

# Armadillo Con 8



# OMNI



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# ARMADILLOCON 8

October 10-12, 1986

Sheraton Crest

Guest of Honor **William Gibson**

Fan Guest of Honor **Debbie Notkin**

Editor Guest of Honor **Ellen Datlow**

Toastmaster **Lewis Shiner**

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## Artists

Stephen Fox: 3
Edward A. Graham, Jr.: 10
Jeanne Gomoll: 6
Teddy Harvia: 9, 22
Chris and Harry Morris: cover
Robert Whitaker Sirignano: 18
Mel. White: 11, 12

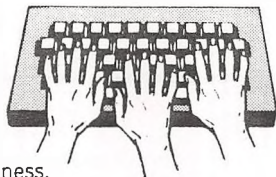
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# Important Information: Ignore at Your Own Risk

## Rules

We don't have an actual "weapons policy" — but we *do* have an "idiots policy." And brandishing a sword or a big stick in a crowded area is considered the act of an idiot. Please respect the rights of your fellow fans, or you may be asked to leave the convention.

Remember, the legal age for drinking in Texas is 21. We cannot serve liquor to anyone under this age.

Several areas of the convention have been designated as "No Smoking" areas — please!

We expect parents to keep track of their children. ArmadilloCon is not responsible for unattended children.

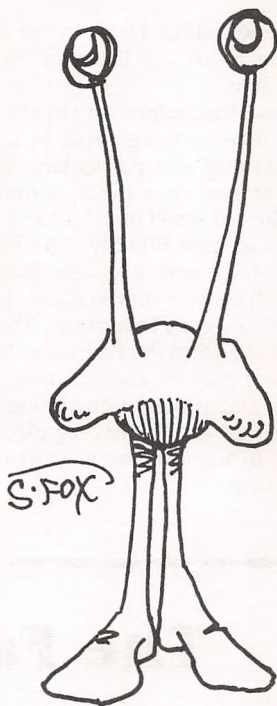
## Masque

The masquerade at ArmadilloCon is a party, not just a parade past a panel of judges. If you attend the Masque as a "spectator," you'll have to wear a simple domino or mask (available at the door). If you're a participant, your costume may be as simple or as elaborate as you choose, but we suggest you wear something you'll feel comfortable dancing and partying in. If a weapon (real or otherwise) is part of your costume, you must keep that weapon sheathed, holstered, or otherwise secured at all times.

Prizes will be awarded for the best costumes. The judges will be secretly appointed and their identities will not be revealed until after the judging (if ever). Judging will be based on ingenuity, ability to remain in character, and other highly subjective criteria.

## Pig-Outs

Once again, ArmadilloCon presents its traditional excuse for a banquet — the all-you-can-eat Pig-Outs. Friday night is the Chicken Pig-out (\$3.00); Saturday night is the Pizza Pig-Out (\$4.00). Both are at 6:00 in the Con Suite (room 221). Tickets are available at registration. Only 50 tickets will be sold for each, so you'd better hurry. Oink, oink.



## Other Meals

At some point, you will probably quest for sustenance. I meant to do a map of area eateries, but time and space have not allowed. But, if you ask at Registration or in the hotel lobby, you can get suggestions/directions to help fill the void. Or look for *Kaleidoscope* or *Key* Magazines. And 'Dillo maps will be around, too.

## General Info

To find out what readings will be when, or to learn about schedule changes (\*editorial sigh\*), you should look on the Official ArmadilloCon Chalkboard. The OAC will be located at Registration, on the second floor lobby. Be sure to check there each day (maybe even a couple of times a day — schedules are awfully hard to keep straight).

# The Art Show

Welcome to our Art Show. We have again gathered the best Texas has to offer, and we still have a few "furriners" from outside the Republic. Please come in and browse; the hours are listed in the program schedule.

Of course, the proper way to show appreciation to a starving artist is to purchase something you particularly like. If you wish to bid on a piece, write your name on the bid sheet attached to it. Bidding closes at 1:00 Sunday. The highest bid at that time gets it unless there are more than three bids on the sheet. In that case, the piece goes to auction. The auction will be at 2:00 in the Ballroom. If your favorite piece goes to auction, make sure to be there and protect your interests! If you are the highest bidder on a piece that does *not* go to auction, you *must* pick it up by 5:00 Sunday.

If you wish to buy something that has no bid yet, you may pay the Quick Sale amount shown on the bid sheet to make sure you get it. Obviously, anything marked SOLD or NFS (Not For Sale) are only for show.

Art is a very precious commodity; we hope you understand that we have to enforce a few rules.

1. *Absolutely* no smoking, food, or drink in the Art Show.
2. No cameras allowed.
3. In order to be fair, we will check handbags, purses, backpacks, camera bags, and similar items at the door. You may take your purse or whatever with you if you allow Security to bag and seal it before you enter. Portfolios and such-like may be taken in and out with the permission of the Show Director.

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## The Fan Lounge

We're trying something different this year. It's called a *fan lounge*.

If you've ever been at a loss for something to do during the day — you can't afford to go back to the dealer's room just yet, you've already bid on every piece in the art show, and you've gone to all the programming you can stomach for a while . . . you want to sit around, talk, drink a cup of coffee or two . . . but the lobby isn't where it's at, and the Con Suite's not open yet — stop by the fan lounge!

If you're new to fandom — whether this is your first con, or you're still just not quite sure what's what — be sure to drop by; we'll give you a proper welcome! We can explain the strange jargon, show you fanzines galore, tell you about other cons in your area, and introduce you to fellow fans. In no time, you'll have

the unquenchable desire to pub your ish . . . you'll be smoffing with the best . . . you'll learn that, without trying, you've suddenly become a science fiction fan!

There'll be: lots of colored markers so you can dress up your name badge (or create a new, artistic one); fanzines to read, and fanzines to buy; coffee, soft drinks and munchies; and lots of good, friendly conversation. Time and energy permitting, we'll even have an honest-to-ghu mimeo, for impromptu publishing and demonstration purposes.

So, whether you're a brand-new neo-fan, a tired old fan, or you fall somewhere in between, come to the fan lounge! It's room 217, right next to the Con Suite. (The hours will be posted on the door.) See you there!

— Pat Mueller

# Gaming Gnotes

Gaming is traditional at Armadillo-Con. Granted, it's a middle-aged tradition — it's about four years old — as opposed to the new traditions (those we're starting this year) and the old traditions (those from "the beginning"). Nonetheless, we couldn't let those of you who expect it down. After all, gamers tend to be a devious and oft-times vengeful bunch — probably all the practice you get . . .

Anyway, gaming will take place (in a semi-organized fashion) in Room D. Here you may find opponents as interested in mayhem as you. Tables will be available for open gaming, and several tournaments will be held at specific (but as yet unknown) times. Among expected tournaments:

**Car Wars** and **Illuminati**, sponsored by Steve Jackson Games.

**AD&D** — an individual advancement, two-round tournament — sponsored by the RPGA (Role Playing Game Association).

**Hearts**, which will be held without any sponsor (although flush fans are welcome to apply).

A **Scavenger Hunt** will be held for those with high levels of one-upmanship and pack-rat syndrome.

In addition, we will have demonstrations of two new products.

Designer Steve Jackson will talk about his new roleplaying game, **GURPS Fantasy**, in an informal demonstration.

**GURPS Autoduel** co-author Scott Haring will give an informal demo of the new roleplaying supplement that brings the **Car Wars** world alive.

(I also hear the SJ Games folks have some new **Ogre** scenarios they're playtesting. If you're interested, you might check with Steve or leave a message for him at Gaming Central.)

In addition to *that*, we will have a panel. From 5:30-6:30 on Saturday in rooms B/C, Rembert Parker and Steve Jackson will discuss the directions the industry seems to be taking. This should be enlightening as well as entertaining, so don't miss it.

Final times as well as changes in schedule will be available at the con; we don't want to make *that* any more puzzle-like than it already is.

— Rembert Parker  
(written with a little help from friends)

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**William Gibson, Guest of Honor**

# **The Making of William Gibson**





An SF folk mythos has sprung up about the entity known as William Gibson. The committee of ArmadilloCon has graciously given me this opportunity to set the record straight.

First, Gibson was, in fact, born. He was not "assembled by off-duty engineers during the Manhattan Project." Gibson's father did supply toilets to the Oak Ridge National Laboratories; this business connection has led some to assert that Mr. Gibson accepted the "Atomic Baby" as his own for national security reasons. This is outwardly plausible but not entirely true.

His mother's startling encounter with a UFO in the wilds of Virginia has also led to misconceptions. In point of fact, the "William Gibson genetic template" was not delivered by "Space Brothers" in a craft powered by the "Violet Fire of Saint-Germaine."

Gibson grew to young manhood in the small rural town of Wytheville, Virginia, a place once noted for its relaxed Southern living and the old-style courtesy of its gentry. It is now a place of huge vampiric trees and armed survivalist teenagers dressed entirely in camouflage. However, Gibson's "vibrational influence" had nothing to do with this transformation. He was not isolated there for security reasons, and the story of black limousines appearing yearly to check his growth is unfounded.

The late 1960s found Gibson as a denizen of the countercultural underground of a large Canadian metropolis, where he was not associated with counterfeiters.

During this period, Gibson formed his life-alliance with the astounding entity known as "Deb Gibson." Young "Graeme" and little "Claire" are the two entities they proclaim as their "children."

The Gibson gene-line found a home in the North Ecotopian capital of Vancouver, where they still dwell. After years of arcane studies in literary alchemy, Gibson learned to "distill a sensibility with the kick of white lightning and the clarity of white light" (© *The Village Voice*). In a basement crowded with Erlenmeyer flasks, acid-dripping retorts, and those big static-electricity things that go bzzzt-bzzzt, Gibson labored over his Steam Age manual typewriter, his lanky shins shrouded in clouds of dry ice. His stories for *Omni* found quick acclaim, followed by critical yips of glee for his novel *Neuromancer*, and, now, *Count Zero*.

After the infamous "Tim Leary episodes" during Gibson's recent Hollywood sojourns, absurd rumors (which I have now refuted) appeared in fandom's First and Second Coasts. But here in Austin, where he has attended several ArmadilloCons, "Malibu Bill" has become a familiar, homey figure, ducking under lintels in his trademark sleeveless down jacket and Japanese monkey-boots, his nostrils flaring for the scent of Tex-Mex chow from Matt's El Rancho ("World's Finest"). Today, while Tokyo fandom speculates feverishly over his blood-type, we Texans can brag, without fear of contradiction, that we know our Guest of Honor well.

— Bruce Sterling

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## Gibson Bibliography

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*Neuromancer*; Ace, 1984.

*Count Zero*; Arbor House; 1985.

*Burning Chrome*; Arbor House, 1986. Story collection including:

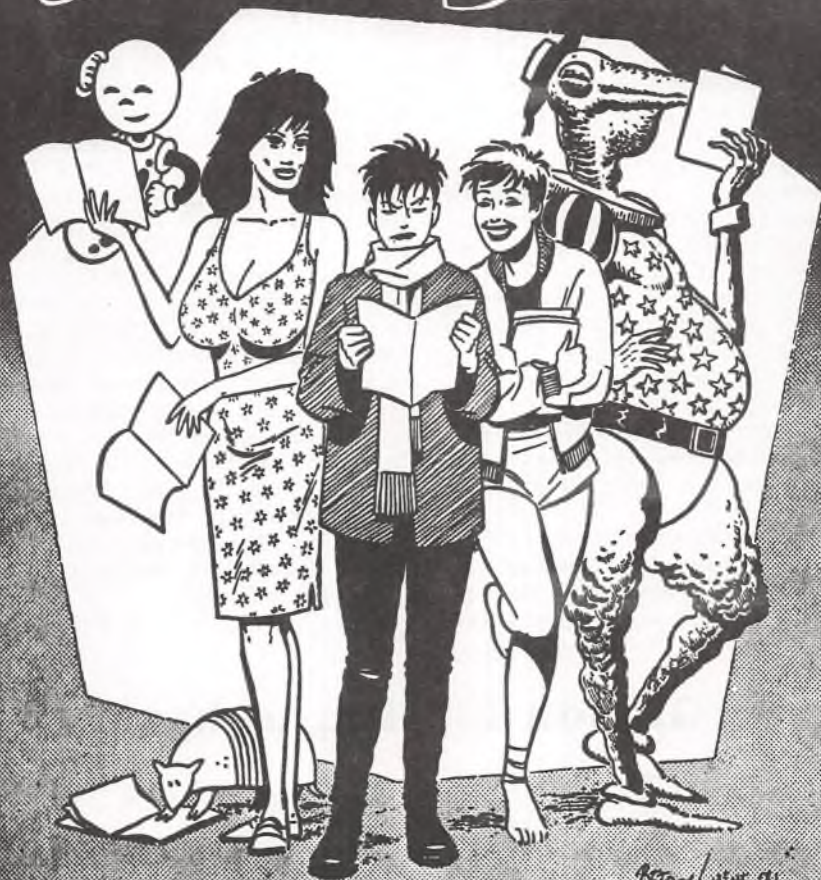
"Johnny Mnemonic"; "Hinterlands"; "Red Star, Winter Orbit" (with Bruce Sterling); "New Rose Hotel"; "Dogfight" (with Michael Swanwick); "Burning Chrome" (© Omni Publications International Ltd., 1981, 1983, 1982, 1985). "The Gernsback Continuum" (first appeared in *Universe* 11, © 1981 by Terry Carr).

"Fragments of a Hologram Rose" (© 1977 by UnEarth Publications); "The Belonging Kind" (first appeared in *Shadows* 4, © 1981 by John Shirley and William Gibson); and "The Winter Market."

"Hippie-Hat Brain Parasite"; *Modern Stories*, 1983.

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## Debbie Notkin, Fan Guest of Honor

# A Non-Biography

It is a truism that program book biographies can't give you much information about their subject. Some are long lists of achievements; some are humorous essays about the subject's youth, or history in the field; some are serious *hommages* that embarrass the author and the subject, though usually no one else; and some say less about the subject than the author. Unfortunately, for someone like Debbie Notkin, none of these approaches will give you a hint of what she's like.

The list approach won't work; in 500 words, one could barely get beyond Debbie's book reviewing, bookstore credentials, editorial assistantship at Putnam, and serious essays in the field to the subject of her fanzine achievements and convention experience. She's busy enough for three people, and is always adding to her schedule. And not just in fandom: political work, theater, ballet, travel . . . all keep her running day and night. It's enough to make one wonder when she finds the time to *read* the books she reviews.

The humorous essay might work, except for one thing: she tells the stories better than anyone else. So why settle for second-rate printed versions when she can give the full-blown detailed tale? Ask her about starting a bookstore, or about reading slush pile manuscripts, or about opossums. You can even try asking her about travelling to California from New York. See what happens.

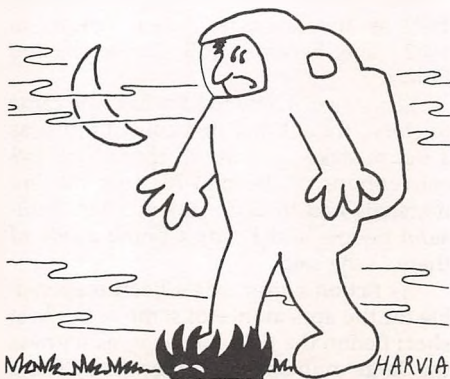
It's morally reprehensible to embarrass a Guest of Honor, so the third choice is out. Nothing here about how many authors find her reviews in *Locus* perceptive, insightful and accurate. Nothing about how (with two partners) she manages the most fannish science-fiction specialty store in the country. Nothing

about her helping create the "Fat, Feminism and Fandom" panel that caused a lot of discussion at Westercons and Worldcons. And nothing about how much and how well she cares for the people in her life, or what those people mean to her. That just wouldn't be appropriate.

I've never liked the last type of biography, and I refuse to push my way into this essay about Debbie. No, I won't use the word "I" here. I could do it, but it would be wrong.

Which leaves a bit of a quandary. Since none of the conventional biographical devices will work, there won't be a biography here. How will you know why Debbie is being honored? I guess you'll just have to talk to her yourself. But that's not so bad. When you do, you'll be well rewarded. And isn't that why both you and she are here anyway?

— Tom Whitmore



Thank you for putting  
your foot in my mouth  
(Chomp, chomp, yum, yum)!

## Not Just Another Pretty Face

Ellen Datlow's first memories are of the Bronx — but not the James T. Farrell nightmares we usually expect. She remembers being pulled along the Grand Concourse in a sled by her father. "There were no big hills there, so he had to pull me for miles." She also remembers building long ice tunnels there during the middle of the winters.

The fun was over when she was eight — they moved to Yonkers (the bad dreams of kids from the Bronx always take place there). Somehow, she managed to grow all the way up and went to Gorton High School. She then attended SUNY at Albany, where there wasn't much to do but go to classes and watch the state legislature meet. (Just like Austin, only 100° cooler.)

She graduated in 1971 and was off for Europe like a shot. ("My parents threatened to follow me.") She returned to NYC after a year and got her first job in publishing, as a sales secretary at Little, Brown and Co. She worked for the next five years as an editorial assistant at various mainstream publishers.

She came to *Omni* officially in March of 1979 as the associate fiction editor; in 1982, she became Bull Goose Fiction Editor.

Ellen wasn't new to SF when she came to *Omni*, though her first convention was a big mistake . . . one of those *Star Trek* conventions of the mid-70s that the fire marshals had to close down: "Ten thousand people and I didn't know a one of them," she said.

As fiction editor, she's been responsible for the appearance of some of the best short fiction the field has seen, as witness the large number of stories from *Omni* that have appeared on the final ballots of, or won, the Hugo and Nebula Awards in the past five years.

Not only is she a tireless editor ("Well,

I do get tired, but I don't take it out on the writers"), but she goes out of her way to get first look at the best fiction. ("If you send your next story anywhere else first, I'll pout.") She has been known to send writers letters saying, "Ed Bryant said Connie Willis said you were working on a story about Nazi mice. Let me see it when you're done." (You can tell by the number of award-winning stories about Rodents of the N.S.D.A.P. that this is sometimes counterproductive.)

She's been called "queen of the cyberpunk editors," mostly by people looking for someone to blame for buying stories by William Gibson and Bruce Sterling (when few people knew who they were) and encouraging their careers.

She brings to her editing a thorough knowledge of what's gone on in the field, and an actual-for-really-true literary sensibility, something the SF genre's been real short on since Gernsback sold his first battery.

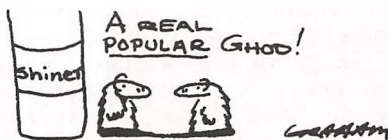
If you don't believe me, pick up any of the *Omni Books of Science Fiction* (First through Fourth out, Fifth due April, 1987, from Zebra) to see what's appeared under her editorship. Or to see how far her tastes range, get her vampirism anthology, *Blood Is Not Enough*, (forthcoming from Bluejay Books).

Other than that, I'll leave you with the two supreme compliments a writer can pay an editor:

1) She's the least New York New-Yorker I've ever met.

2) She knows a good story when she sees it.

— Howard Waldrop



## **Just Another Pretty Face**

I'd read all the literary anecdotes about Fitzgerald coming to Hemingway for advice in all sorts of matters, so I wasn't surprised a couple of years ago when I got a phone call from Lew:

"O Master," he said, "I would like you to come over and watch me screw. I don't think I'm doing it right."

I went over. "Go ahead," I said. He screwed for a long time, worked up a sweat, then looked up and said, "How'm I doing?"

"You screw well and truly," I said, "but you need something longer."

"What do you mean, O wise one?"

"The flathead 1¼" wood screws you're using are biting well and truly through the sheetrock, but not deeply into the joists. A job like that does not make you feel good afterwards. I recommend 1½", and a longer stroke on the Yankee screwdriver so that your hand does not feel like you carried a Weatherby .575 through tall brush all day."

So it was that we drywalled his new house, and later that night in the cafes, the talk and wine and crepes were good and fine.

To show you what kind of guy Lew Shiner is #1: Bruce Sterling, early in his career, had sold lots of stories to prestigious places and was talking about himself a lot. The only trouble was that none of the work had been published yet.

Lew was co-editing the fanzine *Tales from Texas* with Bob Wayne. In one of their issues, they printed "The Complete BRUCE STERLING Bibliography," with an introduction about Bruce, a full page of blank space, and a note thanking all their friends for help in researching it.

Lew Shiner was born in 1950 in Eugene, Oregon (he's the son of Joel Shiner, the salvage archaeologist whose

name appears in every archaeological reference book of the 1950s and '60s), but he jumped around enough to make an Air Force brat envious — Arizona, Virginia, Georgia, Arizona again, New Mexico, North Africa, Texas. He was (as Becky Matthews pointed out) really and truly president of his fourth grade class.



He graduated from St. Mark's in Dallas (St. Mark's was one of the two private schools in Dallas that let out anytime a snowflake was spotted within 50 miles of the Trinity River — the public schools would only let us go at 2 p.m. in a blizzard). SMU, cum laude. He had the usual smattering of jobs — architectural draftsman, commercial artist, record store assistant manager, Cutco door-to-door knife salesman (one day), and private investigator (one day). ("It was August. It was hot. My knives were sharp as Kate Hepburn's shins.")

To get ahead of the chronology here, once Lew came to Austin, he was a drummer in two rock bands: 1) Reptilicus (three guys making lots of noise and the first act that ever opened for Joe King Carasco and the Crowns), and 2) The Dinosaurs (five guys making lots more noise).

To show you the kind of guy Lew Shiner is #2: We all heard Lew had moved to Austin in 1978 but nobody had seen him. "I'll tell you where to find him," said Lisa Tuttle. "He's the kind of guy who'll walk to the first apartments outside the airport entrance." She went to the Lexington ("A Day Or A Lifetime") Arms, fifty feet off Airport Blvd. "You got a Lew Shiner here?" she asked. "Room 118," said the clerk.

I haven't told you what a good writer Lew is. I'm not about to, either.

He's the kind of writer I like, who can write ("Kings of the Afternoon") a whole story about James Dean without ever mentioning his name, or another ("Stomping at the Savoy") with a guy sitting in the room with a precog, and the precog saying, "The police are coming." Then there is a pounding at the door and the guy opens it and someone says, "The police are coming."

Lew looks like an Arrow Shirt Man, redrawn by Will Eisner, if that makes any sense. He has a boyish charm, and a boyish sense of fun, and that might make some people mistake him for someone with a boyish attitude toward his work. Nothing could be further from the truth — he works hard at his writing; he *cares* about it. In his newest stories, this sense



comes across to you beyond what it says on the page, which is the one sure sign that a real writer is at work.

Without Lew Shiner around, things would be a lot duller than you imagine they are.

— Howard Waldrop

## Shiner Bibliography (just like he sent it to me)\*

### Novel:

*Frontera* (Bean \*ghack\* Books) 1984, Nebula and Philip K. Dick Award finalist.

### Stories

First published: *Galileo* #5, Oct. 1977.

First story anybody cared about: "Stuff of Dreams" *F&SF*, April 1981.

Stories I can still stand: "Tommy and the Talking Dog" *Twilight Zone*, July '82.; "Snowbirds" *Analog*, Nov. '82; "Twilight Time" *Asimov's*, April '84 (repr. *YBSF*); "Till Human Voices Wake Us" *F&SF*, May 1984 (repr. *Mermaids*); "The War At Home" *Asimov's*, May 1985 (repr. *YBSF*, *In The Fields Of Fire*); "Jeff Beck" *Asimov's*, January '86.

### Forthcoming:

"Cabracan" *Asimov's*, October 1986, and "Rebels" *Omni*, 1987 (?), both excerpts from *Deserted Cities of the Heart*, unfinished, unsold novel in second draft.

Stories in all three *Wild Card* anthologies, ed. G.R.R. Martin, Bantam Books, 1987.

"Love in Vain" *Jack The Ripper*, ed. Dozois and Casper, Tor Books, 1987(?).

\* With a little punctuation and some font changes added at the typesetter.

# WYNDHAM HOTEL

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# ArmadilloCon 8

## Program Schedule

### Friday

- 3:00 Registration, Dealers' Room, Art Show, Fan Lounge OPEN  
Video Programming (B/C)  
Movie: *Godzilla vs. Megalon*
- 4:45 Movie: *The Fly*
- 5:00 Gaming OPENS
- 6:00 Chicken Pig-Out (Con Suite)
- 7:00 Opening Ceremonies/Pinkwater Society (B)
- 8:00 Meet the Guests Party (B)  
Dealers' Room, Art Show CLOSE
- 10:00 Registration CLOSES; Con Suite OPENS  
Late Night With Science Fiction — *Host, Ed Graham* (B)  
The Politics of Running A Bookstore (B/C)
- 11:00 Fandom Horror Stories/Down in the Trenches (B/C)
- 11:30 Movie: *Mesa of the Lost Women*
- 12:45 Video Programming (B)

### Saturday

- 10:00 Registration, Dealers' Room, Art Show OPEN  
Fan Lounge OPENS
- 11:00 APAs, Mimeoos, and BBSs — Fan Communications in the '80s (B/C)
- 12:00 Cyberpunk: Is It a Movement Or A Writing Style? (B/C)  
GURPS Fantasy Demonstration (D)
- 1:00 Fan Guest of Honor Speech (B/C)
- 2:00 Science Fiction Family Feud (B)
- 3:00 What's Really Wrong With Science Fiction? The Readers! (B/C)

### Programming Locations

(Hotel map on page 16)

**Registration** — second floor lobby

**Dealers' Room** — Nueces Suite

**Art Show** — San Antonio Suite

**Readings** — Colorado Suite

**Gaming** — Suite D

**Fan Lounge** — room 217

**Con Suite** — room 221

**Movies** — Ballroom (Trinity and Brazos  
rooms on the map)

(B) — Ballroom

(B/C) — Suites B and C

### Panels

**APAs, Mimeoos, and BBSs — Fan Communications in the '80s:** Neil Kaden, Earl Cooley, Debbie Notkin.

**Art Auction and Book Auction/Fire Sale:** Ed Bryant, Auctioneer. Proceeds go to George Alec Effinger to help replace items lost in a recent fire.

**Book Reviewing For Big Bucks and Glory:** Debbie Notkin, Ed Bryant, Michael Point, Jay Sheckley, Martin Wagner.

**Cyberpunk: Is It A Movement Or A Writing Style?:** William Gibson, Ellen Datlow, Bruce Sterling, Tom Maddox, Lew Shiner.

**Fandom Horror Stories/Down in the Trenches:** Tom Whitmore, Willie Siros, Ben Yalow, Scott Dennis.

**Genre Fiction — Read Any Good Nurse Novels Lately? Any Good SF?:** Neal Barrett, Jr., Chad Oliver, Carole Nelson Douglas



- 5:30 The State of Gaming Today (B/C)  
 6:00 Pizza Pig-Out (Con Suite)  
 Movie: *Throne of Blood*  
 7:00 Dealers' Room, Art Show CLOSE  
 Genre Fiction — Read Any Good Nurse Novels Lately?  
 Any Good SF? (B/C)  
 GURPS Autoduel Demonstration (D)  
 8:00 Why Write Short Stories When The Bucks Are In Novels? (B/C)  
 Registration CLOSES; Con Suite OPENS  
 Movie: *Lost World of Sinbad*  
 9:00 Regional Fandom: Will It Play in Peoria? (B/C)  
 10:00 Masquerade Ball (B)  
 12:00 Movie: *The Quest*  
 12:30 Movie: *Wrestling Women vs. The Aztec Mummy*

## Sunday

- 10:00 Registration, Dealers' Room, Art Show OPEN  
 Video Programming (B)  
 11:00 Fan Lounge OPENS  
 Book Reviewing for Big Bucks and Glory (B/C)  
 11:15 Movie: *The Fly*  
 12:00 Is Cyberpunk All High-Tech and Low Life? (B/C)  
 Howard Waldrop Reading (Colorado)  
 1:00 Special Guest Interview: Ellen and Gardner Go Mano a Mano (B/C)  
 Art Show CLOSES  
 2:00 Me and My Computer, A Love/Hate Relationship (B/C)  
 Fan Lounge CLOSES  
 Art Auction; Book Auction/Fire Sale (B)  
 3:00 Science Fiction Writers of America: Trade Union? Good Ole Boys? (B/C)  
 4:00 Movie: *The Quest*  
 4:45 Movie: *Cat Women of the Moon*  
 6:00 Dealers' Room CLOSES  
 7:00 Dead Armadillo Party

GURPS Autoduel Demo: Scott D. Haring.  
 GURPS Fantasy Demo: Steve Jackson.  
**Is Cyberpunk All High-Tech and Low Life?:** William Gibson, Lucius Shepard, George Alec Effinger, Karen Joy Fowler.  
**Me and My Computer, A Love/Hate Relationship:** Bill Baldwin, Bud Simons, Steve Gould.

**Opening Ceremonies/Pinkwater Appreciation Society:** William Gibson, Debbie Notkin, Lewis Shiner, Ellen Datlow.

**The Politics of Running a Bookstore:** Debbie Notkin, Bob Wayne, Ron Tatar, Tom Whitmore.

**Regional Fandom: Will It Play in Peoria?:** Debbie Notkin, Richard Wright, Ben Yalow, Spike Parsons, Willie Siros.

**Science Fiction Family Feud:** William Gibson, Ellen Datlow, Howard Waldrop, George Alec Effinger, et al.

**Science Fiction Writers of America: Trade Union? Good Ole Boys?:** Steve Gould, Chad Oliver, Ed Bryant, Gardner Dozois.

**Special Guest Interview: Ellen and Gardner Go Mano a Mano:** Ellen Datlow, Gardner Dozois.

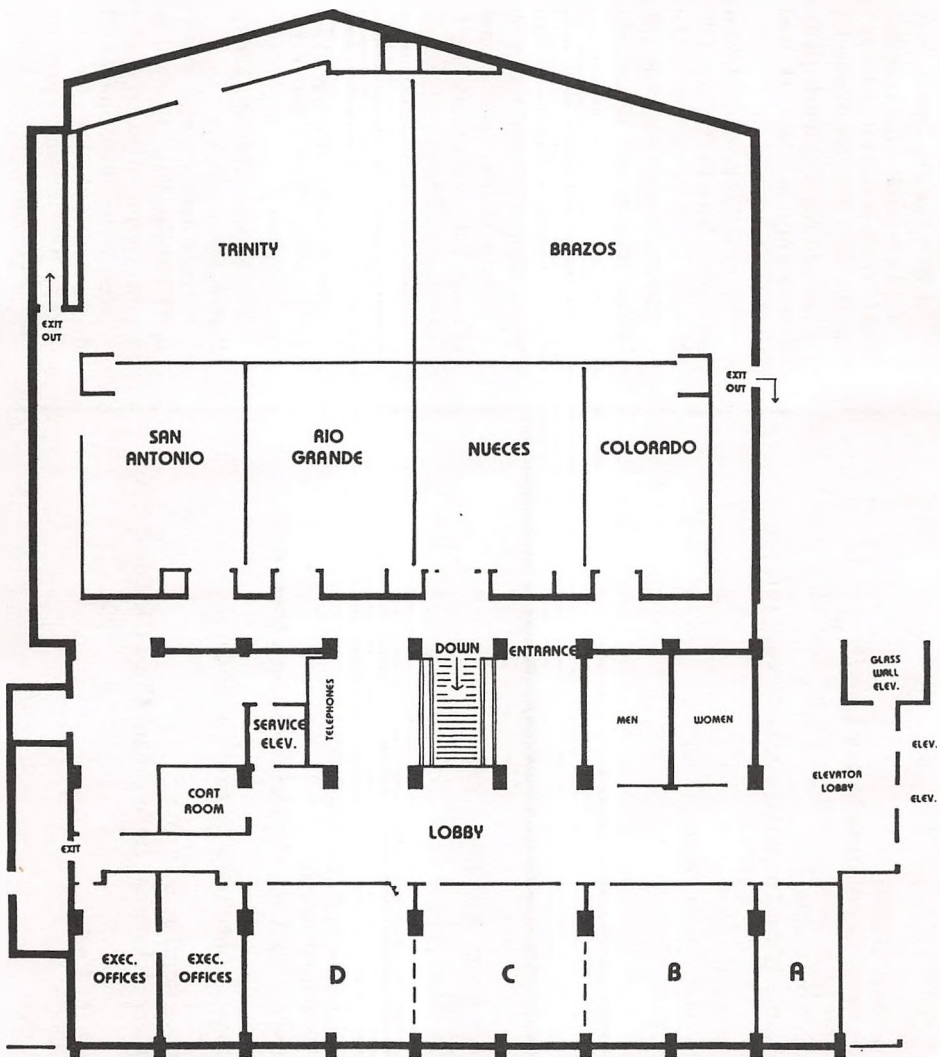
**The State of Gaming Today:** Rembert Parker, Steve Jackson.

**What's Really Wrong With Science Fiction? The Readers!:** Howard Waldrop, Ed Bryant, Gardner Dozois, Neal Barrett, Jr.

**Why Write Short Stories When The Bucks Are In Novels?:** Howard Waldrop, George Alec Effinger, Karen Joy Fowler, Lucius Shepard, William Gibson.

# Sheraton Crest Hotel & Towers

## Second Floor Convention Center



### Programming Locations

Registration — second floor lobby  
 Dealers' Room — Nueces Suite  
 Art Show — San Antonio Suite  
 Readings — Colorado Suite  
 Gaming — Suite D

Fan Lounge — room 217  
 Con Suite — room 221  
 Movies — Ballroom (Trinity and Brazos rooms on the map)  
 Panels — Suites B and C

Austin's Premiere Science Fiction Convention

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OCTOBER 9-11, 1987

Guest of Honor

**BRUCE STERLING**

author of *SCHISMATRIX*  
editor of *MIRRORSHADES*

*—The Cyberpunk Anthology*

Fan Guest of Honor

**MARK OLSON**

Chairman of 1986 *BOSKONE*.

1989 *WORLDCON*

Toastmaster

**PAT CADIGAN**

editor of *SHEYOL* and *THE PATHOSFINDER*

Special Guest

**BETH MEACHAM**

Editor-in-Chief of *TOR BOOKS*



Memberships are \$10 through Armadillocon 8, \$15 through Worldcon, \$25 after Worldcon (Possibly more at the door. . .)

Dealers' tables are \$50 and include one membership

Our hotel is the Wyndham South, 4140 Governor's Row (I-35 & Ben White)  
Singles and doubles \$55, Triples & Quads \$66

ArmadilloCon is sponsored by FACT, The Fandom Association of Central Texas, a non-profit, literary organization. FACT publishes the Texas SF Inquirer, a bi-monthly science fiction newszine covering the fannish scene in and around Texas. Subscriptions are 6 issues for \$6. FACT also sponsors a science fiction computer bulletin board. The SMOF NET is a 24 hour board operating at 300 and 1200 baud. Dial (512) 836-7663.

For more information or memberships write ArmadilloCon 9,  
P.O. Box 9612, Austin, Tx. 78766 or call 443-3491

# The Film Program vs. The Outer Space Monster Virus

## Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying And Love the Bombs We're Showing This Weekend

Have we got some movies for you! Step right up. Don't be afraid!

I mean, I grew up on stuff like this. I couldn't wait for the Saturday matinee in the '60s, to see exciting films like *Valley of the Gwangi*, *War of the Gargantuas*, and *Gamera* movies. I remember scenes of some guy becoming lunch for a Gargantua who then picks the guy's clothes out of his teeth; and a scene where some Fu Manchu character in an otherwise forgotten movie loses his head to a chopping block. Terrifying. Great stuff. Everyone should see these, I thought, particularly in their formative years.

So when I was asked to do this year's film program, I jumped at the chance. I didn't realize that some of these movies were (fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your viewpoint) hard to get or out of distribution. Little did I realize the nightmare I would have dealing with non-English-speaking Japanese film distributors in L.A. or semi-literate, rude New York distributors — "Look, we ain't got neither *Mars Invades Puerto Rico* or *Frankenstein Meets the Space Monster*, and don't call back."

But imagine having to grow up on films like *Top Gun*, *Short Circuit*, and *Flight of the Navigator*. Ick! Ptooie! Get me outta here! Send me to another planet! I mean, just look how great I turned out. I only occasionally run drooling through the park screaming about creeping socialism. And anybody who's about to start shooting a new video production entitled *Bubba and Jim meet the Space Monster* must be too marvelous for words.

But as to our movies . . . At last count there were about one and a half "good" films (as opposed to the more hazardous "bad" variety), guaranteed to cause neither irreversible brain damage nor massive internal hemorrhaging in children or young adults. For the rest of you it's too late, so go ahead and watch all the movies . . . I know I will.

— Eric Truax  
(with a couple of additions from Robert Taylor)



### **Catwomen of the Moon (1953)**

From the producers of the classic *Robot Monster*. Not in thrilling 3-D! Telepathic women in tights inhabit the moon! Giant spiders! Lunar love!

It's hard to imagine as bad a film as this going through three incarnations: Originally shown in 3-D, it bombed. Released as *Rocket to the Moon*, it bombed. Then remade in '59 as *Missile to the Moon*, it bombed. The basic plot (Earthmen visit planet populated by gorgeous, man-hungry females) has served for many films, but this one is the worst. It makes *Queen of Outer Space* look like *Citizen Kane*.

### **The Fly (1958)**

"THE FLY with the head of a man . . . and the man with the head of THE FLY!" The wonderful original with Vincent Price. No fancy fly transformation scene, just your basic man-with-a-fly's-head (and vice versa) trying to figure out what went wrong and why he is obsessed with the idea of buzzing around a pig farm. The man's wife becomes obsessed with flies in the search for the misplaced human head and the guy's son looks for his fly dad and hears the classic squeaking, "Help me! Help me!" With a wonderfully sick ending.

### **Godzilla vs. Megalon (1973 — Japan)**

A pretty silly Godzilla film where he (it? she?) teams up with cyborg Jet Jaguar and battles the evil Seatopians to keep them from taking over the world. Megalon is a big metal bug and Gaigan is a big metal bird that the Seatopians send against Godzilla. The usual little boy hero and great dubbing make this one of the more ludicrously fun Godzilla movies. "Shit, Jet Jaguar, what'll we do? Those damn Seatopians are tough!"

### **Lost World of Sinbad (1964 — Japan)**

Why they called this a Sinbad film, I have no idea. Toshiro Mifune is great as the samurai hero who saves the day against evil pirates and an evil witch who likes flying around like a bug and turning people into stone. The dubbing is inept, ensuring hilarity. It's pretty hard to find a more stupidly funny movie than this.

### **Mesa of The Lost Women (1952)**

An ArmadilloCon classic and a new dimension in Bad Cinema. This completely lobotomized movie has all the ingredients of success: a mad scientist, a giant tarantula and women with long fingernails. Jackie Coogan (Uncle Fester of *The Addams Family*) wants to breed women with spiders and create a super-race to conquer the world. Absolutely moronic; don't miss it. (Warning: May cause permanent damage to your good taste in cinema.)

### **The Quest (1983)**

This half-hour short is a beautiful, moving allegory of a people with an eight-day life span who live in a dark, cold world. They send one of their number to find the gateway to the "outside," where there is light and warmth. Visually stunning, the wonderful effects evoke a dreamworld of fabulous visions and landscapes. The story is based on Ray Bradbury's "Frost and Fire." This film should not be missed.

### **Throne of Blood (1957 — Japan)**

Akira Kurosawa's gripping epic is patterned after *MacBeth*'s tangled web of ambition and power, but in Medieval Japan instead of Celtic Scotland. Toshiro Mifune is the ruthless Washizu, a Samurai MacBeth murdered by his own ambition. If you've seen Kurosawa's more recent *Kagemusha* and *Ran*, you know his films are visual poetry. *Throne* and *Ran* are probably the best film adaptations of Shakespeare you're likely to see.

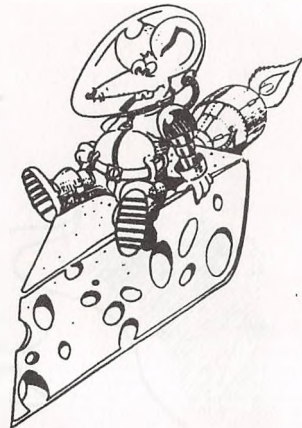
### **The Wrestling Women vs. the Aztec Mummy (1965 — Mexico)**

A few cons ago, we decided that *Robot vs. the Aztec Mummy* was so stupid that we had to have another "Aztec Mummy" movie (I understand there are four in the series, but who cares?). There's not a heck of a lot to say about this movie — the title pretty much tells all — but I think the Mummy is the Good Guy (gal?). If you saw the first one, you really should see this — then you're halfway to "completing the set."

*A bid for the 1990 Worldcon*

# Go Dutch - our way!

That means we will look after the program and you will have the time of your life. We've come all the way from Holland to entertain you with Old World hospitality and a New World of possibilities for the 48th World Science Fiction Convention.



Interested? (Of course you are!) Look for us at conventions: If you see fans with those Big Mouse buttons and T-shirts, find our (real!) Dutch room party. We'll come up with the drinks and you'll leave with a pre-supporting membership.

By the way, if you haven't received your buttons and wooden shoes as a pre-supporter, be sure to find us and get your goodies!

## *The 1990 Worldcon in Holland? Sounds great!*

**Pre-supporting  
membership \$5.00**

KLM Dutch Airlines has been appointed official carrier for the 48th Worldcon in the Hague.

Worldcon 1990, P.O. Box 95370, 2509 CJ The Hague, Holland.

### **OUR AMERICAN AGENTS:**

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Minneapolis MN 55408

# That's A FACT, Jack

Okay, it's time to reveal the truth about the science fiction group that calls itself FACT. To begin: What does FACT stand for? Fair question. FACT stands for truth, justice and the American Way. But it also stands for the Fandom Association of Central Texas. It is a non-profit 501(c)3 literary and educational organization. It began as a bunch of folks sitting around talking about SF. Then someone brought a clipboard to a meeting (a sure sign of organizational intentions), and soon we were all Roberts' Rules of Order and other club stuff.

The group incorporated and did all the IRS stuff to provide an umbrella organization to handle the preparations for the 1985 North American Science Fiction Convention (NASFiC). FACT actually came into being in January of 1983. It was founded by Willie Siros, Robert Taylor, and Scott Cupp, who formed the original Board of Directors. In 1984, the Board was expanded to five members, to more fully represent the various facets of the group. Currently, the Board consists of Willie Siros, Robert Taylor, Pat Mueller, Dennis Virzi, and Fred Duarte, Jr. They're a nice bunch of folks who would never attempt to overthrow a popularly elected government.

Supported by Texas fandom, FACT

was successful in bringing the NASFiC to Austin. This was the first time a national SF convention was held in Texas. Nicknamed Lone Star Con by the committee, the NASFiC was attended by some 3,000 fans from all over the country and the world. Again, the key support of Texas fans made the con a success and brought Texas fandom to the attention of the SF community.

The NASFiC's success brought FACT a stable financial base (as opposed to the usual begging in the street) and certain responsibilities. It is a corporation with legal duties; its officers have definite obligations; and, as stated in its incorporation papers, FACT is "to promote an interest in science fiction, and the SF literature, in central Texas." Of course, we're still just a bunch of folks who like to meet and talk and promote science fiction.

After NASFiC, FACT took some time to recharge its batteries, so to speak. The group is now getting involved in several projects. These include:

- The Special Projects Committee. Headed by Dennis Virzi, it solicits ideas for FACT projects and activities.
- The Future Convention Bids Committee. Headed by Willie Siros, it investigates the possibilities of FACT



I'm so tired I  
could sleep 100  
million years.

My  
sediments  
exactly.



holding another major convention in Texas.

• The Computer Applications Committee. Eight people looking into ways to make FACT more productive and informative: making the BBS multi-user, improving the FACT database, computerizing a list of all cons . . .

Other FACT members have been assigned specific duties:

William Watson is Keeper of the Lists; he maintains the FACT database and mailing lists.

Joe DiMaggio is Social Director; he knows when and where the parties and meetings are held.

What else does FACT do? Well, aside from the monthly meetings and parties, we:

• Publish an ostensibly bi-monthly fanzine called *The Texas SF Inquirer* (edited and produced by Pat Mueller), which includes news about Texas fans and pros (as well as national SF news of note), articles, letters, book reviews, and any other contributions its editor feels like including. Subscriptions are \$6 for six issues. Samples are available at the convention.

• FACT supports fanzine publishing by providing electro-stencilling, printing, and bulk-mailing services.

• Sponsors the SMOF-BBS, an electronic SF bulletin board. Earl Cooley is sysop. If you have a computer and modem, dial (512) UFO-SMOF to get on.

• Puts on a yearly SF convention called ArmadilloCon and a yearly relax-a-con called Glyptocon. See the FACT table in the dealers' room for more information.

Currently, FACT has about 100 members. Most hail from Texas, but there are FACT members on both coasts and even up in Yankee land. If you are interested in joining this rather loose, lovable group of anarchists, it'll cost you \$15 in dues, which includes a sub to the *Inquirer*. (If you mail your dues later, the address is at the bottom of the Contents page.) We can always use the help and input. Besides, we need more folks to talk SF with.

— Robert Taylor

# Get on the SMOF

*The SMOF-BBS,  
Austin's science-fiction  
computer bulletin board  
system*

## Available boards:

- General Board
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## A Short History of ArmadilloCon

# A Serious Statement of Philosophy & Management

Ah, ArmadilloCon I . . . I remember it like it was a flashback on the David Letterman Show. So many memories — the auction, where the original manuscripts for John Varley's *The Barbie Murders* and *The Persistence of Vision* were sold after a fierce bidding battle; Jeanne Gomoll showing everyone that a cat with a sock wrapped around its middle can't stand up (try it sometime); the panel on "How I Grew Up in a Small Town and Lived To Tell the Tale," featuring Howard Waldrop, Chad Oliver and Varley speaking from their hearts about discovering SF and how it changed their lives.

It all occurred at the Villa Capri Motor Hotel, May 11-13 of 1979. Guest of Honor was John Varley, an up-and-coming writer of the time. We've heard he's gone on to bigger things since . . . Fan Guest was Jeanne Gomoll, who traveled all the way from her cool, native Wisconsin to "enjoy" Texas weather and "for-real" Mexican food. Toastmastering the whole affair was Howard Waldrop, who provided the highlight of the con with his reading of "The Ugly Chickens" (which brought Howard the Nebula award for best novelette). Attendance was 103. It had only a dealers' room (six tables), a programming room, and a con suite (in Jeanne Gomoll's room). One of the main pastimes of the con was creating art on the carpeted walls of the programming area. One "drew" by brushing on the carpet. Amazing things were done on those walls.



ArmadilloCon II? I'm glad you asked. Since we were still so new to running SF cons, this was a time of experimentation. We didn't really know what could or couldn't be done. For example, we didn't know that you don't invite stylistic writers as your Guest of Honor. Go with a known writer, we were told, someone who likes to filk and masquerade. Since we didn't know, we invited Gardner Dozois — a very stylistic writer, incredibly talented and a little crazy, in a nice way. (He once ran a tag-team wrestling match in the SFWA suite at Worldcon. The match featured two Tyleneols vs. a pretzel and a potato chip. The Tyleneols

won by double-teaming the pretzel in their corner.)

AC II was held at the Quality Inn South on October 3-5, 1980. In addition to Gardner, we had Harry Morris as our Fan Guest and Chad Oliver as Toastmaster. Membership reached 157. Like the first ArmadilloCon, there was only a dealers' room, a programming room, and a con suite. Instead of a traditional banquet, we substituted a pizza pig-out and a chicken pig-out. These informal, inexpensive dinner gatherings allowed folks to socialize without paying \$12 for a hotel rubber-chicken dinner.

Another difference at this con was the GoH speech. Dozois did a hybrid of a speech and a reading. This wasn't the usual "science fiction is taking us to the stars" speech. Instead, in hilarious fashion, he spoke of being a slush-pile reader for *Galaxy* magazine, and about the brain-damaged stories he received. Imagine receiving (and having to read) stories written on a Big Chief tablet, in crayon, about a super-moose. One came in the mail every two weeks. (And apparently the cover letters were even worse.) His reading, of a piece entitled "Touring," was incredible. Centering on a reunion of Janis Joplin, Elvis and Buddy Holly, it showcased the Dozois wit and flashes of humor. It was a well-written piece that touched the feeling of loss many of us have toward those old rock 'n rollers.

Interestingly, music and SF were again a feature at the con when Howard Waldrop got into the act by reading his "Flying Saucer Rock and Roll" short story. Ah, we danced away the night.



AC III was at the Town Lake Ramada Inn, October 2-4, 1981. The Guest of Honor was the dean of Texas science fiction (and head of UT's anthropology department), Dr. Chad Oliver. Fan Guest was Bob Wayne, owner of the Fantastic Worlds Book Stores. Ed Bryant handled the Toastmaster duties. Once again the convention had only a dealers' room, a single programming room and a con suite, but the 212 attendees were well entertained by the programming and the guests.

The film program featured a "bad cinema"

# CONTEK IV

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Houston Texas

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MEMBERSHIPS	\$14 until 10/31/86
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WINE & CHEESE	\$ 6 extra pre registered
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\_\_\_\_\_ Memberships = \_\_\_\_\_

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festival that brought some very bad movies to the convention. These included *Mesa of the Lost Women*, *Plan Nine from Outer Space*, *Robot Monster*, *Invasion of the Bee Girls*, and many others. The crowd loved them. (I can assure you that *Mesa of the Lost Women* is beyond bad. It makes *Plan Nine* look like *King Lear*.)

In addition to the films, the programming included a number of panels that got both the audience and the panelists heated. One was *Condos and Fantasy Trilogies — The End of Western Civilization As We Know It?* People have strong views of fantasy trilogies. Another topic was violence in *Star Trek*, discussed in the panel *Kiss the Blood Off My Phaser*. That was a nasty one, but quite interesting. Also, Kerry O'Quinn, a native Austinite, took time from *Starlog* magazine to make an appearance and show his magazine's birthday film.

The pizza and chicken pig-outs were quite successful and the con suite seemed never to close. But the highlight of the con was Chad Oliver's GoH speech. After a sparkling introduction by Ed Bryant, Chad gave the best speech I have ever heard. It spoke to that sense of wonder all who enjoy SF share, and touched on his history in the field both as fan and pro. Chad was turning out fanzines in the '30s, and was well known in the letter columns of the major magazines before he began appearing in the fiction section. In the early '50s, he and Walter Miller (*A Canticle for Leibowitz*) bid for the Worldcon in Dripping Springs, Texas. His speech was both a history lesson and a very personal guide to the field. Chad's warmth and love for the literature were quite evident. It was a beautiful speech from a true giant of the field.



With AC IV, the convention put on some airs. It was held at the very swank Bradford Hotel (now the Stephen F. Austin) on October 1-3, 1982. George Alec Effinger was Guest of Honor, Joe Pumilia was Fan Guest and once again Ed Bryant was Toastmaster. Despite the opulence of the hotel and its mirrored hallways (folks were bumping into the mirrors all the time), the fans were fans — all 317 of them.

Among the other guests was Ellen Datlow, the fiction editor of *Omni*, making her first of many visits to ArmadilloCon. Frank Robinson dropped in and George R.R. Martin was there, too, as was a writer from Canada named William Gibson.

Again the con featured a single programming room and a dealers' room, but the con suite was a penthouse room. For the first time, AC members had to deal with elevators.

The film program had a number of hits from the "bad" cinema, and the panels again focused on areas of controversy in SF. Perhaps

the highlight of the convention was the Science Fiction Family Feud, pitting the pros against the fans. This "panel" resembled the TV game show, but the questions and answers dealt with SF — in a tongue-in-cheek style. You know . . . "Name an SF writer whose type-writer you would like to smash." It was a close contest; the pros won on the last question.

Another high point was the masquerade, our first. Well, it wasn't exactly a high point. It may have been one of the worst masquerades ever. Imagine Larry, Curly and Moe in charge. The audience was entertained, but it was torture for the committee. Since then, AC has had masked balls (which are easier *and* more fun).

Joe Pumilia proved to be a very good fan guest. He kept everyone entertained with his brand of insanity and fannish fervor. You see, Joe makes home movies. These include *The Attack of the Killer Frog* and *Return of the Killer Frog*. Most of the SF writers in Texas have appeared in these super-8 wonders. Plus, Joe was riding the crest of the "fans and their cats" debate with his good-humored *Kitty Torture* zine.

George Alec Effinger gave an eloquent speech describing the struggles of an SF writer. It was filled with irony, both bitter and comical. For all the wonders in the literature, there are very human writers behind the work. A writer has to put food on the table and pay the rent like everyone else. George brought this to our attention in a very moving address. Writing is a difficult way to make a living, but one that he found impossible to give up.



After winning the bid for the 1985 NAS-FIC\*, the ArmadilloCon committee rushed home to run AC 5. This was the first con put on by FACT.

Howard Waldrop was a most deserving Guest of Honor, Becky Matthews was Fan Guest, and the immortal one, Neal Barrett, Jr., was Toastmaster. The convention gathered, for the second time in its history, at the Villa Capri. The dates were October 7-9, 1983.

For the first time, there was an art show, plus two programming rooms and the dealers' room. A big problem was the con suite; since the Villa Capri is a three-block-long motor hotel, the 413 fans had a good walk from the

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\* North American Science Fiction Convention. Traditionally, the World Science Fiction Convention is held over the Labor Day weekend. Members of the Worldcon vote on where the Con will be held two years hence. (Beginning with this past Worldcon, the voting is three years in advance.) Any year that the Worldcon is held outside the US, a somewhat smaller con is held for North American fans. Austin hosted the 1985 NASFIC.

Catch a doubleloon...  
in 1988

# NOLA CON II

## A Magical City For A Magical Worldcon

Guest of Honor  
**Donald Wollheim**

Fan Guest of Honor  
**Roger Sims**

Toastmaster  
**Mike Resnick**

Supporting Membership: \$30

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**Nolacon II**  
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New Orleans, LA 70182

Frolich

programming area to the suite. The Villa Capri's entertainment center (sort of a theatre in the half-round) was basically a night club and its cozy atmosphere was very conducive to fannish fun. The masque was a big hit. So were the movies, which included a tribute to Willis O'Brien. Such full-length features as *King Kong*, *Son of Kong* and *Lost World* were shown, as well as a number of O'Brien shorts. The bad flicks were back, including a number of classics like *The Tingler* and *Rocket to the Moon*.

The Family Feud returned, but this time the fans won in a squeaker. It was a busy con, with a meeting of the NASFiC executive committee, a hot tub party, the ever-popular pig-outs, and parties till dawn. The pools were well used.

Becky Matthew gave a first-class speech as Fan GoH, even after being roasted by Steve Gould in an SF version of *This is Your Life*. Becky's presentation was filled with visual aids as she poked fun at nearly everyone, including herself. She and Pat Mueller moderated panels on fannish history and artifacts that gave the newer fans a sense of their place in the crazy world of fandom.

Certainly the highlight of the con was Howard Waldrop's speech and reading. He read from his novel *Them Bones* and described how the novel was constructed. Howard is certainly the best reader in the field — only Gardner Dozois and Ed Bryant can match him. The only thing better is watching Howard dance — which he also did. A Waldrop reading is not to be missed, and this one was very special. Howard flowed in and out of characters in his colorful and dramatic style. At the end, Howard was presented with a three-sheet movie poster of his favorite film, *Them!*.



The sixth AC was again at the Villa Capri, on October 12-14 in 1984. John Sladek was Guest of Honor, Jim Corrick and Gay Miller were the Fan Guests, and Joe Lansdale brought his country charm to the duties of Toastmaster.

The con featured a movie/video room, a panel/reading room, a gaming room, the dealers' room, and a room for the art show. But again the con suite was a long walk from the programming area. That year, the entertainment center was used just for the masque.

Once again the programming proved the most interesting aspect of the con. The Family Feud made its third appearance; the fans destroyed the pros in a lopsided victory. The masque ball served as the con mixer and the pig-outs (egg rolls took the place of chicken that year) were a good place to meet folks while stuffing your mouth. The hot tub party was also a fun place to get acquainted.

The number of films in the "bad cinema" genre dropped, but the movie schedule was well balanced with interesting shorts like *The Quest* and classics like *Kwaidan*. The videos were varied, but featured a lot of Japanese animation.

Panel topics ranged from a revival in honor of writer Daniel Pinkwater to themes in the horror genre. There were panels on gaming and the history of the gaming business in Texas. One panel was concerned with the value of the Hugo and Nebula awards, and how they can affect a writer's career. For the first time, there was two-track programming — you couldn't see everything.

During their Fan Guests speech, Jim and Gay gave an interesting history of their lives in fandom and the difference between Texas fandom and their native Arizona. They noted how Texas was a melting pot of fandoms, while their area saw little crossover in the various fandoms.

John Sladek is certainly an unusual writer. His stories are noted for their humorous tone and absurdist qualities. He is often categorized as just a writer of funny SF stories, but he showed a serious side in his GoH address when he touched on the value of satire in the field. Sladek said that parody and the SF element can present insight to the human condition. Speaking in almost self-mocking tones, he discussed the need for SF to explore the fringe areas of the field. It was an almost academic speech, but Sladek's own humor added a nice balance as he presented an interesting challenge to other SF writers.



Now for the easy one. AC7 was just a relax-a-con held in a some cabins in New Braunfels on October 17-19, 1985. There were about 70 very tired fans in attendance — everyone was catching their breath following the NASFiC four weeks earlier.

It rained all weekend and everyone just sat around talking and visiting. There were some hot dominoes being played in the Houston fans' cabins, eating was a big pastime everywhere, and card games and water balloon battles were popular. Saturday night saw a big party, and Sunday featured a FACT meeting, but overall, laid back was the motto of the weekend.

It was a weekend for sitting in a rocking chair and if you felt like it — and had the energy — well, you just might do some rocking.

I know that this con will be as much fun as the others, and hope to have some great stories for next year. See you then. Aloha.

— Robert Taylor

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