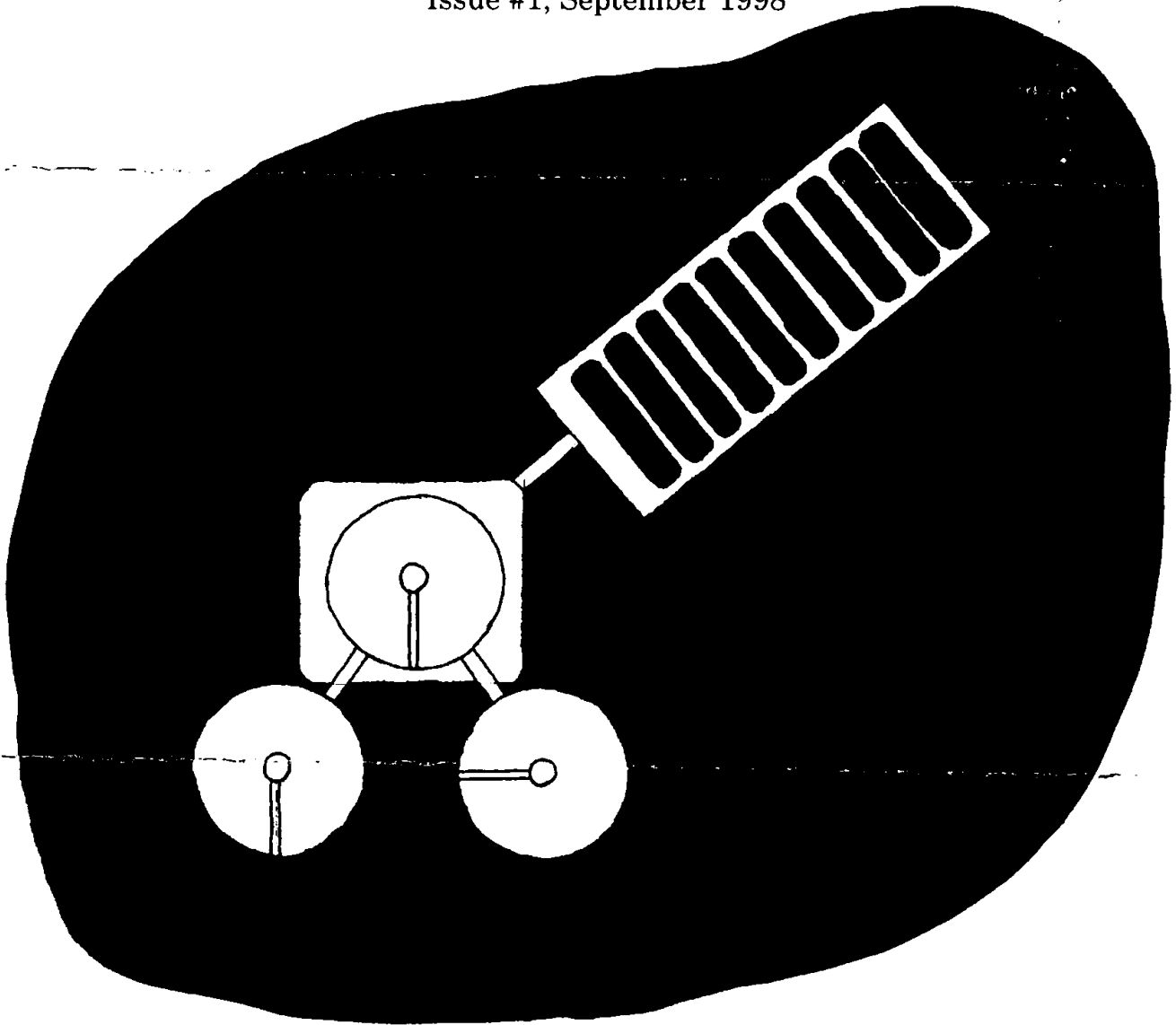


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# Covert Communications From Zeta Corvi

Issue #1, September 1998



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Edited and published by



Andrew C. Murdoch

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Covert Communications From Zeta Corvi is available for the Usual (That is, in exchange for a submission of text or artwork, a copy of your 'zine in trade, a letter of comment, or two dollars cash). Send submissions or subscriptions to:

Andrew C. Murdoch,  
2563 Heron Street,  
Victoria, B.C.,  
V8R 5Z9

or e-mail at [raven@wolf.spydernet.com](mailto:raven@wolf.spydernet.com)

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The Purpose of Covert Communications From Zeta Corvi:

- To review SF books, movies and other projects.
- To open discussion on the topics and ideas presented therein.
- To show how SF has influenced the real world, or how real world science is achieving some of SF's ideas and concepts.
- To report on major (and not-so-major) conventions.
- To report and publicize SF awards and fan funds.
- To review and promote other SF fanzines.
- To foster discussion, of both SF and other topics, through a healthy LoC column.

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Any articles which relate to these aims are encouraged and welcome.

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# My Two Cents' Worth or Stop Me, Before I Publish Again!

## Andrew C. Murdoch

Last time, it was John Wilcox Herbert and Karl Johanson. This time it's R. Graeme Cameron. He's the one who has inspired me this time around to start pubbing my ish (which means I'm blaming him when I find out I'm broke!).

Well, I had other reasons, too.

For example, there's the fact that I am terrible at keeping up with correspondence. Ask anyone. It's been months, maybe even years since I've LoCed another 'zine. I eventually let correspondence dwindle between anyone else I may start one with... this includes fans, friends, and family. The fact that I do delay so much infuriates my fiancée. So, the thought hits. Publish a 'zine, and people will write me! Insidious? Yes. Unethical? Beats me, but it works!

I also felt I needed to improve my writing ability to some degree, *any* degree. Hence, a 'zine in which to organize the ramblings in my mind on a selection of subjects, which tie in more or less to science-fiction. Hopefully, they'll make for good reading as well.

And, well, I haven't forgotten that first Aurora nomination back in '94 for my first 'zine, ZX. Add delusions of grandeur to the list of reasons.

How's that for reasons to publish?

So, here then is this, the first issue of Covert Communications From Zeta Corvi. Long may she (and my funds to publish it) last.

## Accolades

For those connected to the net, check out AwardWeb at <http://www.city-net.com/~lmann/awards/index.html>. This site has information on many literary awards, both in SF and other genres, from around the world.

### CUFF

Lloyd and Yvonne Penney were the winners of the 1998 Canadian Unity Fan Fund. They will both be attending Convention 18/Con\*Cept '98 in Montreal in October, and then take over from 1997 CUFF winner R. Graeme Cameron as the fund's administrators for the 1999 award. Lloyd and Yvonne are both past winners of the Prix Aurora Award.

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund exists to send prominent Canadian fans to Convention, the Canadian National SF Convention.

### The Auroras

The Aurora Awards are given to recognize Canadian professional and fannish achievements in science-fiction and fantasy. They are given out every year at Convention, this year to be held in Montreal in October. The nominees for this year have been announced, and are:

#### Best Long-Form Work in English

- *Trader*, Charles de Lint (Tor, Feb/97)
- *Black Wine*, Candace Jane Dorsey (Tor, Jan/97)
- *Shadow of Ashland*, Terence M. Green (Tor, Jan/96)
- *Frameshift*, Robert J. Sawyer (Tor, June/97)
- *Illegal Alien*, Robert J. Sawyer (Ace, Dec/97)

#### Best Long-Form Work in French

- *Corps-machines et rêves d'anges*, Alain Bergeron (Vents d'Ouest, 97)
- *Coeur de fer*, Joël Champetier (Orion, 97)
- *L'Odyssée du Pénélope*, Jean-Pierre Guillet (Héritage, 97)
- *Nelle de Vilvèq*, Francine Pelletier (Alire, 97)
- *Aboli*, Esther Rochon (Alire, 96)
- *Le Jeu de la perfection*, Élisabeth Vonarburg (Alire, 96)

#### **Best Short-Form Work in English**

- "The PlayTime Case", David Chato (On Spec Winter/97)
- "Divisions", Eric Choi (Tesseract 6)
- "Three Hearings on the Existence of Snakes in the Human Blood Stream", James Alan Gardner (Asimov's, Feb/97)
- "The Fishmonger's Emeralds", Katie Harse (Tesseract 6)
- "The Watley Man and the Green-Eyed Girl", Eileen Kernaghan (TransVersions #7)
- "The Hand You're Dealt", Robert J. Sawyer (Free Space, Tor)
- "Spirit Dance", Douglas Smith (Tesseract 6)
- "Prescribed Burn", Jena Snyder (Tesseract 6)

#### **Best Short-Form Work in French**

- "La Voyeuse", Manon Brunet (imagine... 78)
- "Badelaire l'assassin", Joël Champetier (Concerto pour six voix, Médiaspaul)
- "Une lettre de ma mère", Yves Meynard (Solaris 121)
- "Dans ses yeux une flamme", Daniel Sernine (Entre voisins, Pierre Tisseyre)
- "Fictions et fantascience", Jean-Louis Trudel (Solaris 121)

#### **Best Other Work in English**

- Firewall, ReBoot episode 3.1.3 (Mainframe Entertainment, Inc)
- Northern Frights 4, Don Hutchison, ed. (Mosaic Press) (anthology)
- On Spec, SF magazine (The Copper Pig Writers' Society)
- Parsec, SF magazine (Parsec Publishing Co.)
- Sandoval's Run, Earth: Final Conflict episode 112 (Atlantis Films, Baton Broadcasting, Roddenberry/Kirschner Productions, Tribune Entertainment)
- Tesseract 6, Robert J. Sawyer & Carolyn Clink, eds. (Tesseract Books) (anthology)
- TransVersions, SF magazine (Island Specialty Reports)

#### **Best Other Work in French**

- "Un baiser dans le noir—Quand Stephen King se fait nouvelliste", Guy Sirois (Stephen King: Trente ans de terreur, Alire)
- imagine..., Paul-G. Crôteau/Jean-Marc Gouanvic, réd. (Les Imaginoides)
- Hugues Morin, editor/directeur (Stephen King: Trente ans de terreur, Alire)
- Solaris, Hugues Morin, réd. (Les Compagnons à temps perdu)
- Élisabeth Vonarburg, critiques (Solaris 120-123)

#### **Artistic Achievement**

- James Beveridge
- Edward Charpentier
- Yves Crepeau
- Janet L. Hetherington
- Jean-Pierre Normand
- Larry Stewart
- Ronn Sutton

#### **Fan Achievement (Fanzine)**

- A Little Enlightenment, Chris Chartier, ed. (Btfcog)
- OSFS Statement, M. B. Wadsworth, ed. (Ottawa SF Society)
- Sol Rising, Theresa Wojtasiewicz, ed. (Friends of the Merrill Collection)
- The Space Cadet Gazette, R. Graeme Cameron, ed.
- Warp, Keith Braithwaite, ed. (MonSFFA)
- Warp Factor, Chris Chartier, ed. (Warp 9)

#### **Fan Achievement (Organizational)**

- Chris Chartier (Warp 9 and/et British Television Fanclub of Quebec)
- Andrew Gurudata (Pharos Project)
- Peter Halasz (The National SF & Fantasy Society / La Société Nationale de la S-F et du Fantastique)
- Cindy Huckle (Primedia)
- Ann Methe (Con\*cept)
- Rebecca M. Senese (Space-Time Continuum)

#### **Fan Achievement (Other)**

- R. Graeme Cameron (CUFF)
- Gary Hilson (Canadian SF & Fantasy Resource Guide website) ([www.connect.ab.ca/~garyh/cansfrg](http://www.connect.ab.ca/~garyh/cansfrg))
- Charles Mohapel (Hollyweird column/chronique)
- Lloyd Penney (fan-writing/écriture fanique)
- Larry Stewart (entertainer/personnalité amateur)

Further information and voting ballots are available at the Aurora Awards web site,  
<http://www.sentex.net/~dmullin/aurora>

## **The Hugos**

The Hugo Awards, nominated and voted by members of the World Science-Fiction Convention, were given out on 7 August 1998 at Bucconeer/WorldCon 56 in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

Novel: *Forever Peace* by Joe Haldeman

Novella: ...*Where Angels Fear to Tread* by Allen Steele

Novelette: "We Will Drink a Fish Together" by Bill Johnson

Short Story: "The 43 Antarean Dynasties" by Mike Resnick

Non-Fiction Book: *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*, edited by John Clute and John Grant

Dramatic Presentation: *Contact*, Directed by Robert Zemeckis

Professional Editor: Gardner Dozois

Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton

Semi-Prozine: *Locus*, edited by Charles N. Brown

Fanzine: *Mimosa*, Edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch

Fan Writer: Dave Langford

Fan Artist: Joe Mayhew

Campbell Award: Mary Doria Russell

## **Phillip K. Dick Award**

The Phillip K. Dick Award is given for distinguished SF published as a paperback in the U.S. The 1997 winner was *The Troika* by Stepan Chapman, presented at NorWesCon 21 in Seattle on 10 April 1998. A special citation also went to William Barton for the novel *Acts of Conscience*.

## Nebula Awards

The Nebula Awards are nominated and presented by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA) for outstanding achievement in Science Fiction. The 1997 Awards were awarded on 2 May 1998 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, U.S.A.

Best Novel: *The Moon and the Sun* by Vonda McIntyre  
Best Novella: *Abandon in Place* by Jerry Oltion  
Best Novelette: *Flowers of Aulit Prison* by Nancy Kress  
Short Story: "Sister Emily's Lightship" by Jane Yolen

Frederick Pohl was also named a Grand Master of Science-Fiction at the awards for his lifetime achievements.

## 'Zine in Passing

Any 'zine available for 'The Usual' can be had by sending a submission of text or artwork, a copy of your own 'zine in trade, a letter of comment, or two dollars cash.

### **The Space Cadet Gazette**

Edited and published by R. Graeme Cameron  
1855 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Apt. #110, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6J 1J1  
Available for the Usual.

Comments: Issue nine is devoted to the first part of Graeme's history of the Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF), right up to the point where he got nominated as 1997's recipient and administrator. Highly amusing in places to see how some of the early winners (or recent ones, even) received the award.

### **CanfAPA - The Canadian Fanzine APA**

Edited and published by R. Graeme Cameron  
1855 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Apt. #110, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6J 1J1  
Available for CDN\$3 (Canadian Addresses) or US\$3 (Everywhere else) per issue.  
Comments: This APA was created as a forum for Canadian fanzine editors to discuss how to keep fanzines in Canada going, in this new day and age of convention-going, Internet cruising fandom. Topics have included preserving 'zines of old, promoting 'zines and 'zine editing to fans, and converting fans to messing about with paper. The APA is available for anyone who wants a copy, and not just the APA's charter members, so anyone can feel free to join the discussion, or just read and consider.

### **BCSFazine**

Edited by John C. H. Wong.  
Published by the West Coast Science Fiction Association  
Available for CDN\$26 per year (12 issues, includes WCSFA membership)  
Comments: Issue #303 has book reviews, convention guides, web site guides, news on various television SF projects, club events and even a LoC or two. All in all, the usual good stuff.

# Introduction to The Retro Review

## Andrew C. Murdoch

According to sociologists today, I belong to that amorphous demographic known as Generation X. Isn't it great we have people like them around to tell me these things? I probably wouldn't have known otherwise. Imagine not having someone to tell me I was born between 1969 and 1978! All that means basically is, I'm young.

Being young in this day and age has had certain undeniable influences on my interest in science-fiction and my involvement in fandom. My first experience with science-fiction was when my father took me, at age six, to see my first movie, a low-budget flick called *Star Wars*. Ever the closet fan, my father also subsequently took me to see such films as *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and the first two *Star Trek* films. (My mother, by comparison, was more than a little bored when she sat through *The Black Hole* with me.) Then I ventured into other titles. I credit *BattleStar Galactica* more than anything else for getting me into science-fiction on a regular basis.

See the trend yet?

I was in my early twenties before I realized that I had hardly *read* any science-fiction at all. Books that my friends (all of whom were older than me) had read years ago I never had. And even once I had started, I was, on occasion, looked down on (or like I was some sort of alien myself) because I hadn't read a particular book. Once, when the pub table conversation had turned to Heinlein, I had to defend myself when one of my friends thought I hadn't read any of his works, when in fact I'd read all his best-known novels and most of the rest of his portfolio.

There's still a lot of works of science-fiction that are considered "classics" which I have not yet read. That's where this feature comes in. I'll be taking this column as an opportunity to review a novel that's not new, but will be new to me. (As if the used bookstores don't already love me!) For those who, like myself, aren't so well read, I hope this inspires them to pick up a copy of those works they may have missed. For everyone else, I hope it inspires a desire to go back and enjoy those books again. Either way, now we'll have one more thing in common to talk about over the pub table.

# The Retro Review

## Andrew C. Murdoch

### Starship Troopers

#### By Robert A. Heinlein

Most people have probably heard the most frequent complaints about the film inspired by this novel... That it was excessively violent and gory, and portrayed a fascist society as a Good Thing. The novel, however, paints a different picture, and so, since Heinlein is my favourite author and the general public now thinks he wrote a clone of *Aliens*, I thought it would be a good candidate for a review.

In actual fact, *Starship Troopers*, the novel, contains very few scenes of combat. It's part military SF, part coming-of-age story, and part pro-military manifest. The story centers around Johnnie Rico, a kid just out of high school who follows a couple friends of his too far into a recruiting center and ends up in the Mobile Infantry. Trouble was, though, that at the same time a war was breaking out between Earth and the Bugs, alien insects who simply decide to swat humanity for no apparent reason.

Certainly, Heinlein had no qualms about suggesting the world would be better off with a little good old fashioned law and order... public floggings and such... and also that only those truly prepared to die for the state, veterans, were the only ones allowed to make laws for it. But, all in all, it takes a back seat to following Rico through some tried and true rituals, such as opposing your parents' wishes, leaving home, and facing life on your own (which is tough enough without man-sized insects trying to eat you).

As for the fascism of *Starship Troopers*... a good deal of what was considered fascist in the movie and the novel, such as mandatory military service and floggings for criminal punishment, exist already in the world today. Greece, for example, not only requires military service for citizenship but also has no allowance for conscientious object, and what was a routine punishment for vandalism in Singapore became an international incident when an American citizen was flogged for the crime, the fact that Singapore has a very low crime rate notwithstanding.

*Starship Troopers* is a prime example of Heinlein's writing style and views, and is a darn entertaining book to boot. Hopefully the movie's reputation (and its poor show at the box office) don't prevent anyone from picking this book up.

## Afterword

### Andrew C. Murdoch

Modest. I think that best describes this issue. Still, I think most first issues are fairly modest. I had hoped to include a review of Albany Anthrocon '98 in this issue as well, but found it was written for way too specific an audience, so I dropped it. Ah well...

This issue had actually been started over a year ago. I had hoped to make my review of *Starship Troopers* all the more timely, and had started writing the review after re-reading the book in anticipation of the film, but life happened, and things got pushed back. After writing the introduction to the Retro Review, though, a thought hits me... why not open it up to everyone? If you have an older book you'd like to write a Retro Review for, by all means, go ahead. A general guideline for the column is that the reviewed book be at least ten years old (and science-fiction or fantasy, of course!).

Anyway, modest or no, I'm glad to be back into fanpubbing, and I hope *Covert Communications From Zeta Corvi* does nothing but improve. For now, this issue is finished at last. Ahhhhhhhh...

