



www.psfs.org

PSFS NEWS

The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society

SCIENCE FICTION ■ FANTASY ■ HORROR

Our Guest for June 13th, 2003:
ROMAN RANIERI
Horror Author

ABOUT ROMAN RANIERI

Roman A. Ranieri is a native of Philadelphia, PA. During his formative years in Catholic elementary school and high school, he enjoyed writing tame stories for English class assignments, and other — more imaginative tales for his own amusement. Although this fiction displayed some emerging talent, Roman never submitted any of it for publication.

After a few interesting and fruitful semesters at Penn State University, he established and managed a reasonably successful construction business for several years.

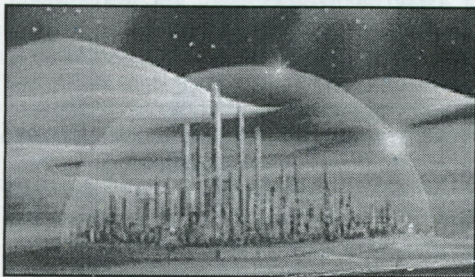
In 1986, he finally acknowledged that he wasn't working toward the goal he really

wanted — becoming a professional writer. Following the accumulation of a respectable stack of rejection letters, Roman eventually became a frequent contributor to many small press magazines such as: Cemetery Dance, Afraid, Horror, and Dead of Night. His spectrum of work for these publications included; fiction, articles, interviews, and book/magazine/audio reviews.

The appearance of "The Drifter" in Cold Blood, published in 1991, marked Roman's graduation into professional anthologies. Stories in The Earth Strikes Back, Werewolves, Darkside, The Best of Cemetery Dance, Bad News, and many others, have solidified his reputation as a talented writer of horror and dark suspense.

For the last several years, an extraordinary series of misfortunes forced Roman to sharply curtail his writing.

Currently, due to the intervention of an inexhaustible and relentless muse, he has begun to reestablish his writing career with dozens of new short stories, a new collection, and a new novel in the works.



ABOUT PSFS NEWS

PSFS NEWS is the newsletter and corporate minutes of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, published monthly as a benefit of membership.

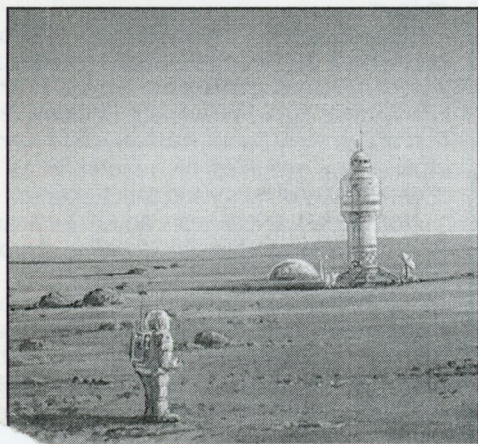
SUBMISSIONS to PSFS News are welcome, in our quest for world domination. Anyone wishing to contribute articles (book or movie reviews, discussion group or convention reports, announcements, etc.) is encouraged to do so. Articles can be e-mailed (secretary@psfs.org) but they may be mailed, if necessary, to the PSFS PO Box. Deadline is two weeks before the next general meeting. E-mailed articles may be sent in nearly any format, but text or HTML formats are preferred. Artwork, Sketches, Comics, or Photos are also welcome in any graphics format, or we can scan originals if mailed to us (originals will not be returned).

SCIFI-OGRAPIHIES SUBMISSIONS are open to any member who would like to send us approximately 300 words about themselves, and their relationship with science fiction. Submissions will be published based on available space.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - PSFS News is available free to active and general members of PSFS, and to any Science Fiction Club or organization wishing to trade newsletters. Non-members or inactive members may subscribe at an annual cost of \$15/year.

PSFS NEWS is published by the PSFS Secretary (Nathan E. Lilly) of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society.

CONTRIBUTORS (in order of submission received): Henry Leon Lazarus, Lee Weinstein, Nathan Lilly, Darrell Schweitzer, Saul Snitkin.



ABOUT THE SOCIETY

THE PHILADELPHIA SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY is a non-profit organization that meets to discuss and promote science fiction and fantasy in literature, the arts, and popular culture.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY is open to everyone. Becoming a member is easy. Attend your first meeting; we'll say "Hello." At your second meeting, you can nominate yourself for membership or ask someone else to nominate you. At the next meeting you attend following your nomination, you're eligible to be voted in as a General Member. Our current dues are \$24 for a full year (\$40 for couples). Attendance of 4 meetings each year maintains the status of Active Member.

GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the 2nd Friday of each month and feature a guest speaker involved in some area of Science Fiction or Fantasy, such as writers, editors, artists, etc. See *Meeting Notices* for more information.

SPONSORED EVENTS, such as *The Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference* (AKA *PhilCon*), are held throughout the year.

OTHER SPECIAL INTEREST EVENTS, are also sponsored by the society, such as the *Book Discussion Group*, which meets monthly to discuss a work of science fiction or fantasy; and the *Special Events Group*, which attends science fiction and fantasy movies and other events.

COPIES OF THE BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES can be made available to all Society Members by asking the Secretary.

CONTACTING THE SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Contact boardmembers by phone (or send e-mail to board@psfs.org).

PRESIDENT Suzanne Rosin (610)667-5248
VICE PRESIDENT Hugh Casey (215)674-8047*
SECRETARY Nathan Lilly (215)439-8690
TREASURER Jeff Linder (856)983-3074
2 YEAR DIRECTOR Debra Ruh (215)739-9045
2 YEAR DIRECTOR Tim Binder
1 YEAR DIRECTOR Saul Snitkin (215)745-3765

*no calls after 9p.m.

CALL THE PSFS HOTLINE: (877) 656-3914 for PSFS Meeting Information, to leave messages, and to receive last minute meeting cancelations.

TO JOIN THE PSFS LISTSERVES and receive PSFS related news via e-mail, send an e-mail to 'announce-on@psfs.org'. To subscribe to PSFS-Talk (general PSFS discussions), the address is 'psfs-talk-on@psfs.org'.

MEETING NOTICES

June 8th, 2003
PhilCon '03 Meeting
 To discuss the '03 Budget

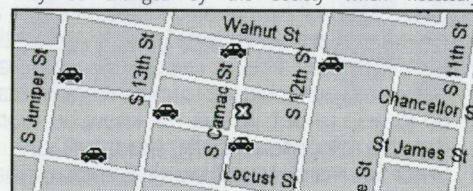
June 13th, 2003
Roman Ranieri
 Philadelphian Horror Author

June 19th, 2003
Board Meeting
 To discuss society topics. Contact board@psfs.org for time & location

July 18th, 2003
Hugo Awards Discussion
 PSFS Member panel discussion of this year's Hugo Nominees.

December 12th-14th, 2003
PhilCon 2003
 The Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference at the Marriott Hotel

Unless otherwise specified, General Meetings are held on the 2nd Friday of each month at The Franklin Inn Club, located at 205 South Camac Street - the northeast corner of the intersection of Camac and St. James Streets, which is just north and east of the intersection of Locust and 13th Streets, in Center City Philadelphia. Business meeting starts at 8:00 pm. Program starts at 9 pm. Meeting dates may be changed by the Society when necessary.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

For current information and announcements about PSFS visit www.psfs.org

COPIES OF ALL OFFICIAL PSFS CORRESPONDENCE should be sent to the Secretary for filing in the Society's official records.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS can be e-mailed to secretary@psfs.org, mailed to the Society's P.O. Box, or given to the Secretary in writing at the meetings. To have your announcements, events, articles, etc. published accurately you must give the secretary the information in writing (or e-mail).

PRYDONIANS OF PRINCETON meet once a month at the Mercer County Library, Lawrenceville, NJ. Contact: Prydonians@aol.com or visit www.prydonians.org.

PAGE (PHILADELPHIA AREA GAMING ENTHUSIASTS) meet every Sunday night at the Ethical Society on Rittenhouse Square. Meetings start at 6 pm and run till 10-10:30. They do role-playing, board gaming, historical (a bit of everything). Everyone's welcome. For more information visit <http://www.philagamers.org>

BARNES & NOBLE IN BRYN MAWR has a Science Fiction Discussion group that meets the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 7:30pm.

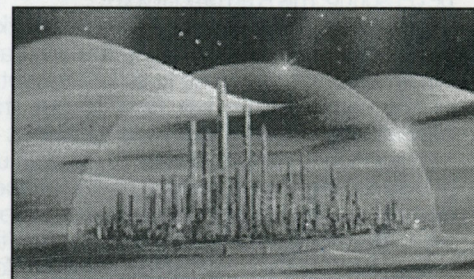
THE LOST HIGHWAYS ART GALLERY Radebaugh Opening is an exhibition in Old City, showing the rediscovered works of the mid-20th century futurist illustrator, A. C. Radebaugh. The exhibition-in-progress can be seen right now on line, at www.losthighways.org

THE EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA GAMING SOCIETY is sponsoring Game Club Saturday at the Oxford Valley Mall-Community Room (upper level behind Zales), for anyone interested in playing board games, strategy games, military simulations (wargames and miniatures), railroad games, economic games, or family games. Bring your friends and your favorite games. For additional information visit www.epgs.org

HUGO AWARDS DISCUSSION PREPARATIONS are being made by Terry S. S. Graybill. If you have any of the nominated materials (books, magazines, videos) that you'd be willing to lend, she can be reached at tgraybill@aol.com

THE FRANKLIN INN CLUB offers dinner to interested members before the regularly scheduled PSFS meetings at about 6:30, \$15 for appetizer to dessert \$8-\$10 if you just want dinner and dessert. RSVP at least 24 hours (by Thursday) before next meeting. Can sit up to 32 people.

THE ROSENBACH MUSEUM features Maurice Sendak's original drawings for *Where the Wild Things Are*, along with some original manuscripts, through June 29 at 2008 Delancey Place.



MEMBERSHIP STATUS

for May 9th, 2003

First Timers: 0 Nominees: 1

New Members: 0

Members: 32 (31 active, 1 general, 0 inactive)

**Status changes are effective after meeting adjourns.*

GENERAL MEETING

These are the minutes of the General Meeting held on May 9th, 2003 at The Franklin Inn Club. The meeting was called to order at 8:02PM.

PROXIES: Mattie Brahen to Darrel Schwietzer, Diane Weinstein to Lee Weinstein, Denise Casey to Hugh Casey, Tod Dashoff to Joni Dashoff, Leslie Ann Alpert and Terry Graybill to Gary Feldbaum.

**Proxies may be delivered directly to the Secretary either in person, by mail (must arrive before the meeting), at the meeting by another member of the society.*

CORRECTIONS TO MINUTES: Philcon meeting minutes made it appear that the only ones who spoke were Jeff and Hugh. For the record they were not the only ones who spoke.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

PRESIDENT (SUZANNE): Because we are a little community within this group and a lot of people do socialize with each other and we all do have special events going on.

If you guys have a special event that you're going to have like a birthday or whatever, please tell us and in the newsletter we will publish like, "Happy Birthday" if you're having a birthday.

If we all agree to do something like this we would start putting it in the newsletter for the May issue. The fundraising side of it is if you want to send Oz a special birthday wish this is where it changes. It's one dollar for the first two lines, one dollar thereafter. A line being a column width. If we agree to this, Nathan will bring to the next meeting a form that you can fill in. If you want to pay to wish somebody something you will have to pay ahead of time. We do not take IOUs. This is a public newsletter so we will be censoring. This is an official vote.

If you feel this is something you would like to do we're asking you to do is this you can email Nathan but you have to do it by the 20th of the month so he has time to put the newsletter together. If you want to give us a paid announcement you'll have to give it to us at the meeting. If we're going to post a one liner wishing you a Happy Birthday it's free, if you want to wish someone a Happy Birthday it's going to cost you a minimum of one dollar for

two lines. So we're going to try this for a little while to see if this works.

VICE PRESIDENT (HUGH): no report.

SECRETARY (NATHAN): Sign-in, Proxies, etc.

TREASURER (JEFF): Pay your dues.

2 YEAR DIRECTOR (TBD): none.

2 YEAR DIRECTOR (DEB): none.

1 YEAR DIRECTOR (SAUL): none.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

WEBMASTER: We have the new web host up. It took a little longer than I thought to convert the code to the new server. Shortly after this meeting the new web site will be up (Jeff, I need the username & passwords so that I can change the DNS).

PHILCON 2003 (HUGH): I have been swamped during this tax season and so I have not been able to schedule our next PhilCon meeting—I will set a date after the 15th. I want to thank everyone for their input regarding our Philosophy and Purpose over the last few weeks. We will have a significant presence at JerseyDevilCon on the weekend of April 25th-27th. We expect a better response than we had last year. If you would like to know what you can do to help us out, just let me know, but don't expect a response until after the 15th.

SPACE SCIENCES (HANK SMITH): Hank Smith has a list of events to be held in the near future. Please contact him for details.

PROGRAMMING (OZ): Oz introduced Todd Kimmel. See *Meeting Notices* for future guests and dates.

SPECIAL EVENTS (OZ): Contact Oz for future features, locations, and dates.

BOOK DISCUSSION (OZ): Contact Oz for future features, locations, and dates.

MOVIE GROUP (OZ): Contact Oz for future features, locations, and dates.

BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS: none.

NEW BUSINESS:

ELECTIONS: Rebecca Marcus resigned in April. A special election was held at the meeting and Tim Binder was elected into the position of Two Year Director (with Jenna's permission).

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:28 PM.

BOARD MEETING

These are the minutes of the Board Meeting held on April 24th, 2003 at Deb Ruh's house. The meeting was called to order at 8:14PM.

PROXIES: none.

CORRECTIONS TO MINUTES: none.

ATTENDING: Hugh Casey, Nathan Lilly, Jeff Linder (by phone), Suzanne Rosin, Deb Ruh, Saul Snitkin (by phone). Others Present: Oz Fontecchio, Gary Feldbaum.

BOARD REPORTS

PRESIDENT (SUZANNE): No report to give except that people did not disagree or agree or any other comment regarding the little fundraiser thingy. The fundraiser thingy is to give people greetings on their special occasions via birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, whatever special events that person comes up. A dollar for the first two lines and a dollar each line thereafter.

“...fund raising thingy...”

VICE PRESIDENT (HUGH): no report.

SECRETARY (NATHAN): no report.

TREASURER (JEFF): not present.

2 YEAR DIRECTOR (DEB): no report.

2 YEAR DIRECTOR (TIM): no report.

1 YEAR DIRECTOR (SAUL): no report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PHILCON 03: King of Prussia Borders Bookstore is also their District Office. I have the phone number of the area Marketing Manager so I'll get in touch with him about Philcon to see if they want to do any kind of cross-promotional thing.

If you give me the phone number we could also try to set up readings again. Two Cons coming up that we're gonna be attending. Balticon (Memorial Day weekend) we'll have a presence at and we will have a room party. The weekend of the May 30-June 1 will be Wizard World. We'll have the table at the artist's alley at Wizard World. They're giving us the table for free. WYBE is Saturday night, Jeff and I will be there, we'll be bringing the Philcon banner. Star Wars Stormtroopers would like to get a fan table at Philcon. We should get Philcon or PSFS t-shirts.

As for Programming space at PhilCon: no signature but do have pretty much finalized contract for space. May be some play with space on Friday, no loss of space may gain additional. Meeting in two weeks, Tuesday the 27th (**NOTE: since changed to June 8th at the Lithuanian Music Hall**).

SPECIAL EVENTS (OZ): What kind of interest is there in having a picnic, a Halloween party, an end of year party, that sort of thing or should we continue to skip those things? Find out where and when. Who would coordinate food? Try to get non-board members involved. Start with just the picnic. More info at the General Meeting.

WEBMASTER: Status changed. I have the user name and password to change the DNS from Jeff. Before the next general meeting the new site will be live. There will be training sessions for posting. There will be a special password protected section of the site for the committee members. The PFSF (not Philcon) committee members will be able to add information to the database.

BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS: none.

NEW BUSINESS:

FUNDRAISING: (Hugh): Looking recently at www.cafepress.com as a possible source of revenue (probably not a significant one) with no risk to the society. I would like to explore further and would like to set up an exploratory committee.

(Nathan): Dinner and a Song? Food and Filk? Why can't we do an inexpensive dinner at a Firehouse to raise funds? Maybe a \$5 all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner with Filk performers (who'd eat for free).

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:35 PM.

SCIENCE FICTION FOR JUNE 2003

by Henry Leon Lazarus

I've often wondered why Hollywood doesn't pick more current science-fiction or fantasy for its movies. Maybe I'm getting a bit tired of comic book characters fighting constantly, or monsters found in abandoned ship. The movies have discovered trilogies, but it takes so long between episodes, that it is difficult to keep track of who is who, what is happening, and why. There also is the lack of new ideas. One original film (like *The Matrix*) is followed with endless copies. The publishing industry pumps out exciting tales, that work visually and have solid characters that an audience can identify with. All a film producer has to do is read a few of them to find a great project.

Lian Hearn's tale of a feudal Japan has a subtle background that seems like cherry blossoms strewn across the Nightingale Floor (trade from Riverhead books). It has been optioned for the movies and it is a wonderful tale of a young samurai with special talents inherited from his father—go invisible, be in two places at the same time, and incredible hearing. He is adopted by one of the Otori lords after an evil lord destroys his village because its people worship non-violence. There is also a young aristocratic woman who is given in marriage and whom he falls in love with. This is mainly a quiet tale punctuated by a few episodes of violence as when Takeo invades the evil Lord's home looking for vengeance. It is also only the beginning of Takeo's story. I don't know how a movie could capture the subtle aspects of this fun tale, so I recommend reading it now and not waiting for the movie.

I think that Simon R. Green had a neat series in mind when he introduced us to John Taylor, private investigator and a refugee because his mother was *Something from the Nightside* (paper from Ace). In fact John's father committed suicide when he discovered that his wife wasn't human. John has the ability to find things, but only in the strange center of London where magic happens and it's always 3 a.m. John left because people were trying to kill him, but a missing teenager and a rich mother who won't quit lures him back in. There are neat characters like Suzie Shooter who doesn't believe in leaving any bullet unturned and Razor Eddie who found immortality by making a deal with the Gods. The action shifts past and future and there are hints that if John ever discovered

his mother's identity that horrible things would happen. I want more.

The late Marion Zimmer Bradley worked with Debra J. Ross and Zandru's *Forge* (hard from DAW) is the second book that returns to Darkover where psionics work like magic. Ms. Ross writes like a younger version of Ms. Bradley and the tale takes place during the hundred kingdoms age, a time when the compact against remote violence came into being. It's a time when of Varzil the Good and Carolin, heir to the Hastur throne. It's also the time of horrible weapons, powerful to crack the world. Zandru's *Forge* tells a tale of civil war, and of abiding hatred that overcomes common sense. I'm glad to see Darkover in competent hands.

Martha Wells starts a new series about the fall of her magical Victorian country, *Ile-rien* (The Death of the Necromancer) which is under attack by invaders in dirigibles from another world. It has one plucky heroine, *The Wizard Hunters* (hard from Eos) from the other world who the Nazi-like badies think primitive, and a magical sphere able to create magic when needed. The result is pure pulp (like *Doc Savage*). *Tremaine* might prevail in this first adventure, but her world is still under attack and there are two more volumes of adventure to come.

There's a fortress, waiting for attack, in a harsh land based roughly on the *Crusaders Kingdom*. Add magical djinn (talking tornadoes), a land folded away and locked out and a magical light that lights into alternate worlds. Put in three interesting characters; a monk fighter living under harsh discipline who was overwhelmed by blood of the heretic villagers he and his monks killed; a woman given in marriage to a man she has never met and who is waiting for an escort to the man's home; and a Knight pledged to defend the God because of a sin in his past (probably killing his brother).

Chaz Brenchley's *The Devil in the Dust* (paper from Ace) is the first of six books already published in England and thus will be coming out once a month. I am waiting for next month with bated breath.

Lyda Morehouse plays with *Armageddon* in his third tale about a future with artificial intelligences, direct computer links to the brain for instant communication, and real angels

from God. In *Messiah Code* (paper from Roc) a meteor hits the Moslem Dome of the Rock and, at the same time, the virtual version goes off line. The real prophet Elijah visits a Seder to find the Messiah, a young girl whose father really is (was) the Archangel Michael. Before long the whole world is convinced the end is nigh. Fun, but a bit hokey.

Patricia A. McKillip tells a fairy tale set in the *Forests of Serre* (hard from Roc) which a princess comes to marry a prince, to discover him enchanted by an evil witch. Then there is on wizard spent from a fight with a mysterious foe who has a scribe writing down his adventures, another wizard who is supposed to be protecting the princess and falls in love with her, and the supposed bridegroom still mourning his last wife who was lost in childbirth. This in an enchanting tale, and I wanted it just to flow. Ms. McKillip, however, had other ideas and zigzags from one fairytale quest to another with no sense of resolution till the end. I found it a bit frustrating.

Diana Wynne Jones tells of *The Merlin Conspiracy* (trade from Greenwillow) in which a group of ingrates plot to destroy the Merlin on the most magical of the Alternate England's (Blest). So we have a two teenagers, Nick—a potential Wizard, from our world, and Roddy (Arienrhod) (helped by her friend Gerund) who have to somehow find each other and stop the evil plot. Ms. Jones who is known for have animals running wild, has a wild elephant, and a goat, that eats everything, mixed into the plot. This would have been much more fun if Ms. Jones hadn't put in so many side trips. The extra worlds simply aren't interesting enough to keep interest going while waiting for the plot to continue.

Redemption Ark (hard from Ace) is the third tale of a future in which faster-than-light travel is impossible, but there are many colonies on other planets. A computer virus Plague on one has caused a dark age, and on another invaders have arrived to wipe out intelligence. The first colony needs super weapons that were stolen from it and taken to the second colony (with two sides fighting for the right to get them) and the other colony needs to move two hundred thousand people out of the system. Alastair Reynolds has an interesting reason for why the

ancient machines are wiping out intelligence that leaves its system and his high-tech background is neat, but this tale didn't work as well for me as his previous efforts.

Berserkers, life killing machines, were invented in Science Fiction by Fred Saberhagen. His latest, *Berserker's Star* (hard from Tor) takes place on a planet that lacks a star (it somehow weaves a figure-eight path between a black hole and a quasar). Maracanda is even weirder because no one can figure out why it is habitable. Shaped like a chocolate cookie, there are large areas where machines simply won't work, anti-matter packets in the ground, and a gateway that pilgrims come to visit from around the galaxy. Harry Silver comes with passenger looking from her husband. *Berserkers*, together with their worshiping followers, goodlife, have conceived a monstrous plot. Harry may hate authority, but he hates *Berserkers* more. This is a fun and exciting tale, but leaves the puzzle of Maracanda for a future story. I hope it comes soon.

At the heart of John Barnes's *In the hall of the Martian King* (paper from aspect) is the electronic diary of the person responsible for writing the 'bible' that governs human behavior in that era, the *wager*. It is found in one of the minor Kingdoms on Mars (now oxygenated) by an archeological team and Jak is in charge of the diplomatic mission to retrieve it. After boring talks, a rich idiot from one of the best families who is supposed to be given credit for the retrieval, shows up, as does the evil princess who used to be Jak's girl friend. The attempt to seal the artifact, under the idiot's guidance, fails and Jak is being hunted across the Martian wilderness. But then he, and his friends, turn the tables on... Well you get the idea. Fun, but a bit long.

Harry Turtledove's *Jaws of Darkness* (hard from Tor) is the penultimate book (year) in the world war fought with magic. Based roughly on World War II, with dragons instead of bombers, etc... the tale has interesting characters overwhelmed by the battles around them. The book details the development of the atomic bomb equivalent and D-Day. I like the characters enough to keep reading. I just wish I could truly root for one of the two sides.

(continued on page 8)

(continued from page 9)

Condemnation (hard from Wizards of the Coast and this one by Richard Baker) is the third tale of the dark elves losing their Spider Queen Goddess and of the other who try to rise to power in the confusion. There's a lot of standard questing with battle after battle, but somehow the story rises about that – I've gotten curious as to the disappearance of the goddess and my appetite was whetted by the travelers incursion into the realm of the Gods. I also liked the assassin who uses his talents to manipulate the leaders of other cities to attack the dark elves. Fun, but each book has a different author compromising quality.

The library books this month include : Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's latest tale of her vampire (who lives more off of woman's sexual pleasure than blood) Saint-Germain and tells of his time at the court of Karl the large (Charlemagne). The tale takes place at the time when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans. Saint-Germain finds himself involved with an albino woman with stigmata from the heart of Night Blooming (hard from Aspect). I was much more

impressed with the way that Ms. Yarbro brings the 8th century to life; a dangerous time when a herd of bison can harm travelers, when the locals still worship local gods while monks and priests are overly devout, and when a king's favor can disappear overnight because of a dream. This is an amazing historical series and I eagerly await each new tale. Nancy Kress tells a tale of colonists trapped in the Crossfire (hard from Tor) of two warring species. While the humans are drawn three dimensionally, each with a personal problem, the alien Furs and Vines are sketched so simply that they seem caricatures. The Furs seem more like killing machines than intelligent beings and they want to use the humans to get into the shield the vegetable based vines use to protect their worlds. Somehow the humans have to figure out how to protect their colony and survive at the same time. Fun.

Collections this month include Poul Anderson's Going for Infinity (trade from Tor) has a number of his classic tales – perfect for collectors' and Mike Resnick has gotten together a group of Women Writing Science Fiction as Men (paper from DAW).

THIS SPACE FOR RENT!

Well, not *this* one, but one very much like it.

If you would care to sponsor PSFS News, to help support the society and the newsletter, you may purchase either a half page (this size) or full page space (pending approval of the PSFS board). Contact the secretary by e-mail (secretary@psfs.org) for more information.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

June 6-8, 2003

Moonlight Rising

Catskills, NY

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

June 13-15, 2003

Anime Mid-Atlantic

Richmond, VA

Anime

June 13-15, 2003

Buffycon

Saddle Brook, NJ

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

June 26-30, 2003

Origins

Columbus, OH

Game Expo

July 3-6, 2003

Anime Expo 2003

Los Angeles, CA

Anime

July 11-13, 2003

Readercon 15

Burlington, MA

Science Fiction

July 11-13, 2003

Shore Leave 25

Baltimore, MD

Science Fiction

July 17-20, 2003

San Diego Comic Con

San Diego, CA

Comicbooks

July 18-20, 2003

Anthrocon 2003

Philadelphia, PA

Anthropomorphic Animals

December 12-14, 2003

PhilCon 2003

Philadelphia, PA

Science Fiction

June 2003

SELECT QUOTES OF OSCAR WILDE

America is the only country that went from barbarism to decadence without civilization in between.

Bigamy is having one wife too many. Monogamy is the same.

A man cannot be too careful in the choice of his enemies.

Experience is one thing you can't get for nothing.

When the gods choose to punish us, they merely answer our prayers.

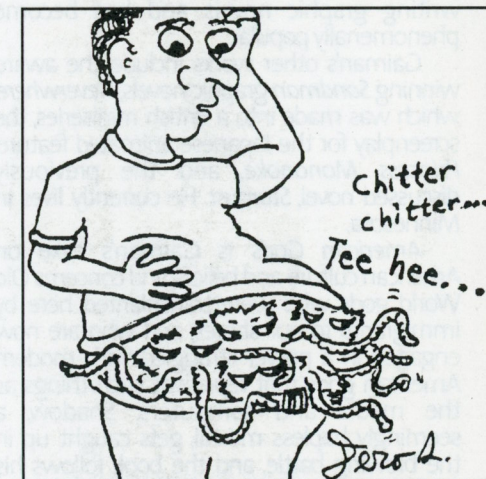
A cynic is a man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing.

Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much.

The pure and simple truth is rarely pure and never simple.

SCIENCE FICTION COMIC

by Darrell Schweitzer



'I ADMIT I HAD MISGIVINGS WHEN THEY MOVED IN, BUT THEY'RE NO WORSE THAN SOME NEIGHBORS I'VE HAD'

STUPID BITS

A duck's quack doesn't echo. No one knows why!

SAUL SNITKIN'S SF REVIEW

by Saul Snitkin

Enterprise hits me like a pound of Velveeta.

BOOK DISCUSSION RECAP

by Lee Weinstein

The August discussion was of *Moonfall* (1998) by former Philadelphian Jack McDevitt. Although he writes hard SF, his academic background was in English, rather than the sciences. We previously discussed his novel, *Infinity Beach*.

The book concerns a huge comet which smashes into the moon and sends a huge chunk of the moon on a collision course with Earth.

While the group generally enjoyed the book, the feeling was that it was really just a disaster novel, well done for what it was, but formulaic. The science felt accurate but there was not much character development. There was some discussion of similarly themed books, notably *Off on a Comet* by Verne and *In the Days of the Comet* by Wells.

September's discussion was *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman, this year's Hugo winner. We began, as usual, by talking about the author. Gaiman is a British writer who started out writing graphic novels and has become phenomenally popular.

Gaiman's other works include the award winning *Sandman* graphic novels, *Neverwhere*, which was made into a British miniseries, the screenplay for the Japanese animated feature, *Princess Mononoke*, and the previously discussed novel, *Stardust*. He currently lives in Minnesota.

American Gods is Gaiman's take on American culture and beliefs, and concerns Old World gods who were transplanted here by immigrants to our shores, and who are now engaged in a power struggle with modern American gods that represent such things as the media and computers. Shadow, a seemingly hapless mortal, gets caught up in the brewing battle, and the book follows his adventures.

We talked about how most of the backdrops are actual places, such as the House on the Rock. Post cards from there were passed around.

People generally liked the book, but with reservations. Some felt the main character,

Shadow, and many of the other characters were more archetypes than real people, although others disagreed. A few felt there were too many unexplained loose ends and would have liked to have had more background on some of the gods. Many felt the ending was weak.

What many liked was the multi-layered construction of the work, which can be read either literally, or as a metaphor for cultural forces. This led to some discussion of unintended meanings in artistic works. Comparisons were made to the works of Roger Zelazny, who seems to have been a major influence of Gaiman.

PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Have Fun! Amuse your friends! Take out a personal announce ment! Just \$1 for the first two lines and an additional \$1 for each additional line (each line is about 38-54 characters long, including spaces). All proceeds go to support the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society.

54 characters:

aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

38 characters:

wwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww

"To my favorite Vice President, Have a happy birthday!!"

-Suzanne

"That'll be one dollar Suzanne."

-Nathan

"That's a dollar for you too Nathan."

-Suzanne

"What? Damn."

-Nathan

"There was supposed to be another announcement from Hugh's wife, But I didn't receive it in time, so, Happy Bithday Goggly-Bear!"

-Nathan

"Suzanne, Do you think we can just do this month as a comp, since no one really wrote, just to get things started?"

-Nathan

"Well that's an excellent idea!"

-Nathan

"Yeah. I thought so too."

-Nathan



Philadelphia Science Fiction Society
P.O. Box 8303
Philadelphia, PA, 19101-8303



NYSFS, The Lunarians Inc. [T]
PO Box 3566
New York, NY 10008-3566

PSFS News: June 2003

10008-3566 60