios, Steve, in whatever your new endeavors may be I expect we'll see something from you in the future, it sort of gets in the blood.

We'll look forward to seeing what happens with BCSFazine under the new editorship.

Last note, as of 12 June I will have a new apartment. The address will remain as before, except substitute #406 for #702.

Best, Alexander R. Slate

From: HARRY ANDRUSCHAR
P.O. Box 5309, Torrance CA, USA 90510-5309

Dear Graeme:

Thanks for sending me a copy of your new perzine, BCSFazine #193. In fact, for some reason I got two copies. Really, I do not need two copies. One is just fine. I think you should re-check your file system and see what can be done to prevent this in the future. (IDIOTOR'S NOTE: Not seeing you on the membership list, and not having a copy of the trades list, I just assumed your BCSFA's would be hand addressed. Oops! Typical editor change-over problem. Won't happen again... The Graeme) Money is all important, after all.

((I think a lot about money nowadays, since returning from my three week vacation at the Grand Canyon. That was about \$2,000. Next year, I would like to go on a four week truck trip across the Sahara desert, at a cost of \$3,500. Of course, I would be unable to attend the 1990 Worldcon in Holland.))

Note to Debbie Miyashita: My birthdate is 4 October, 1944. On 4 October 1957, Sputnik one was launched.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: following is compilation of letter and Harry's 'THE NATTER zine')

If I am so worried about money, why do I continue to be an active fanzine publisher? As for my perzine in progress, "GRAND CANYON MEMORIES", I am up to page 14. I think I will devote page 15 to "How I Almost Drowned In Crystal Rapid." Actually, I am not really sure how close I came to drowning. After our raft hit the rock, and everybody was swept out of the raft by the wall of water, we all sort of lost track of the time. I may have been underneath the raft, trapped, for over a minute and air running out. Or it may have been less time than that. In any case, "GRAND CANYON MEMORIES" is going to be over two ounces. I need to keep it under three ounces to keep postage costs within my limited budget.

In case anybody is wondering, I donate all fanzines and Apas that I get to Forrest J. Ackerman, for his SF collection. Forry is still looking for a way to make his collection a part of a permanent collection in some public library. If he does, the fanzines will be a part of that collection.

And what can be said about the on-going discussion about "cold fusion"? Or "table-top fusion" as it is sometimes called. Believers in APA-L and other fanzines I receive are using much the same arguments that John W. Campbell used to support "psi", or that others have used to support flying saucers and other new age stuff. Talk about DEJA VU!!

Yes, yes, I know all about keeping an open mind. What you really mean is "keep an open mind until you agree with me, and if you do not end up agreeing with me, that is proof YOU did not keep an open mind."

Of course, even Robert Heinlein got suckered a few times, as when he claimed that it was proven that the gravity constant is changing. It wasn't, experimental error. Tsk, tsk. So I guess it is understandable why Dr. Jerry Pournelle is among the believers.

I am enclosing copies of the last 3 apazines I printed, to keep you up to date on my activities. I seem to be having some health problems that will cost money to fix.

Yours for a kinder, gentler fanac...

Harry Andruschak

LOCS FROM BEYOND

From: R.J. (Jim) Robinson
675 Rue Lahaie, Gatineau, Quebec, J8R 1J4

Dear Record-keeping Person,

Pleased be advised that we have moved, and that our new address (ABOVE) is effective immediately.

I would like to say that even though I don't get out to many meetings due to the length of the drive, I really enjoy getting the 'zine every month. Congratulations to Steve for a job really well done, and I hope that you can keep up the high standard. I hope that V-CON went off well and was as profitable as desired. Bye for now, and until next time, I remain,

Yours Sincerely, R.J. Robinson

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From: JOSEPH T. MAJOR
4701 Taylor Boulevard #8,
Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A. 40215-2343

Dear God:

Hmmm, that did not quite sound right, did it?

What bothers me about Stan Hyde is that I think he is correct about the dearth of innovation in the 70's and 80's. Sometimes I feel that if it were not for Roman numerals, modern film would be dead. And how did he forget continuations: ISAAC ASIMOV'S ROBOT CITY by William F. Wu et alia, ARTHUR C. CLARKE'S VENUS PRIME by Paul Preuss -- they used to wait until a writer was dead before this. Think of the atrocities perpetuated in the names of Conan, Lord Kalvan, Lord Darcy, and so on. (Well, some of them are not bad, but even the best seems to have a perverse need to introduce something radically different to the original conception.) However, it is possible that this endless appetite for sequelae stems from the desire to turn on the tube every week and see another adventure of whomever (the doctor, Captain Kirk, Blake & Co., et cetera, et cetera).

Translations slip up in all directions; I was just reading an article on Nancy Martsch's BEYOND BREE on how Tolkien suffered at the hands of his French translators. Even Hutchingses can slip; Umslopogaas is not in KING SOLOMON'S MINES but in its sequel, ALLAN QUARTERMAIN, and, like Quartermain, in about half-a-dozen other books including one titled ALLAN AND SHE which is about what you could guess. And there are a couple more books about Ayesha. What were we saying about endless sequelae?

Then too, as long as we are talking about A. Merrit, the evolution of THE MOON POOL is interesting; the villain was a German in the serialization and a Russian in the book publication. Of course the book was serialized during the (First) World War and published in hardback after the Bolshevik Revolution. Following the election returns?

Don DeBrandt is discussing the theory of shared worlds. The theory is well presented and defended. However, the practise is marked by few of the advantages and all of the negative points he mentioned (and a few more). In particular, the weeding of weak concepts and wrong information he refers to does not happen: instead, editors simply deny that the weak concepts are weak and that the wrong information is wrong.

Doug Girling's Archaeo-SF-ology has forgotten the ultimate pulp SF plane: the B-36 with its six props, two jet pods, tons of Cryogenic equipment in the belly (old H-bombs had to be kept cold) and GRP-86's hanging beneath. Think of that in a 1936 Thrilling Wonder Stories.

Namarie, Joseph T. Major

ZINESCENE by Garth Spencer

THE OWLET RETURNS FROM THE GRAND CANYON Editor: Harry Andruschak, P.O. Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309 U.S.A. Two-page LASPAPA diaryzine-apazine. From the last of the ditto masters.

OTTAWA SF STATEMENT #143 May 1989, monthly from OSFS, Box 6636, Stn J, Ottawa, ON K2A 3Y7. In this issue: local Ottawa fandom news; Charles Mohapel invites you to send Pinecone II/Convention 9 any photos of Canadian Cons; "Rumour central" (bringing you the best substantiated rumours this side of Ottawa river); Paul Valcour's semi-national news; zine reviews; "Ask Mr. Science!" (in syndication); letters, cartoons and Con listings.

WARP #3: 3,4,5 (March, April, May 1989), c/o MonSFFA, P.O. Box 2413, Dorval, Que. H9S 5N4. A well-produced clubzine; needs some more content. Funny amateur illos, good layout, ads, semi-official pronouncements, letters, local doings, Con-Cept announcement, gaming and film news, Con-report, editorial on Star*Log (feh), more media and comic news; a basic congoing guide by Joseph Aspier, some science news; an editorial on the Planetary Society's world, academic SF criticism and a Con calendar!

DATAPHILE #10:3 Spring '89, c/o SFFC, W.W.U.-A.S., V.U. 202, Box H-7, Bellingham, WA 98225, U.S.A. There's something quirky and fun about this club newsletter. An ad for "Space 1889" (I swear I'm not making that up), letters, club news, some zines reviewed, Dave Sullivan on FRED, a light, funny short story, two pages of plastered-at-3-a.m. gags, a Con calendar, a 3-a.m. "Death by chocolate", and stuff.

BURNABY WRITERS' SOCIETY NEWSLETTER June 1989, c/o 6450 Deer Lake Avenue, Burnaby, B.C., V5G 2J3. 4 8&1/2 by 14" pages of who sold what, future events, and market updates. With a flyer for the August Festival of the Written Arts program (to be held in Sechelt).

LIGHT IN THE BUSHEL #6 Richard Brandt, 4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso, TX 79912, U.S.A. A short, pleasant, unassuming perzine. Bits of Brandt's mundane and fannish life, adventures and misadventures, in Lone Star fandom. With fillos by some of the best. (I promise you Richard, I'm going to do the same thing real soon now.)

SOLARIS #84 Avril 1989, a/s Luc Pomerleau, C.P. 25, succ. A, Hull, Quebec, J8Y 6M7. In this issue, besides SF and fantasy and news "capsules", we have critical articles on Lovecraft -- and a critical article asking how much science there is in science-fiction Quebecois, anyway, and what kind of attitude the writers are taking. Have we got space to reprint this, Graeme? If I can do a half-decent translation, that is... (EDITOR'S ANSWER: a definite maybe! If Solaris says oui, and if you bribe me sufficiently)

OASFis EVENT HORIZON #25 June 1989, c/o OASFis, P.O. Box 616469, Orlando, FL 32661-6469, U.S.A. A special embiggid Oasis Con issue. Or should I say enhuged? With two decent pieces of fanfiction and an article on recent and current worldcon issues (and why you should care). They should do this all the time.

TRANSMISSIONS #281/282, "Nova Odysseus", P.O. Box 1534, Panama City, FL, 32402-1534, U.S.A. Your basic club newsletter with SF illos; pretty decently done.

OASIS II PROGRAM BOOK Event held a week before V-CON (Same weekend as Key-Con). Digest-sized, photocopied; quite well done. Also pocket program.

THE NORTH WIND #129 June AS XXIV, c/o 5870 Booth Ave. (Bsm) Burnaby, B.C., V5H 3A9. The newsletter of the Barony of Lions Gate, Northern Society for Creative Anachronism. \$7 (Cdn) per year. More detailed and useful calendar of events than The Toad, more legible, and more interesting.

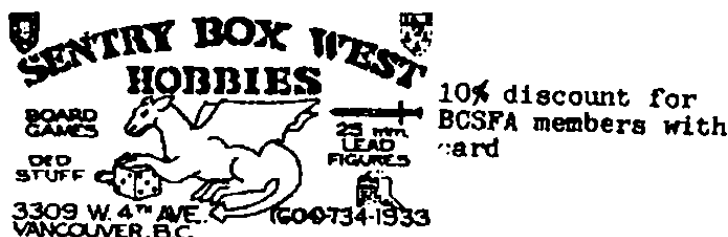
FOSPAX #139 May 1989, c/o FOSFA, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233 -7281, U.S.A. Another humungous clubzine from Out There. News, reviews, articles, illos, and lots of locs. (Seems like I'm in shit this issue. Well, once more into the fray...)

THE TOAD June A.S. XXIV, c/o Catherine Downward, 1021 Queens Avenue, New Westminster, B.C. V3M 1M4. Good illos.

THE MAD THREE PARTY #34 May 1989 (Did I review this already?) <EDITOR'S NOTE: No> the continuing adventures of Noreascon 3, Box 46, MIT Branch PO (which may or may not recognize that they use the box; try "Massachusetts Convention Fandom Inc.") Cambridge, MA 02139, U.S.A. Rilly organized. I like to watch the letter column.

SF CHRONICLE June 1989, Andrew Porter Ed., P.O. Box 2730, Brooklyn, NY 11202-0056, U.S.A. In this issue: yet more SF news; market updates; some fandom news; COMPREHENSIVE SF MARKET LISTINGS; July book releases, book reviews. Con listings and letters. Locus doesn't give you a picture of the whole SF market, like SFC does semi-quarterly.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS



BCSFA EXECUTIVE MEETING

JUNE 17, 1988

Present: Con Hiebner, Kathleen Moore-Freeman, R. Graeme Cameron,
Dan Dubrick, Frances Higgsion

Place: Shadowgate Manor commencing at 7:30 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

Signing Power: Dan and Sidney will be signing officers until such time as BCSFA receives letter from June Osborne relinquishing her signing power.

Mail Box: Bill not received yet

Printing Supplies: Steve Forty will be making a run for supplies for printing BCSFAzine in a couple of weeks. Dan will buy postage.

Treasurers Report: Dan indicated that this would be ready by June 24th.

NEW BUSINESS:

New BCSFA member: Dan will have to write back to a person requesting membership in BCSFA. The cheque was payable to BCSFAzine and was at the old rates. This person had discovered about BCSFA in SF Chronicle.

Typewriter: BCSFA owns a broken typewriter. Con H. said he found out it would cost \$150+ to repair and asked whether or not it would be worth fixing. This will be discussed at the general meeting.

July Meeting: This will be held at Alan Kelly's place. If warm, we will be swimming, using sauna and cabsana. A games night will be held also. Graeme said that someone contacted him about test-playing a new game called "MOOT". We would be willing to try this and Graeme will get more details.

August Picnic: The location, once again, is Locarno Beach on Saturday, August 19th. Post-picnic party location to be found later. In case of rain, we will go straight to party location. Graeme and Kathleen will organize formal invitations to fans of the Northwest to participate by contacting Westwind, Pulsar and trades in Bellingham etc.

Micron: Con H mentioned that he would like to see if people are interested in setting up a Micron - mini 6 to 8 hour con at a community centre in September. Activities might include author readings, selected videos (including V Con 17), past V Con highlights, ST The Pepsi Generation video, Mad ST movie or Mad Dr. Who movie, artists at work, panels and maybe costume contest etc. Coffee and cookies to be provided. Because this is essentially to acquire new members, advertising will be done at libraries, bookstores with posters and flyers. If successful, we will have another Micron in March.

October meeting: Halloween party.

November meeting: Science World during the afternoon, the meetings afterwards and possibly turkey readings programming for the evening. We may get \$1 off admission if group is sufficiently large for Science World.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

KM-F and FH

BCSFA GENERAL MEETING

JUNE 17, 1988

Present: about 30 people

Location: Shadowgate Manor

The meeting commenced at 8:20 p.m.

by Frances Higginson

OLD BUSINESS:

Sharing: Kathleen will give Dan the address for sending money to Non-Con.

NEW BUSINESS:

Treasurer's report: BCSFA funds are up a little now since many members have renewed. Report will be out soon.

July Meeting: Membership was informed of arrangements for July meeting - Alan Kelly's, swimming, games, and perhaps testing of a new game. Fran suggested that members offer their place, if they can, for crash space for those people coming from out of town. Meeting place for party after will be decided later.

August Picnic: Frances will coordinate supplies needed for picnic and a special note will be made in the BCSFAzine about the picnic including exact location, liquor regs, food etc.

Micron (a One Day Minicon): The membership thought this was a good idea and suggestions were made for the Kitsilano CC or the West End CC. We'll see which one is cheaper. The con will last from about 12 noon to 6 p.m. Activities will take place in one room and Kathleen read off the various events and items being considered now for programming. The date is Saturday, September 16th. A suggestion was made that the university SF clubs be invited to participate. If they want to participate, then the date MAY be moved to September 23rd.

October meeting: It was suggested that the Halloween party be geared to Druid-type costumes this year, an idea which delighted some of the members.

Christmas Party: This will be held at Steve Forty's and Jackie asked to be allowed to play Santa again.

Other meeting: January, not decided. February, the second annual hot tub party at Shadowgate?

Typewriter: After some discussion about the disposal of the non-working BCSFA typewriter, a motion was placed by Al Betz to put an ad in BCSFAzine to sell it for \$25 or best offer, BCSFA members getting preference. This was seconded by Terry Fowler and this was passed unanimously.

V Con 17: Con Hiebner announced that a profit of possibly \$3,000 but maybe less by the time the bills are all in, was made this year. Con said that he got lots of good feedback about V Con 17 and he thanked all those who helped make it successful. A post-V Con 17 Con Com party will be held at Shadowgate on June 24th. Actual meeting at 7 p.m. A letter received by Con from Bob Shaw was read. This will probably appear in BCSFAzine next issue. The total membership was 776 but four cheques bounced from people who did not end up coming - so really, the number was 772. Still a record.

V Con 18: Lisa Smedman gave a report on V Con 18. Artist GoH is Roger Raupp, Dragon Magazine Art Director among other things. So far 51 people have joined - there are some dealers and one advertiser signed up also. Membership will be \$17 to November 30th with \$2 discount to BCSFA members and a further \$2 if you're a BCSFA member on the Con Com. If members are going to any outlying cons, contact Lisa for flyers to take with you.

Westercon: Terry Fowler described arrangements for promotion (including a skit) of Westercon 91 in Vancouver at Los Angeles this July. There are 3 representatives going from Vancouver plus Jon Gustavson from Moscow. They will phone home Monday night with results of the bid to Con Hiebner.

Context: Steve Forty suggested that, if enough people are going to Context, a party be arranged at which we will make a toast to Westercon.

At 9:20 p.m., a motion was made by Kathleen to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Rick Smith. Carried. FH



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