

Saturday, August 9, 2008

Morning Edition

Lois McMaster Bujold Romances SF in GOH Speech

Ms. Bujold discussed how she mixed different genres in her books. Her working definition of genre is a group of books in close conversation with one another. Genre is also a marketing category; labels were invented as soon as there were too many books for one person to sort through easily, which probably started 15 minutes after Gutenberg invented his press. These categories can become toxic when they function as walls rather than doors.

She confessed to not knowing where the SF genre was going in the 21st century, because she isn't doing the steering. SF as a genre is always dying and being reinvented by new authors. Most of the time she didn't even know where her next chapter was going, let alone the future of the genre as a whole.

In her cross genre exploration, mystery is Blood Type O, the universal donor, and SF is Type AB, the universal recipient. Romance is a fantasy of love; mystery is a fantasy of justice; and SF is a fantasy of political agency. The different psychology of genre readers gives different results to similar themes. SF runs heavily to coming of age stories where, for instance, the village is burned down and the protagonist then goes on a heroic journey. In romance, the village may also burn down, but the main character's journey is about integration and redemption not about individual empowerment.

Her recent encounters with romance can be blamed on Catherine Asaro's invitation to submit to *Irresistible Forces*, an anthology of romance SF

stories. Fan reaction was interesting; SF fans tended to be tone deaf to the relationships while the romance fans were indifferent to the worldbuilding. She also noted the tremendous staying power of Georgette Heyer, especially for SF fans.

Her approach to writing is to "think of the worst possible thing to happen to the characters and then do it" and the worst possible thing is to force her characters to deal with politics. However, the new Miles book, from which she will be reading today at 11:30am, is packed with politics, worldbuilding, and chickens. Having no other contracts, she has a great deal of freedom to decide what she wants to do next in 2009. There will be two more Five Gods books.

People do not discuss series structure as an art form, but series do different things than individual novels. The Miles books are structured as independent adventure stories in a character's life in real time. In the Chalion books, she made a different God the theme for each book, rather than tie the series to a particular set of characters, which is what readers expect.

Now that she has finally married off Miles, the most frequently asked question is "when will Ivan get his own book?" She has no plans for a "first landings on Barrayar" prequel or to go back to Athos. She noted that she was a little unhappy about how she let telepathy into her universe and was not sure she wants to develop that any further.

Help Preserve SF Community's History—Save the Tapes

Denvention received a DVD of Robert Heinlein's 1976 Guest of Honor Speech from Midamericon. It was sent on behalf Margie Lessinger, partner of the late Scott Imes.

Imes spent several decades documenting the science fiction community and its conventions. This DVD of Heinlein is the first time any of this work has been digitized.

Margie is seeking a permanent archival home for Scott's video documentaries. The collection is in a variety of tape formats, including reel-to-reels, and needs to be preserved, digitized, cataloged, and cared for, most likely in a university setting.

If anyone has information about such a home or can offer a proposal, please contact Jeff Schalles at jjschalles@comcast.net. Thank you!

Hip Hugo Happenings

By a vote of 40-28, a resolution to drop the Best Semiprozine Hugo passed at Friday's WSFS Business Meeting. The resolution will go on next year's Business Meeting at Anticipation in Montreal for final ratification and take effect in 2010.

A resolution to add a Best Graphic Story Hugo was overwhelmingly approved and will also go to Anticipation for final ratification. In addition, a non-binding proposal was made to both Anticipation and the winner of the 2010 Worldcon to put the Best Graphic Story on their list Hugo list.

Also passed at the meeting, and to be ratified at Anticipation, clarifies the eligibility of works published in electronic and other non-print forms for Hugo awards. One of the effects of this change is that the Best Related Book award would become Best Related Work.

Ratified at the meeting was a change to Best Fan Artist that would allow an artist to be nominated in both Professional and Fan artist categories in the same year. It will take effect next year.

SF Writers Out Themselves as Subversives

On the Friday panel, "SF as a Forum for Questioning Social Norms," prominent SF writers confessed to being subversives.

Nancy Kress said that science fiction is not predictive literature.

Ian McDonald said that SF really is a very conservative literature but gives the most powerful tools for social analysis in all of literature. Writers slip in little bits of subversion.

Jim Morrow said that these days just suggesting that there is more than one side, that those who disagree with you may not be agents of Lucifer, is being subversive. Nancy Kress replied, "By that definition, I'm a subversive."

David Coe said that science fiction can't help but be a reflection of the times in which we live.

And Pat Cadigan said, "There was a fair amount of hostility toward cyberpunk. It really shook up the 'Old Pharts'."



Denvention 3 Art Show Awards

Color:

- John Berkey—Star’s End
- Stephen Daniele—Wind of War
- Bob Eggleton—Springtime of the Mammoth
- Todd Lockwood—Bitter Chivalry
- Theresa Mather—Forest Heaven
- Margaret Organ-Kean—Masque
- Richard Sternback—The Moonbow
- Jeff Sturgeon—To Heaven Below
- A B Word—Neither Here Nor There

Monochrome:

- Rory Clark—In, Through, Beyond
- Kelly Freas—Telzey Toy
- Karen Johansen—The Guardian
- John Picacio—Son of Man
- Mark Roland—Hydra

3-D:

- Peri Charlifu—Mordred’s Fountain
- John Douglas—Freighter S60
- Jim Humble—Greater Gargoyle Downspout
- Lannie Pihajlic—Arden the Ent
- Vincent Villafranca—The Celestial Itinerant

People’s Choice Awards:

- 3-D:** Butch Honeck—Quest Isle
- Monochrome:** Karen Johansen—The Guardian
- Color:** Jeff Sturgeon—Porthole 17

PROGRAM CHANGES!

New Program Items

Ellen Klages, Signing, Saturday 2-2:30pm, Tachyon table (for “Portable Childhoods”)
 Sarah Hoyt, Reading, Saturday 2:30pm, Hyatt Regency Agate C

Schedule and Venue Changes

Item 539 Amy Sterling Casil Reading, Saturday 2:30pm, moved to CCC Korbel 1A

From Impsec

Apollo’s Return

Christopher Carson (publius) would like the person who has unexpectedly acquired a copy of *Apollo: Missions to the Moon*, to return it to him at the Luna Project fan table, leave a message on the voodoo board, or e-mail publius@lunarcc.org.

Vampires Well-Sated

The Blood Drive was a tremendous success. Over 100 Denvention members came by to lend an arm in saving lives. After deferrals, 60 units of blood were donated. Thank you all who helped pay it forward.

Denver Newspaper Reports on ‘Sci Fi Strip Off’

The Denver *Westword’s* “the latest word” blog reported that the Shotgun Willie’s strip club welcomed “Science Fiction Writers” to its “Sci Fi Strip Off” on Thursday. The reporter at the event said that no one there admitted to being from the convention (although one spectator was wearing a Star Trek shirt). He also quoted dialogue with the strippers showing they could not identify Princess Leia or Captain Kirk.

Westword’s also has featured more serious stories about the convention by Cory Casciato and Jason Sheehan. While the latter story had the typical stereotyped headline “World Science Fiction Convention Shows Denver at its Geekiest,” the stripper story pointed out that we are only the “second-biggest gathering of geeks in Denver this month – have you seen the goofy hats DNCers will wear?”

The Sheehan story also said that “if you’re a science fiction fan or science fiction writer living in or around Denver and you’re *not* reading this from your laptop in the lobby of the Colorado Convention Center, what the hell are you waiting for?” and included some serious discussion about the state of the science fiction industry and mentioned *The Yiddish Policemen’s Union*.

Westword promised further reports from Worldcon including one on the Hugos.

Poetry In Hearing

The acoustics in this confer
 They say are mighty fine
 We hear what they are saying
 One-tenth of the time
 I don’t like these Denver
 panel rooms
 Gee Mom, I wanna go
 Gee Mom, I wanna go
 Gee Mom, I wanna go home

CSI:Denver—Photo Identification

Fandom has had some outstanding characters. What did the faces of fandom look like? Could you pick FTL, Moskowitz, or Carr from a crowd? FANAC is preserving the photos of our fannish past. The FANAC History exhibit has samples, and for more, go to fanac.org.

However, your FANAC needs you. We need help identifying some of the people in the photos. Please check and see if you can put a name to these fannish faces so that we can scan the photos and post them on the web.

If you have photos documenting parts of fannish history, consider donating copies to FANAC. See you at the exhibit near the entrance, Hall D.

Denvention Lingo

Slush drunk—an editor who spent too much time reading manuscripts.

Rejoctomancy—the art of divining an editor’s mind, based on printed rejection slips.

Found

Mr. Matt Kirking please contact Art Show about forgotten property!



Necessity: The Mother of Denvention © 2008 Denvention 3

Kent Bloom, Chairman; Helen Montgomery, Publisher; Sam Lubell, Editor; Gary Blog, Printer

Staff: Kate Barnes, Jan van’t Ent, Chris Garcia, Cenk Gökçe, Cathy Green, Danny Low, Howard Taylor