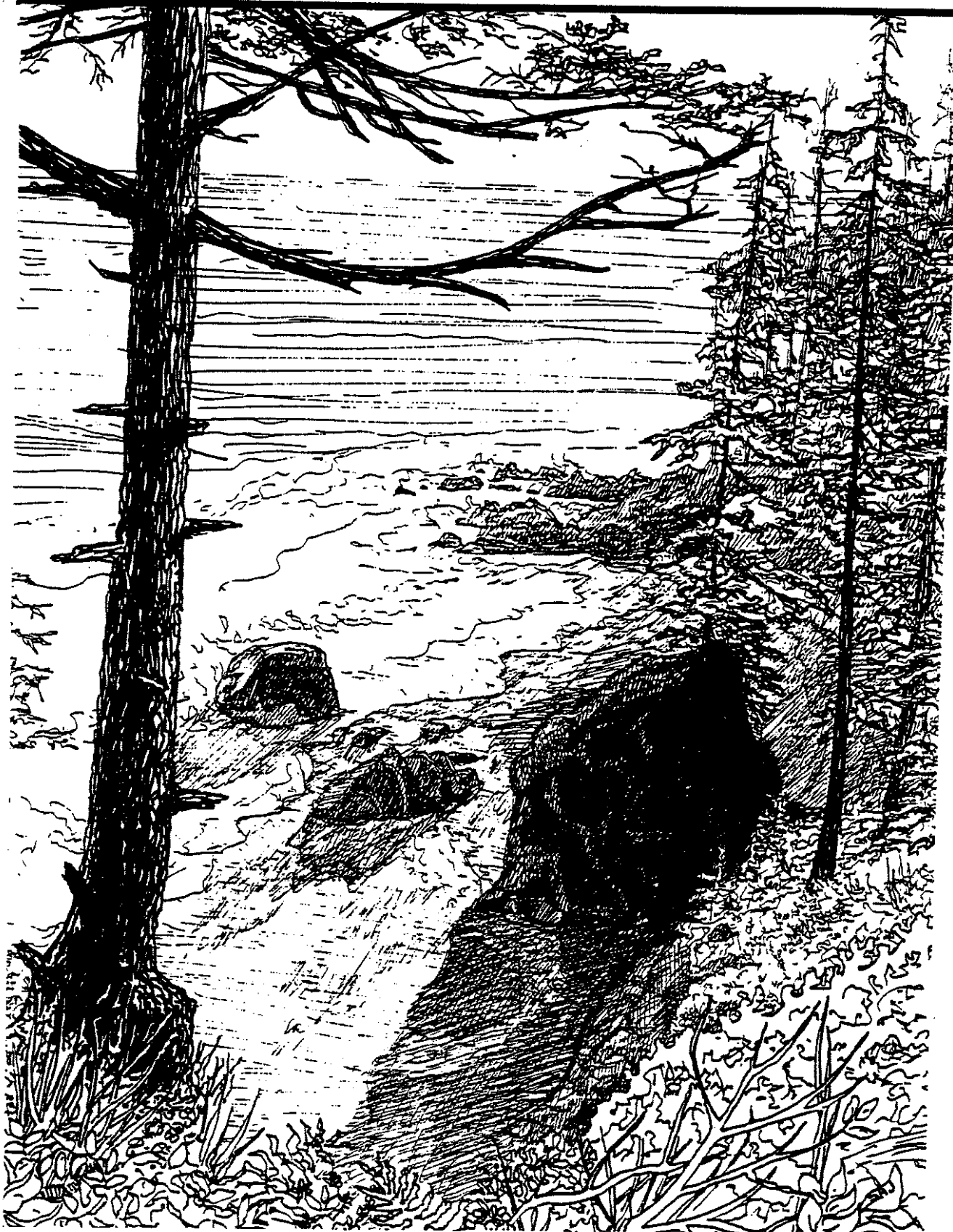


# Under The Ozone Hole

Number Two - November 1992



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*Edited By John Willcox Herbert & Karl Johanson*

*Published by The Spuzzum Press and Nuclear Cheese Wuncle Press*

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Send us your club news and info, fan news, convention news & reports, reviews, cartoons, fillos, address etc.

If we publish something you send us, we can't pay you, but you'll get something better than money: **egoboo**.

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### Why You Got This

- ☐ If you didn't, someone else would.
- ☐ Editorial whim.
- ☐ You sent us something. (yeah, right.)
- ☐ You *should* send us something.
- ☐ I cannae take the strain!
- ☐ Land shark.
- ☐ Robert Runte said to send you one.
- ☐ You said to send Robert Runte one.
- ☐ The lawsuit is pending.
- ☐ Nepotism, pure and simple.
- ☐ Papa smurf rules, ok?
- ☐ Skiff skiff wabbo nepno waboo. (?)
- ☐ Our mistake. It won't happen again.
- ☐ Here fishie fishie fishie fishie.
- ☐ [insert reason here]
- ☐ Boo!
- ☐ If you don't Send Something Soon....

### **WARNING:**

Some quantum physics theories suggest that when the consumer is not directly observing this zine, it may cease to exist, or will exist only in a vague and undetermined state.

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### Art

Karl Johanson, page 6  
Stephanie Ann Johanson, pages 4, 7  
Tricia Evans, page 19  
D.J. Knox, page 22

### The Cover

Stephanie Ann Johanson draws some of the beautiful scenery at Long Beach in Pacific Rim National Park on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

## The Editor's Opinion

by John Willcox Herbert

First, let's correct some boo-boos from last issue. Zines: it's *Spintrian*, not *Spintrain*, and *Opuntia*, not *Opitunia*. Apologies to Dave and Andrew, and Dale. News: *The Quicksilver Screen* is the first novel by Don H. DeBrandt, not Don Hildebrandt (although I have seen a cover repro with the Hildebrandt moniker; I guess Del Rey couldn't make up its mind?); Elizabeth Vonarburg's *The Silent City* was also published in a Canadian edition by Bantam. The "U.S. only" was supposed to have been removed. You know how it is. Also apologies to Stephanie and Laura for not listing them as contributors. Also, the explosion of Mount St. Helens was felt two hundred miles away, not twenty. It rattled windows here in Victoria, but somehow I slept through it.

Last issue was plagued by the moving bug. Monica and I moved from the big city (Victoria) to the small town (Sooke) and it was a mad dash to get the zine ready and printed for *Noncon 15*, and to get everything (including Monica's horse, two cats, and Mr. Computer) packed up and ready for the move. But we did it; the zine got out, we got moved, and here we are.

This issue was plagued by computer malfunctions and printer malfunctions. But thanks to Jono and the wizards at Cornerstone Computers, we are up and

running again. In fact, now we're up and running on a brand new computer and we've got new software waiting to go for next issue. Can't wait.

Let me tell you about some of the stufh in this issue. We have a couple of interviews, the first with Dave Panchyk and Cath Jackel. I first met Dave a couple of years ago. He met me for the first time then, too. Funny ol' world, isn't it? But seriously, Dave was briefly considering moving out here to the We(s)t Coast at the time. Okay, so he only made it as far as Edmonton. That's not good enough, Dave! Our other interview is a quickie Karl conducted with Robert Charles Wilson. When I briefly served on the I-Con I Concom when back when, I suggested Robert for our GoH. He met all the qualifications for a perfect guest for a Canadian con as far as I was concerned: he was (still is) a great writer, he lived in Canada (Nanaimo at the time), and would probably come cheap! The problem was that I was the only Concom member who had ever heard of him, so it was not to be. (Also, the conchair insisted the con needed a "name" media guest; they *don't* come cheap.) I just hope everyone has heard of him now and runs to their local bookstore to pick up all his books. (As an aside, I should point out that our inter-

views were conducted with less than ideal equipment which in some cases made transcribing a bit difficult, so if our subjects find themselves misquoted, the fault is entirely ours.)

Karl has written a piece on the JFK assassination (by coincidence, it's November 22 as I write this). Robert Runte once called Karl a sarcastic sonovabitch, and, after reading this piece, I agree. (I'd love to tackle a serious JFK article. Does anyone want to read one?)

No one sent an entry for last issue's contest concerning what the Republican Dirty Tricks/CIA had that made Ross Perot pull out of the U.S. Presidential Race. But since Perot ruined our contest by telling the world what they really did use on him, I guess it's just as well. The other comment I have on the race is that the day after some guy reading the newspaper headlines ("Clinton Rolls Over Bush": take that however you will) and said this was terrible that a womanizer who had been once charged with fraud was elected President. I said, "You must be kidding, he's met all the qualifications!" I'd rather have a womanizer in the White House than a former head of the CIA, for Christ-sake!

Enjoy this issue.

## The Other Editor's Opinion

by Karl Johanson

Ya heard the one about the zine editor who won \$4.2 million? No?... Okay, this zine editor wins a lottery. When he picks up his cheque, reporters ask him, "Whatcha gonna do with \$4.2 million?" The zine editor thinks and replies, "Oh, I'll just keep editing my fanzine until the money runs out."

That, of course, leads me into my in-depth discourse on how zines and cons can avoid losing money (or at least lose less).

Virtually every convention in Canada in the last two years has lost money. The solution to this problem (which applies equally to zines) is easy to write down but possibly difficult to implement. But, con-

sidering that right now I'm writing and not concurring, I get to do the easy bit. The solution to the problem of cons losing money is for concons to cut costs and boost sales.

# The Question of Art

by Stephanie Ann Johanson

## Soapstone: Lost Art or Found Medium?

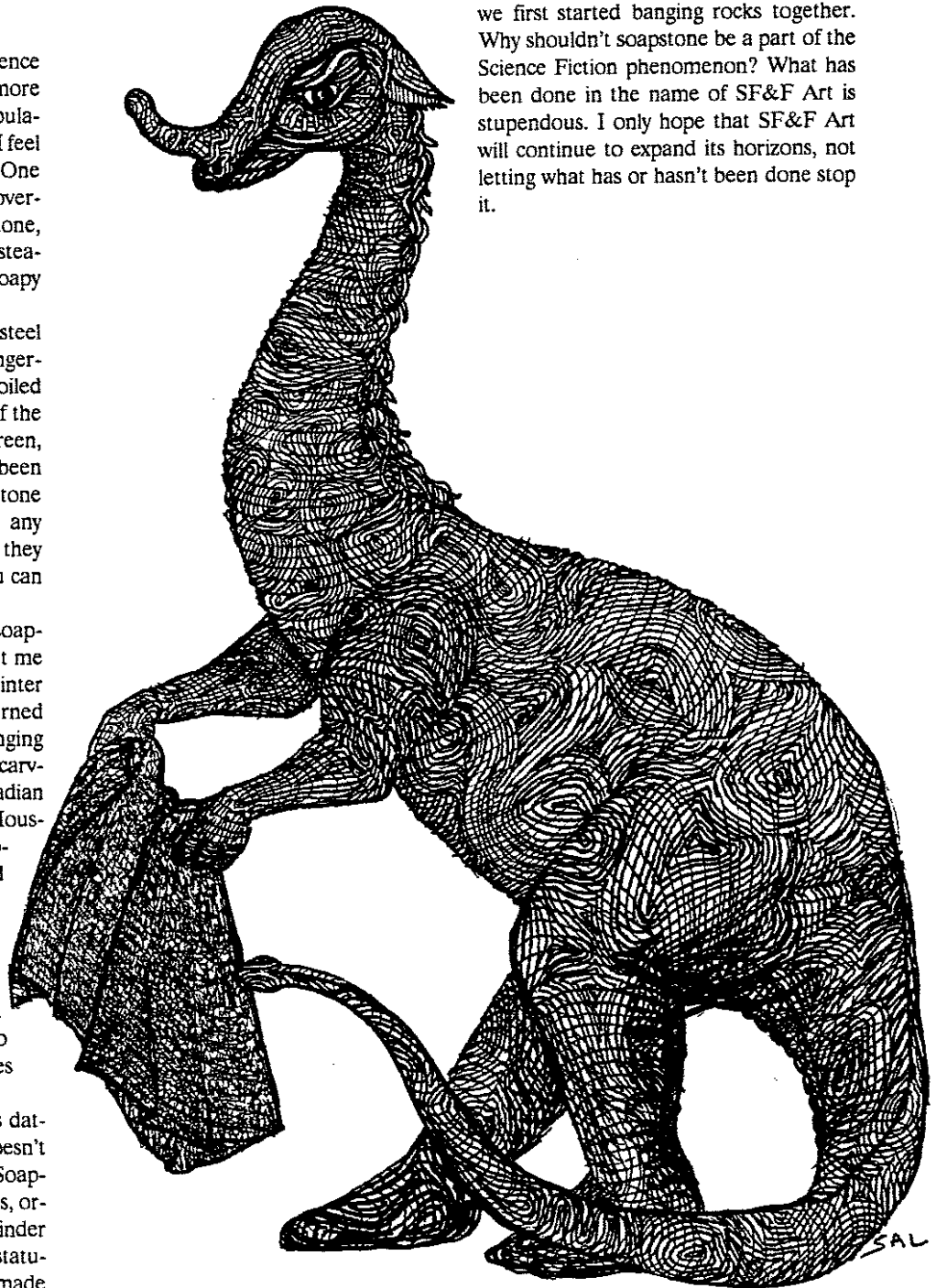
It's generally recognized that Science Fiction and Fantasy Art is becoming more popular. As more of the general population becomes interested in the genre, I feel it should also expand its horizons. One medium that seems to have been overlooked is Soapstone carving. Soapstone, also known as potstone, saponite and steatite, is a soft talc in rock form. It has a soapy feel to it, thus its common name.

The stone is easily carved using steel tools. It can even be scratched by a fingernail. After sanding, the stone may be oiled to bring out the grain. The colours of the stone vary: pearly white, grey, light green, yellow, rust and almost black. I have been told it is possible to acquire soapstone cheaply from lapidary groups, but any Rock shop should carry soapstone. If they don't, they'll usually know where you can get it.

It is commonly believed that soapstone carving is an Inuit artform. Let me give you a bit of history. In 1948 a painter by the name of James Houston returned to Montreal from Hudson Bay, bringing with him a few small Inuit soapstone carvings. After seeing them, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild commissioned Houston to acquire more of these sculptures. He headed back north, and returned a year later with a thousand pieces. They were put on public display and in three days the exhibit was sold out. In the 1950s, Inuit soapstone grew in popularity, and size. Early pieces were usually only three to ten centimetres tall. Now, many pieces can be found up to a metre tall.

There have been Inuit carvings dating as far back as 2500 BC, but this doesn't mean only they used soapstone. Soapstone has been employed for carvings, ornaments, utensils, Assyrian cylinder seals, Egyptian scarabs and Chinese statuary. The first lamps may have been made of soapstone. They didn't look like much, just a hollow to burn fat in. (Electric light is much easier to read your zine by.)

It's because soapstone is easy to carve that it has been a part of our lives ever since we first started banging rocks together. Why shouldn't soapstone be a part of the Science Fiction phenomenon? What has been done in the name of SF&F Art is stupendous. I only hope that SF&F Art will continue to expand its horizons, not letting what has or hasn't been done stop it.



## Interview: Dave Panchyk and Cath Jackel

**John:** Dave, what about Meech Lake and Convention? Should Quebec fandom have a "notwithstanding clause"?

**Dave:** ?

**Cath:** Stunned.

**Dave:** What does "notwithstanding" mean?

**John:** That's the whole question, really.

**Dave:** (sighs) Sure. Sure, because....

**John:** So what's happening back in Edmonton, Dave?

**Dave:** Ah, oh geez, not a hell of a lot. ESFACAS is dormant. Cath could probably tell you more about all this. And *Neology* just put out a for now last issue. And we've got a really big, mega series of meetings coming up in September. Take it away, Cath.

**Cath:** September 14 is the official release date for the fall issue of *On Spec* so I got together with the owner of Edmonton's only specialty sf bookstore, Flights of Fantasy, and we now have on that night a reading by Guy Gavriel Kay from his new book *A Song for Arbonne*, and also a reading by Shaun Stewart, and a reading by Candace Jane Dorsey, and the release of the tenth issue of *On Spec*. And, theoretically, the release of the first issue of *Senary*, the Journal of Fantastic Literature, promised to people since *Context* '91.

**John:** Great. *On Spec* is going pretty good?

**Cath:** Yeah, we're going to quarterly next issue, and we're going to do some new stuff like running convention listings--

**Gaby & Ender:** bark bark bark bark bark bark--

**Cath:** If this ever makes it into print and someone in the far reaches of Canada decides they want to put a convention listing in *On Spec*, they should send me one. Do you want the address?

**Karl:** We'll put it in.

**John:** Insert address here.

**On Spec**

P.O. Box 4727

Edmonton, AB

T6E 5G6

**Cath:** In other news, the SCA is still going strong. All the people with any kind of talent or organizational skills or enthusiasm when ESFACAS foundered moved over to the SCA because there is actually much more respect for their talent and things to learn and people to play politics with--

**John:** That's important.

**Cath:** --bash with sticks, the whole shebang!

**Dave:** There's a younger crowd getting

into live role-playing which has started up again in Edmonton after a spate of interest in the mid-eighties. It's really fun, whereas the SCA has an emphasis on being "period" -- dress, mood, and so forth -- in the live role-playing you let your head go wild. If you want to be Bongo The Chaos Guy with big skulls and spikes and stuff, you can and walk around in public parks.

**Cath:** Clarification here. It never actually died in Edmonton.

**Dave:** It's comforting through all of the dormancy of ESFACAS to remember Runte's Rule of Life in Fannish Organizations. They go in cycles, and this means that ESFACAS probably will be brought up once again by some young person with intestinal fortitude.

**Cath:** The society framework is still there, all the important non-profit protection and stuff. So if anyone wants to play with a science fiction club, there's one vacant in Edmonton. Now that *NonCon* is outside of Alberta this year, I think we should rotate it through the provinces. Other clubs should guest host it.

**Karl:** A few years back, I offered to edit *Neology*, but was turned down.

**John:** So has any club formed up to take the place of ESFACAS or is there a vacuum there?

**Dave:** In order for ESFACAS to be able to get a university room, they had an organizational shell called Campus SF and Campus SF is now in the hands of the live role-playing society.

**Cath:** There are lots of other groups around town. It used to be 15 years ago when it all got started that ESFACAS was the only one in town and that one is now in hibernation. But there's still LRPS, two *Star Trek* clubs, two *Doctor Who* clubs, the Anime club, the U of A Fantasy gamers who actually tried to do a con last February which was a limited success in some areas (although it was a gaming con so maybe there were some things that weren't to my personal taste). So if you're into media or associated stuff, it's okay. Of course, the ones who just read books are boring and wouldn't want to band together anyway. What are you going to talk about -- the book you read?

**Dave:** Gaming's doing well. There are going to be more gaming cons.

**Karl:** Any word of another *ConText*?

**Cath:** That one seems to be dead in the water. I know that in a moment of insanity at the end of *ConText* '91, I was making noises about *ConText* '93, but it was only one evening and I have since regained a more...shall we say balanced outlook. Ba-

{{What can we say? John & Karl spoke to Cath and Dave in Victoria prior to their appearance as FanGoHs at *Noncon 15*. Karl and Stephanie's dogs, Gaby and Ender, also had some things to say.}}

sically, it was a too small group of people putting a huge amount of effort into doing those two **ConTexts** and they've all burned themselves out, and noone is foolish enough to try. It was a great idea and I sure hope that it materializes again in some form or other. Edmonton is a good city but it needs to recover.

**Dave:** **CanCon** is sort of taking its place, but I don't know if **CanCon** flew or not.

**Cath:** They only had fifty people. Apparently, it was a fun time for the fifty people who went because they were interested in writing books and so on. Maybe if they try again. *{{They are. See Convention Listings. --Eds.}}* Somebody wants to do another **BanffCon** in about ten years.

**Dave:** I think because con sizes are shrinking, we have to live with smaller cons. You can have fun with fifty people just as you can fail to have fun with five hundred as happened in 1991 at **Conversion**. It was okay. When we ran **Combine**, we had a dozen people, but we had fun! I think that one of the trends of the 90s that actually is going to spill over into fandom is the fact and the tendency towards specialized markets and specialized interests. I'm seeing a kind of Balkanization of Fandom: individual communities that are growing up relatively separate from each other.

**Cath:** I don't know if "Balkan" is a good term these days. As long as they don't start firing at each other.

**Dave:** Given the historical context, the Balkans have been Balkanized more than once. I don't think there's like a fannish Stalin--

**John:** We hope!

**Dave:** As a for instance: gamers have their own fanzines, their own APAs, their own conventions. Although many things are different, it's not customary for a person to go and put a fanzine together, and it's rare for game designers or even game fiction writers to gain any of the kind of celebrity sf writers

do. You see a lot of resemblance to sf fandom and whether it's influences from sf fandom or from mundane ways is still open to debate.

**Cath:** Steve Jackson drew a larger audience than many of the authors--

**Dave:** Yeah, but he'd also been raided by the Secret Service. Steve Jackson has always been a good draw. Among gamers he's kind of a celebrity. In 1985, he was a big draw in Saskatoon even before the raid.

**John:** But that helps.

**Dave:** Yeah, it always does. They knew they had a new marketing ploy when it happened. Jackson was a real good guest in Saskatoon. He ran an excellent Toons. He explained how the combat system later evolved into GURPS. He started an early

morning lecture with, "Well, let's face it. The human body is a soft, squishy thing." It has a certain kind of charm.

## k<sup>a</sup>RL'z K<sup>a</sup>rTooN! by Karl Johanson



# Convention Listings

## 1992

### MAPLECON 13

October 30 - November 1  
Chimo Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario  
SF GoH: S.M. Stirling; Comic GoH: Charles Vess; Art GoH: Gabriel Morrissette;  
Fan GoH: Keith Braithwaite; Media GoH: John Colicos (tentative); M.C. Lloyd and Yvonne Penney  
Maplecon, PO Box 20235, 390 Rideau St. E., Ottawa, ON, K1N 9P4

### NOVACON '92

November 6 - 8  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia  
GoH: Dave Duncan  
The NovaCon Society, PO Box 1282, Main Post Office, Dartmouth, NS

## 1993

### WOLFCON VI

March 5 - 7  
Old Richard Inn  
Wolfville, Nova Scotia  
GoH: Gordon R. Dickson  
Wolfcon VI, Box 796,  
Wolfville, NS, B0P 1X0

### ST CON '93

March 12 - 14  
Ramada Inn  
Calgary, AB  
GoHs: Ronald Moore (ST:TNG producer), Tanya Huff, Michelle Sagara  
ST Con '93, 44 Senic Road NW,  
Calgary, AB, T3L 1B9

### NORWESCON16

March 25 - 28  
Bellevue Red Lion  
Bellevue, Washington  
GoH: Betty Ballentine; Art GoH: Janny Wurts; SciGoH: Janietz Trisler, PhD.;  
Fan GoH: Jane Hawkins; Volunteer GoH: Teresa Janssen; Toastmaster: Bonnie Baker; Special GoH: Anne McCaffrey  
Norwescon, P.O. Box 24207, Seattle, WA, U.S.A. 98124

### CAN-CON '93

May 14 - 16  
Delta Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario  
GoHs: Karen Wehrstein, Shirley Meier, Robert Sawyer, and Bink  
Can-Con, Box 105, 220 Woodridge Crs., Nepean, ON, K2B 8G1

### KEYCON '93

May 21 - 23  
Marlborough Hotel  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
GoHs: Roger Zelazny, Fred Saberhagen, Bob Eglington, Linda Ross-Mansfield  
Keycon 10, Box 3178,  
Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4E6

### V-CON 20

May 29 - 30  
Totem Residence, U.B.C., Vancouver  
GoH: TBA, Toastmaster: Michael Coney,  
Art GoH: Rob Alexander  
V-Con 20, P.O. Box 48478 Bentall Centre,  
Vancouver, BC, V8V 1W4

### AD ASTRA 13

June 4 - 6  
Sheraton Toronto East  
Toronto, Ontario  
GoH: Anne McCaffrey; Special GoH: Dave Duncan; ArtGoH: Robin Wood  
Ad Astra 13, Box 7276, Station A,  
Toronto, ON, M5W 1X9

### WESTERCON 46

July 1 - 5  
Bellvue Red Lion  
Bellevue, Washington  
GoH: Greg Bear; ArtGoH: George Barr;  
FanGoHs: F.M. & Elinor Busby and Wally Weber; Toastmaster: George Alec Effinger  
Westercon 46, Box 24292, Seattle, WA, 98124 USA

### RHINOCON 3

July 17 - 19  
Radisson London Centre  
London, Ontario  
Rhinocon, Box 1451, Stn.B,  
London, ON, N6A 5M2

### CONFRANCISCO

- 51st WORLD SF CONVENTION  
September 2 - 6  
Parc 55, ANA Hotels, Moskone Convention Centre  
San Francisco, California  
GoHs: Larry Niven, Tom Digby, Alicia Austin, Jan Howard Finder & Mark Twain (dead GoH)  
ConFrancisco, 712 Bancroft Rd #1993,  
Walnut Creek, CA, 94958, USA

## 1994

### CONADIAN

- 52nd WORLD SF CONVENTION  
September 1 - 5  
Convention Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba  
GoH: Anne McCaffrey, Artist GoH: George Barr, Fan GoH: Robert Runte  
Non-presupporting Attending Memberships: \$85  
Conadian, Box 2430,  
Winnipeg, MB, R3C 4A7

## 1995

### INTERSECTION

- 53rd WORLD SF CONVENTION  
August 24 - 28  
Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre  
Glasgow, Scotland  
GoHs: Samuel R. Delaney, Gerry Anderson  
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





## JFK: No F'in Way

by Karl Johanson

The U.S. government involved in crooked activities? Give me a break. If President John F. Kennedy had been killed by members of the U.S. government then democracy would have been negated. Persons alleged to have been involved to one degree or another are still in positions of power. It is arguable that to this day democracy would still be only an illusion in the U.S. if the alleged *coup d'etat* had taken place in 1963.

Oswald worked alone. His first move was to plant "President's car goes this way past the book depository at eleven miles per hour" signs along the parade route to divert the limo. He then pretended to have a seizure on the road, tying up the ambulance intended for the president in the event of an emergency. He obviously had a motorbike in the back of the ambulance which he used to ride back to the book depository and up the stairs to his sniper's nest.

Oswald didn't fire as the president's car approached the book depository (the easier shot) because he might have been left handed or something. He used a poorly-sighted, mail order, bolt action, 6.5mm, WWII vintage Mannlicher-Carcano rifle because it looked neat. He also left a tape recorder in the book depository which broadcast subliminal messages which convinced the police chief that the rifle found was at first a German 7.65 Mauser (which looks just like the Mannlicher-Carcano except for its size, shape, calibre and lack of a "Made in Italy" stamp).

Oswald quickly sprinted downstairs, past the holographic projection of himself drinking a Coke which he had set up in the cafeteria, and outside. Carrying his portable 8mm movie film retouching kit, he quickly stole Zapruder's movie camera and doctored the film to make it look as if there were other gunmen. (He later realized he couldn't alter the sign which blocks Kennedy for a portion of the film, so he snuck out of jail the next day and removed the sign.) From there he ran through the crowd, starting rumours about other gunmen, and picked up the K-Tel Inflatable Novelty Gunman he'd planted on the grassy knoll to trick people.

There has been some controversy concerning how a single bullet could have changed directions several times and stopped completely for a second and a half. Anyone who has seen any of the films kept hidden by security agencies so Commies can't get them, knows the answer. Kennedy sneezed, causing him to lean

forward just as the bullet entered his neck (or was it his upper back? Neck, back -- who cares?) from behind and lodged in his throat. He sat back upright and sneezed again, causing the bullet to be expelled through the front of his throat into Governor McConnell's wrist (frame 278 of the Zapruder film clearly shows McConnell picking the president's nose). The bullet went from there through McConnell's chest and into his left thigh. (Frame 279 shows McConnell with his left leg against his chest and his foot behind his head.) The bullet which appeared to hit Kennedy in the head from the front was obviously fired from behind and ricocheted off the limo's bulletproof fuzzy dice. While firing, Oswald threw a pristine bullet into the President's jacket as he went by. In the hospital, this bullet fell out of the jacket's pocket and bounced up onto a stretcher where it was later found.

After escaping from the book depository, Oswald drove to a point two blocks away from Jack Ruby's house and shot officer Tippit to remove suspicion from himself as the assassin.

The rest was easy for Oswald. He merely had to get the president's car cleaned to remove evidence, give false orders to U.S. military personnel (telling them to make sure the autopsy got screwed up), trick the Warren Commission into misquoting many of their witnesses (and to delete Mrs. Kennedy's testimony altogether), hypnotize the law enforcement officers who interrogated him into not recording any of the questioning, clone a duplicate of himself for Ruby to kill, and then kill more than 150 people with knowledge of the conspiracy. (Oswald knew that if the U.S. government knew the truth, they'd certainly not hesitate to tell the American public.)

*Epilogue: Lee Harvey Oswald is currently living on a farm in Nevada with Elvis, Amelia Earhardt, and the Loch Ness Monster. Several UFOs have been sighted in the area. The break-up of the U.S.S.R. is all a trick! A lie, I tell you! Even now, they're plotting to....*



## LoCs

Robert Runte  
Lethbridge, Alberta

1) **Ozone Hole** Subscription enclosed.

2) News well done but you need to attribute your sources. Where did you get these facts?

2 1/2) Similarly, no one is credited with writing Asimov obit. Is this a reprint? If so, from where? Do you have permission for reprint? If original to you guys, it should be credited because it's a fine piece of writing!

3) No more listing Shatner's *TekVengeance* etc. as Canadian News. Not only has Shatner sold out to Yanks years ago, but books are actually ghosted by American Ron Goulart.

4) Great first issue. Keep it up!

{{Thanks, Robert, yours was the first LoC we received. To comment on your points: 1) Money! Look, Karl, it's money! Thank you, great god Runte, thank you. 2) Sources for the news sections are mostly the usual places. Most news items were published previously in two or more places. We'll be more careful to attribute sources. 2 1/2) The Asimov piece was written by me using facts from the numerous obits that were around at the time. 3) While it wouldn't surprise me one bit to find that William Shatner's only contribution to his Tek novels is his name on the cover, he does seem to be taking some part in the creative genesis of the books. How ever much we may hate to admit it, Shatner is a Canadian (as a matter of useless trivia, my grandfather taught in the same high school that he attended in Montreal -- golly!), and there are books coming out in his name, so I feel that's enough justification to list it (barely). 4) Thank you. We'll try. -- J.W.H.}}

Dale Spiers  
Calgary, Alberta

Thanks for **Under The Ozone Hole #1**. You mean it was published at the North or South Pole? I appreciate the zine review. Normally, however, reviewers misspell my name, not my zine title.

"Opitunia" sounds like a New Yorker's pronunciation of the word "opportunity." But I see **Opuntia** was not alone; farther down the review column **Spintrian** showed up as "Spintrain."

John Herbert's account of his troubles editing **Atavachron** and the "Mylescon" reports is why I avoid SF clubs completely and publish by myself. Who pays the piper (or printer) calls the tunes.

**UTOH** has a nice layout, although the lines drawn through the titles is distracting. I don't have much to comment on since I don't have a television set, so all that **Trekkie** business is beyond me and most of the news was old. However, in the interest of providing some news for you, albeit parts were published in **BCSFazine** and **Opuntia**....

**ConVersion 9** in Calgary (July 1992) made money according to a concom member. No screaming or yelling *a la* a certain Vancouver con. **ConVersion** is going through a rough patch because of gaffiation of burned-out conrunners. One can only hope fresh blood comes in next year to revitalize the con without botching it up for any of the reasons which are evident to anyone who has read any of Garth Spencer's fanhistories.

But **ConVersion** seemed to go off fairly well from the point of view of an ordinary attendee. The video room, with three large screens, has always been excellent. Panels were average to good, at least the ones I attended. At the GoH speeches, Toastmaster Peter David was excellent, and I recommend him to any concons looking for a speaker.

Other than that, a routine summer in Calgary. Rain, snow, but no locusts. Lots of mosquitoes, though.

{{My apologies for getting your zine title wrong (see zine reviews). I hadn't noticed that I'd also goofed up **Spintrian** (Dave Panchyk tells me it was a common mistake). Is there a standard fannish pennance for misspelling zine titles? -- K.J.}}

{{Wasn't **Spintrian** the ship on Land of the Giants or am I just hallucinating again? Read your piece on **ConVersion** in **Opuntia** and laughed myself silly over the "David (applause)" bit. Speaking of **Trekkies**, the

*Under The Ozone Hole Fannish Dictionary* defines a "trekkie" as: a person who worries over whether or not he/she gets called a "trekkie."

-- J.W.H.}}

Harry Andruschak  
Terrance, California

Thank you for sending me **Under the Ozone Hole #1**. It is always a thrill to receive issue #1 of a new fanzine, and wondering how it will shape up as it matures.

It is good to receive a zine of Canadian fan news, since **File 770** tends to ignore fandom outside the U.S.A. And with the 1994 Worldcon in Winnipeg, perhaps we are in for a new, expanding era in Canadian Fandom. It would be nice.

By the way, you missed a new, excellent Canadian fanzine, **The Frozen Frog**.

Sorry this is short, but I have a lot to do in connection with my upcoming vacation. I will be attending **Coppercon** in Phoenix, Arizona this weekend. This will be my first SF convention since **Corflu 9** last February, and probably my last convention until **Loscon 19** this November. So I will have only been to 3 SF conventions in 1992.

Much of this is due to my lack of money, and my work schedule at the Post Office. My current days off are Thursday and Friday, instead of Saturday and Sunday. As such, I need to ask for vacation time to attend SF cons on weekends, and vacation time at the Post Office is strictly regulated. And much depends on a system of "bidding" for vacation slots which are assigned by seniority, and I am at the bottom of the seniority list.

1993 may or may not see me attending a convention in Seattle, either **Norwescon** or **Westercon**. The 1993 Worldcon is out. 1994 in Winnipeg? Hard to say.

And that's all for now. Again, thanks for the Canadian news.

{{I managed to find the address for **The Frozen Frog** soon after we published issue one. I added it to our mailing list. Stephanie's been invited to guest at both **Nor-**

wescon and Westercon, so hopefully we'll be able to say "hi" at one of them. John and Monica will be there, too.  
-- K.J.}}

Lloyd Penney  
Brampton, Ontario

Whatsdis? A new Canadian fanzine? One with news in it? Fan news? Wunnerful! (Actually, I was afraid Garth Spencer was going to try to shame me into doing it. I'm glad someone else was suckered--talked into it.)

Anyway, good to see another newszine arise from the remains of Maple Leaf Rag, MLR, and XenoFile. Let me know if I can help. By the way, I don't live in Toronto. Brampton is just outside of Toronto. I don't work in Toronto either, I work in Markham. That's just outside of Toronto, too. Keeping Toronto at arm's length is probably the best way to handle it. Plenty of things happening in it, I just don't want to live there right now. I can see the CN Tower from my balcony, though....

A fact for you two to consider.... many Big Name Fans I talk to in the States cite Myles' House in '89 as one of the best Worldcon hoaxes they'd ever seen. Two of the eight votes the bid got were from Yvonne and myself. Mylescon II sounds good right about now....

As I read Laura Atkins' article on how she lost her convirginity, I thought about the fact that we started bringing our niece to conventions three years ago. She's now 14...oh, I'm so ashamed....

Actually, we even took her to the Worldcon in Orlando this year. One of the big events of her weekend was meeting Metallica. They were staying in our hotel as they were playing (?) at the Citrus Bowl just up the street from Worldcon, and she met them in the lobby.

The reports and tributes in Locus and Science Fiction Chronicle to Asimov showed he was the most beloved sf writer, even if more and more people were complaining he couldn't write anymore. If you didn't cut your sf teeth on Heinlein juveniles, it was a good bet you cut them on Asimov short stories.

I should think that Paramount would sue Warner Brothers.... I had thought that Deep Space Nine was started before Babylon 5. No matter what, it looks like it's time to invest heavily in blank videotapes.

We're on the Concom for Bouchercon 23, in charge of merchandising. It's an experiment in merchandising, since no

past World Mystery Convention has had anything like convention T-shirts or coffee mugs, but the concom is willing to finance it, so we'll see what happens.

Hey, Karl, it's Opuntia, not Opitunia. Makes it sound like some kind of fish.... Page 17 in this issue was left blank, guys. What happened while I was gone? I think this was the beginning of the book reviews.

If you're looking for Canadian fan news, I can send some your way. First of all, I'm the new chairman of Ad Astra, after 11 years of working on the committee.

Hugs to Stephanie (it's been a LOOOOOONG time), and thanx for the zine. Take it easy, and send me more. I miss Raspberry Drinkzine.

There IS life in Sooke! Ooo! Aaaaah! Eeee!

{{Well, thank you, Lloyd, for all the flyers and the list of Hugo winners 'n' stuff. I must admit that I never thought Asimov could write! There are only a couple of novels of his that I could get through (Fantastic Voyage II: Destination Brain comes to mind). But he was a giant of the field (of many fields) and is sorely missed. Babylon 5 has been making the rounds between studios for years. Creator J. Michael Straczynski was at Norwescon 10 (Spring 1988) and he was working on it then. My understanding is that Paramount had a look and rejected it about three or four years ago. Deep Space Nine was conceived in 1991 when Paramount went shopping for a new Trek series. (Nimoy, Meyer, and Jaffe, working on ST VI also made a pitch for a series that would have been a sequel to ST VI focusing on Captain Sulu of the Excelsior, and would have featured cameos by all the original Trek cast. Alas, it was turned down.) Karl has suffered greatly for The Great Opitunia Tragedy (even as I type this, Karl is having OPUNTIA tatooed backwards across his forehead, so if he is ever in doubt again, he just has to look in a mirror). Page 17 was left blank in every issue; we wanted to see who would notice. HHOK. Actually, we found your page 17 -- see next letter. We miss Raspberry Drinkzine, too -- when are you going to return it? And don't you still owe us \$1.37? -- J.W.H}}}

Elizabeth Garrott  
Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A.

Congratulations on your new zine. I suppose you're wanting swapsies? Looks

like you went to a lot of work, if it's just to avoid paying for Fosfax!

UTOH Number One arrived Saturday, and since Tim is in Orlando -- having a good time, but his feet were killing him after Sealand -- and Joe left that morning for Hopkinsville to spend the week (and Norman and Janice are in Orlando too, and Grant in Reno), I got the first look at it. Nice zine. Your collator picked up 2 sheets of pp 17/18 for our copy, but since nothing was omitted, there's no harm done. We used to make mistakes likethat when we were doing our own collating, but now Laser Graphics does it for us.

Keep up the good work.

Joseph T. Major  
Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A.

Looking at the colophon, what about the mediocre Starfleet captain who wants to "Make it so-so"? Also, pink flamingoes are getting rare in zoos because what the zookeepers give them to keep them pink turns out to be illegal. (Rather like why your canary no longer sings; they eliminated the ingredient in canary seed that made them sing, namely hemp seed.)

By the way, you forgot to mention in the report on Page 6 of the unreported release of radioactive materials the one other thing the unreported release did. It destroyed a habitat of an endangered species. Yes, the state of Washington has listed Bigfoot as an endangered species, and the vicinity of Mount St. Helens was one of the sites with the most frequent sightings of Bigfoot. The question is, who is going to be sued/jailed for this horrendous crime?

Incidentally, in Antarctica Mount Erebus has been erupting constantly, if on a low level, for at least half a century. It emits more chlorine (the main contributor to ozone depletion) than all the air conditioners in the world put together.

I know that George Takei was floating an idea for Star Trek VII, featuring Captain Sulu of the Excelsior and a young ensign fresh from Starfleet named Picard. The timing may be off, I think.

The problem is that some people think that Timothy Zahn's Star Wars novels are taken off the unproduced concepts that Lucas had drawn up, so these many years ago, for the three movies that would follow Return of the Jedi. Probably not. In any case, there are enough fan fiction follow-ups out there that the threat of a "You stole my idea!" lawsuit is always there. It

happened once already.

If Orson Scott Card has sold the gaming rights to his "Alvin Maker" novels to Steve Jackson Games, one wonders how he will handle having abandoned the series back in 1989, halfway finished, after producing them at a steady rate of a book a year. Not unlike Lucas and the *Star Wars* series there.

Of course, Sharyn McCrumb has effectively nullified all fannish criticism of *Bimbos of the Death Sun* and its sequel *Zombies of the Gene Pool* by declaring all fans to be geeky nerds who could make it in the real world if they would just put into the real world the effort they put into fandom, so no need to pay attention to such unserious people. I am waiting for her to do a like number on mystery fandom, but expect to be disappointed.

The editor's insight into the fundamental nature of Alien 3 is remarkably brilliant, and it could not have been more obvious that it was a dream unless they had shown Newt in a shower. (Then the good ship *J.R.Ewing* would have shown up to rescue them. The aliens, I mean.)

The other editor's similar insight into the logical flaws of ST: TNG "Unification I" and "Unification II" is equally noteworthy. Presumably the regular ST fans have also commented similarly. There seems to be a certain attitude of the people in charge of ST towards their fans, based on the belief that they will take anything. Maybe not; look what is happening with the novels.

{(Regarding ST VII: William Shatner presented a storyline which was rejected by Paramount. I doubt Shatner will direct ST VII since Nimoy did not direct ST VI, but their "favoured nations" contract (what one gets, the other gets) allows Shatner first try on a story. Of course, they should focus on Captain Sulu, but they won't. (For more on Captain Sulu, see my answer to Lloyd Penney's letter, above.) Lucas has always said his unproduced *Star Wars* scripts would never appear as books, except as novelizations of finished films. Orson Scott Card hasn't abandoned Alvin; he's said he will get back to him soon. He's just had other things to do. Re your last paragraph: right on! There is that attitude out there that "trekkies will like anything." A local reviewer said that *Star Trek V* was a below average movie but that it was good enough to satisfy Trekkies. I would think that *Star Trek* fans would be more critical of *Star Trek* projects than mundanes are. And yes, most *Trek* novels are pretty pathetic these

days, with the exception of the hardcovers, which generally are always worth the admission price. (For \$25.00. they'd better be!)

--J.W.H.}}

Harry Warner, Jr.

Hagerstown, Maryland, U.S.A.

I'm very sorry I didn't thank you for your first issue and comment on it more promptly but I've been overwhelmed with various obligations this autumn. I might have been still later if I hadn't become alarmed at the international tension resulting from the mishap in Atlanta which caused me to hunt up all the Canadian fanzines in the unlocked stacks and try to respond to them before the border is closed and mail is censored. You realize, I hope, that the flag mishap was just the stupidity of the United States variety, and I'm not immune from it. You might even discover that I've absentmindedly typed this letter upside down, and if that happens, you'll need to go to the trouble of rotating the paper 180° for easy reading, or at least as easy reading as this decomposed ribbon permits.

I enjoyed UTOH, finding the typography easy on the old eyes and free from the annoying excesses in which fans occasionally indulge when they use a computer to commit a fanzine. It was also very good to find material by fans whom I rarely see as contributors to other fanzines reaching me, because this is evidence that writing for fanzines is not becoming an obsolete art as some of us have been fearing.

I believe Stephanie Ann Johanson can be forgiven for one inaccuracy in her otherwise fine article. Notwithstanding her claim that "Anyone can do art," I am a living example that there's an exception to every rule. Stephanie and I have never met so she can't be blamed for not revising her rule to cover my case. I never even could acquire the knack of tracing illustrations onto stencils when I was publishing genzines, and that's supposed to be as foolproof as those art-by-numbered-spaces kits. (I also think it would be more accurate to determine if a child will become another Michelangelo by looking not at the walls of the house but rather at the ceiling.)

Laura Atkins' conreport was immensely amusing. I no longer go to cons but I could nod knowingly at some of the things she discovered at her first con because they were that way far back when I was still attending the things.

Karl's bit about the radioactive catastrophe is a good antidote to the media's overplay of difficulties at nuclear power plants. But it doesn't make me feel any more comfortable. About a dozen miles northeast of Hagerstown is a small mountain that is all that remains of a long-ago volcano, and I keep worrying that geologists might be wrong when they say it's been tens of thousands of years since it was last active and it's permanently dead. I know one man who claimed he had traced the surviving elevation of where the cone was. It's all downhill from that spot to Hagerstown and maybe my insurance company wasn't as smart as it thought it was when it recently added volcano damage to all the situations covered by my householder's policy to make it look as if I was getting a bigger bargain than ever.

Some of the news items in the middle of this issue were new to me or contained additional details about things I'd heard about briefly. It's too bad about Irwin Allen because now he can never use as theme for a disaster movie one of the less fortunate worldcons of recent years.

I hope Harry Andruschak was on your mailing list for this issue because he of all fans would appreciate "The Curvature of the Earth." Harry runs around to previously unexplored portions of the United States and even to South America to go hiking and to scoot down rivers in improbably frail boats and so on. The article reminded me somehow of the Northern Exposure episode several weeks ago involving Maggie's 30th birthday and her trip into the wilderness.

I've read only one of the books reviewed toward the end of the issue, the one inspired by Carmen Miranda (and that collection of stories inspired me to buy a remaindered copy of a biography of the singer-actress who seems to have been a more complicated person than her movies would indicate). I like the fact that your reviewers went on at some length about most of the books since a review that contains only a short plot summary and a verdict that it was good or bad will be duplicated in other reviews in other fanzines a half-dozen or more times, what with the current tendency to publish lots of reviews as a method of getting free review copies.

The cover would be probably less puzzling if I'd seen any of the Terminator movies and knew something about Canadian politics. The spot of colour in one eye is a puzzler: it doesn't look as if it had been done by hand on each copy and yet I have-

n't heard that you are so filthy rich that you possess a multi-colour copying machine.

Again, I'm sorry I didn't respond promptly. You aren't the only fans who have waited the longest for a loc this year, if that's any consolation.

{{I thought the flag incident was part of some obscure, subtle scheme to help push through NAFTA.

Perhaps I should have written about the eruption of Tambora in 1815, which emitted 20 times the material St. Helens did. Perhaps you should get a huge fire safe for your zine collection. Then if the volcano covers your house with lava, archaeologists

can dig up the zines millions of years from now.

Neither of use are rich enough to own one of those neat multi-colour printers (I still have eight tubes of orange mimeo ink, though). However, my company has a \$44,000 automatic silk screen press, with auto flood, variable speed and squeeze pressure, a vacuum tube, power take-off and several neat controls. But we hand-coloured the red bit on the cover.

-- K.J.}}

{{I heard an interview on the CBC with an Atlanta radio personality who, of course, was quite apologetic about "the incident." He went on to note that the Canadian flag

really is one of the easiest to figure out which way is up, and that Atlanta is hosting the 1996 Olympics and that they'd better learn how to fly hundreds of different flags by then. Start studying!

-- J.W.H.}}

We Also Heard From:

Dave Panchyk (thanks for the stuph)!!

## Interview: Robert Charles Wilson

{{Robert Charles Wilson was born in California, but his family moved to Toronto when he was young. He later lived in Nanaimo, B.C., and currently resides in Vancouver. His novels include *A Hidden Place*, *Memory Wire*, *Gypsies*, *The Divide*, and *A Bridge of Years*, all from Bantam Spectra, and all recommended heartily by John. His latest novel is *The Harvest*, to be published this December by Bantam Spectra. Karl spoke to him at NonCon 15 where he was Guest of Honour.}}

**Karl Johanson:** Could you tell us a brief bit about yourself, Robert?

**Robert Charles Wilson:** I was born in California, but came up to Toronto when I was nine years old, so I think of myself as being a Canadian American. I've lived here many years and worked the usual variety of jobs. I started selling professionally in meaningful numbers around 1985 and I've been pretty much living off that ever since.

**Karl:** You have six novels published?

**Robert:** Yeah-- hang on, let me count. Yeah, my seventh is coming out the end of this year.

**Karl:** What's your latest one?

**Robert:** The one coming out is *The Harvest*. It's a book I'm proud of. It's my longest book to date, and my most ambitious book to date. When I was taking over ideas with my editor, she suggested I try something with a large scale, so I pretty much devastated the planet. And it was a lot of fun. I think the book works on a lot of levels and I'm looking forward to seeing what the reaction will be.

**Karl:** Is it primarily novels you write?

**Robert:** I'm a lot happier writing novels. When I was first starting out, I wrote a few short stories and they've been published various places, but I really have-

n't written a short story since 1987. Short stories are as hard for me to write as novels, and I read more novels than I read short stories and I feel more comfortable with novels.

**Karl:** It's probably a harder market to crack for a new writer, especially if it's as much work.

**Robert:** Although the short story was a big entry point for me into the field. It was on the basis of a short story that I got a call from Shawna McCarthy, editor at Bantam, and she said, "Liked your story, do you have a novel?" And I said no, but I'll write you one. That became *A Hidden Place*.

**Karl:** Have you ever taken a short story you've published and expanded it into a novel?

**Robert:** In fact *A Hidden Place*, my first novel, was a short story that I hadn't submitted anywhere because I wasn't happy with it, and I realized that it needed to be much longer, and I turned it into a novel.

**Karl:** How are you enjoying your first Guest of Honourship?

**Robert:** I'm having a good time. It's a little intimidating standing up in front of crowds. I don't feel really at home in front of an audience. It always seemed ironic to me that we have writers, who are usually solitary people by nature, and we have performers and celebrities. For some reason, the public wants celebrities to write books, and they want writers to stand up and perform. I never understood that.

But it's been a good time.

# Science Fiction News

## 1992 HUGO AWARDS

Best Novel: *Barrayar*, by Lois McMaster Bujold;  
 Best Novella: "Beggars in Spain," by Nancy Kress;  
 Best Novellette: "Gold," by Isaac Asimov;  
 Best Short Story: "A Walk in the Sun," by Geoffrey A. Landis;  
 Best Non-Fiction Book: *The World of Charles Addams*, by Charles Addams;  
 Best Dramatic Presentation: *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*.

## Raiders of the Lost Roddenberry

Several old projects of Gene Roddenberry may finally see the light of day. First, way back in the mid-seventies, during Paramount's first attempt to bring *Star Trek* to the big screen, a number of scripts by many famous people (Robert Silverberg, Harlan Ellison, Theodore Sturgeon, and others) were submitted, and all were rejected. Even Gene Roddenberry wrote one, called "The God Thing," that Paramount turned down. After its rejection, Roddenberry said he would base a novel on it. And that's all that was ever heard about it, until this fall when it was going to see the light of day. Michael Jan Friedman was fine-tuning and expanding it, and Pocket Books had it pencilled in for a December release. However, they temporarily killed the book after objections from the Roddenberry estate. They hope to release it next spring.

In the mid-seventies Roddenberry and Jon Povill (who was involved in the various 1970s *Star Trek* revival attempts) wrote a screenplay called *The Nine* about a man who "undergoes an experience similar to how Rod Serling might have felt if he woke up one day in the *Twilight Zone*." Povill is showing the script around to various producers.

## Books

Both Harlan Ellison and Larry Niven had close medical calls recently. In late June, Ellison underwent surgery to correct a 90% blockage of a coronary artery. He's recovering well and following a strict diet. Meanwhile, Larry Niven was taking Advil to treat gout, but the Advil caused seven stomach ulcers, one of which hit a blood vessel and he lost three pints of blood to internal bleeding. He says he's fine now, except that until the blood is replaced, he'll

get dizzy and his "mind [will] feel mushy."

Dan Simmons sold a collection, *Lovedeath*, to Warner.

David Brin turned in a new novel, *Glory Season*, to Bantam with a collection, *Otherness*.

Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle and Steven Barnes sold a sequel to *Legacy of Heorot* to Tor.

## Movies and TV

Premiere magazine recently ran a list of their Ten Best sf movies. Their panel of experts included, among others, John Carpenter, Neil Gaiman, Bob Gale, Terry Gilliam, Ray Harryhausen, Nicholas Meyer, Dennis Muren, Carl Sagan, and Patrick Stewart. Their list:

- 1.) *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968).
- 2.) *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1926).
- 3.) *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (Robert Wise, 1951).
- 4.) *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (Don Siegel, 1956).
- 5.) *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982).
- 6.) *Star Wars* (George Lucas, 1977).
- 7.) *War of the Worlds* (Byron Haskin, 1953).
- 8.) *Forbidden Planet* (Fred McLeod Wilcox, 1956).
- 9.) *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, 1971).
- 10.) *Alien* (Ridley Scott, 1979).

Terry Gilliam's latest project is a

remake of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. (He just can't stay away from King Arthur, can he?)

Stephen King has won a suit filed against the makers of *Stephen King's The Lawnmower Man*, claiming that although he signed a release permitting a movie adaptation, the movie bears little resemblance to his original short story. "It deceives the public into believing he created the story in the movie, when he did not," said King's lawyer. The phrase "Stephen King's" will be dropped from all future advertising and from the film's title.

In other legal news, David Gerrold won a sizable amount in his dispute with Gene Roddenberry and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, according to *Cinefantastique*. The dispute dates back to the first season when Gerrold was brought in, with other "classic" *Trek* alumni writers, to help create the show. Gerrold wrote the show's first Writer's Guide, or "bible." Gerrold left the show after Roddenberry nixed his script "Blood and Fire," which featured two homosexual crewmembers as a subplot. He took Roddenberry and *ST: TNG* before the Writers' Guild for union infractions and his failure to receive proper accreditation for his work on the show. Dorothy Fontana also lodged similar complaints with the Writers' Guild.

*Star Trek: The Next Generation* made another big showing at the Emmy Awards, winning five technical awards: Best Original Score (Drama) - "Unification I"; Special Visual Effects - "Conundrum" and "A Matter of Time"; Best Costume Design (Drama) - "Cost of Living"; and Best Make-Up - "Cost of Living," and something else that I didn't catch (probably set design).

Edison Brothers Entertainment Inc. plans to open *Star Trek* virtual-reality centres in U.S. shopping malls starting next year. The game will be based on *ST:*

## 11th ANNUAL SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE READER AWARDS

Best Novel: *Stations of the Tide*, by Michael Swanwick;  
 Best Novella: "Beggars in Spain," by Nancy Kress;  
 Best Novelette: "Gate of Faces," by Ray Aldridge;  
 Best Short Story: "Vinland the Dream," by Kim Stanley Robinson;  
 Best Dramatic Presentation: *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*.

### 1991 JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL AWARD

*Buddy Holly is Alive and Well on Ganymede*, by Bradley Denton

### 1991 THEODORE STURGEON MEMORIAL AWARD

"*Buffalo*," by John Kessel

### 1992 ARTHUR C. CLARKE AWARD

*Synners*, by Pat Cadigan

#### Fritz Leiber

Fritz Leiber was born December 24, 1910. At the University of Chicago, a friend introduced

him to the works of H.P. Lovecraft. His first professional sale was "*The Automatic Pistol*" to *Weird Tales* in 1938. He wrote horror novels (*Conjure Wife*) and science fiction (*Gather, Darkness*). Sf novels *The Wanderer* and *The Big Time* both won Hugos. His short stories "*Catch That Zeppelin*," "*Gonna Roll the Bones*" and "*Ill Met in Lankmar*" won Hugos and Nebulas. *Our Lady of Darkness* won the World Fantasy Award for Best Novel. Other honours include the Gandalf Award as Grandmaster of Fantasy, the Horror Writers of America Life Achievement Award, the World Fantasy Life Achievement Award, and the Nebula Grand Master Award. He died September 5, 1992. He was 81.

#### Bob Peak

Illustrator Bob Peak was born in Denver, Colorado in 1928. By the late fifties, he was a regular contributor to *T.V. Guide*, *Esquire* and *Time*. But in 1961, he painted a promotional poster for *West Side Story* and his career as a movie poster illustrator took off. He painted over 100 in his career, including *My Fair Lady*, *Camelot*, *Hair*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Rollerball*, *Superman*, *Excalibur*, and the first five *Star Trek* movies. He died on August 7, 1992, of a brain hemorrhage. He was 64.

#### Anthony Perkins

Anthony Perkins' first film appearance was in the 1953 film *The Actress*. In

1956, he earned an Oscar nomination for best supporting actor for *Friendly Persuasion*. His other films included *On The Beach*, and *The Black Hole*. His most famous role was that of Norman Bates in Alfred Hitchcock's classic film *Psycho*. Bates was the owner of a lonely motel where vicious murders were taking place, including the most famous (and most parodied) murder scene in film history, the stabbing of a character played by Janet Leigh in a shower. Perkins died of complications from AIDS on September 12, 1992. He was 60.

#### Joe Shuster

As a young boy of nine, Toronto-born Joe Shuster worked as a newsboy for the local paper, the *Toronto Star*. When he was ten, he moved to Cleveland where he met Jerry Siegel. Together, they created a comic book hero who would have great strength, X-ray vision, and the power of flight: their character would be a "superman." They sold their idea to DC Comics, and when *Action Comics #1* debuted in 1938, a legend was born. An instant success, Superman set the standard for comic book heroes for decades to come and the character is still immensely popular today. Siegel wrote and Shuster drew the comic for close to ten years, but they were fired in 1947 when they asked for a larger cut of the profits generated by the Superman character. By the 1970s, both were nearly destitute. Shuster, legally blind, lived in a small apartment in New York City's Queens borough. In 1975, Warner Communications, now the owners of DC Comics, agreed to pay each a pension of \$20,000 a year for the rest of their lives and guaranteed that their names would appear as creators on all future Superman products. Shuster moved to Los Angeles and lived out his days in a one-bedroom apartment, shunning most publicity. He died on July 30, 1992, of congestive heart failure. He was 78.

TNG and players will be able choose which scenario and character they wish to play.

*Batman 3* is being discussed at Warner, with Robin Williams the favorite to play the Riddler. (I still say Eddie Murphy would make a great riddler: Riddle me this, Batfuck!!)

Steven Spielberg has optioned the DC Comic hero *Plastic Man*, and wants Bruce Willis to play him.

Bob Hoskins is currently shooting *Super Mario Bros*. Dennis Hopper plays the baddie.

## Obituaries

#### Denholm Elliott

"Never act with children, dogs or Denholm Elliott" was the British film industry's word on Denholm Elliott's scene-stealing abilities. His films include *Trading Places*, *Noises Off*, *Alfie*, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, *A Private Function*, *Underworld*, *September*, *Defence of the Realm* and *The Missionary*. He was nominated for an Oscar for his role in the film *Room With a View* in 1985. Genre fans will remember his portrayal of museum director Marcus Brody in the films *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. He died on October 5, 1992, from complications from AIDS. He was 70.

### 1992 Bram Stoker Awards

Best Novel: *Boy's Life*, by Robert McCammon;  
Best First Novel: *The Cipher* by Kathe Koja, and *Prodigal*, by Melanie Tem (tie);  
Best Novellette: "*The Beautiful Uncut Hair of Graves*," by David Morrell;  
Best Short Story: "*Lady Madonna*," by Nancy Holder;  
Best Collection: *Prayers to Broken Stones*, by Dan Simmons;  
Best Non-Fiction: *Shadows in Eden*, by Stephen Jones;  
Life Achievement Award: Gahan Wilson.



Mr. T Stamp of Approval



# SPACEHOUND SKYLARK OF THE STARS AND BEYOND

## PART TWO -- IGNORES PART ONE

### FICTION BY F.F. "BONES" NORMAN

The silver, dart-shaped spacecraft swung madly through space.

"Fornication!" yelled Captain Dwayne "Spunky" Spongester over the roar of the engines as he grabbed at the steering wheel. His ship, the small freighter *Mulroney*, was totally out of control, its course twisting and tumbling like errant fireworks. It was a good thing Spongester had put on his driving gloves, otherwise he might not have been able to grip the wheel.

"Quick, Mavis," he shouted to young woman in the co-pilot's seat, "switch to auxiliary!" Princess Mavis Octavia quickly scanned the controls. She'd had only limited spaceship flying experience as a member of the Royal Court of Crunchiebar, but she knew enough to know they were in trouble. "Which one?"

"Auxiliary!" The ship lurched and the fuzzy dice hanging off the rear view mirror hit him in the face. "There," he pointed, "the red one!" She pressed the button, her expression looking more worried. "What's wrong with the ship?"

"Throttle's jammed open, but the pedal's not stuck! I'll bet one of Kling Davar's henchmen is behind this!"

"Like the one I saw hanging around the ship before we took off?"

"Yeah, like that one! Fornication, auxiliary's not working either. Hit the manual override -- the blue one!"

She pressed the blue button, but *Mulroney* continued dizzyly careening out of control. Spongester knew they couldn't take much more of this.

"We can't take much more of this! Nothing's working!" All the controls were inoperative. With the throttle jammed open and steering gone, it was just a matter of time until they flew into a star or an asteroid. Spongester began to think their future was hopeless.

"I have an idea," said Mavis. "What if we just turn the engines off?"

"WHAT?!? Fornication, Mavis, if we turn the engines off, we'll lose power!"

"Yes, so?"

"So, if we lose power, we'll.... Stand by! I'm going to turn off the engines!" Spongester turned the ignition key to "off" and the main engines cut out. The cabin was filled with relief and silence.

"Good work, Mavis. We'll be drifting for a while, but at least now I'll be able to fix this crate. First, I'd better find out where we are. Pass me the map." Reaching into the glove compartment, Mavis pulled out a folded, dog-eared, wrinkled, coffee-stained piece of paper. "This?"

"Yeah." Spongester unfolded and studied the paper. "Ah, I thought so. We're right on course for this uncharted planet," he said pointing at the map, "and if I'm right, we'll drift right into a perfect orbit."

Just then, Arnold the Android entered the cockpit. "Sir!" he declared imperiously, "that was the most horrific example of space flight I've seen this century. You could have killed everyone and dented me."

Spongester snorted. Arnold the Android was entirely made of cantbustium, the strongest substance known. "Right. We need to fix this crate fast before Kling Davar finds out we escaped his devious plot. You go outside and do the dangerous stuff, I'll stay inside and supervise. Mavis, let me know when we get near that planet."

Unfortunately, Spongester was wrong. *The Mulroney* did not drift into a perfect orbit about the uncharted planet. In fact, it crashed on the planet.

"Fornication," said Spongester.

The trio survived.

*To be continued....*

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# Canadian News

## 1992 Prix Aurora Awards

Best Long Work in English: *Golden Fleece*, by Robert J. Sawyer;  
 Best Long Work in French: *Alleurs et au Japon*, by Elisabeth Vonarburg;  
 Best Short Work in English: (tie) "*Breaking Ball*," by Michael Skeet, and "*A Niche*," by Peter Watts;  
 Best Short Work in French: "*L'Efant des mondes assoupis*," by Yves Meynard;  
 Best Other Work in English: *Prisoners of Gravity*, TVOntario;  
 Best Other Work in French: *Solaris* magazine, by Luc Pomerleau;  
 Artistic Achievement: Matin Springett  
 Fan Achievement (Fanzine): **SOL Rising: The Newsletter of the Friends of the Merrill Collection**, D.Larry Hancock, ed.  
 Fan Achievement (Organizational): John Mansfield, chair, Winnipeg in '94 WorldCon bid Committee  
 Fan Achievement (Other): David W. New, editor **Horizons SF**.

## Book Launch at Flights of Fantasy - Edmonton

Monday, September 14 saw readings by Guy Gavriel Kay, Candas Jane Dorsey and Sean Stewart at Flights of Fantasy bookstore. As well, two magazines were made newly available: the first issue of **Senary**, and **On Spec #10 (Vol. 4 #2)**. The people who came to listen, collect autographs and absorb the wine and cheese spent an enjoyable evening in the company of very personable writers. While I was there with my husband E.B.Klassen, the owner Colin Linton and his staff were selling books at a ferocious rate.

I heard and enjoyed Sean Stewart's reading, and Catherine Girczyc reported on all three authors and their works for the **Edmonton Journal's** Book Pages. She also described the magazines launched at the reading -- **On Spec**, with its new format and art director, and **Senary**, available (alas!) only as galley copies because of a printing delay.

One of **Senary's** editors, Derryl Murphy, was present, pleased and proud to have the magazine ready to go after so much planning. The **On Spec** editorial collective went in and out of conversational knots with every writer in the room. Guy Gavriel Kay seemed to be delighted with the reception his book *A Song for Arbonne* has been getting (#1 on the **Globe and Mail** list!); Sean Stewart, fresh from an interview on CBC radio, read and answered questions in a soft voice that belied the five year effort it took to sell his first novel, *Passion Play*. Candas Jane Dorsey has been busy; besides readings, she has several anthology sales this year, a book of poems coming out and a story chosen for the prestigious Norton Anthology edited by Ursula K. LeGuin.

There were about 60 people attending, including local writers Nicole Luiken, Leslie Gadallah, Doug Barbour, Mary Woodbury, Derryl Murphy, Caterina Edwards, Kay Stewart, Catherine Girczyc and the Copper Pig Writer's Society: Jena Snyder, Diane Walton, Susan MacGregor, Hazel Sangster, Barry Hammond, Marianne Nielsen and Cath Jackel. A great party, but Bernie and I had to leave early to make the long drive back to the farm before our sitter turned into a pumpkin. (Thanks to Catherine for references to her article.)

-- Paula Johanson

Robert Runte finally finished his thesis. Done. Overwith. In the can. Out of his hair. Completed. Absolutely over with, mostly, sort of. (In fact, Karl gave him a button at **Noncon 15** which said: Yes, I've finished my f&\*&\$#@ thesis!)

**Uncon**, the nonexistent con/**Westerncon** debt fundraiser has had to fold due to lack of memberships. Persons who purchased memberships can have their money returned or donated to the debt. (**BCSFAzine #231** and **#232**)

**OSFS** (Ottawa Science Fiction Society) is having an interesting topic contest. A prize will be awarded at the December '93 meeting to the person whose topic suggestion results in the best turnout to an **OSFS** meeting. (It's tempting to suggest that they talk about the Canadian constitution...somebody in Ottawa must know what it's all about!) We're looking forward to see if this experiment works. (**OSFS Statement #184**)

Victoria Mayor David Turner declared the week of October 25-31 "Science

Fiction Week" in Victoria. **I-Con** organizers were after this designation for some time in the hope that it would give some publicity to **I-Con 3**. Unfortunately, **I-Con** was postponed until next year, and no events are planned, save for a Hallowe'en Dance.

Strawberry Jam comics is publishing again. Their latest release is a comic by Mike Bannon called **Oombah Jungle Moon Man**. (**OSFS Statement #184**)

The Saskatchewan Fandom Nude Airband Contest was a big success. Cons across North America are thinking of holding similar events. (**Newsweek**)

## Canucks Writing Books Dep't

*Dreams Underfoot* by Charles de Lint (Tor); *Tesseract 4* ed. by Candas Jane Dorsey and Gerry Truscott (Beach Holme/Porcep); *A Handful of Men #2: Upland Outlaws* by Dave Duncan (Del Rey); *Virtual Light* by William Gibson (Bantam); *Blood Lines* by Tanya Huff (DAW); *Alien Nation #1 - The Day of Descent* by Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens (Pocket Books); *Fossil Hunter* by Robert J. Sawyer (Ace); *TekVengeance* by William Shatner (Ace/Putnam); *Saber and Shadow* by S.M.Stirling and Shirley Meier; *Prince of Sparta* by Jerry Pournelle and S.M.Stirling (Baen); *The Ship Who Fought* by Anne McCaffrey and S.M.Stirling (Baen); *The Maerlande Chronicles* by Elisabeth Vonarberg (Beach Holme/Porcep); *In the Mother's Land* by Elisabeth Vonarburg (Bantam Spectra); *Tesseract Q* ed. by Elisabeth Vonarburg and Jane Brierly (Beach Holme/Porcep); and *The Harvest* by Robert Charles Wilson (Bantam).

# Zines Recieved

## ATAVACHRON

Vol. 7 No. 3, Autumn, 1992

P.O.Box 6501, Depot C, Victoria, B.C.,  
V8P 5M4

Published quarterly by the U.S.S. Resolution

Available for \$15/year (?) or The Usual

Another fun-filled, action-packed issue of Canada's best Trekzine. Lots of news, letters, club stuff, fiction, an editorial called "*The Silence of the Aardvarks*," and a great review of *Under The Ozone Hole Number One*. What more can we ask for?

--J.W.H.

## ATREVIDA

Vol.3 No.3 Nov. 1991;

Vol.4 No.2 Sept. 1992

P.O. Box 4501, Station A, Nanaimo, B.C.,  
V9R 5J9

Published quarterly by the U.S.S. Malaspina

Available for ?

Standard Trekclub fare. Interesting if you're in the club, but not much here for non-members.

-- Brian Townshend

## BCSFAzine

#231, #233

Box 35577 Stn. E, Vancouver, B.C.

V6M 4G9

Published by the British Columbia Science Fiction Society

Available for \$20/year, or The Usual

Issue #231 carries some people's valiant efforts to diffuse the rumours and bad feelings surrounding the alleged BCSFA boycott of Harlan Ellison's speech in May, 1992. (The story is there was no BCSFA boycott.) Hopefully, things are all settled and done with.

The Big News for this issue is the return of Mr.Science. In this fact-packed article, we are told the origin of white mice, the cause of algebra, the meaning of the phrase "time flies," as well as other interesting tidbits. We also learn that Mr.Science has discovered co-marketing and is now offering "Mr.Science Poking Sticks."

In "Bizarre Technology," Graeme reviews the book *The World's Worst Aircraft* by Bill Yenne (\$35.95, Dorset Press). From Graeme's description, it sounds like

a fascinating read.

Clint Budd and Donna McMahon have started a new column, "*Hot Gossip Stop!*" This is a sort of behind the scenes look at Vancouver fandom

Some nice art this issue. Jacquelyn Nilsson's cat on page 28 caught my eye the most.

In his editorial in issue #233, Ghod Editor Greame mentions that a detailed cost analysis pointed out that each BCSFA member is getting \$21.48 worth of BCSFAzines for their \$20, so this issue is eight pages shorter and folded in half to save postage. This means less LoC space. (bwaaaaah!)

The zine still looks good. An interview with Don H. DeBrandt precedes a review of his book, *The Quicksilver Screen*. Dale Spiers tells us what happened to Johnny Canuck. "*The Space Report*" talks about the early German rockets and the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first successful A-4 launch. Also for the space enthusiasts is a reproduction from *TV Guide*, July 1969, about the Apollo landing. Some regular columns and no art or LoCs make up the remainder of the issue.

-- K.J.

## COMMUNIQUE

No.3, April 1992

P.O. Box 22063, 21 - 3510 8th St. East,  
Saskatoon, SK

S7H 5P1

Published by The Undiscovered Province Science Fiction Society, Inc.

Available for ?

This new *Star Trek*/sf club was formed last December and was already planning a convention for late June. How did it go, guys? This issue contained a trivia quiz, a short story and ten pages of club regs. Obviously for the person who takes their *Trek* seriously.

-- J.W.H.

## ConTRACT

VOL.4 #5, Sept./Oct. 1992

321 Portage Ave.

Winnipeg, MB

R3B 2B9

Available for \$7.00/6 issues or The Usual.

This newszine, aimed primarily at convention committees and exhibitors,

contained two and half pages of con listings, almost all of which are Canadian. The review section contains comments about Quebec conventions. There were also news bits, con ads and Convention '93 voting forms. All concons should be sure to send their flyers to this zine.

--K.J.

## DIMENSION

Vol. 1 No.1, June 1992;

Vol. No.2, September 1992

Box A13, 1720 Douglas Street,  
Victoria, B.C.,

V8W 2G7

Published by Falcon Entertainment

Available for \$4.25/issue, or \$17.00/four issues.

The first issue of this underwhelming zine is full of good intentions, but needs work. And proofreading, better layout, and better fiction. Still, it's sorta newswy and no one's perfect the first time out. The second issue is somewhat better, but still suffers from serious layout problems (half-blank pages), and lackluster proofreading (there's a report on the new film *Supperman V*). There is a nice article on *Virtual Reality* by Shandi Leadbetter.

-- Brian Townshend

## FOSFAX

#161

P.O. Box 37218

Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A.

40233-7281

Published by FOSFA, edited by Timothy Lane, co-editor Janice Moore

Available for US\$3/sample copy, US\$12/6 issues, US\$18/6 issues (foreign)

One of the more noteworthy aspects of Fosfax is its heavyweight letter column which has caused some reviewers to refer to Fosfax as an Apa wannabe. The letter column size seems to have originated from an editorial decision in years past to publish every letter received. Over the years, certain letters/letter writers have been excluded, always with the editor explaining who was being excluded and why. Most of the letters are references to other letters and often centre on controversial topics (and rarely sf). Some seem to think that this LoC column has degraded into a random free-for-all argument session where nothing is ever resolved (maybe that's why

it's so much fun). LoCcers' addresses are not published unless a specific request is made.

Every issue of **Fosfax** comes packed with book, movie and con reviews from a wide range of people. Unlike the lettercol and editorials, a significant volume of the reviews actually deal with sf. In most issues I've read, Joseph Majors seems to be attempting to set a new record for number of book reviews.

A significant volume of **Fosfax** is taken up with "liberal" vs. "conservative" debates (for those who think the world has only two types of people). I recently did a bit of gratuitous shit disturbing by listing dictionary definitions of liberal and conservative. I was promptly informed that definitions were irrelevant.

-- K.J.

## THE FROZEN FROG

#4, September 1992

1016 Guilaume-Boisset,  
Cap-Rouge, Quebec,  
G1Y 1Y9

Published by Benoit Girard

Available for \$1.00 or The Usual

In his editorial, Benoit mentions that you should never write in an editorial that you have enough material for the next issue. Sound advice, I'd say.

Marc Ortieb talks about what self-centered creatures humans are (You don't think he was referring to me, do you?) in his article "*The Strong Misanthropic Principle*." His article refers to Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time* which reminded me I bought an audio version of it and forgot to listen to it.

The results from TFF's second survey are presented this issue. Numerous fans comment on their favorite SF cover art. A fascinating collection of opinions, but no grand prize winners.

The art in TFF is primarily small fillos with (for reasons unknown) frogs as a recurring theme.

Book reviews, LoCs, and a ginormous WAHF column fill out the remaining pages. Too bad Benoit can't afford the thousands of bucks it would take to publish all those LoCs.

-- K.J.

## INTERMEDIATE VECTOR BOSONS

#5

P.O. Box 5309

Terrance, CA, U.S.A.

90510-5309

Published irregularly by Harry Andruschak

Available for trade

This perzine is a brief walk through Harry Andruschak's life. The level of detail (including times he eats breakfast and reports on the colour of his urine) may be a bit much for some, but I found his stories of hiking and camping in the Grand Canyon area interesting. (As a digression, the **Under the Ozone Hole** Fannish Dictionary offers the following: "glombit" -- camping trip undertaken by fans.)

--K.J.

## NCSE REPORTS

P.O. Box 9477

Berkley, CA, U.S.A.

Published by the National Centre for Science Education

Available for US\$24/ 4 issues (\$18 in the US)

**NCSE Reports** deals with the forefront of the public issues of the Creation/Evolution debate. The newsletter reports on various successes and failures to keep creationism out of the science class (because it's not science) and out of the classroom entirely (because of the need to separate church and state). While an in-depth search can find minor flaws, I find this publication to be extremely professional. Their articles seem to go out of their way to avoid simple religion bashing and stick mainly to comprehensive objective analysis of issues.

A year subscription to **NCSE Reports** also includes two issues of **Creation/Evolution**. In addition to publishing interesting essays on the topic of evolution science, this magazine provides a forum for debate between scientists who accept evolution as a scientific theory and "creation scientists." While I'm sure dogmatic creationists reading the debates would probably conclude that the creationists win all the debates, I find myself feeling sorry for them. The "creation scientists" don't even seem to be aware of what the scientific method is. You can't decide ahead of time what the truth is and then set out to prove it and call yourself a scientist. Science allows one to gather evidence under controlled conditions and test whether a hypothesis is correct or not. Only in religion can one decide what the truth is before any of the facts are known.

-- K.J.

## OPUNTIA

No. 9.1, No. 9.5

Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7

Published irregularly by Dale Spiers

Available for \$1.00/issue, or The Usual.

First of all I would like to apologize for the unforgivable error I made last issue. I misspelled **Opuntia**. Our proof-reader Monica had no way of knowing this was incorrect, so I must assume all responsibility. My sincere apologies to Dayl Speers.

The cover of issue 9.1 displays two fannish stamps which had been issued as a commemorative of the Niagra Falls, New York **Opuntia/Astronomancer Quarterly International Fanzine Trade Agreement**. They celebrate fifty years of fanzine publishing and are as funny as hell.

**Opuntia's** widely varied topics this issue include an article on the Calgary book co-op, stagnation in fantasy and science fiction, laments of the passing of **Punch and Factsheet Five**, interesting notes on several cities (including Victoria), as well as reviews of **The Knarly News** (the usual - Henry & Letha Welch, 5538 N.Shasta Drive, Glendale, WI, U.S.A., 53209), **Monad** (Pulphouse Publishing, Box 1227, Eugene, OR, U.S.A., 97440) and **Raspberry Drinkzine** (you don't want to know). The letter column contains an interesting assortment of LoCs bearing both familiar and unfamiliar names from around the world.

At **Conversion 9** (Calgary, July 17 - 19), Dale gave away several back issues of **Opuntia** in the hope of generating interest in neos for fanzines. Can't argue with that plan.

Stories of Dale's job in the parks department are the staple of issue 9.5. The **ConVersion 9** review left me with that "yeah, I should have gone" feeling. We are also let in on some of the more interesting bits of Calgarian meteorology. Dale also mentions that he recently published a book: *The History of the Calgary Philatelic Society*.

--K.J.

## OSFS STATEMENT

Sept. '92 #183, Oct. '92 #184

Box 6636, Station J, Ottawa, Ontario, K2A 3Y7

Published by the Ottawa Science Fiction Society

Available for \$18/year or The Usual (?)

This long-running monthly is jam-packed full of news, letters, articles, the ever-popular Mr.Science (he sure gets around), etc. What it lacks in production values, it certainly makes up in content. Particularly liked Robert Sawyer's article, "What's Wrong With SF," in #184.

-- Brian Townshend

**STONEKNIVES & BEARSKINS**

Vol.4 No.6, Vol.5 No.1, Vol. 5 No.2

M.P.O. Box 1212, Saint John, NB, E2L 4G7

Published by the U.S.S. Omega  
Available for ?

This long-running Trekzine is always entertaining. These issues contained episode reviews, trading card reviews, fiction, science articles, model kit building hints, and more. Vol. 5 No. 2 was a "Best of" issue. Check it out.

-- J.W.H.

**XENOFIL**

No. 10

P.O.Box 1088, Station M, Calgary, AB, T2P 2K9

Published by Con-Version

The final issue of Ron Currie's XenoFile crossed my path. This wonderful zine contains lotsa news (hopelessly out of date by now, but interesting just the same), plenty of reviews, and a blank page (it says so right on it). But all good things must

pass, so Ron's embarking on a new project, **Quadrant Five**. The first issue is available free! Write: **Quadrant Five**, Box 50054, Malborough Postal Outlet, Calgary, AB, T2A 7P1.

-- J.W.H.



# Reviews

## BETWEEN THE COVERS by David Gordon-MacDonald

### *Rama II*

Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee  
Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1989

### *The Garden of Rama*

Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee  
Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1991

### *Who P-P-P-Plugged Roger Rabbit?*

Gary K. Wolf  
Villard Books (Random House), 1991

### *Zombies of the Gene Pool*

Sharyn McCrumb  
Simon and Schuster, 1992

### *Eaters of the Dead*

Michael Crichton  
Alfred A. Knopf, 1976

Okay, I admit it. I'm an absolute sucker for Clarke. Now that Asimov's gone he's the last of the old grandmasters still around, and the thought of his writing can still bring out the drooling fanboy in me. (Alright, bring out the drooling fanboy more than usual, if you want to be picky about it!) When my parents dragged the family from Edinburgh to Vancouver at the beginning of the 'Seventies, my father helped introduce me to both the continent and SF with a few treasures from the university library. First of all, he made sure I was hooked with a complete book of the Buck Rogers comic strips from the 'Twenties and 'Thirties, then he helped ensure that the genre reeled me in with the help of Arthur C. Clarke. *Childhood's End*, *Tales from The White Hart*, *The Nine Billion Names of God*, *The Deep Range* ... they helped mold (if not mould) my teenage years, and germinate an interest in the sciences. Since Dad was an environmental physicist, one may sense a hidden agenda in this somewhere.

A couple of years later, when *Rendezvous with Rama* came out I was just as thrilled with that title, but this is not a sentiment that I can say applies equally to its sequels. Maybe it's because I'm older and my sense of wonder has been tamed by mundane reality. Or maybe, it's because that quality was never present in the work

that Clarke and Lee produce jointly. The future of the *Rama* sequels is just a little too much like late Twentieth Century reality, and many situations are far too redolent of today's literary mind candy. If I want to read a trashy novel, (Ghod forbid!) I'll pick up a Jackie Collins. I expect something better from Clarke. The worst sin of these two novels is that they take SF and make it prosaic; there's nothing new either in the characters or world situation, and identifying with or even caring about any character is well nigh impossible. The worst insult of these books, though, is that they are not even complete stories; we'll have to wait until next year to find out what's been going on in these two and "Rendezvous." At least when Clarke was working alone, he didn't forget that a novel has a beginning, a middle, and an ending. There can be no doubt; "Rendezvous" has its two sequels far outclassed. *Rama II* and "Garden" may be a slightly better time passer than that snore fest, *Cradle*, which was this pair's first project, but even Arthur C. Clarke's *Mysterious World* is a better bet for entertainment, enlightenment, and just plain Sense of Wonder.

Gary Wolf's second *Roger Rabbit* novel, by contrast, is an absolute delight. In *Who P-P-P-Plugged Roger Rabbit?* Wolf has succeeded in melding the best of his own vision of Roger's world with that of the film to create a seamless whole. Discrepancies between *Who Censored Roger Rabbit?* (Wolf's first *Roger* novel) and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* are explained away in a most amusing fashion. However, "Plugged" is more than merely amusing; at times it's an absolute scream. Wolf makes his world of uneasily co-existing toons and humans as natural as our own, defining a universe and characters that have the ability to make the reader laugh out loud and yet be strangely disturbing. After all, when you think about it, having living cartoons as fellow creatures would be downright creepy. The reflections on our own world which underly the humour are never obtrusive, as they are in the *Rama* books. Who would have expected it? This *Roger Rabbit* book is actually thought provoking. But don't read "Plugged" as a treatise on social ills, read it for a wonderful cast of characters with depth and vitality, despite their surreal nature. Roger and Jessica are far more

real than those cardboard cutouts Clarke and Lee have been foisting on us.

A few years ago, Sharyn McCrumb produced a combined satire of, and tribute to, SF fandom called *Bimbos of the Death Sun*. Since then, it has become a cult hit. Many fans' outraged reactions to its painfully accurate characterizations have caused McCrumb to jokingly refer to herself as "The Salman Rushdie of SF Fandom." Both *Bimbos* and its sequel, *Zombies of the Gene Pool* were selling like crazy at this year's *NorwesCon*. It took a while for its popularity to build, but eventually the publisher (TSR) got the idea and reprinted James Owen Mega's first outing as well as printing his second (in hardback through Simon and Schuster). Like *Bimbos*, *Zombies* is a look at SF fandom. However, instead of scrutinizing youthful con fandom, McCrumb this time focuses on older literary fans and writers. There is an obvious allusion to The Futurians in a group called The Lanthanides. In both cases, a group of young SF fans go their separate ways, some growing up to become best-selling SF writers, or editors; some never grow up at all, and become middle aged fanboys. McCrumb has set the novel in Tennessee quite deliberately, because most of the old guard of SF came from the New York-Boston-Philadelphia corridor. Besides, the setting allows the introduction of the metaphor-laden draw down of a man-made lake (the Gene Loverick Lake, or Gene Pool, to those of us who are a bit odd). *Zombies* is a better novel than *Bimbos*, and we get to see more of McCrumb's talents as an Edgar Award winning mystery writer. But to say that it has more depth would be a pun too heinous even for me. There may be less chance of recognizing yourself in these sixty-year old fans and writers than there was among the con goers of *Bimbos*, but the types are familiar and poignant. Strangely, the words which come to mind, in summing up *Zombies*, are grace and dignity. Strange choices? Perhaps. However, this book is also a hymn, a hymn to a dying breed. Most of that original generation of fans is already gone, and the ones who remain, of those who came to SF in the 1920's and '30's, are in their late seventies, or their eighties. In fact, old fashioned literary fandom seems grossly outnumbered and beleaguered by media fandom,

which has a much wider appeal, these days. In a way, unabashed *Star Trek* fans like me, and perhaps you, are partly to blame. Not a comforting thought, is it?

Michael Crichton's name is a familiar one in both genre and mainstream literary circles, from such novels as *The Andromeda Strain*, *The Great Train Robbery*, and *Congo*. Though several of Crichton's books have been successfully adapted for the screen, it is difficult to imagine that *Eaters of the Dead* would make this transition undamaged. *Eaters* is firmly based in ancient Norse legends and oral literature, combined with the travelogue style common to the Islamic Empire of 1000 years ago.

Allegedly the manuscript of Ibn Fadlan, a tenth century Arab diplomat, *Eaters* details his journey across Europe on a mission to the Bulgars for his Caliph. On the way, Fadlan is diverted into an adventure with some Norsemen, and ends up smack in the middle of the legend of Beowulf.

This was written at a time when the full extent of Norse civilization had only just been realized, and its newly rediscovered richness was being popularized by a new generation of archaeologists and historians. Until the last couple of decades, it had been popular to discount the contribution of Norse civilization, and even to deny that it existed as such. *Eaters* is filled with marvelous detail of both the civilization and the Norse people themselves. The reader gains great insight into the character and world view of an oft caricatured people. Equally fascinating is the character of the narrator, Ibn Fadlan. He is a well educated member of a society that was, at the time, the most cosmopolitan in the world. Strange as it may seem today, Baghdad was known in those days as the City of Peace. Capital of the Islamic Empire, it saw traders from the entire known world of the tenth century. Fadlan is an engaging storyteller whose objective narrative is leavened by a healthy dose of his own opinions and personal experiences.

Historical and literary points of obscurity are cleared up by annotations from a scholar of the "ancient manuscript," and when the SF elements put in an appearance at the novel's denouement, they fit as well as if this were an actual historical narrative, uncontaminated by elements of the fantastic. *Eaters of the Dead* is very difficult to put down. If you can find a copy in the library or a used book store, grab it!

That's all for this installment of Between the Covers. Next time we'll look

at several books by Vancouver writer Crawford Killian, Sherlock Holmes novels from both the East and West of Canada, and Niven's *Man-Kzin Wars*.

{ {As a Clarke fan let me jump in here and say that I didn't think Rama II was all that bad. (Having just this week started The Garden of Rama, I am as yet unqualified to judge it.) Sure, it's not as good as Rendezvous With Rama, but I thought it was more readable than Dave feels. Incidentally, Lee has signed to write three more novels in the "Rama" universe after Rama Revealed is out next year. And Clarke has decided not to do any more collaborations. Read into that what you will.

-- J.W.H. }

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#### *The Gap Into Conflict: The Real Story*

by Stephen R. Donaldson

July 1992; Bantam Spectra; \$5.99

#### *The Gap Into Vision: Forbidden Knowledge*

by Stephen R. Donaldson

August 1992; Bantam Spectra; \$6.99

These are tough books. There is not a single redeeming character in either book, and almost every character engages in various acts of brutality. It's a tribute to Donaldson's ability as a writer that anyone would want to finish them. He's taken what is essentially a space opera and twisted it into something much different.

-- J.W.H.

#### *It's Not Unusual*

by Dread Zeppelin

I.R.S. Records

First the bad news: Tortelvis has left Dread Zeppelin. Yes, the portly modern incarnate of the King has returned to his previous life as a milkman. Now the good(?) news: Dread Zeppelin lives.

Abandoning their usual shtick of reggae Led Zeppelin covers as sung by Elvis, the new Dread Zeppelin takes on that dreaded musical form of the seventies, disco, twisting in Led Zeppelin licks and Elvis-styled vocals. Imagine "*Disco Inferno*" with a fifties-style vocalist that sounds like a poor man's Billy Idol, Led Zeppelin-tinged reggae guitar hooks ("*Kashmir*" to be exact), and snatches of lyrics from Elvis' "*In the Ghetto*," or how about the wail intro to "*The Immigrant Song*" leading in "*You Should Be Dancing*," or "*Jive Talking*" done to "*D'Yer Maker*." "*Night Fever*," "*Shaft*," and "*More Than A Woman*" also get the

Dread Zeppelin treatment this time around. This is warped stuff.

-- J.W.H.

#### *Needful Things*

by Stephen King

July 1992; Penguin Signet; \$7.99

Imagine a store that sells everything you ever wanted: that rare baseball card you need, your long-lost favorite fishing rod, a picture of Elvis, a cure for your arthritis that really works. It doesn't cost much to shop here, just a few dollars...and your soul.

Suffice it to say, King has another masterpiece here. A new store, "Needful Things," has opened up in King's favorite haunting ground of Castle Rock, Maine. Needless to say, the town is full of people who need something. The shop's proprietor, Leland Gaunt, is one King's most finely drawn embodiments of evil. King is a master of narrative plot juggling and manages to keep innumerable plotlines up in the air. He almost drops a few as he races to his cataclysmic conclusion, but he keeps them all airborne. (His twisted sense of humour comes through, too, with the running gag featuring the "open/close" sign.) This could be King's best novel yet.

-- J.W.H.

#### *The Quicksilver Screen*

by Don H. DeBrandt

August 1992; Ballantine Del Rey; \$4.99

#### *Passion Play*

by Sean Stewart

Beach Holme; \$6.95

The cover of Don H. DeBrandt's first novel, *The Quicksilver Screen*, would suit of the old sci-fi pulp magazines or a 1950s Heinlein novel. It does not suit this very modern, hard-hitting story which has more in common with the sf novels of John Shirley and William Gibson. Granted, the protagonist does have a steel crest implanted in his skull as depicted, and passing mention is made of an alternate reality where dinosaurs are kept as pets....

The steel-crested hero is Virgil Jakobi: video artist, former gang member and analyser of Infinite Range Television who manages to find, among hundreds of thousands of transmissions from alternate realities which he is hired to scan, 209 separate realities in which his alter ego attained celebrity status. He sees himself as "scientist, doctor, artist, actor, preacher, psychopath, saint."

Disoriented by the experience, Virge retreats from the corporation's facilities to an artists' colony near Whistler, B.C. With



his artist friends, he learns that the celebrated sculptor and composer Thann Demetrios plans to commit suicide. The sensitive art of Thann, an aphasic with no understanding of language, has touched Virge so deeply that he resolves to convince Thann to live. When Virge's boss calls him back to work, Virge heads instead into the crowded and dangerous streets of Vancouver, looking for an illegal drug to help him understand Thann's emotions.

The drug is controlled by Virge's former gang and they are not about to let him go free again. It takes a daring rescue, escape from a psycho-path's animated corpse and Virge's own death to get him free of the gang and corporation. And what then? The scene shifts to Australia and sanctuary in a colony of sexual fetishists.

But to seek sanctuary is to face their Initiation, and their morality is not Virgil's own....

Even if the reader is astonished at Don DeBrandt's hard-hitting story and loses track of the plot turns, the character Virge never loses track of his resolution to save Thann. Art, love and morality do not distract, but help Virge communicate wordlessly with Thann while trying to keep him from death.

Morality is a central theme in Sean Stewart's first novel, *Passion Play*. This is a gripping murder mystery told with imagination and grit, set in a bleak near-future dominated by a fundamentalist administration. A freelance investigator, Diane Fletcher, hunts criminals and killers with her taser and her ability to feel the emotions of others. She is a "shaper" and a hunter.

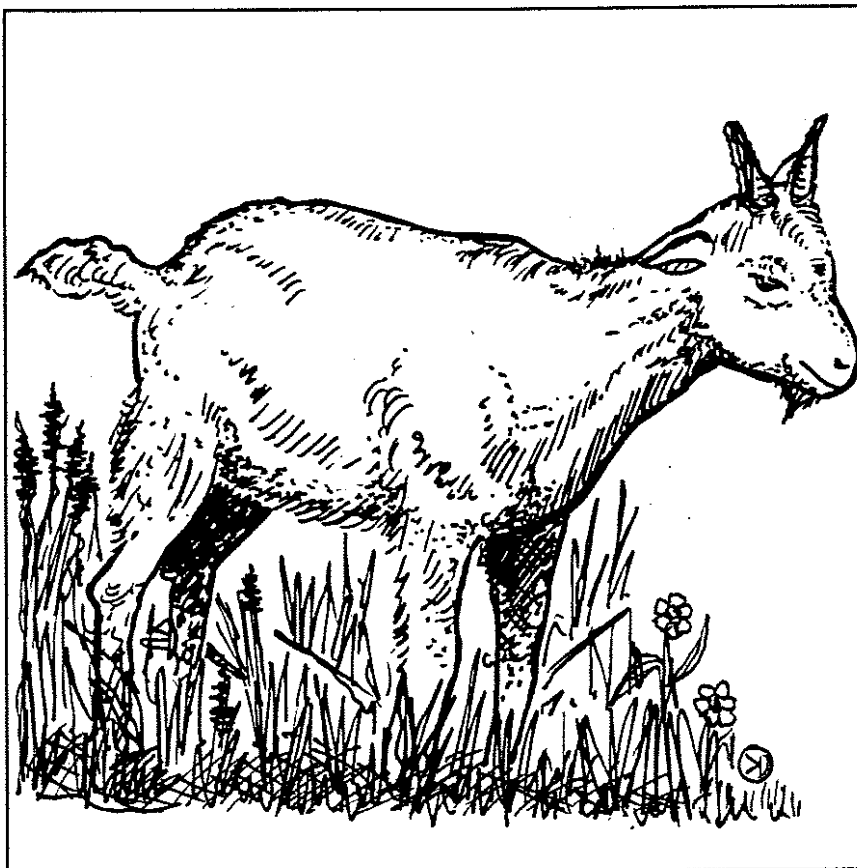
When hired by police and the Redemption administration to investigate the death of actor Jonathon Mask, Diane tracks down the actions and motivations of each suspect, focussing at last upon the

killer. Her own emotions wheel from the acid edge of hunting lust, through passion to desolation. "Nobody feels pain more keenly than an empath," Diane knows. "I became a hunter to minimize that pain, to take away the murderers and madmen and so reduce the suffering."

"When a man kills a woman with his hands I call it murder, but when I send him to be hanged it's Justice, right?" Diane has

Stewart writes with all the immediacy of Dick Francis and the imagination of William Gibson. DeBrandt integrates artist and morality with writing as sure as John Shirley. Cyberpunk novels are not mainstream reading, but these Canadian speculative novels will appeal to minds that look beyond the evening news or the latest downtown office sculpture with a street person sleeping under it.

-- Paula Johanson



*Russian Spring*  
by Norman  
Spinrad  
October 1992;  
Bantam Spectra;  
\$6.99

It's not often that a book goes from "science fiction" to "alternate history" between hardcover and paperback editions, but Norman Spinrad's latest gets caught by the speed of the upheavals in Eastern Europe. In his story set not far in the future, two lovers, an American space engineer and a young Russian woman who has decided to party (pun intended) across Europe, play out their lives against the back-

a great deal of time to think, alone in her apartment. "A pane of glass no thicker than a tv screen is all that stands between Heaven and Hell, between justice and slaughter: one mistake can smash your universe to splinters."

Sean Stewart sets his story in a near future that has an authentic, gritty realism, complete with urban housing projects and TV news tabloids as well as video telephones and mnemometal spoons that return to their shape when bent. The cover for *Passion Play* is more appropriate than was the cover for DeBrandt's novel. Here a hard as nails Diane Fletcher takes aim with her taser before a background of puzzle pieces that come together to form an integrated circuit. A curious image, combining elements of sf and detective fiction.

ground of the decline of the American Empire and the rebirth of the former Soviet republics. This is Spinrad's best work in ages, at times moving and engrossing, and constantly entertaining. Read this.

-- J.W.H.

#### Touch Tone Tune Time

Buckaroo Banzai Theme:  
12336323112333963231123339632313212  
Great Root Beer Song:  
12369#2#963963699#6  
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star:  
1199##966332211199##96633221  
Mary Had A Little Lamb:  
32123332223993212333322321  
Deck The Halls:  
69321232623211