

UNDER THE Ozone Hole

Issue # 9



UNDER THE OZONE HOLE

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*Edited By John Willcox Herbert &
Karl Johanson*

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Proofreader - Monica Herbert.

Art Editor - Stephanie Ann Johanson.

Reviewer-in-Residence - Paula Johanson.

Mascot - Toodles the Wonder Fish.

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Send us your club news and info, fan news, convention news & reports, reviews, cartoons, fillos, addresses etc. If we publish something you send us, we can't pay you, but you'll get something better than money: **mega supreme egoboo**.

Write us:

Karl Johanson	John Willcox Herbert
4129 Carey Road	2330 Otter Point Road
Victoria, B.C.	RR#2 OPR D2
V8Z 4G5	Sooke, B.C.
	V0S 1N0

Karl's e-mail address is:
ug837@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

John's e-mail address is:
uj257@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

Canadians are generally indistinguishable from Americans, and the surest way of telling the two apart is to make the observation to a Canadian.

--Richard Starnes, 1965

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Contributors

Brian D. Clarke, John Willcox Herbert, Laura Houghton, Karl Johanson, Paula Johanson, Andrew C. Murdoch and Robert Runté.

Art

Barb McLean: pages 8, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 & 26.
All other art by Stephanie Ann Johanson.

About The Cover

What else can we say? Dwight Lockhart weaves his magic for us again. Thanks, Dwight! (We hear Robert is consulting his lawyer right now.)

Don't talk to me about free trade... All that would happen with that kind of concept would be the boys cranking up their plants in the United States in the bad times and shutting their entire branch plants in Canada. It's bad enough as it is.

-- Brian Mulroney, 1983

The Canadians don't understand what they've signed. In 20 years they will be sucked into the U.S. economy

-- Clayton Yeutter, U.S. Trade Rep., 1990

Canada is just like an apple on a tree just beyond reach. We may strive to grasp it, but the bough recedes from our hold just in proportion to our efforts to catch it. Let it alone, and in due time it will fall into our hands.

-- James G. Blaine, U.S. Secretary of State, 1889

The Editor's Opinion

by Karl Johanson

I've had a few friends ask about my status as to working on the *ConAdian* daily newsletter. More than a year ago I was asked if I would edit the newsletter with Steve Jackson. Some correspondence and a phone call confirmed my willingness to do this. About three weeks before the convention I was told that a new editor had been chosen for the daily newsletter. Because there may still be some people who have only heard the story up to this point, I thought it would be appropriate to explain the details I have since learned. A new person had very recently taken over publications for the Worldcon. She was told that Steve Jackson was editing the newsletter, but upon contacting him she learned that he was now unfortunately unable to do so. Unaware that I had been asked to co-edit, she quickly rounded up a new editor. To the best of my knowledge no deliberate slight toward me was intended by anyone. If there was any wrongdoing here it was perhaps only a very small communications breakdown within a committee which is running a very complex and involved event.

It looks as if I had over-booked myself for different functions and such at the Worldcon anyway and I can use the extra time generated by not needing to do a daily (actually a twice daily, I understand). So John and I crammed our programming changes flyer, our coupons and the Canadian dictionary Cath Jackel suggested (and contributed to) into *UTOH* instead. I look forward to a good con and an interesting daily newsletter.

When we decided to make *UTOH*'s schedule 'roughly 4 times a year', there were some very good reasons for it. One, John and I, both being business owners, have this stupid habit of putting in extra time at work and can't always find time to write. Two, time doesn't really work properly in my mind. Three, it saves postage to time the zine to come out at the same time as a con where we and some subscribers will be. Four, if we have no preset time of publication no one can accuse us of being late. Now, we ran into a problem with our last issue: it was late. By declaring the last issue the *Apollo 11* anniversary issue we had inadvertently given ourselves a deadline. (Unless we want to cheat and make up something like, "No, wait!! We meant the anniversary of the first barbecue Buzz Aldrin had after he got back from the moon.") Sure enough the deadline came and went (*various really great excuses we'd really rather save for another occasion are available on request*). Eventually *UTOH* Number Eight, the *Apollo* issue, popped out and Number Nine was completed ten days later in time for Worldcon. I thoroughly believe that the principal cause of the lateness of *UTOH* Number Eight was our previously implied specific publication date. Don't worry, it won't happen again.

Latest rumor I hear about the movie *Alien 4* is that Ripley will be back because she is supposed to have dreamed *Alien 3*. Remember, you read it here first (way back in *UTOH* Number One).



The Other Editor's Opinion

by John Willcox Herbert

Welcome to Under the Ozone Hole Number Nine. As I type this, we are less than a week away from ConAdian — The 52nd World Science Fiction Convention in Winnipeg! This time next week, we'll be partying down and swatting mosquitoes at Portage and Main (only the big ones. You learn to ignore the little tiny ones, or so I'm told). Therefore, this issue of UTOH is something a little different as we put some of our regular features on hold and unabashedly wave the Maple Leaf in celebration!

But first, a couple of tips of the ol' helmet to Paula Johanson, who pulls off a natural hat-trick by supplying us with not one, not two, but *three* author profiles for this issue (all Canadians)! By working overtime, she also gave us *six* book reviews (of Canadian works). Plus an essay (featuring some Canadians)! And she wrote all this Canadian content without mentioning hockey even once! Amazing! Second, many thanks to Dwight Lockhart (a Canadian) for his cannonating work on the cover! We appreciate the time and effort involved, Dwight! The red light is on!

So, what do we have in this issue? As

mentioned, Paula brings us an interview with Sean Stewart, plus profiles of Don H. DeBrandt and Catherine Girczyc. (Paula has stickhandled her way through yet more author profiles that will be coming in the issues ahead.) Robert Runté dings one off the post with the latest instalment of his *Guide to Fandom*, focusing on Con-Twits (didn't I see these guys at the *last* convention I was at?). Laura Houghton and Andrew C. Murdoch enter the offensive zone and face off to compare notes on IBBs, Norwescon, and sexism.

To help all you foreigners here for ConAdian (and yes, that *does* include Americans), we have a guide of common Canadian expressions, sayings and facts so you won't get tripped and end up offside. (So when you hear someone say, "He got two minutes for slashing," you'll realize that the speaker was not referring to the length of a prison term. Or, if someone says they are "icing the puck," it does not mean putting ice cream on a piece of apple pie at Denny's.) Plus, there's a very incomplete list of famous Canadians (like John Kenneth Galbraith, economist).

Also for you ConAdian attendees, after some hard checking we compiled a list

of the past winners of the Prix Aurora Awards, some last minute ConAdian programming changes, a map showing how to get to Winnipeg, and, of course, coupons. And more than our usual supply of silly things. (We wanted to have an article on Canada's space program, e.g. The Rocket, The Pocket Rocket, and The Russian Rocket, but we didn't have enough time).

Plus, for extra padding, we have my Editorial. (Wait a minute....)

This is the first Worldcon for Karl & Stephanie & Monica & me (and Toodles the Wonder Fish for all I know), and we're all looking forward to it. Have been for *years*, in fact. This is also Stephanie's first trip in a jet plane, so if she looks a little nauseated or sick after boarding, you'll know why (she ate the food).

Let me wish all the organizers of ConAdian good luck and much success, and I hope everyone has a great time. I know I will.

And finally, it's not true that all Canadian men achieve orgasm while saying, "He shoots - he scores!" (Although it may explain why Foster Hewitt liked the expression so much. ☺)



Interview with Sean Stewart

Fiction is More Fun When It's Inclusive

by Paula Johanson

Vancouver author Sean Stewart went from being an unknown writer to winner of two national awards — the Arthur Ellis from the Mystery Writers of Canada and the Aurora for Canadian speculative fiction — with his first novel, *Passion Play*. *Nobody's Son* was nominated for this year's Aurora and may do even better than his first book.

Even with all his literary success, Sean Stewart is still willing to be interviewed in a downtown Vancouver coffee shop, complete with the sounds of grill orders and transit bus air brakes squealing nearby. He conveys an astonishing impression of youth, of being a gangly kid playing with a computer or out in the Wild Woods for all that he's a husband and father in his thirties, holding down a nine-to-five job.

Currently he's finishing the galley of *Resurrection Man* for Ace Books. Stewart is also working on a new book in an animist future North America; one with, as he puts it, "Fewer people, somewhat better technology, and several hundred billion more gods." Each book he writes is different from the earlier ones in style, genre and focus, as different as the people walking past the coffee shop on a rainy day in Vancouver.

Passion Play is a futuristic murder mystery with crossover appeal for readers of science fiction and crime fiction. "I came in through the back door selling *Passion Play* to Ace," is how Stewart describes the long road his first book took to market. "After a long series of adventures, *Passion Play* was eventually brought out by the fourth publisher who promised to buy it, this being Beach Holme/Tesseract in Victoria. At my local specialty store in Vancouver, the book did quite well. White Dwarf has probably sold four hundred copies out of their store. They gave a copy of it to their sales representative from Ace, saying 'We think this is a good book. We're selling it like hotcakes. Take it to your boss.' The salesperson did. Editor Susan Allison really really liked the book, so she bought it.

"It was astonishingly simple," he says, dark eyes widening. "After years of trying to sell manuscripts, I finally got that thing every author dreams of: someone from New York called me on the phone." Getting his first fan letters also made a big impression, but praise from strangers hasn't gone to his head.

"*Passion Play* has a number of threads in Greek mythology, Renaissance mystery plays, and Elizabethan tragedy, so it's nice when it's clear that the book is working for people who aren't particularly interested in those things. Fiction is more fun when it's inclusive," he says quietly and confidently in the clatter of the coffee shop. "One of the things that turns people off literary fiction in this century, and quite rightly so, is elitism. 'Well, if you don't speak seven languages and you haven't memorized all the poets back to the 14th century, then this isn't for you, mate.'" He shakes his head. "If people enjoy *Passion Play*, great. It's nice if it's pleasing to someone to see quotes from Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, but it's not necessary to be a Marlowe fan."

One of the results of Stewart's careful writing is that *Passion Play* and *Nobody's Son* work as literary fiction worthy of analysis, as well as popular novels, something that can't be said for many of the latest titles sold on rotating wire racks. How hard was it to sell these first novels? "I'm very hard on publishers," he says with a grin. "As soon as *Passion Play* was accepted by Penguin Canada, they cancelled their line and went deep into debt. When I submitted *Nobody's Son* to Maxwell Macmillan, Robert Maxwell dropped off his boat in the Bahamas and drowned. The week after they officially accepted it for publication his two sons were indicted on racketeering and fraud charges. Now that they've brought it out in hardcover they've been sold to Paramount and will probably cease to exist as an independent Canadian publisher in a few weeks." Instead of feeling pretty paranoid by this time, Stewart can see the humour now; most new writers just collect a stack of rejection slips.

He's also learned a lot just by looking at the new cover for *Passion Play* since it was re-released by Ace Books. "Probably everything you could want to know about the difference between Canadian and American publishing is embodied in these two litigiously similar covers," he says wryly. "The people at Ace Books lifted the cover idea from the Canadian edition, streamlined it, simplified it, used fluorescent orange for the title and my name so that it went from being a cover that might appeal to the coffee bar set as well as the science fiction set, in Canada, understated yet moody, to being a cover in the United States that says 'Hey! You! You across the airport concourse! yeah! Come here! Buy me!' American books do that."

Understated yet moody is another way to describe this tall, self-effacing writer, who doesn't stand out in a crowd yet will hold an audience spell-bound, listening to his quiet voice at a reading. Raised in Edmonton, Alberta, and Texas, Stewart's honest nature fits in well in Vancouver and in the writing community. "One of the advantages of my little 'in through the back door' is that I'm sort of a pet author of the sales reps. These are the people you want taking a personal interest in your career." He adds cheerfully, "Once the sales reps don't like you, you can become what's known in the trade as a skip book. Their credibility with booksellers is their asset, so they'll say, 'Just between you and me, you can skip this one.' If you're the skip book, you're dead."

Nobody's Son is not likely to be next fall's skip book. It's been getting good reviews, and has been suggested as an excellent companion read to Robert Bly's *Iron John*. There are some points of contact, as Stewart will admit. "The main character comes to terms with his father having abandoned his family. This parallels some of my experience, having no father when I was growing up... Having said that, it's still a romantic comedy. A revisionist fairy tale." His warm smile shows he still likes fairy tales.

Being a parent has influenced him profoundly. "I don't think you can be a parent and not be influenced," Stewart insists. "If you're an artist who was not influenced by that experience, you'd be a crummy artist." He wrote *Nobody's Son* when he was a stay-at-home parent, during his infant daughter's afternoon naps.

"Good fiction is about truth. *Nobody's Son* is an attempt to write the kind of fiction I grew up loving that would not betray the people who trusted it to tell them what people were like." Stewart came to an eerie realization after *Passion Play* came out. "If I was willing to write ten more Diane Fletcher books, I could at this moment know that I would be financially set for the rest of my life. I've been asked to do

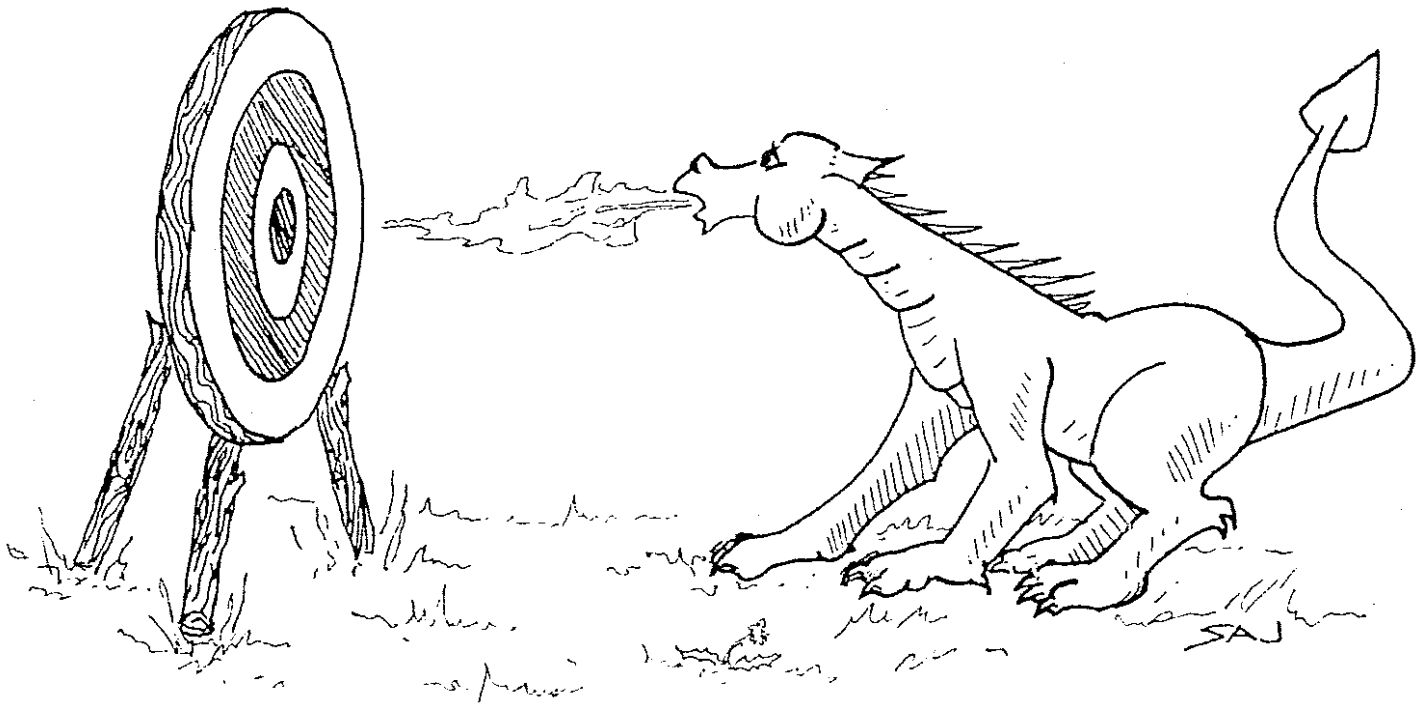
a series many times. I take it as a compliment." But his answer to that compliment is to write as his interests take him: each book has a new focus, a new genre. The common thread is the clear narrative style which reads aloud easily in Stewart's quiet voice at readings and signings.

His newest work is set in an animist future. "Not neo-pagan, closer to Shinto," he explains. "There is a spirit in the rock, and in the garden gate, and another one in the well." Trying to think like an animist, Stewart comes up with an example. "When my printer gave up the ghost after many years of stout service, I took the print head from it, said a small ritual over it, and hid it under my new printer, so it would have much strength and durability, and the spirit of my old printer would help my new printer." He laughs at the superstition even as he recognizes it. "A trivial example, but when I get stuck on this book, I wander outside into the endowment lands and wait for a sign from the gods as to what thing to do next."

This is not a flavour of the month writer with a computer formula and a cynical attitude. Among the themes Stewart has explored are justice, family and now a sense of the sacred. "What is sacred and what is sacral rests in the eye of the observer as much as beauty does," he says, touching on themes developed by the writers Theodore Sturgeon and Sheri S. Tepper. "One of the difficulties with post-Nietzschean death of God, is that we as a society have not constructed a very useful replacement, and so there are a whole lot of half-baked god substitutes out there. So one of the things I see being done, particularly at a popular culture level in fantasy fiction, is the attempt to re-imagine or hypothesize the existence of the sacral in this culture."

He has very mixed reactions to neo-pagan ritual. "You look at people who are desperately trying to make up for that lack, but you just can't do in ten years what takes two thousand years. Some of the stuff, you think oh wow, others are just brutally embarrassing.... Part of the important cultural questions of our time is how we re-imagine our cosmological relationship to the rest of the universe. Sounds fuzzier than I mean it," he sighs. "But how do you answer the question of evil?"

"That's an important cultural question that no one's come to grip with yet, and I don't think that any amount of watching MTV is going to solve it," he says soberly before flashing an urchin's grin. "Though unquestionably that's going to be part of the answer." And Sean Stewart, through an astonishing variety of books, is definitely one of the people asking the questions.



Past Winners of the Prix Aurora Awards/ Caspers

1993 Prix Aurora Awards

Best Long-Form Work in English - Meilleur livre en anglais: *Passion Play*, Sean Stewart;
 Best Short-Form Work in English - Meilleure nouvelle en anglais: "The Toy Mill," David Nicklé & Karl Schroeder;
 Best Other Work in English - Meilleur ouvrage en anglais (Autre): *Tesseract 4*, ed. by Lorna Toolis & Michael Skeet;
 Meilleur livre en français - Best Long-Form Work in French: *Chroniques du Pays des Mères*, Élisabeth Vonarburg;
 Meilleure nouvelle en français - Best Short-Form Work in French: «*Base de négociation*», Jean Dion;
 Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre) - Best Other Work in French: *Solaris*, Joël Champetier, réd.;
 Artistic Achievement - Accomplissement artistique: Lynne Taylor Fahnestalk;
 Fan Achievement (Fanzine) - Accomplissement fanique (Fanzine): *Under The Ozone Hole*, ed. by John Willcox Herbert & Karl Johanson;
 Fan Achievement (Organizational) - Accomplissement fanique (Organisation): Adam Charlesworth, *Noncon 15*;
 Fan Achievement (Other) - Accomplissement fanique (Autre): Louise Hyper, SF² show

1992 Prix Aurora Awards

Best Long Work in English - Meilleur livre en anglais: *Golden Fleece*, Robert J. Sawyer;
 Best Short Work in English- Meilleure nouvelle en anglais: (tie) "Breaking Ball," Michael Skeet, and "A Niche," Peter Watts;
 Best Other Work in English- Meilleur ouvrage en anglais (Autre): *Prisoners of Gravity*, TVOntario;
 Meilleur livre en français - Best Long-Form Work in French: *Alleurs et au Japon*, Élisabeth Vonarburg;
 Meilleure nouvelle en français - Best Short-Form Work in French: «*L'Enfant des mondes assoupis*», Yves Meynard;
 Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre) - Best Other Work in French: *Solaris*, Luc Pomerleau, réd.;
 Artistic Achievement - Accomplissement artistique: Matin Springett;
 Fan Achievement (Fanzine) - Accomplissement fanique (Fanzine): *SOL Rising: The Newsletter of the Friends of the Merrill Collection*, D. Larry Hancock, ed.;
 Fan Achievement (Organizational) - Accomplissement fanique (Organisation): John Mansfield, chair, Winnipeg in '94 WorldCon bid Committee;
 Fan Achievement (Other) - Accomplissement fanique (autre): David W. New, editor, Horizons SF.

1991 Prix Aurora Awards

Best Long-Form Work in English - Meilleur livre en anglais: *Tigana*, Guy Gavriel Kay;
 Best Short-Form Work in English - Meilleure nouvelle en anglais: "Muffin Explains Teleology To The World At Large", James Alan Gardner;
 Best Other Work in English: Meilleur ouvrage en anglais (Autre): *On Spec*;
 Meilleur livre en français - Best Long-Form Work in French: *Histoire de la Princess et du Dragon*, Élisabeth Vonarburg;
 Meilleure nouvelle en français - Best Short-Form Work in French: «*Jci, des tigres*», Élisabeth Vonarburg;
 Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre) - Best Other Work in French: *Solaris*, Luc Pomerleau, réd.;
 Artistic Achievement - Accomplissement artistique: Lynne Taylor Fahnestalk;
 Fan Achievement (Fanzine) - Accomplissement fanique (Fanzine): *Neology*, ed. by Catherine Girczyc;
 Fan Achievement (Organizational) - Accomplissement fanique (Organisation): Dave Panchyk, President, Saskatchewan Speculative Fiction Society;
 Fan Achievement (Other) - Accomplissement fanique (autre): Al Betz, "Ask Mr. Science."

1990 Canadian Science Fiction Awards (Caspers)

Best Long-Form Work in English - Meilleur livre en anglais: *West of January*, Dave Duncan;
 Best Short-Form Work in English - Meilleure nouvelle en anglais: "Carpe Diem", Eileen Kernaghan;
 Best Other Work in English: Meilleur ouvrage en anglais (Autre): *On Spec*;
 Meilleur livre en français - Best Long-Form Work in French: *L'Oiseau de feu (Tome 1)*, Jacques Brossard;
 Meilleure nouvelle en français - Best Short-Form Work in French: «*Cogito*», Élisabeth Vonarburg;
 Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre) - Best Other Work in French: *Solaris*, Luc Pomerleau, réd.;
 Fan Achievement (Fanzine) - Accomplissement fanique (Fanzine): *MLR*, ed. by Michael Skeet;
 Fan Achievement (Organizational) - Accomplissement fanique (Organisation): The Alberta Speculative Fiction Association (TASFA) for ConText '89 for organizing the formation of the Speculative Writers Association of Canada;
 Fan Achievement (Other) - Accomplissement fanique (autre): Robert Runté for promotion of Canadian sf writing.

1989 Canadian Science Fiction Awards (Caspers)

Best Long-Form Work in English - Meilleur livre en anglais: *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, William Gibson;
 Best Short-Form Work in English - Meilleure nouvelle en anglais: "Sleeping in a Box", Candace Jane Dorsey;
 Best Other Work in English: Meilleur ouvrage en anglais (Autre): Gerry Truscott, editor of Porcopic/Tesseract Books;
 Meilleur livre en français - Best Long-Form Work in French: *Temps Mort*, Charles Mont-petit;
 Meilleure nouvelle en français - Best Short-Form Work in French: «*Survive sur Mars*», Joël Champetier;
 Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre) - Best Other Work in French: *Solaris*, Luc Pomerleau, réd.;

Fan Achievement (Fanzine) - Accomplissement fanique (Fanzine): MLR, ed. by Michael Skeet;
Fan Achievement (Organizational) - Accomplissement fanique (Organisation): Paul Valcour, *PineKone 1*;
Fan Achievement (Other) - Accomplissement fanique (autre): Robert Runté, *NCF Guide to Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, 3rd edition.

1988 Canadian Science Fiction Awards (Caspers)

English - en anglais: Charles de Lint, *Jack, The Giant Killer*;
français - French: Alain Bergeron, «*Les crabes de Venus regardent le ciel*»;
Fan: - Michael Skeet for editing MLR

1987 Canadian Science Fiction Awards (Caspers)

English - en anglais: Guy Gavriel Kay, *The Wandering Fire*;
français - French: Élisabeth Vonarburg, «*La carte du tendre*»;
Fan: Élisabeth Vonarburg for *Solaris* and promoting English/French fan communication.

1986 Canadian Science Fiction Awards (Caspers)

English - en anglais: Judith Merrill, for lifetime achievements in editing;
français - French: Daniel Sernine, «*Yadjine et la mort*»;
Fan: Garth Spencer, ed. *The Maple Leaf Rag*;

1985 Canadian Science Fiction Award (Caspers)

Eileen Kernaghan, *Songs From the Drowned Land*.

1983 Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Award

Judith Merrill, Lifetime Achievment.

1982 Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Award

Phyllis Gotlieb, *Judgement of Dragons*;

1981 Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Award

Susan Wood, Lifetime Achievement.

1980 Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Award

A. E. van Vogt, Lifetime Achievement.

(A tip of the ol' cap to Eileen Kernaghan, Garth Spencer, Sean Stewart and Jean-Louis Trudel for their help in assembling this list.)



NONCON 17

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Science Fiction
& Fantasy Convention
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AB, T6E 5G6.



Double Helix

by Paula Johanson

a nonfiction essay, excerpted from *Modern Ritual*

When our six-year-old daughter's stubbornness turned round on her father and I one afternoon, we put her outside on the porch for time out. A few minutes sitting in the spring chill would cool her off and she'd be ready to come inside and be peaceable. Instead, after a minute or two, we heard her calling us outside. Gone was the fussy whining to get her own way; she sounded gloriously happy.

"Come out!" she cried. "You've got to see this! The geese! The geese are here!"

Over the farmhouse, arrowing in a vee against the blue sky was a flock of Canada Geese. A long line of geese ran alongside them, then another flock, and another. Our daughter was jumping up and down, too excited to speak at first. "Hear them? I hear them," she squealed. "Just like my Oma showed me in the fall — but they were going the other way then."

We called our son upstairs and out to see them, too, as flock after flock joined the first until the stream of birds was over a mile long and almost half a mile wide. The end of the flight was just coming in sight, over the trees to the south of the old Alberta farmhouse, when the leading edge of the flock began to turn.

They were riding the wind with maybe one or two wingbeats in a mile, and we could hear them counting cadence as they passed overhead. Was it the wind in their feathers, or only the wind we heard as we watched them? Then the flock was turning.

The leading edge had come round in a great sweep half a mile across, rising above the rest of the flock that was still approaching. They rose in a great spiral, rising clockwise two full turns before the last of the flock found the column of rising air and turned into it.

"A thermal," my husband said. He pointed out the freshly-plowed field on the quarter-section across the gravel road. It showed up black and stark among the dry brown brush not yet leafing out for spring. "The black earth must be warming in the sun, warmer than the unplowed fields and bush, and a thermal is rising from it." This wasn't watching a magpie hover over the chicken shed, or a hawk spiralling over the hayfield; seeing all those birds moving together at once was like seeing an elemental of bird-ness on the move, shifting a feather to turn, travelling miles without a wingbeat, only their bleating calls up and down their vees and slanting columns.

The great arc of birds turned once, twice in the air, sunlight flashing on the wings as the birds shifted up effortlessly from one hundred to five hundred feet in the air. Then Bernie and I gasped and looked at each other.

"Ted Sturgeon's story —" he said.

"*The Golden Helix*," I said at the same time. "Where the people brought to a new planet see a flight of beings like angels, like a swarm of bees, turn in the air in a giant spiral." That golden flight of beings honouring the life before them in a spiral dance, turning around and up and around and down, was an image that stayed with us since we read all Theodore Sturgeon's books together.

In our first years together, a friend had asked us if we could put up a visiting author and his wife for the weekend. That was how we met Ted and Jayne Sturgeon, who travelled in a Volkswagen, bought day-old bread and found it no hardship to stay up till one in the morning talking with us and our friends about stories and science, invention and scrimping. Jayne's plain clean scent was a healing beauty; and Ted's white hair, curling back from a thinning crown, showed us strength and beauty unexpected in a man past sixty.

It was at that time that our twins were conceived, Bernie and I learned later; there could not have been a more auspicious influence upon the moments of our children's beginning. Ted and Jayne kept in touch after that weekend, always delighting to hear news of the twins. It didn't end with Ted's death two years later, or with Jayne's new marriage a few years after that. As she sent congratulations for the twins' birth, and put her arms around me in a crowd after a memorial reading, we sent her best wishes for her new marriage.

It had been years since we had seen them, and a year since Ted's books were boxed away in storage. But the flight of geese over our house had brought back that powerful image from his story, one Ted hadn't known the genesis of himself.

His introduction to the story in the anthology, boxed in storage eight hundred miles away from the farm, mentioned that "*The Golden Helix*" had been written some ten years before the discovery of the DNA molecule's spiralling nature; the double helix was a powerful, moving image that had come to him as he wrote, and he didn't know where he had got the idea for a great cloud of beings turning in the air. Now we had some idea, an understanding of how the sight of several thousand birds moving in concert could stay with someone who had seen it once. A memory like that could stay sleeping in the mind of someone who had never imagined crowds of people like the sea, or how the heat of the sun on a chill day could lift birds from yards overhead to a mountain's height without them stirring a wing.

Now we knew something more of the mind behind the stories that were the best of our book learning; the man who brought out the best in us during three nights' conversation and who maintained a connection with us as if two low-income students living in an industrial park were worth the friendship of a celebrated author. He ate our day-old bread before driving home with his wife in their VW Beetle to eat day-old bread, for there wasn't much more coming in to their home than ours.

We stood outside the farmhouse a long while, in the chill spring air. The sun warmed one side of us as the birds rose, caught a crosswind and continued north, at twice the speed they had arrived. We went in at last when the birds were gone.

Ted was four years dead by then, but when he was failing some writer friends sent him to Hawaii for a month. Though he died a few weeks after returning to the West Coast, I like to think of him on the beach at the end of his life. The waves must have curled around his feet, and the birds flew overhead.

Robert Runte's Guide To Fandom

Part IV: The Con-Twit Self-Test

Do you shake your head at the foibles of others and then suddenly wonder if you might not be guilty of some similar faux pas? Are the people you meet at conventions too polite to tell you which behaviors are putting them off? Do other fans sometimes seem to be avoiding you? Are you afraid people are secretly laughing behind your back? Well, then, use this handy test to identify inappropriate behaviors that might suggest to other people that you are a twit and someone to be avoided. (Each of the following behaviours was actually observed at a recent convention.)

For each of the following questions that you answer in the affirmative, give yourself 1 point. If you accumulate more than 5 points, you are indeed a twit.

At a convention or club meeting have you ever:

Told someone the size of your hard drive within the first two minutes of meeting them?

Recited more than three lines of Monty Python dialogue?

Gone by an obvious pseudonym such as "Shadow Lord" or "Moondancer"?

Carried around a stuffed animal, such as a dragon, which you introduced to other people?

Carried around a riding crop in the hopes of appearing sexually sophisticated?

Engaged in ostentatious public smooching, when a more secluded spot was readily available?

Sexually harassed someone you had just met by trying to hug them?

Bragged about current or previous levels of intoxication?

While an audience member, interrupted a panelist with your own comments?

While an audience member, talked as much or more as any of the actual panelists?

Made autobiographical comments not directly related to the panel topic?

Interrupted other people's conversations to initiate a new topic related to yourself or your interests?

Initiated a conversation with the Writer Guest of Honour so you could explain about the science mistakes in his/her latest novel?

Complimented a writer on a book they hadn't written?

Stood closer to someone you do not know well so you could be observed standing next to other people (i.e., invaded their personal space)?

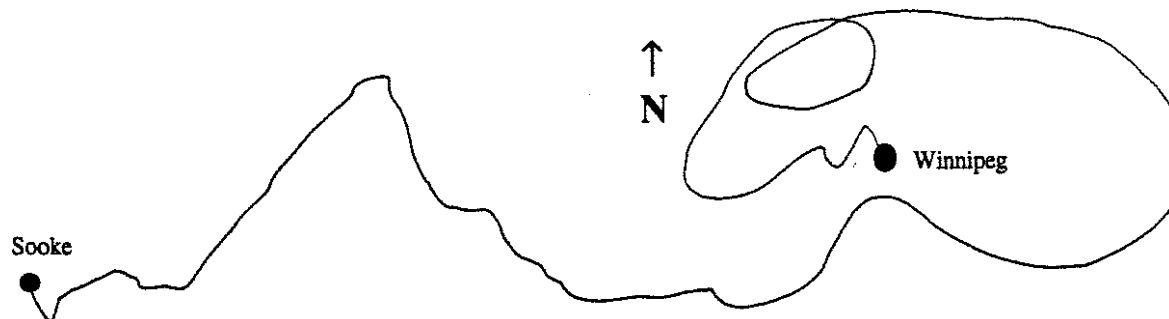
Spoken significantly more loudly than others engaged in the conversation?

Offered to write a favourable review of the Guest of Honour's latest story in return for their identifying you as a promising new writer?

Denounced Sharyn McCrumb as an evildoer who does not know the first thing about fandom?

Built yourself up by ostentatiously taking notes or passing comment on the behaviour of others?

How To Get To Winnipeg



Author Profile: Catherine Girczyc

by Paula Johanson

Catherine Girczyc does not have a one-track mind. In addition to reviewing books for the *Edmonton Journal* and now the *Vancouver Sun*, Girczyc has had several plays produced, earning bursaries and awards, as well as positive reviews and public acclaim. Her poetry has been collected in a successful chapbook, and read at poetry festivals in Edmonton. Her story "Pleiades Cat" appeared in *On Spec*, and another is due in *Senary 2*.

This year's Fringe Theatre Festival in Edmonton had a surprise hit: *Dead Slow*, a murder mystery co-written by Catherine Girczyc and Tom Creighton. "It was a pretty active murder, too, 'cause we did it in an underground parking garage," Girczyc says of the production. "We had cars actually driving in through the audience, we had guns going off, and very atmospheric music." The positive reviews on CBC Radio, in the *Edmonton Sun* and the *Globe and Mail* were matched by people lining up to see the play that everyone talked about — but no one would reveal the ending.

Her earlier plays *Loan Shark* and *Folded Space* were produced at the Fringe and at Con-Text 1 and 2, conferences for readers and writers of science fiction. Girczyc's other plays have been produced, and her half-hour radio drama *Espresso* was presented nationally on CBC Radio. *Espresso* was an imaginative drama about a mall where "there was something in the water that made you happy... and it came out pre-Prozac," she says with a smile.

Catherine Girczyc has a master's degree in drama. "If it hadn't been for my interest in science fiction, maybe I'd be writing Kitchen Sink drama. My work got a lot more power when I connected the two sides of my interests. I was always interested in drama, and with my interest in science fiction," she brings her hands together, "there was a power suddenly.

"And mystery seemed to work the same way, with Tom and I," she adds, speaking of their hit play *Dead Slow*. "We hope to write together again, either another play or a screenplay this year. Right now he's working on a documentary film about India and I'm rewriting a fantasy novel. I am hoping to get a story in *Prairie Fire* this year, because their special SF issue will be distributed to all the people attending the World SF Conference in Winnipeg this fall. All the biggest and best editors in New York will have your story in their packet! Every SF writer in Canada wants to be in there."

Besides the *Vancouver Sun*, Girczyc reviews speculative fiction and fantasy books for the UBC magazine *Horizons SF*, and for *The Ether Patrol* on Co-op Radio (CFRO FM 102.7). She particularly enjoys working with *The Ether Patrol*. "I get to review books you may see in the store and wonder if they're good, but you won't see reviewed in the paper," she says, laughing.

"A book review should define for a reader what the book is and how it struck the reviewer," according to Girczyc. "It's not objective. The best reviewer can define the book and what it is trying to do. If you call it 'Another pseudo-Tolkien fantasy taking place in a highly improbable kingdom where the usual things happen,' then at least that's defined, whether or not readers agree with your slant on it."

Girczyc thinks that opinion is fair comment, from an informed reviewer. SF needs critical reviews as does any fiction, but with knowledge of this popular genre. Imaginative fiction and mysteries account for almost half the books read. "What's wrong in most newspapers' reviewing of speculative fiction, of fantasy or horror is that typically they'll get reviewers who could read the next Margaret Atwood novel very knowledgeably. The newspapers give them the recent Terence Green book, and the reviewers have absolutely no basis for review. They don't know what the writer is trying to do, for what audience, or the difference between a *Dragonlance* novel and a Sean Stewart novel. People with the knowledge may not be approaching their local newspaper saying: I have a degree in English, I read all sorts of science fiction and fantasy, and I'm just dying to review this for you."

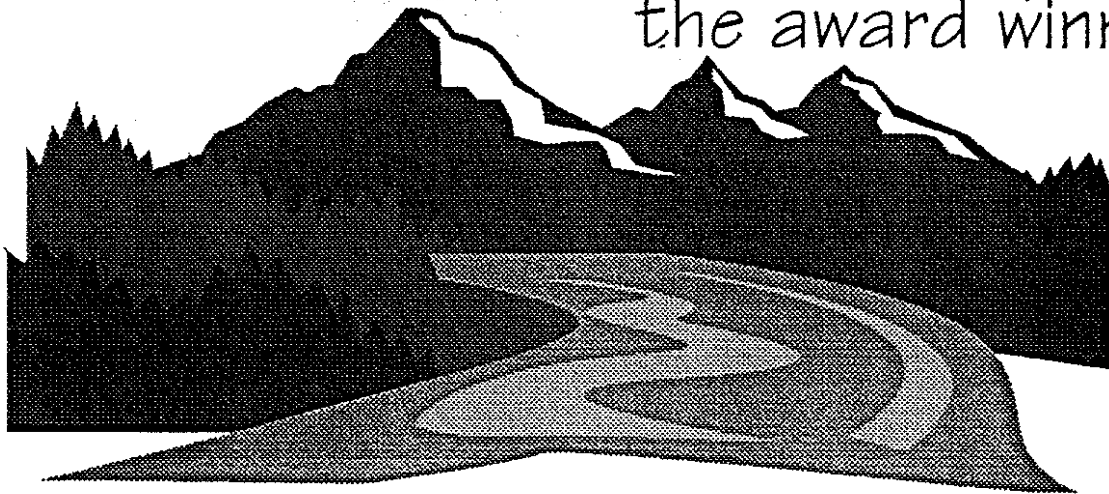
In her eyes, reviews are effective at informing readers and little bookstores. "Local newspapers are very important in talking about their own local authors. Too often we see Book Sections have a Danielle Steele novel, and not enough attention paid to a Sean Stewart. Especially if a local writer is being published in science fiction or fantasy, they're selling more copies than in a poetry journal; so I think they deserve as much attention. It's easier to get good press for poetry," she admits.

Girczyc's plays have received some very positive reviews. "They loved *Dead Slow*. *Folded Space* got a wonderful review in the *Edmonton Sun*. My very first play at the fringe got a terrible review in the *Edmonton Journal*." She admits the production may have deserved it. "One of the actors knocked the set down in the middle of the opening performance; he didn't know where the walls were." She can see the humour now, in a play she didn't direct.

She has been reviewed in the SF and fantasy press. "I think the local fanzines are extremely effective, because they go across the country. Though *Dead Slow* was covered by the Edmonton media, and the *Globe and Mail*, most of the science fiction and fantasy writing community found out about it from reviews in *Under the Ozone Hole* and *Communiqué*, newsletter of SF Canada, the national SF writers' association." Reviews are effective writing.

Girczyc worked as a technical writer in Edmonton, but since moving to Vancouver last fall, she and her partner Tom Creighton opened *Calendars Only*, at 1838 West 4th Avenue. "Owning a store is easier than an office job, because you make your own schedule. We also have our computers and our reference books in the store." She looks forward to writing screenplays, drama and more poetry. "Poetry is the pure distilled art," she says. "There's no extraneous narrative or dialogue. At the moment with a store to run, poetry doesn't always occur to me." But clearly, Catherine Girczyc is making the time needed to work at her popular writing.

We're Back with the sequel to
the award winning



BANFFCON

Some of you will remember how good the last one was. Many of you will have heard the stories. Most of you will not want to miss it this time around

We're planning to pack the 1995 Canadian Thanksgiving Long Weekend with interesting ideas, events and people...

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BANFFCON '95: P.O. Box 20001, Bow Valley Postal Outlet, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 4H3

Just What the @#\$%'s a Loonie? A Guide to Thnigs Canadian, eh?

Despite such communications technology as books, radio, television and Internet there are, of course, linguistic variations from one geographical or national area to another. Because it seems that the vast majority of people attending this con are English speaking non-Canadians, we felt that it would be a good idea to provide a brief dictionary of important Canajun terms, eh? (We take no responsibility for any violence resulting from any greater degree of understanding this list may cause.)

About: About. Pronounced *about*.

Bag: What your groceries are packed in. See *sack*.

Baseball: The Great American Game, derived from the British game "rounders." The first ever recorded game was played in Canada in 1838.

Basketball: The Other Great American Game, invented by a Canadian, James A. Naismith, in 1891.

Beaver: What you find on a nickel. One of Canada's national symbol things.

Biwingual: A hockey player who can play both left & right wing.

Blockheater: The things those electric plugs on the cars are for (no, there aren't that many electric cars in Canada). They keep the oil from getting so cold & viscous that you can't start the engine.

Brouhaha: See *Kerfuffle*.

Centre of the Known Universe: Toronto.

Cheque: What you write when you buy something. Not a 'check,' which is a ✓. (Not a Czech, either.)

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency. Performed illegal LSD experiments on unsuspecting Canadians in the 1950s.

Cider: A common alcoholic drink, not to be confused with the non-alcoholic stuff. If you're one of those folks whom neurotransmitter suppressants make violent, obnoxious or loud-mouthed, then please stay away from this stuff. Thank you.

Cod: The type of fish that they used to have off Newfoundland.

Constitution: Something Prime Minister Trudeau came up with so lawyers could make more money.

David Suzuki: Canada's pre-eminent science writer, not a motorcycle mechanic.

Electric socks: What you wear on a mild day in Inuvik.

Gallon: When we used them, ours were bigger than yours. For more confusion, see *Litre*.

GST: Government Stupid Tax. Also, Gouge & Screw Tax.

Gas: Same stuff (except for some octane differences & stuff like that) as 'petrol' in Britain.

Heath Care Insurance: A right, not a privilege.

High-test: Canadian for beer. See warning under *Cider*.

Hockey: The most popular religion in Canada.

Hooking: A hockey penalty.

Hubbub: See *Brouhaha*.

Kerfuffle: See *Hubbub*.

Lacrosse: Canada's national summer sport which no one plays or knows about. (Lacrosse balls have a higher bounce coefficient than the ball from any other sport.)

Litre: Almost exactly one fourth of an American gallon or one fourpointfiveth of an Imperial gallon. Things which tend to be sold in litres include gas, milk and pop. Things which tend not to be sold in litres include shoes, forks, ten-gallon hats, toenail clippers and microwave ovens.

Loonie: \$.78392174US or so. A Canadian dollar coin nicknamed for the loon it has on one side and for Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (Mul-loonie) who was in power when the coin was introduced. Rumour has it that a \$2 coin will be out soon with the preapplied nick name "dubloon". If you're thinking of passing this joke on, remember that there probably aren't any Canadians who haven't heard it at least 14 times. Other \$2 coin names include the 'tooney' and the 'loonie twon.' (Before you ask, you can't upwrap it to get at the chocolate.) Also, Ronald Reagan.

Maple Leaf: Canada's other national symbol thing. If you squeeze a maple leaf, you get maple syrup. Try it (hee hee hee).

Minus 40: A mild day in Inuvik. Where Celsius and Fahrenheit meet.

Newfie: Person from Newfoundland. Formerly subjected to jokes such as: *Q. What's going on when you see a bunch of (insert unfairly singled out ethnic group here) pushing a house down the street? A. They're trying to jump start the furnace.* Some of the greatest people you'll ever meet.

Pop: Exact same thing as 'soda.' The stuff advertizers try to convince us will quench our thirst better than water.

R.C.M.P.: The guys on the back of the old 50 loonie bill.

Sack: What you give someone when you fire them. Not a bag.

Sovereignty Association: Does anybody *really* know? Mention this in front of Canadians if there is a slow part of the con and you enjoy watching emotionally-draining arguments.

Toast: Heated bread which has had the butter applied *before* the bread has gone cold & dried out.

Toque: A type of hat which looks really doofusy until you've spent more than 7 seconds in seriously cold weather.

Trans-Canada Highway: The only street in Canada on which you can be 'just up the road' from someone who is 6,000 kilometres away.

True north, strong & free: Where Santa lives.

UIC: Unemployment Insurance. As immortalized in the Dire Straits song *Money for Nothing*. You remember: "I want my UIC. Get your money for nuthin' and your cheques for free".

U.N. Peacekeepers: First proposed by Lester B. Pearson, at the time Canadian Ambassador to the U.N., Peacekeepers may only be sent from countries on which all sides in a dispute or conflict agree. The following is a list of the only countries in the world which have taken part in every U.N. Peacekeeping mission: Canada.

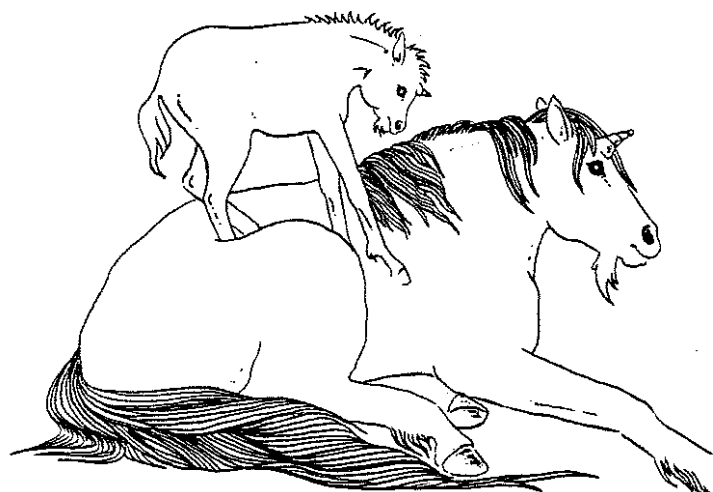
Wayne Gretzky: The guy on the box of "Pro Stars" cereal (the same cereal found in the U.S. called "GI Joes," featuring a guy with a machine-gun on the box).

White House: Didja ever wonder why it's white? Look it up.

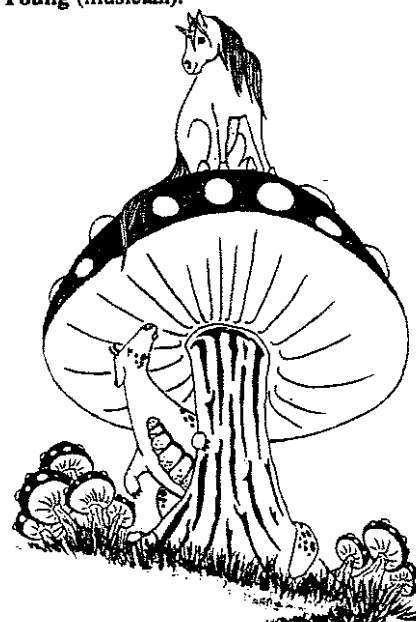
Zed: The name Brits and Canadians use for the letter 'z,' even though 'zee' rhymes better in the alphabet song. (And you know, it wasn't until I was 29 that I realized that the alphabet song & *Twinkle Twinkle* have the same music.)

People You Probably Didn't Know Were Canadian:

Bryan Adams (musician), Paul Anka (singer), Margaret Atwood (writer), Dan Aykroyd (actor), The Band (musical group), Sir Frederick Banting and Charles Best (discoverers of insulin), Alexander Graham Bell (inventor), Norman Bethune (doctor), Raymond Burr (actor), John Byrne (writer/artist), John Candy (actor), James Cameron (film director), Jim Carrey (actor/comedian), Cerebus the Aardvark (aardvark), Tommy Chong (comedian), Rae Dawn Chong (actor), Bruce Cockburn (musician), Leonard Cohen (singer/poet), David Cronenberg (director), Hume Cronyn (actor), Robertson Davies (writer), Charles de Lint (writer), James Doohan (actor), Gwynne Dyer (military historian), Dave Duncan (writer), Glenn Ford (actor), David Foster (musician), Michael J. Fox (actor), William Gibson (writer), Scott Goodyear (Indy Car Driver), Glenn Gould (pianist), Robert Goulet (singer), Graham Greene (actor), Lorne Greene (announcer/actor), The Guess Who (musical group), Monty Hall (game show host), Doug Henning (magician), Tanya Huff (writer), Peter Jennings (journalist), Norman Jewison (film director), Boris Karloff (actor), Guy Gavriel Kay (writer), Arthur "Scud Stud" Kent (journalist), Margot Kidder (actor), The Kids in the Hall (comedy troupe), Donald Kingsbury (writer), W.P. Kinsella (writer), k.d. lang (singer), Daniel Lanois (musician/producer), Eugene Levy (writer/comedian), Rich Little (impressionist), Todd McFarlane (writer/artist), Bob and Doug McKenzie (hosers, eh?), Robin MacNeil (journalist), Louis B. Mayer (film mogul), Joni Mitchell (musician), Rick Moranis (actor), Mike Myers (actor), Leslie Nielsen (actor), Catherine O'Hara (actor), Lester B. Pearson (1957 Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Prime Minister), Oscar Peterson (pianist), Mary Pickford (actor, "America's Sweetheart"), Walter Pidgeon (actor), Christopher Plummer (actor), Harold Ramis (actor/director), Ivan Reitman (director), Commander Rick (lost in space), Robbie Robertson (musician), Spider Robinson (writer), Robert Runté (coverboy), Rush (musical group), Robert J. Sawyer (writer), Mack Sennett (producer/director), Paul Shaffer (musician/sidekick), William Shatner (actor), Martin Short (actor), Jay Silverheels (actor), Sean Stewart (writer), S.M. Stirling (writer), Donald Sutherland (actor), David Suzuki (scientist/writer), Alex Trebek (game show host), Dave Thomas (actor), Paul Tracey (Indy Car driver), A.E. van Vogt (writer), Elisabeth Vonarburg (writer), Jack L. Warner (film mogul), Robert Charles Wilson (writer), Fay Wray (actress), and Neil Young (musician).



B. McKen '93



Author Profile: Don H. DeBrandt

by Paula Johanson

Don H. DeBrandt's first novel, *The Quicksilver Screen*, is set in an alternate world enough like our own that Vancouver streets still have the same names. DeBrandt is learning about communicating alternatives to the world we live in. The response from readers has been good. DeBrandt's book had been out for about six weeks when he attended the 1992 World SF Conference in Florida. "Someone in the Worldcon Hospitality Suite started raving about the imagery, how he loved it, when he recognized my name. 'You're the guy who wrote *The Quicksilver Screen*!'"

Telling the story, DeBrandt laughs. "This took place while I was actually shaking hands with Ellen Datlow, editor of *Omni*. I gave her this look like I don't know where this guy came from, and she's looking at me like, did you slip him a twenty?"

The only negative comments were in *Locus*. The reviewer liked the book, but as DeBrandt says, "There was one central theme the reviewer had a problem with: the idea that in a particular setting, pain might actually be a positive thing, or at least something that can be adapted to and used. I've read other reviews that understood, and at least admitted I had a point. This reviewer just couldn't see past 'Pain is Bad.' Not even pain as experience.

The question the reviewer posed to me, was ask somebody with back pain or terminal cancer those questions." He admits, "It's a challenge to our way of thinking. Pain does play a very integral part of the human experience, a necessary aspect."

DeBrandt sells most of his writing to American publishers. "I'm writing in a number of different mediums. It's science fiction, but not all cyberpunk." He just wrote a high school play, which is a first contact with aliens story and also a parable about AIDS. Currently he is collaborating on a screenplay in the horror/black comedy vein. "I just sold a script to Marvel Comics. They've actually got a cyberpunk version of Spiderman. I'm getting to play with the character." He grins, adding, "I'm doing a monthly series for a local comic company that's starting up. It's going to be a Lovecraft spoof. If anyone's a big enough target, it's Lovecraft."

DeBrandt flirted briefly with technical writing, but as he puts it, "The universe basically conspired to tell me No, you shouldn't be doing this. As soon as I turned my attention to writing something more imaginative the universe opened up and said Yes and began throwing money at me." His infectious humour makes him a powerful contributor to the BC Science Fiction Association writers' workshop, Fictions. He is also a member of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (Canadian Region) and their comics special interest group.

Describing his new novel in progress, DeBrandt's eyes widen. "*Steeldriver* is sort of an SF tall tale. A retelling of John Henry. He died but he beat the machine. Can you imagine a better structure for a science fiction story?" Perhaps he will, in another future book on technology and the human world.



CONVENTION LISTINGS

1994

CONADIAN
52nd WORLD SF CONVENTION
 September 1 - 5
 Convention Centre
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 GoH: Anne McCaffery; Artist GoH:
 George Barr; Fan GoH: Robert Runté.
 Conadian, Box 2430, Winnipeg, MB,
 R3C 4A7

CONVENTION 14
 September 1 - 5
 Convention Centre,
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 Held concurrently with **Conadian**.
 Info: Diane Walton, (403) 924-3540.

FESTIVAL SCIENCE-FICTION II
 September 24 - 25
 Ramada Inn
 Montréal, Québec
 GoHs: Majel Barrett, Mark Goddard.
 Festival Science Fiction, PO Box 311,
 Station B, Montréal, PQ, H3B 3J7

NON CON 17
 October 7 - 9
 Riviera Hotel
 Edmonton, Alberta
 Noncon, c/o Box 4727, Edmonton, AB,
 T6E 5G6

CONCINNITY
 October 28 - 30
 Journey's End
 Kanata, Ontario
 26076 - 72 Robertson Road, Nepean, ON,
 K2H 5YB

CAN-CON 95
 May 12 - 14
 Talisman Hotel
 Ottawa, Ontario
 GoH: Dave Duncan
 Can-Con, PO Box 5752, Merivale, ON,
 K2C 3M1

KEYCON 95
 May 19 - 21
 Winnipeg, Manitoba
 Hotel & Guests TBA
 Keycon, PO Box 3178, Winnipeg, MB,
 R3C 4E6

CLAM SHOOT 95
 May 26 - 28
 Long Beach
 GoHs: Corey Newlander, astronaut Bob
 Groden, and Bruno Gerussi (tentative).

AD ASTRA 15
 June 9 - 11
 Sheraton Toronto East
 Toronto, Ontario
 Ad Astra, PO Box 7276, Station A,
 Toronto, ON, M5W 1X9

INTERSECTION
53rd WORLD SF CONVENTION
 August 24 - 28
 Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre
 Glasgow, Scotland
 GoHs: Samuel R. Delaney, Gerry
 Anderson.
 Canadian Agents: Lloyd and Yvonne
 Penney, 412 - 4 Lisa Street, Brampton,
 ON, L6T 4B6
 U.S. Address: Theresa Renner, Box
 15430, Washington, DC, USA, 20003
 U.K. Address: Bernie Evans, 121 Cape
 Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands,
 B66 4SH

PACIFICON '95
 September 1 - 3
 Holiday Inn
 Victoria, B.C.
 GoH: John de Lancie ("Q").
 PacifiCon, #2 - 1325 Stanley Street,
 Victoria, BC, V8S 3S4
 ue437@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

BANFFCON '95
 October 6 - 9
 Banff, Alberta
 Banffcon '95, PO Box 20001, Bow Valley
 Postal Outlet, Calgary, AB, T2P 4H3

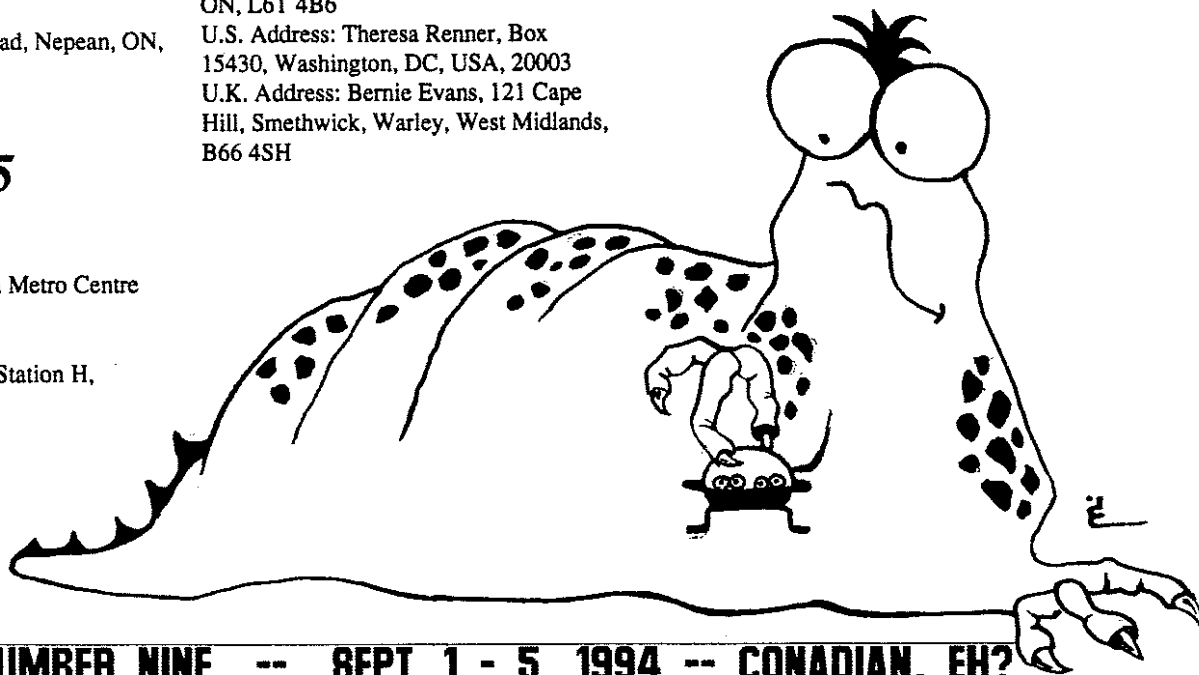
1996

WOLFCON 7
 May 17 - 20
 Old Orchard Inn
 Wolfville, Nova Scotia
 Wolfcon, PO Box 796, Wolfville, NS,
 B0P 1X0

L.A. CON III
54th WORLD SF CONVENTION
 August 29 - September 2
 Convention Center, Hilton Hotel &
 Towers, Marriott Hotel, Anaheim,
 California
 GoH: James White; Media GoH: Roger
 Corman; Fan GoH: Takumi and Sachiko
 Shibano; Special Guest: Elsie Wollheim;
 Toastmaster: Connie Willis.
 L.A.Con III, c/o SCIFI, Box 8442, Van
 Nuys, CA, USA, 91409.

1995

CON-CEPT '95
 March 31 - April 2
 Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Metro Centre
 Ottawa, Ontario
 GoH: Spider Robinson.
 Con-Cept, PO Box 405, Station H,
 Montréal, PQ, H3G 2L1



WORLDCON '94 LAST MINUTE PROGRAMMING CHANGES

FRIDAY

11:00
Order Pizza
12:00
Heavy Drinking Begins - Consuite
13:00
Art Show
13:30
Art Didn't Show After All
14:00
Movie Preview: Brian Mulroney and the Election of Doom
15:00
Reading: *Foundation and Gor*
16:00
Movie Preview: Gilligan: Beyond Thunderdome
17:00
Bar Opens
17:02
Concom Appears
18:00
Panel: Goats in SF
19:00
Dance Begins
19:15
Batteries die - dance ends
20:00
Panel: Where's that Pizza?



SATURDAY

2:11
Break and Enter in Progress
08:00
Panel: 90210: Cutting edge SF, or more?
08:30
Panel: Stars and other Great Big Hot Things.
09:00
Panel: Goats: Where Would We Be Without 'Em?
Lunch
Cheese Whiz Fandom Meeting.
Just After Lunch
Panel: Clam Shooting: Are geoducks more fun than razor backs? Is infrared better than UV? And just what the hell is a 'triple squidgy'?
13:00
Panel: If Neutrinos are Real, How Come I've Never Seen One?
13:30
Reading: *Foundation and Dune*
14:00
Panel: Cheap Breakfast Cereals: What's more important, sugar content or number of food dyes?
15:42
Silent Author Readings. Come and watch your favourite authors read to themselves.
19:15
Duane Dibbly for Prime Minister?
17:00
War. Huh! What is it good for? Absolutely nuthin'.
19:15
Panel: How Often Should You Clean the Window on your Barbeque?
21:15
Panel: Fandom and the National Debt. The truth about the new 'fanzine tax.'
22:00
Spam Dance.

SUNDAY

05:42
Pillow fight.
08:30
Mighty Morphin Power Rangers on channel 3.
08:31
Throw brick at tv.
09:00
Movie preview: Alien Vs. Bugs Bunny. Robin Williams as Bugs, and Danny DeVito as Marvin. Of course you know, this time it's war.
10:00
Reading: *Foundation and Pern*.
11:00
Panel: Garth: Committee or Hive Mentality?
12:00
Thought we'd forgotten about that pizza, eh?
13:00
Panel: Does Anyone Care that Most People are Apathetic?
14:30
Panel: Dead Presidents Get More Respect. With John Kennedy, Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter.
15:45
Mr. Science - Exposed!
15:49
Mr. Science - Arrested!
16:34
Reading: *Ender's Goat*
20:01
A Space Odyssey



The Impossible Battle Bikini: Revisited...and Retired by Laura Houghton

"Keep your tongue in your eyesockets!"

No, it wasn't the punchline of a joke about aliens. It was a female fan attempting to reprimand her male companion after I walked past them at Norwescon 17 while wearing my Impossible Battle Bikini.

I'm going to be 30 this year, and I was kinda pleased (and more than a little amused) that I could cause such a remark despite the ravages of time, food and gravity on the ole bod.

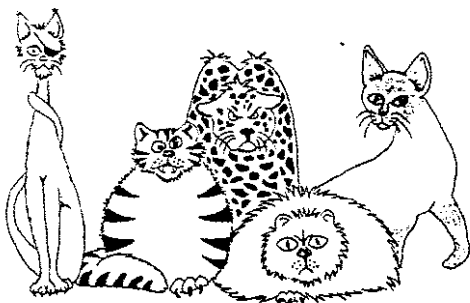
Regular UTOH readers will recall that after test-driving the IBB at Norwescon 16, I extolled the virtues of Cons as places in which to safely wear one's skimpy fantasy clothing... and I refer not only to IBBs, but belly-dancing outfits, fur loincloths, etc. So despite a certain amount of what can only be called stage-fright, I was looking forward to wearing my IBB again, along with several other costumes that I enjoy because they fulfill some need of mine for romance and drama that jeans simply don't supply.

You can imagine, then, my extreme annoyance when a member of the Committee to Stamp Out Fun (disguised as Con Security) tapped me on the shoulder and, in brief, informed me that although I was "technically legal," due to the hotel's wish to maintain its reputation in the eyes of its non-fan guests, the Con and hotel were requesting that I not wear my IBB in public any more.

Unh-hunh. Well, compared to a woman in a thong bikini, I was better covered even before adding the cape, head-sandals and jewellery — yet I daresay that such a woman would not have been told to leave the swimming pool and change her swim-suit lest she be kicked out out of the conference and the hotel.

I concede that the IBB is not tasteful. But is a belly-dancing outfit "tasteful"? A bondage top? A see-through skirt? A plunging cleavage? A shiny spandex full-length bodysuit? All of these were costumes I saw on others. A Con is not a place for a business suit and a string of pearls, people. We regard Cons as places in which to shed our mundane selves, and yes, often that *does* mean shedding some clothes as well.

In short, I am gravely disappointed in both the ConCom and the hotel. I do not believe that the IBB was excessive within the bounds of con costuming, and as I was "technically legal," I do not believe the hotel had the right to bowdlerize my outfit when it had already agreed to be host to Norwescon 17. I was well-behaved, and I gave visual pleasure to numerous people. (I have witnesses to prove it!) But apparently I still offended the moral majority... so the Impossible Battle Bikini has finally proven itself to be truly impossible, not through physics, but through censorship. R.I.P.



Equal Rights for Skimpy Tights: The Impossible Battle Bikini For Men by Andrew C. Murdoch

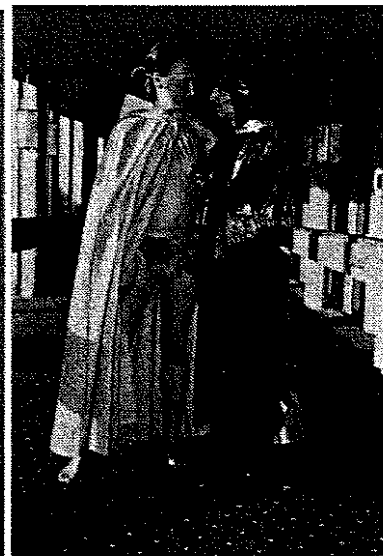
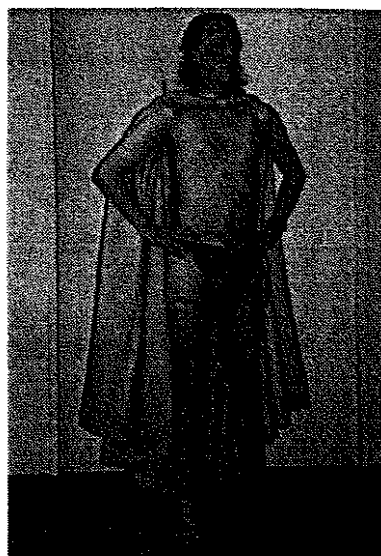
It had been well over a year since Laura Houghton (née Atkins) first exhibited herself... er, her Battle Bikini for all and sundry to gawk at (like they did at Norwescon 16). I decided some time before this year's Norwescon that what was good for the goose was good for the gander. I may not have an Atlas-esque figure, but I can suck my gut in with the rest of them. Thus was born my own Miniscule Monstrosity.

The costume itself was very simplistic... a faux fur loincloth to cover the essentials, along with a floor-length cloak so that I could flash whomever whenever I chose. The cloak was an afterthought hastily picked out at Dealers' Room when I heard about Laura's indictment for breaking the 10% rule. A few other bits and pieces were added here and there (a brass collar and leather thongs around my forehead and thigh) to draw people's attention away from my less attractive features (like my gut when I couldn't suck it in as well).

I wore it on the final night of the convention and, 10% or not, I even discarded the cloak when I got to the dance. Oddly enough, even though there was no way any convention officials could have missed it, I was never once asked to change. The only trouble I had was when I was asked to don some footwear, rather than go barefoot as I had been doing. I can't help but wonder why I, a less than eye-pleasing guy at the best of times, would go unharrassed while a distractingly lovely lady like Laura would be told to cover up. Methinks the Spandex Police should get their priorities straight.

How far did it get me? Well, it got me photographed several times by myself, several times with a number of young ladies, and once with one young gentleman. If it got me any looks, I wasn't paying attention (although at one party, a Romulan woman discreetly opened my cloak just to make sure I *was* wearing something underneath).

What has this taught me? Next year, I'm going to tone up a little, use leather and watch who comes along while I'm being photographed!



CLAM SHOOT 95

Long Beach - May 26-28

You watched it on Wide World of Sports!

You thrilled to it on TSN!

You were awed by it in National Geographic!

You didn't believe a word they said about it on 60 Minutes!

Now's your chance to experience it -- **LIVE!**

What is Clam Shooting?

Clam Shooting is the 23rd fastest growing spectator sport in the world. Invented by a group of UBC Engineers, Clam Shooting is one of the few fun, wholesome activities that combines the whole family with excessive firepower.

How Come No One's Ever Heard of Clam Shooting Before?

Clam Shooting, like Slug Tossing and Pig Squatting, has been a popular underground sport for years. But now Clam Shooting is gaining public acceptance and the really cool people are doing it. In fact, **Sports Illustrated** recently published one of our classified ads!

What Happens At A Clam Shoot?

Why, we shoot clams, don't we? But seriously, there are lots of other activities, too. First, there will be panel discussions where we'll talk about all the important aspects of our favorite sport: - The Latest Clam Shoot Slang (squidgy, murf, moondoggie, spudmuffin, turdhole, etc.);

- Infrared: For Wusses Only?;
- Keeping Score On Your Computer;
- Health Insurance: Where To Get It, How To Keep It;
- and our most popular event, Clamsinging.

Clam Chowder?

Oh, hey, there's a thought. Let me write that down.

Who's Going To Be There?

This is the big one, and all your favourite Clam Shooters will be there: Richard Frost, Claire Sklar, Roger 'Three Fingers' Munson, Bob Bernstein, and five-time world champion, Corey Newlander!

Is This a Safe Sport?

Sure is! If Dateline NBC can fake a report on trucks blowing up, why should we believe what they had to say about Clam Shooting? Besides, we outlawed exploding bullets well over six weeks ago!

Read What Others Have Said About Clam Shooting!

"Hey! Careful -- Look out! Aw, shit."

-- 'Stumpy' Joe Finkowitz

"And while you're here, enjoy the trees before I chop 'em down."

-- M. Blodel

"Here. Try this. You'd be amazed at the receding targets you can hit through some trees with a Mannlicher-Carcano and a badly mis-aligned sight."

-- Lee Harvey Oswald

"Clams hoot? What, you mean play jazz?"

-- Myles

"Teflon and a big nightscope. No better way to get babes."

-- Corey Newlander

What Sort of Competitions Are There?

All sorts! And all of them are safe for the entire family (bring your own kevlar).

There are:

- Rapid Fire
- Trick Shooting
- Distance
- Depth
- Most Holes in a Single Clam
- Most Richochets
- Clamathalon

But wait! There's more! Famed trick-shot expert Corey Newlander will

attempt the never-before accomplished Triple Squidgy! Plus, special appearances by astronaut Bob Groden and Bruno Gerussi (tentative.) And don't forget the popular fan favourite, the Night Hunt! Now, how much would you pay?

Aren't I Supposed To Be Asking The Questions?

Sorry. Go ahead.

How Do You Find Out More?

No, you mean "How Do I Find Out More." We know already.

How Do I Find Out More?

Just fill in this handy form.

SEND NO MONEY NOW!

We'll send you an outrageous bill later.

Name _____

Address _____

Favourite Calibre _____

I hereby state that I am over the age of majority and am not affiliated in any way with the SPCA.
signed _____

Gonna Get Me Some Clam!

It's not too late.

The Spuzzum Institute™ is here to help.

Before leaving the convention,
don't forget to visit the **DE-REGISTRATION** Table for **DE-PROGRAMMING**.

DE-PROGRAMMING is, sadly, the most neglected aspect of the Science Fiction Convention Experience. Our trained technicians are here to help you ready yourself to be re-absorbed into the mundanity of everyday life. They'll help you prepare you for the shock as you slowly remember:

- your job/school;
- your bills;
- your kids;
- your spouse;
- your life;
- that Fandom is just a goddam hobby, and just how the hell are you gonna pay for *another* convention, anyway.

Returning to reality from fandom is a difficult, trying journey. Some can't make it alone. Some can't make it all. We at **The Spuzzum Institute™** are here to help with our own private specialists, trained counsellors, investment analysts, and lawyers experienced with 'Power of Attorney.' We can help you make the leap back from slobbering fan-boy to slobbering 7-11 clerk.

Don't be afraid. We're here. We'll help you. Whatever the cost, we're ready.

Famous Fan Sez:
DE-PROGRAMMING SAVED MY LIFE!

"I used to go to every convention I could. Now, thanks to **The Spuzzum Institute™**, I only go to the ones where I can charge everything to my Visa card!"



**The Spuzzum
Institute™.**

Whatta bunch of guys.

REVIEWS

THE COLUMN WITH NO NAME

by Brian D. Clarke

Children of the Gun a boy's eye view of Shane

"He was the man rode into our little valley out of the heart of the great glowing West and when his work was done rode back whence he had came and he was Shane."

— last line of the novel *Shane*, by Jack Schaefer

Shane is a movie that supports many different interpretations and readings. One of these is to view it as a story about children, innocence and childhood. This is more overt in Jack Schaefer's original novel, written from the point of view of a much older Bob Starrett (transformed into the hideously annoying "Joey" for the movie) looking back at his childhood and the events that helped to shape it. However, while vestiges of this theme remain in the film, the film seems to look down on children and childhood. In the movie, children are used almost always as objects or symbols, rather than as characters in their own right. (Certainly Joey is portrayed more like an obnoxiously cute bundle of annoying habits than as an actual human being....) Visuals of children are used prominently and frequently to symbolize the community, which is itself in its infancy. This is particularly true (for example) at Stonewall's funeral, where shots of the burial are interspersed with shots of the homesteaders' children, grouped around a covered wagon — and a wagon wheel in particular. The iconography isn't subtle, but it is effective: we are presented with a clear image of the cyclical nature of life, with the beginning of the children's lives juxtaposed with the end of Stonewall's. At the same time, the spectre of death is left hanging over the children, and thus the future of the community. In fact, the real struggle of the film is never over the land, but over the children, over what sort of world the homesteaders will raise their children in, and, by extension, what sort of people these children will grow up to be. Within this context, we have the contradictory figure of Shane, who represents, on the one hand, the violence that threatens the children on both

a physical and ideological level. This is what informs half of our response when young Starrett shouts out, "Come back, Shane! Come back!" As adults, we know, logically, that Shane can never come back, for his doing so would represent a return to and an acceptance of the violence that he fought so hard to end. However, at the same time, we do want Shane to come back, because he also represents something that we ourselves have lost. Shane, you see, is a symbol not only of violence, but of childhood itself.

To begin with, why can Shane never come back? The answer revolves around what Shane meant to Joey, who clearly idolizes Shane, and Shane threatens to become both a role model and a father figure. Shane exerts a powerful influence on Joey, an influence which cannot be allowed to continue. The point is clearly made (by Marion) that Shane has to move on someday, as much for Joey's own good as anything else. Much of the conflict of the film revolves around the idea that Joey cannot — *must not* — become too attached to Shane, who, for all his regal bearing, babyfaced good looks and stumps-laying prowess, is ultimately a killer, and, "right or wrong, it's a brand that sticks for life." When Marion gets upset at Shane for showing Joey how a gunslinger draws, it is because she is afraid of what Joey is learning, rather than who he is it learning it from. Marion isn't entirely wrong, either: at times, Joey's fascination is almost as much with Shane's gun as with Shane. The continual equation of Shane with his darker counterpart, Wilson, also serves to underscore the point. The unspoken threat isn't so much that Joey might grow up to be like Shane, it's that he might become another Wilson. Even Shane tries to discourage Joey when he knocks Starrett unconscious with the butt of his pistol, making Joey shout out "I hate you Shane!" Joey is thus almost tricked into rejecting Shane in favour of his father. From a narrative point of view, it is also important that Joey be made to understand that violence cannot be accepted: and once Shane kills Wilson, the logic of the film decrees that Shane must be ostracized. The peaceful world of the valley no longer has a place or a need for someone like Shane, and Joey must in-

stead follow the example of his father — peaceful, honest, hard-working and non-violent. What Shane leaves behind is a peaceful world; as he says, there are no guns in the valley. He leaves behind a world full of farmers, storekeepers, and politicians; of Joeys, Marions, and perhaps even Stonewalls — but no Shanes. The day of the gunslinger is done and everyone — including Shane himself — knows it.

So why do we want Shane to come back? What is it about Shane's leaving that affects us? Shane's leaving is justified in terms of the narrative, and from an *adult* point of view, it is vital that Shane leave. The film, however, undermines that point of view. While narrative logic suggests that Shane is a model that Joey and society must reject, Alan Ladd's portrayal, coupled with the heavy-handed rejection of Shane that the film embraces, pushes our sympathies toward Shane — towards a *child's* point of view. Throughout the film, Shane is equated with childhood things like pop bottles, pet dogs, and toy guns. Shane isn't merely a gunfighter — he is a child's fantasy of what a gunfighter is. There is very little about Shane that is unattractive: he is clean-shaven, decent, hard-working, honest to a fault and, above all, innocent. Shane's love for Marion is portrayed as a pure one: it is never expressed, never consummated. As well, like so many figures in children's literature, Shane becomes the fantastical childhood friend Joey must put aside. However, it is still the *adult* world which rejects Shane. After Joey is manipulated into choosing his father over Shane, the narrative uses that as a pretext to justify Shane's leaving, no matter how quickly Joey repents his statement. What grabs our sympathy here is the fact that Joey really has no choice in the matter: the adult world has made the choice for him. There is something grotesquely unfair about the film's treatment of Shane, and the way Joey is forced to lose his childhood friend. Of course, life — *adult* life — is unfair, and the film's rejection of Shane seems to suggest an end of innocence. Adult logic demands that childhood fancies and imaginings inevitably have to leave, and so too must Shane. Coupled with this is the clear identification of Shane as the *last* gunfighter — a mythological image on a par with the last unicorn, the end of Camelot, or the death of Robin Hood. The world Joey grows up in will be a safe one without violence, populated with farmers, storekeepers and politicians — but there will be no more gunfighters. Ever. Joey is left behind in

a world where you can't grow up to be a gunfighter — and soon, not even a cowboy — anymore. With Shane's departure, some of the magic has gone out of the world. It isn't merely Joey who has lost his childhood, but the world itself. Joey's world is, in fact, ours. This is what engages the audience, and what makes us wish Shane could come back. We couldn't grow up to become cowboys, either, and at the end of the film we find ourselves yearning for the innocence and wonder which we ourselves have lost.

So, when Shane rides up out of the valley for the final time, we feel a sense of loss. Or at least, that's the film's intention. Still, one final question suggests itself: What's Shane's angle on all this? What makes him decide to sacrifice himself as he does? The film is mainly silent on this point. Apart from an oblique hint or two, it side-steps the fairly

explicit motivation given for Shane in the novel, a motivation which fits rather nicely with Shane's view on childhood. Shane's final words to Bob in the novel make an interesting contrast with the movie version, because here Bob is allowed to understand and accept Shane's leaving:

"A man is what he is, Bob, and there's no breaking the mould. I tried that and I've lost. But I reckon it was in the cards from the moment I saw a freckled kid on a rail up the road and a real man behind him, the kind that could back him for the chance that another kid never had."

"But — but, Shane, you..."

"There's no going back

from a killing, Bob. Right or wrong, the brand sticks and there's no going back. It's up to you now. Go home to your mother and father. Grow strong and straight and take care of them. Both of them."

"Yes, Shane."

[Shane, p.203. Emphasis added.]

With that, Shane says, "There's only one more thing I can do for them now," and rides away — and Bob watches him go without saying a word.

{[Brian D. Clarke has just returned from his annual sabbatical up-province and is currently working on a "Generation X" murder mystery, Slurpees and Bullets.]}

BOOKS, MOVIES, TV (AND OTHER STUFF) REVIEWS

Blood Lines

by Tanya Huff

DAW Books; 271 pp.; \$5.99

Some books fizzle, especially the third book in a series. This one sizzles. *Blood Lines* combines fantasy with detective fiction with good results. Tanya Huff sets her Vicki Nelson mysteries in Toronto, where the layout of the city is faithfully detailed down to the 1,790 stairs in the CN Tower — and discovering a 450 year old vampire is the least of Vicki's problems.

Vicki is an ex-cop going blind by degrees. In *Blood Price*, she had recently become a private investigator, unwilling to accept a desk job on the Toronto Metro Police Force. Long distance calls from her mother are the bane of her existence. Tracking down the cause of several grisly murders takes methodical detective work, especially after she discovers a vampire who isn't responsible for the deaths. Together with him and her ex-partner, Vicki eventually faces a demon and the computer nerd who's been conjuring it.

Blood Trail takes Vicki and her ex-partner Mike across the ocean to England with Henry Fitzroy, the vampire who leads them all on the trail of a werewolf. England holds many memories for the 450 year old bastard son of Henry the Eighth. For his part, Mike has come to resent Henry's place in Vicki's life.

Now in *Blood Lines* a mummy's cas-

ket is unsealed in the Royal Ontario Museum, and the mummy is not dead. Neither is its god. Henry has faced enemies before but never the temptation offered him by the only other immortal being he has met since he became a vampire. "You know there's a good reason most vampires come from nobility," he snarls when Vicki brings him to inspect the sarcophagus. "A crypt is a lot easier to get out of. I'd been buried good and deep and it took (my friends) three days to find me and dig me free."

Vicki's investigation is hampered by the mummy's ability to change the thoughts and memories of people who know it. Warrants for the arrest of Vicki and Mike don't help matters, once the mummy controls the police force and the Solicitor General.

Vicki is not Wonder Woman. She was a high-energy cop who still won't do less than her best now that she's night-blind and can't see worth a damn without her glasses. Her mother calls long distance or visits at the worst of times, which brings an element of humour to the story. *Just what the evening needed.* "Bad timing, Mom. I've, uh, got company." "Both of them?... I'll call you tomorrow, dear. I can't wait to hear how this turns out." But because of their visits to the CN Tower, Vicki is able to come through at the climax to *Blood Lines*.

The last third of the book will have readers turning pages faster and faster. Canadian fans of detective fiction or vampire

fantasy will find Tanya Huff addictive. She has four other very different fantasy novels out from DAW Books at present, and she manages to write (if you can believe it) on her lunch hour while working at a Toronto bookstore.

— Paula Johanson

The Children of Atwar

by Heather Spears

Tesseract; 265 pp.; \$7.95

In this sequel to *Moonfall*, Heather Spears writes sensitively of those who are left behind when young Atwar leaves to halt Moonfall. The world has been saved, and Atwar is hailed almost as child-god, but his twin brother Betwar is desolate.

Their mother Tasman cannot stay with the people who worship her absent son. Their father goes quietly mad. Betwar is alone, unbonded to anyone except the children he was asked to father. The children will be sent to join Atwar in the Moon, where Atwar is believed to live thinking he was forgotten.

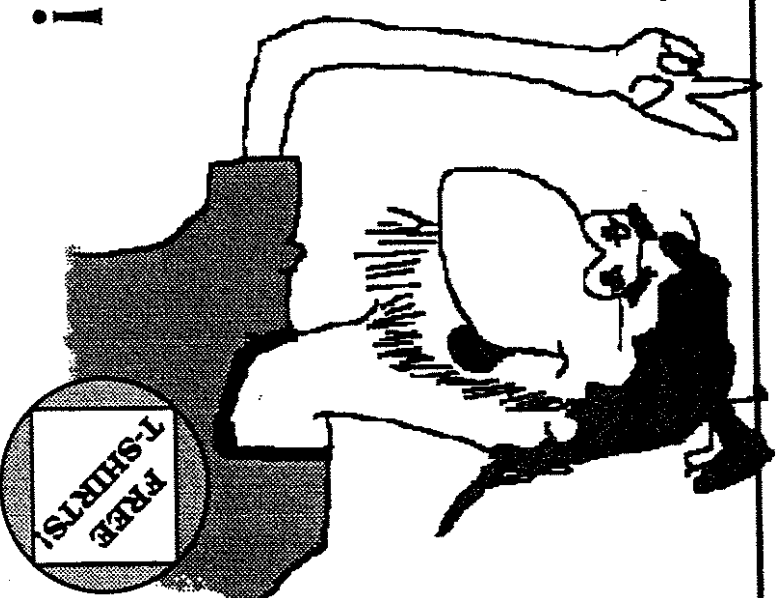
To keep them small enough to fit into the transport vehicles, like the crippled Atwar was, the children's legs are bound from infancy. They are both crippled and treasured by the people who honour Atwar for his journey, the people who sent a weak child to halt Moonfall when no adult could fit the vehicle, not even Betwar or their mother Tasman. No one else could fit because except for Tasman and her children, these people are all two-headed, twins "conjoined as is seemly" and they are taller and bigger than the departed Outdead people who seeded the Moon and died.

Betwar's loneliness and love for his

**IF YOU MISSED THE CON...
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DEAD GOAT PARTY!**



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XYLOPHONE PLAYERS EXTRAORDINAIRE!!**

Sponsored By The Committee For The Preservation of Things That Are Endangered on the Earth, with the exception of SoCreds, Tories, Red Necks, Republicans, Ugly Fish, Most Reptiles (SoCreds Again), Ronald Bush, George Reagan (who can tell?), and slimy little critters that I never liked as a child 'cause my parents made me sleep with them -- ick!

WHEN: East Stairwell, Motel 6

WHERE: Friday, 11:32 P.M.

WHY: Why The Hell Not

UNDER THE OZONE HOLE

Winner of the 1993 Prix Aurora Award for Best Fanzine

Number One

Features "How I Lost My Convirginity" by Laura Atkins, news, reviews, and fiction by F.F. "Bones" Norman. Cover features Brian Mulroney as The Terminator. (But no LoCs 'cause it was the first issue, eh?)

Number Two

Quickie Interviews with Dave Panchyk, Cath Jackel and Robert Charles Wilson. LoCs, news, and Karl's Cartoon! Plus "Touch Tone Tune Time" and more fiction by F.F. "Bones" Norman.

Number Three

Another Karl's Cartoon! The first chapter of "Tale of the Young and Slothful" by Laura Atkins. John destroys Space Rangers.

Number Four

The first infamous all-colour Robert Runté cover! "The Impossible Battle Bikini" by Laura Atkins (with pictures! Okay, only one). More fiction by F.F. "Bones" Norman, and a new typeface that John didn't like so he never used it again, ever! The Robert Runté Guide to Fandom Part One! Plus, an honest-to-God real LoC from Brian Mulroney! (Really! We're not making this up! Honest!)

Number Five

Special All-Pets issue! The Robert Runté Guide to Fandom Part Two! More "Young and Slothful"! News, reviews and pictures of our pets! Wow! Plus "Trying Times," by Paula Johanson. (And a picture of Robert Runté relaxing in his backyard.)

Number Six

Special Conspiracy Issue! The Robert Runté Guide to Fandom Part Three! Still more "Young and Slothful"! Chuck Bell's "Ode to the Stubby." Proof that Brian Mulroney is related to a hamster (it says so on the cover)! And another picture of Robert! (A note to collectors: there are at least a dozen different variations of this issue. Check yours carefully. Do you have the rare extended DNQ issue?)

Number Seven

A gazillion reviews! The Under The Ozone Hole Quiz! Plus reviews, reviews and reviews. And still more reviews. Boy,

we had a lot of reviews in this issue, eh? The cover features the cast of Star Trek: Voyager (but not Robert. Unless you were Catherine Girczyc and lucky enough to get the special version we printed up with the dummy cover that had Robert on it -- it's a long story).

Number Eight

Special Apollo 11 Anniversary Issue! News, reviews, funny stuff, and Robert on the cover! What more could you want? (A note to collectors: there are eight different covers for this issue. Ain't photocopiers wonderful?)

Number Nine

We get ready to go to Worldcon in Winnipeg! Map! Programming Changes! The Robert Runté Guide to Fandom! Canadian Facts! Sean Stewart Interview! Profiles of Catherine Girczyc and Don H. DeBrandt! "The Impossible Battle Bikini...Revisited"! Plus Clam Shoot news! And Robert... all over the cover in his second colour cover appearance!

Number Ten

Aw, give us a break. We just got Number Nine out. But we'll put Robert in there again somewhere, okay?

What Others Have Said About UTOH:

"I like it."

-- John Willcox Herbert, co-editor UTOH.

"John likes it."

-- Karl Johanson, co-editor UTOH.

"Somebody stop them before they zine again!"

-- Robert Runté

Yes, I need to subscribe to **Under The Ozone Hole**. Some strange primal urge is making me do this. Can't stop. Must... sign... name.....

Name _____

Address _____

Shoe Size _____

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Canada
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\$12.50/four issues
(1 yr.)
Back Issues: \$3.00
each
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one Free Neat
Thing with your
sub.

children are gripping for the reader, who can learn of Tasman's story in *Moonfall* through the poems the author has appended to the novel. Heather Spears has written the ceremonial songs of her bicephalic characters, and a dictionary of their speech which reveals much about their lives and history.

The Children of Atwar can best be compared with Ursula K. LeGuin's *Always Coming Home* for its sensitive portrayal of the lives and worship of a people imagined to live in a distant future, marked by the inventions and folly of our present time.

—Paula Johanson

A Handful of Men: The Cutting Edge

by Dave Duncan

Del Rey; \$6.99

A Handful of Men: Upland Outlaws

by Dave Duncan

Del Rey; \$6.99

Some fantasy writers sell an outline and then set about writing a trilogy that will meet the contract. Not Dave Duncan. By the time *The Cutting Edge* appeared in paperback, Duncan had finished writing his new series, *A Handful of Men*. These four books are set in the world of Pandemia, where in the earlier series *A Man of His Word* Princess Inosolan, poised to inherit a small kingdom and a magic word, was followed through danger and across a continent by her magic friend Rap, a stablehand with a knack for animals... and magic.

The Cutting Edge begins fifteen years after Rap helped Inosolan win back her throne. As Queen and King Consort of the tiny kingdom of Krasnegar they are raising four children, among them a bratty princess and a precognitive son. The young Shandie whom Rap rescued has grown up to be Emshander, heir to the Empire, with a shy young wife. While the old Emperor is dying, Shandie comes to depend upon the help of his squire, a ratty soldier with eyes for Shandie's wife. As the calendar turns toward the new millennium, the Gods warn Rap of approaching crisis in the Empire.

Upland Outlaws begins at a moment of crisis. Shandie will need all the help he can get, mundane and magical, to protect him and his family for the throne. But all he can assemble are a handful of sorcerers, soldiers, nobles and an old man. Sagron is not only wise, he also shares his time and space with four friends in a sequential spell. With Rap's advice, the small band of loyalists separate across the Empire. As the book's cover says, "It was one heck of a way to start a revolution!"

Just as Queen Inosolan uses Rap's magic to bring their children to another north-

ern city, a goblin army attacks. And, as if the reader weren't already pulled in three directions at once, one young woman is finding her quiet life as a pixie is not what she remembers....

Dave Duncan has a particular knack for bringing the strands of a story together at the right moments. The use of precise details — Thäile's untanned neck meaning her hair had grown long and been cut, the taste of almond cake keeping a gourmand in place till the soldiers come — gives clear images not common in fantasy novels. Duncan has said at readings that he writes first of all for enjoyment, and only secondly for market. The attention he devotes results in books which are a pleasure to read.

Two more titles will complete the series. *The Stricken Field* is already out in hardcover, and *The Living God* will soon be available. The distinctive cover art features portraits of the many human races in Duncan's fantasy land of Pandemia.

—Paula Johanson

The Maerlande Chronicles

by Éliassabeth Vonarburg

translated from the French by Jane Brierley
Tesseract; 582 pp.; \$8.95

Éliassabeth Vonarburg, author of *The Silent City*, has once again written a novel which stretches the mind and imagination. *The Maerlande Chronicles* is a story of epic proportions, telling through the life of one woman the story of the people around her in a future world. So many changes have come because of the Decline, and survivors have made new societies time and again. Rejecting patriarchy for matriarchy, the few thousands of people building a mother-centred society now have to face truths from the past as well as the challenges of the future.

Lisbei discovers much about herself as she grows up in the Maerlande. Her love for her younger sister, Tula, is the focus of Lisbei's life as they talk together, sharing all that she learns. Letters to Tula become journals where Lisbei sets her thoughts in order, writing her sensitive perceptions of the people around her.

The novelist Vonarburg also uses the letters and journals of other characters to describe how they see Lisbei, growing from a child to an insightful, questioning young woman. Much is revealed about the religion of the Maerlande, the festivals and the history, through Lisbei's curiosity and discoveries.

History was like stories, and like stories it was true, only in a different way. Through hard work, Lisbei makes discoveries that shake the foundations of her society.

Reinvented technology as well as history and old books affect the lives of women and men, fertile or sterile because of the lasting effects of the Decline. But even in a distant future, love is still the strongest force acting on Lisbei, love she never looked for in anyone but Tula.

"If Believras can't stand having their faith questioned, what's that faith worth?" ...
"The same as that lack of faith that unbelievras don't like to have questioned?"

The Maerlande Chronicles is a book that will keep the reader coming back to ideas touched on early in the story, which return and are developed in unexpected ways. Why is fertility still so low? How will raising children in nursery groups compare with the families in other cities? When men and women rarely come together at all, how will they learn to see each other as people?

Vonarburg has put a great amount of time and attention into writing of the Maerlande, this future society, without lecturing or preaching. The English translation by Brierley is a masterwork, exquisitely sensitive to the development of new words and gender roles in a future European language. More than merely popular, *The Maerlande Chronicles* stands up under analysis as a thinking person's book well worth reading.

—Paula Johanson

Safari Beneath the Sea—The Wonder World of the North Pacific Coast

by Diane Swanson

photographs by the Royal British Columbia Museum

Whitecap Books Ltd.

64 pp; \$16.95 hardcover

Safari Beneath the Sea is a book for kids full of questions about sea life. Many of those questions can be answered by looking up the names of creatures as exotic as shaggy mouse nudibranchs and mosshead warbonnets in the index. And for those sea creatures you don't know by name, there are 35 full-colour photographs and a commentary that is simple enough and detailed enough to keep an eight to twelve-year-old interested.

Author Diane Swanson honed her talents writing *A Toothy Tongue* and *One Long Foot*, *Why Seals Blow Their Noses*, *Squirts and Snails* and *Skinny Green Tails*, and nature articles for *Ranger Rick* and *Owl* magazines. She has found a clear voice to write her fun facts in this "armchair adventure."

"It's hard to believe that a wrinkly bag with eight arms is a real animal — let alone a smart one," Swanson writes in a chapter titled 'Spineless Superstars.' "But the giant

Pacific octopus is very real, and full of surprises. It has the best-developed brain of all invertebrates (animals with no spines, or backbones). Researchers have discovered that the octopus can learn and remember; they think it may even be as smart as a cat."

There are enough basic facts outlined in this book to steer a young researcher toward the right books for more research, or more likely, right down to the beach or the Royal British Columbia Museum, if the reader is lucky enough to live on Vancouver Island like author Diane Swanson. *Safari Beneath the Sea* is a companion book to a special marine education broadcast sponsored by the Museum in April 1994, which was immensely popular among viewers and participants alike. Children in Canada, the US, Europe and Japan were linked via interactive technology to a team of scientists off Bamfield, BC. The questions asked by children and answered by experts were complex and thoughtful.

— Paula Johanson

White Jade Tiger

by Julie Lawson

Beach Holme; 168 pp.; \$7.95

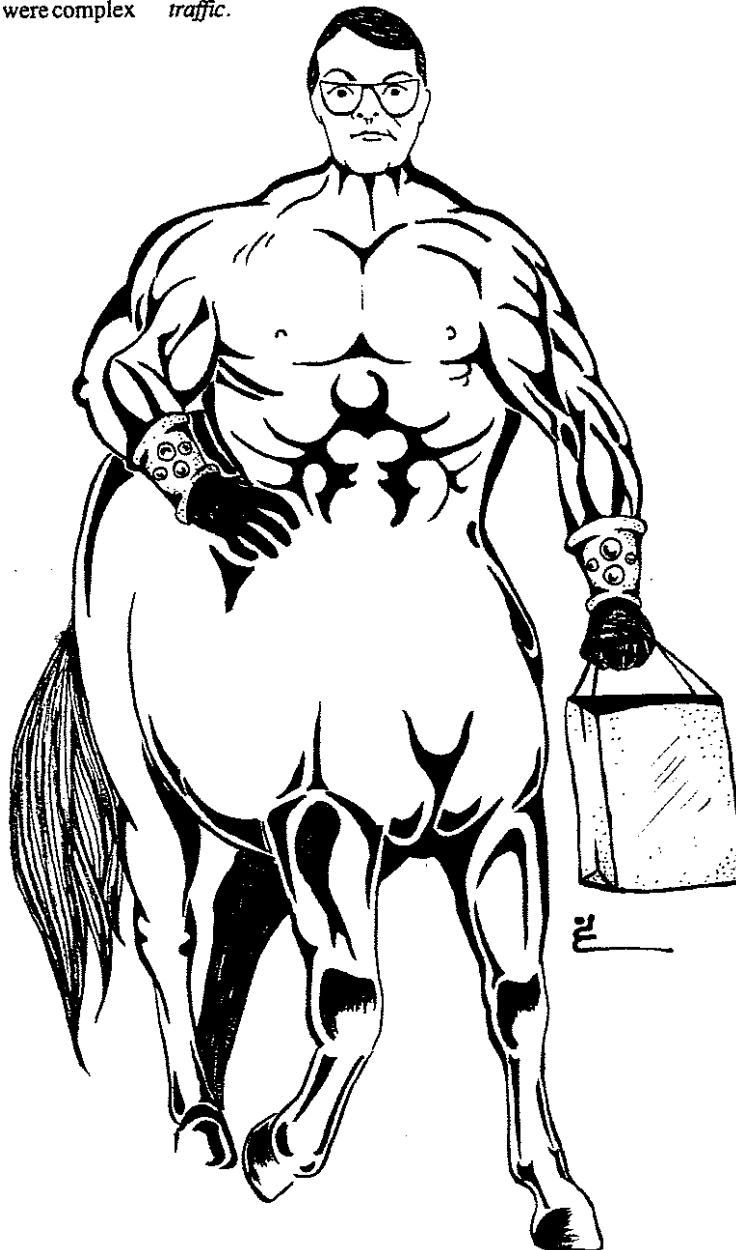
White Jade Tiger is successful, both at telling a gripping story and finishing it in a satisfying, believable way. Julie Lawson has written a story so well grounded in real-life Victoria, B.C. now and in 1881, that the fantasy of time travel between our time and the past seems natural and necessary.

Jasmine does not want to be left behind in Victoria when her father takes a teaching job in China. But a visit to Chinatown helps her change her mind and understand the dreams that have upset her since her mother died. Wearing "coolie clothes" that were handed down in her mother's family, Jasmine travels through a door into the Fan Tan Alley of 1881. *Something had changed. Jasmine knew it the instant the door closed behind her. The sounds were different. No traffic.*

She makes a new friend who has come from China to find his father and a family amulet — the white jade tiger. Her adventures in Chinatown and journeying to the Fraser Canyon are exciting and confusing for Jasmine. She works on the railbed of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and learns how the Chinese were treated in Canada in the 1880s. The writer does not shy away from using some of the racist terms common even in the newspapers of the 1880s, and she uses them sensibly and with great sensitivity.

The wealth of details, the connection between Jasmine, her present-day life and her friend in the past, and the resolution of her story combine to make *White Jade Tiger* a fascinating book.

— Paula Johanson



LoCs

Jenny Glover
16 Aviary Place
Leeds, West Yorkshire
United Kingdom
LS12 2NP

Thank you very much for the March (or May) issue of **Under the Ozone Hole**. The front cover is absolutely brilliant, totally inspired, marvellously funny and generally great.

I see there's the usual finger being pointed about what one was doing when Kennedy was assassinated. I was doing my French homework (one reason, perhaps, why my French was never very good?) but I'm pretty sure C.S. Lewis died the same day and got virtually no publicity at all. What is probably more relevant is that although Kennedy's assassination was a big media event, we had no TV and a scratchy radio, so we just considered it to be yet another news snippet — for in those days, I was far more interested in the off-shore weather reports. My parents could not afford a TV until just before I left home, though I question whether kids are better informed now that TVs are as common as dishwashers. It's too easy to have the box in the corner as background noise — company even — and for one's life to be dictated by programme slots.

Because we had no TV, we completely missed out on man landing on the moon and I didn't see the sequences until a couple of days ago at a special exhibition at the Museum of Film and Photography in Bradford — a young President Nixon was seen telephoning the astronauts; the astronauts revealed how they put a kink in the U.S. flag to make it look as if it was being blown in the wind; we found out how much the flag cost and where it was purchased. It was very disappointing, just like conjuring tricks or

special effects are when they have been explained. I felt very let down, bored almost, and went back to SF with relief, where I can visit a thousand colonised planets almost instantly.

Mind, I do have a TV now, in fact two (a black and white is upstairs and is rarely used, but kept from a mixture of nostalgia and in case of emergencies). And one thing I've noticed is that there are several excellent SF/F series for children, particularly Century Falls (which had a few parts that really scared me), Round the Twist and my current programme Halfway Across the Galaxy and Turn Left... the programme schedulers don't consider that adults are worthy of quality SF. So the children are encouraged to like SF, then when they reach the age of 12 or 13, there's this massive group with only Star Trek and Babylon 5 to feed that SF craving. I can't make up my mind about Babylon 5. As entertainment, it's okay, it passes the time quite pleasantly. There's no great acting and the plots are on the neutral side of banal, everyone is so nice (the crew I mean — the alien ambassadors are allowed to have occasional tantrums). Uh-oh, I've just re-read Willie Rimshot's review which mentions Babylon 5. He suggests that viewers have "seen major character development and revelations." Sure, I'd agree on the revelations — I watched an episode where Garibaldi (the security chief with the squashed up face) revealed episodes from his past. But "major character development"? You must have been a lot luckier on Canadian TV than I have with Brit TV. Obviously I have a treat or two in store for me.

I wonder if I could ask you both a favour. First of all, enjoy ConAdian (I'm very envious and wish I could be there). There's a lot of people who won't be able to get to the Worldcon who will be gritting their

teeth. As you know, I'm involved in arranging some programme items for **Intersection** and one thing I'm concerned about is people coming to **Intersection** and feeling overwhelmed by being surrounded by strangers. When I was a very new fan, I made friends through APAs — a nice, regular form of writing group. I was stuck in the house with two young children and it was wonderful to have these paper relationships. It occurred to me that this would be one very pleasant way of preparing for **Intersection** — to join an APA and get to know a few Brits. I'm currently looking after a mixed APA called **The Organisation** where recent topics of conversation have included SF, horror, comics, sex and terrorism and have contacts with other British APAs, including an all female one. If either of you or your readers are interested in joining a British APA and making a few Brit contacts, please write to me and I'll be pleased to send some information.

{{Kennedy's assassination wasn't just a media event... it was the first media event! As far as TV coverage goes, it couldn't have been planned any better. (Hmmm... was Kennedy assassinated by CBS for ratings points? Dan Rather was in Dallas that day. And were those real tears that Walter Cronkite shed...?)}}

Sorry, just took a break from my reply to watch a Three's Company rerun. Where were we? Oh, yeah: Richard Nixon was never young.

Personally, I think Babylon 5 is the best SF to come on TV in years.

Okay everyone! Write Jenny right away!

— J.W.H.}}

We Also Heard From: Nobody, 'cause we just put the previous issue out *last week!*

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This Coupon is null and void.

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This Coupon entitles the bearer to talk at the top of his or her lungs in the hospitality room. (Absolutely everyone wants to hear about your theories on what would happen if the Cardassians and the Minbari had a war!)

This Coupon entitles the bearer to buy John and Karl dinner during the convention.