

Boskone 39
A convention report by Evelyn C. Leeper
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Boskone 38 was held from February 15-17, 2002, in Framingham. Last year, I wrote, "When Boskone moves back to Boston in 2003, we will definitely have to revisit the feasibility of going, given that that will be an extra hour above Framingham." Of course, that was before we knew we'd be retired by then, or for that matter, by now. So driving to Framingham is completely different. First, we drove up Wednesday morning, stopping at the Jumping Frog Bookstore in West Hartford which was having a moving sale. Then we arrived at my parents' house in Chicopee and went over to my brother and sister-in-law's house to see our brand-new (13-day-old) niece, who is just as cute as they said. Thursday we hung out with family. Friday morning we went up to Amherst, hit a couple of used bookstores in town and then headed out from Framingham--well, sort of. We went by way of North Hatfield (Troubadour Books) and South Deerfield (Meetinghouse Books). Since we had three people plus luggage plus two boxes and two bags of books and magazines for NESFA before we started, by the time we made all our purchases and actually started for Framingham, the car was already packed. Luckily, the NESFA donations made room for the books we bought at the convention. (We also stopped at another used bookstore in Connecticut on the way back.)

Anyway, it would appear that driving time won't be an issue for next year's Boskone, unless we decide for some insane reason we don't like being retired. This is unlikely.

The Dealers Room was actually three connected rooms upstairs, which was 1) hard to navigate, and 2) too far from the programming rooms. I really think the Dealers Room should be situated so that people who hear about a book on a panel and want to buy it should be able to run into the Dealers Room between that panel and the next one and get it right away. The large rooms near the programming were the Con Suite, which seems much more a place where you would be spending some time and so could be a longer walk away.

The rooms were all renamed from what they had been for the last several years, so that made finding the rooms a little more confusing, or maybe just more interesting.

It will be interesting to compare this regional convention to Windycon, which we will be attending in November as Fan Guests of Honor.

How Bad Can a Bad Panel Get?
Friday 5:00pm Dover
Andrew Adams, Jim Mann, Priscilla Olson (m), Edie Stern, Noel Wolfman

Description: "Whose program is it, anyway? Discuss, model?, and generally dissect the questionable (and sometimes, outrageous) behaviors and weird information exhibited by program participants at diverse conventions. Share stories, advice, and solutions for same. (Note: whilst program participants certainly don't have to come to this, it wouldn't hurt to check it out, anyway!)"

This started out with about ten or fifteen minutes of "humorous" demonstration, during which times the panelists showed up late, said they didn't know why they were on this panel, hawked a lot of books, talked about other topics, talked on cell phones, and so on. Part way through this, Janice Gelb came up from the audience to add herself to the panel.

Finally this foolishness ended. (If I wanted to see all this, I could go to any panel. :-))

The panelists then talked about these problems and what to do about them. Mann pointed out that hawking one's books excessively can generate a backlash. Some people apparently even sell their books at panels (and I got the impression this was not referring to people who sell them afterwards, but actually during the panel).

Olson and Asher also thought that one panelist handing out reading lists, bibliographies, etc., tended to result in that panelist dominating the panel. (This can be okay if all the panelists agree to it, and perhaps even collaborate on the hand-outs. I certainly wish that there had been a hand-out for the anime panel, since I have no idea how to spell most of the titles people mentioned!)

Olson talked about when the panelists all seem to have "agendas," and said this was fairly common at Readercon. (Maybe they should rename it "Agendacon"?)

It was agreed, I believe, that having too many panelists on a panel meant that no one got very much time and the logistics of having everyone speak were horrendous. The panelists suggested more than six was too many; I would suggest that more than four is pushing it.

Wolfman said that there are some people who are very good at single-person items, but do not do well on panels. Two examples she gave were Norman Spinrad or Harlan Ellison.

Olson thought that opinionated or autocratic moderators were a bad thing. I suppose it depends on how heavily the moderator moderates--a round-table discussion with an opinionated moderator who doesn't try to moderate could work. There is also the reverse problem: no moderator. I have been on or seen many panels in which no moderator is specified. Mann said this is because the committee asks on their program participants' questionnaire who would like to be a moderator, and then discovers that no one on panel X checked "yes." He feels a better approach is to ask if the person is *not* willing to be a moderator, and assume everyone else is. (Hey, it works for book clubs!) One can also ask someone who knows little or nothing about the topic but is a good moderator to serve as a non-participating moderator. (I basically did this for one of the panels I was on, though I did know something about the topic.)

While an autocratic moderator can be bad, strong panelists and a weak moderator can be just as bad. Overall, the panelists here said they would like for the panelists (or audience members) to provide more feedback on how good a job the moderator of a panel is doing.

Regarding panelists saying they don't know why they're on this panel, this is sometimes just a schtick

they use. But it's annoying to the committee, because the panelist is basically saying, "The committee has no idea what I know anything about and just assigned me at random." (John DeChancie apparently said at a recent convention that he didn't know why he was on that panel, and from the audience Mann responded, "Because you asked to be on it, John.")

Adams agreed that panelists should gather in the Green Room ahead of time, but not spend so much time talking about the topic that they have a great panel in the Green Room and nothing left for the actual panel. Email ahead of time helps also, in narrowing down what the specific topic is and what should be covered.

Audience members, too, can be the problem, either by getting the panel off- topic, or by arriving late and then asking questions that have already been covered. To make sure the audience knows what the topic is, and what to expect, the panelists agreed that descriptive titles need to be used as the primary panel titles, and the "cutesy" ones can be included if there is enough space--*not* the other way around! Also, the descriptions should give the audience (and the panelists!) some idea of whether the panel is expected to be useful, social, or entertaining, or all three.

Technical details, such as no working microphones, or conversely, too many microphones, can sink a panel. I added that other problems included excessive noise from adjoining rooms, or from the hallway if the door is opened a lot (or left open for ventilation). (I should also have added things such as a too-loud air conditioning system, or rooms that are overly hot or cold, or the biggest danger to late-night panels: drunken panelists.) We all agreed that ceilings are important. (If you don't understand that reference, see anyone's report from Intersection. Adams said that the venue now has ceilings for all its rooms, in case you're considering the UK in '05 bid.)

At the end, as a final demonstration, Adams asked, "Can't we run over just a little bit?" And then someone suggested the panelists stay there and sign some autographs.

A Fragmentation of Fans: The Growth of Separate Fandoms
Friday 7:00pm Dover
Mark Mandel, Priscilla Olson (m), Don Sakers, Geri Sullivan

Description: "A continuation of the Millennium Philcon program item, about the background and continued growth of separate fandoms that seem to be splitting the fannish community. What's going on, why, what will the outcome be? (And, if the situation is dire, how can it be remedied?...if it should be?)"

The panelists started by listing their credentials, in the sense of being in many different aspects of fandom. Sakers, for example, has been involved in books, gaming, costuming, convention running, and several more categories I didn't write down. Mandel said one of his interests was filk, but even that was fragmented. ("I'm a folkly filker. There are people who do thrash filk.") Sullivan said, "Most fans have a multitude of interests," and that people can serve as glue to hold the various fandoms together.

People commented how unhappy they were that Corflu was being held opposite Boskone, as if the people who were interesting in fanzines weren't interested in Boskone. (Many of those who had to decide between the two opted for Boskone in part because it had picked the date first.)

Olson said that part of the fragmentation is that people sometimes get an unearned reputation which is either too negative or too narrow. (I seem to have been labeled a "fanzine fan" by someone who knew only that I had been nominated for the Hugo for Fan Writer. Anyone who knows me knows that I am not primarily--or probably even secondarily--a fanzine fan.)

An audience member suggested that the major fragmentation these days is an age split. Someone observed that the gender balance had gotten better over time, but Olson said from her point of view it had gotten worse. :-))

Sullivan thought that one problem might be that science fiction is changing and not everyone thinks the changes are for the best. As she said, "We like change that we are driving." Mandel said we needed to watch our terminology. "There's division and then there's conflict. You can have multiplicity without conflict." Sullivan noted also that fragmentation is not new.

(At times this panel was a bit incoherent, diffuse, . . . , dare I say it, fragmented.)

Talking about what an audience member called "different genres within science fiction," Rusty Hevelin said, "Newcomers should sample." Sakers added that that was "not advice just for the newcomers."

From the audience, Nomi Burstein said that when she and husband Michael went to NESFA, they liked what they saw, and stayed. Olson asked, "Why did you stay sticking with NESFA?" Michael replied, "I would say for me it was the hot chicks." But then he added, "NESFA has a presence other than just running a convention," which other area groups do not.

Nomi talked about expressing interest in working on a Boskone and having someone say, "Oh, we have an easy job for you. We call it logistics." Michael added, "And the next thing we know, we have 600 pounds of soda in our garage."

How To Watch an Animated Japanese Film
Friday 8:00pm Wayland S
Christine Carpenito, Alice N. S. Lewis

Description: [no description provided]

Here's a panel that could have used a description. I know, because I suggested it, and it was clear that the panelists didn't quite get the message of what I was asking for. At Worldcon last year, Dan Kimmel had said that the Japanese have a different style of story-telling that is difficult for those unfamiliar with it. So I suggested that maybe a convention should have a panel on "How to Watch a Japanese Films: Different Story-Telling Styles." But the panelists seemed to think that maybe the question was movie theater versus DVD. Since they seemed a little unsure, I raised my hand and said that I had suggested the panel as a way to help people unfamiliar with anime understand it.

Alas, even this didn't quite convey what I wanted. Basically this became "Anime 101," not a bad thing, but not quite the analysis I had hoped for. And, boy, do I wish there had been a hand-out. I expect it will take a lot of "Googling" to figure out how to spell some of these titles. (If I'm not sure I've managed to match up my phonetics with the correct titles, I'll add a "?" after it.)

I asked specifically about the big eyes, since film critic Richard Roeper recently said that he didn't like Japanese anime because all the characters were very unrealistic with those big eyes. The panelists said the big eyes are because all anime is descended from (or at least heavily influenced by) the cartoonist Ozama Tezuka, who was in turn influenced by Disney, and many of Disney's characters had the same large eyes. Also, big eyes are "cute," and Japan has a sort of "Cult of Cute," as one panelist put it. And finally, they suggested that the big eyes are used to show big emotion.

They did say that some anime uses more realistic artwork, and mentioned *Perfect Blue* and *Ginrei* (?) as being two of these.

However, one of them (or maybe it was another one) is about the life of a famous Japanese novelist where he's a cat--it's connected to his stories and would not make a lot of sense to audiences who didn't know about him. For that matter, they said, a lot of anime are based on manga which it is assumed the audience is familiar with. And some are very long, since anime covers not just the movies that one occasionally sees released in theaters in major cities, but also television series from Japan. For example, *Legend of the Galactic Heroes* and *Sailor Moon* are both considered excellent, but are really long. (*Legend of the Galactic Heroes* is 110 episodes; *Sailor Moon* is 82 episodes.) And they are continuing stories, more like soap operas than traditional American prime-time television series. The panelists said that we were starting to see this sort of continuing story in science fiction series such as *Babylon 5* and *Buffy: The Vampire Slayer*; I would add that *Hill Street Blues* had some of it as well.

Another difference mentioned was the use of establishing shots, which are rare in American animation. Another is the occasional silence. Disney, which they released *Kiki's Delivery Service* in the United States, insisted that the (dubbed) soundtrack have no silences. There are also cultural differences. Japanese society puts more emphasis on reticence, so where in the Japanese version, a character might just hug another character, in the American version, they might add, "I love you" to the dialogue as well.

Speaking of the characters in a lot of anime, Carpenito said, "They're all tall and willowy when they're not short and fat and dwarfish."

Mark Leeper asked why the Japanese anime we see here, particularly in video stores, seems so fixated on fighting. Lewis said that the market for that is really sixteen- to twenty-year-old males, rather than the broader market anime has in Japan.

Carpenito mentioned *Roujin Z*, saying that it "[proved] that health care and giant robots can be mixed." I have no idea what this means.

The panelists recommended Antonia Levi's book, *Samurai from Outer Space : Understanding Japanese Animation*, as well as Fred Perry's *Giant Robots* and *More Giant Robots* (though the latter two appear to be out of print). Regarding manga itself, they suggested two books by Frederik L. Schodt: *Dreamland Japan : Writings on Modern Manga* and *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics*.

Most of the time was spent listing anime that the panelists thought would be the most accessible or of the most interest to the beginning viewer. For the sake of completeness, I will list them here: anything from Studio Ghibli; *My Neighbor Totoro*; *Kiki's Delivery Service*; *Akira*; *Cowboy Bebop* (good music); *Ranma One Half*; *Tenchi and Tenchi Moyo*; *Brother, My Brother*; *Mysterious Thief Saint Tail* (about stealing things for God?); *Eva*; *Utena*; *Lucy*; *Spring and Chaos*; *Memories Like Teardrops* (?); *Whisper of the Heart*; *Gundam* (if you like things blowing up); *Bubblegum Crisis*; *His and Her Circumstances*; *Wings of Honneamise*; *Space Battleship Yamamoto Yohko*; *Captain Horlock*; *Rojin Kenshin* (?) (a 1870s historical anime); *Infinite Ryuibus* (?); *Crusher Joe*; *Project Dako*; *Irresponsible Captain Tyler* (?); *FLCL (Funi Kuri)*; *Nadia (The Secret of Blue Water)* (which was described as "Jules Verne Captain Nemo stuff"); *Grave of the Fireflies* (World War II); *Twilight of the Cockroaches*; *Vampire Hunter D*; and *Tokyo Babylon*; and *Ghost in the Shell. The Big O* is supposedly on The Cartoon Network.

Studio Ghibli apparently has some sort of distribution arrangement with Disney, but only the Miyazaki films are included.

One of the films you are not likely to see widely distributed is *Pon Poko*, which apparently has "raccoon dogs with magic power in their genitalia." (Really, do you think I would make up something like that?)

Let me at least list some of the sites that were very useful for me in writing this:

- | <http://novaonline.nv.cc.va.us/eli/evans/his135/MODULES/Events/Anime62/Anime62.html>
- | <http://www.csclub.uwaterloo.ca/u/mlvanbie/anime-list/classic.html>
- | <http://www.anipike.com/> (recommended by the panelists)

Rediscovery: Olaf Stapledon and Other Classics in the Field
Friday 9:00pm Wayland C/N
Gregory Feeley, David G. Hartwell (m), Alex Irvine,
Robert I. Katz, Darrell Schweitzer

Description: "Olaf Stapledon won the new 'Rediscovery' award this year. Did he deserve it? What other great, neglected, classical writers deserve recognition? (Why aren't they getting it?)"

Hartwell began by saying that it was hard to think of Stapledon as forgotten when all he wrote was in print. I pointed out that this was not true. Yes, his four major works (*Last and First Men*, *Star Maker*, *Odd John*, and *Sirius*) are in print, but even if one leaves aside his non-fiction philosophical works, there is quite a bit out of print: *Darkness and the Light*, *Far Future Calling* (collection), *Last Men in London*, *Nebula Maker*, *The Olaf Stapledon Reader* (collection), *The Opening of the Eyes*, *To the End of Time* (collection), and *Worlds of Wonder* (containing *The Flames*, *Death into Life*, and *Old Man in a New World*). And some are completely unobtainable, such as his poetry collection, *Secular Psalms*.

Anyway, Feeley then said that "neglected is the default position" for Stapledon, and claimed that Stapledon was/is unreadable. (I completely disagree with that, though what I have read by Stapledon in the last couple of years is primarily his non-fiction, so I suppose I must go back and re-read one of his classics.) Feeley said that David Lindsay and E. R. Eddison are in similar positions, describing them all as writing visionary literature with no characterization. He admits that *Odd John* has characters and dialogue, but says that is an exception among Stapledon's work. (Yes, and so what? Sorry, but Stapledon is one of my favorite authors and I'm feeling cranky.) Katz agreed with Feeley.

But Hartwell noted of these authors, "They weren't writing in genre. They were writing on the fringes of a literary movement--modernism." Lindsay, he said, was appreciated by C. S. Lewis, and E. R. Eddison by James Blish.

Schweitzer noted that in spite of what Feeley sees as flaws in these writers, "they all managed to stay in print." They are all "eccentric writers," he added, and "lots of readers can't tolerate anything but plain white bread prose."

Regarding rediscovery in general, Feeley quoted Walter Benjamin as saying that books can lose an audience and find one later (a somewhat Marxist view). Because of this, he takes issue with canon formation, observing that books can be before their time. For example, Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* is now highly regarded, whereas before it was not. Terry Eagleton (another Marxist critic) said that the nineteenth century was not wrong in their choices, but that choices can evolve.

Irvine admitted to never having read Stapledon, but suggests that there may be something of "an attempt to ratify reading tastes that are out of fashion." At one time, he noted, T. S. Eliot was out and Ezra Pound was in. Then people decided that Eliot's *4 Quartets* was acceptable, and gradually other of his works were "rediscovered" (or perhaps rehabilitated) as well.

Hartwell addressed "the idea of progress and literary evolution," which he described as first the early pulps, then John W. Campbell, Jr., bringing about a higher form of science fiction, then *Galaxy* and

The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction bringing it still higher, with something of a peak with the New Wave. He described this as the "myth of progress" which he said brings about the notion that "you must discard the past." (Hearing all this, I was stuck by an image of that famous picture of evolution, with the five primates from various eras marching in a line, except with science fiction authors' faces.)

Schweitzer elaborated on this, saying that someone called the 1920s the "Great Retarded Period." In the 1890s, he said, science fiction was at the level of the mainstream (indeed, it was in the mainstream), but by the 1930s it had declined, and it was not until the 1970s that it achieved that level again. "The pulps," he said, "lowered entry standards to a level no one imagined possible." He mentioned some authors who were well respected at the time but now forgotten, leading Hartwell to point out, "There are littered throughout the history of science fiction lots and lots of people who have been forgotten." He pointed out that the January 2002 issue of *Harper's* contains what he described as their "every-ten-year attack on science fiction," adding, "The point is that we're still important enough to be dissed by the establishment." Schweitzer had little use for the academics, saying "Let me suggest that the English Department at Harvard is irrelevant. In about another generation they'll discover Philip Dick."

Feeley decried what he described as the "teleology and Whigistic tone to [this] marching forward" description. The notion of rediscovery implies that the past was wrong to ignore these authors, he said, but is difficult to reconcile with a phenomenon such as James Branch Cabell going through several cycles of revival and desuetude. Schweitzer responded that there do exist shifts in taste, and that "different times need different things." Feeley countered that he had the same objection to the "evolution" description that Stephen Jay Gould had to the drawing I alluded to earlier--that evolution does not mean *better* per se. "The steady accretion of the past does not imply progress."

Regarding what other authors should be rediscovered, Schweitzer said there was a wide field to choose from, because "anything out of print for five years is pretty much forgotten." He suggested John Collier, known mostly for his short stories, but also the author of a few novels. And a final name from him was Ray Nelson.

Katz thought Piers Anthony's earlier works such as *Macroscope* and *Chthon* were worthy of rediscovery, but I could see a problem there in that they are very different from what his current audience would expect, and those who dislike his current work would be unlikely to pick them up at all. He also suggested Doris Piserchia, Stanley Weinbaum, and Frederick Turner (?).

Feeley thought Edgar Pangborn would be a good author to rediscover, along with the lesser known Raymond Queneau, Tom LaFarge, and Jonathan Brandt. He also mentioned Bernard Wolfe, whose *Limbo* he described as a "modernist novel about cybernetics."

Hartwell named John Sladek, Thomas M. Disch, and Theodore Sturgeon. Disch, Hartwell said, "wrote New Wave science fiction in a mode of rationality that would have honored Isaac Asimov."

I suggested John Wyndham, who is woefully out of print. (And completely-- even *The Day of the Triffids* is currently out of print, at least in the United States).

Art Show Reception Friday 10:00PM Art Show

The art show reception was open to all this year. (In order to get favorable rates for convention space, Boskone--or any convention--has to guarantee the hotel a certain amount of food and beverage business. In previous years there has been a banquet, but that was becoming more and more

a problem, both for the space required and for attempting please everyone. So this year Boskone decided to just drop the banquet and spend more on the con suite, the art show reception, and so on.)

I found the reception a good place to meet and talk to people, but increasingly the art is less interesting than it used to be. This may be because of the switch from science fiction to fantasy, and my growing distance from television-inspired media art.

For breakfast Friday morning we drove to the usual place we have been going for the past several years, only to discover that it was no longer a breakfast/lunch diner-type place, but an Indian restaurant (not open for breakfast). So we settled for the Greek restaurant across the street. Unfortunately, even though they still list egg-lemon soup on their breakfast menu, they no longer seem to have it then, and their pancake syrup seemed watery. For breakfasts alone, the move to Boston next year is probably a good thing. :-)

**Collecting or Hoarding?
Saturday 10:00am Weston
Glen Cook, Greg Ketter, Tom Whitmore (m), Noel Wolfman**

Description: "When does collecting become hoarding? (Is it fair to call unbridled, obsessive collecting hoarding, or should some other term be used?) How does a collector differ from a hoarder? (How about a 12-step program for hoarders?) Share some good stories about collections gone wild..."

Ketter began by saying that the difference was that "science fiction fans tend to be very methodical collectors" as opposed to the more pathological book hoarders, to which Whitmore added, "Or the indiscriminate." Cook said that the author of *Full Metal Jacket* was apparently one of the pathological ones. Wolfman said she once went to an estate sale in an apartment building in which the owner would fill an apartment with books, then seal it up and start on the next one. "It's all mine, my precious!" Ketter described a forty-four-room mansion filled with books. The audience started to drool.

Regarding re-reading and the collecting urge it generates, Whitmore said that sometimes we need comfort books like we need comfort food. And when it comes to buying, Whitmore noted, "It's always cheaper now than it will be later." (This is *not* the beginnings of a twelve-step program!) he also said, however, "You will never get what they are currently selling for when you sell them." These statements seem a trifle contradictory.

Wolfman said, "Every science fiction fan probably has their complete collection catalogued," unlike pathological hoarders. Another sign of the hoarder, Whitmore added, is that they have several copies of various items.

Wolfman talked about the fire that Bill Rotsler had in his apartment. Standing on the sidewalk watching the fire department fighting the fire, Rotsler's response was to turn to his companions and say, "Let's go to dinner; I'm hungry." (They did discover later that tightly packed books do not burn very well, due to lack of oxygen--the pages were fine on many books, though the bindings had burnt. Whitmore reminded the audience "books are heavy" and to be sure that the structure can hold them.

Ketter said that fans are bibliographic, which can be a problem, because many science fiction authors wrote a lot of pornography to pay the bills and this is very hard to identify for a bibliography, let alone track down for a collection.

Whitmore pointed out that once you have everything, you're an owner, not a collector. (My solution

to this is to ask my friends for their want lists and collect for them.)

Cook, Ketter, and Whitmore are dealers as well as collectors and had some observations on the book-dealing aspects. For example, pricing an item too high may keep it from selling, but so will pricing an item too low. One needs to look everywhere for books, including the Salvation Army and library sales.

The Ever-Growing Rift -- Pros and Fans
Saturday 12:00 n Dover
Janice Gelb, Gay Haldeman, Eleanor Lang, Steve Miller,
Priscilla Olson (m), Teresa Nielsen Hayden

Description: "A continuation of the program item at the Millennium Philcon. In recent years, some pros view themselves as separate from the fannish community, and some fans are happy to have it that way. It used to be different. What happened? Is it getting worse? (Yes - but why?) How can this (damaging...OK, argue it if you want!) trend be reversed?"

Haldeman pointed out that most of the older pros were fans before they were pros, giving Joe Haldeman as an example. Miller said he was a fan in college and later was the curator of science fiction at the University of Maryland, which he said meant he was "forced to be paid to buy fanzines."

Gelb said that as a con-runner, the most common issue these days is pros who insist they must be on a panel in order to deduct the convention as a business expense. (This isn't true--see the ConJose web site for details.) The next most common is probably the pros who don't respond to the questionnaire asking if they are attending because they assume the convention *knows* they always attend, and then wonder why they are not scheduled for any panels.

Haldeman felt that all this can be reduced to "serious insecurities or extremely large egos," but Miller pointed out, "There's no either/or."

Gelb said that many pros also seem to feel they should not have to pay for convention memberships simply because they are pros. But as a friend told her, "The writerly essence wafting down the hallway doesn't to the convention any good."

Andrew Adams said that part of the problem may be expectations: because the smaller conventions give program participants free memberships up front, this makes some pros expect this from Worldcon as well, rather than having to pay now and be reimbursed later. Ginjer Buchanan said that many pros were upset about the World Fantasy Convention's policy of no free memberships, leading Nielsen Hayden to say, "People I know in the pro community [upset] about this are notoriously thick-headed anyway."

Miller said that part of the growing rift is almost a class thing, in that pros talk about "fan boys." (I guess that includes "fan girls.") Gelb thought that some of the newer pros' misconceptions about fans was due to the fans that "the nice people don't want to bother them" when they're having dinner or whatever, while the jerks will barge right in.

Nielsen Hayden returned to the issue of pros insisting that they be put on panels. Sometimes, she said, they are just not very interesting (e.g., John Norman). And sometimes they are what she described as "PSF": Published Small Fry. This can be a problem for authors who start out at small regional conventions, where they are the "big fish in a small pond" and then move on to larger regional conventions or the Worldcon, where suddenly they are not the Big Name in attendance.

Gelb returned to the initial comments about pros being fans before they were pros and said that this was true for a long time, but now is no longer as true. Andrew Adams said that the widespread media conventions have set the perceptions of many pros. (One of the manifestations of this is the whole question of whether one buys a "ticket" to or a "membership" in a convention.) I suppose all this means that neo-pros used to know not and knew that they knew not. Now they know not but know not that they know not.

Nielsen Hayden said this was all true, but there are also older authors who cause problems, and "they should know better." Olson's comment was, "They are twelve years old; they *don't* know better," to which Nielsen Hayden responded, "I am illuminated."

Pod People: How to Live, On-Line
Saturday 1:00pm Weston
Daniel P. Dern, Jeff Hecht, Kurt Lancaster, Evelyn C. Leeper, Erik Olson (m)

Description: "More and more, communicating electronically is what is binding many of us into a community. Is this a bad thing? What are the changes in technology that are behind this revolution? What new technologies might change the way (and frequency) we communicate with each other? Will we ever have to leave the house again? What are some of the things that we should do to keep it a friendly community? And what about web-logs? Why are people suddenly feeling impelled to let everyone read their diaries/ (And what do you get out of doing this?)"

[As usual, my write-up for this panel is rather skimpy, because it's hard to take notes and participate at the same time.]

My credentials for this panel were that I had been on Usenet since 1984 (and had email since 1978). However, I have never been in a chat room, unless one counts a single use of AOL Instant Messenger. The closest I came was probably the old "write" command on UNIX.

One of the panelists noted that the concept of being on-line is really just an extension and updating of ham radio and Morse code--except of course that now one can do that "24/7." Indeed, the whole phrase "twenty-four-seven" is an outgrowth of the on-line community. I said that I had read several articles about how the Internet was leading to the loss of distinction between being at work and not being at work. People are expected to read their email, work on documents, and so on, even outside of office hours or when they are in the office. One has to work to get away from work, in fact.

Dern talked about how the Internet also raises the question of *where* work is. He gave the example of a salesperson who wanted to come into "the office" to give a demo. Dern tried to explain that he was in Boston, his manager was in San Francisco, the software designer was in India, and other staff were scattered around the globe, but the salesperson kept insisting that he would just come into the San Francisco office to demo for everyone.

So we have the virtual corporation to go with the virtual community. Is this good? Well, it does allow people a new mode of interaction, one in which the shy, or mobility-impaired, or otherwise disadvantaged can participate equally. Or, as the famous *New Yorker* cartoon said, "On the Internet, no one knows you're a dog." Again, there is a flip side: no one knows if you're who you say you are either. One big concern of parents is that their children need to realize that the people they talk to over the Internet may not be the wonderful people they project themselves as being, and that children--and adults too--need to exercise caution in setting up meetings or dates with people they really know nothing about. (Someone pointed out that young people take on-line communities for granted, just as we accept live television without thinking about it.)

Regarding how an on-line community can bridge logistical difficulties, quite a few of the biggest posters in one of the Usenet consumer groups I used to subscribe to were military wives who found themselves isolated from family and friends, but found communities on-line that they could stay with even when they moved.

And all our discussion did not even begin to address privacy issues.

My conclusion would be that the best way to live on-line would be to live off-line as well. Don't let the computer interactions replace all other forms of contact.

I Enjoy Being a Fan
Saturday 2:00pm Weston
Thomas Atkinson, Rusty Hevelin, Mary Kay Kare,
Evelyn C. Leeper (m), Geri Sullivan

Description: "What's to love? (Conversely, is there anything you hate?) Where would we be without fandom? How did it make us who we are today?"

[Same disclaimer applies: my write-up for this panel is rather skimpy, because it's hard to take notes and participate at the same time.]

Atkinson said one of the best things about being a fan was "I can be as abstruse and obscure as I want and someone will understand me." (Later, Kare referred to "an even more frightening datum," which almost seems an illustration of this, "datum" being the singular of "data.")

Kare said she enjoyed meeting strange, unusual, and odd people and things, and also "never having to say, 'But where would I wear that?'"

Hevelin said in fandom, "I can be me." Kare said when she discovered fandom, she had the feeling "I've come home." (These are very much the sentiments that I've heard gay people use when describing their feelings on finding organizations or communities of other gay people.)

Overall, the main theme seemed to be that fandom was a welcoming community, although since everyone on the panel was by definition a member of fandom, this might be considered a skewed sample. Many people have pointed out that while fandom is accepting of overweight people, or people who wear odd outfits, it is less accepting of outspoken Second Amendment supporters or abortion opponents.

Kipling
Saturday 3:00PM Dover
Brenda W. Clough, Gregory Feeley (m), Michael F. Flynn, Frederick Andrew Lerner

Description: " Kipling: Fantasist and/or Modernist? His importance in the sf/fantasy field is enormous, but its true extent is often overlooked. He remains a touchstone of the political right - but his early imperialist work of the 1890s forms only a part of his achievement. His late, increasingly dense and experimental stories of the 1920s are increasingly recognized as his finest work. As Kipling's political beliefs become less important in the modern world, new aspects of his work are better appreciated. Discuss these aspects, and the issues noted above."

One of the panelists--I have mercifully forgotten who--started with the gay joke, "Do you prefer Kipling or Browning?" (Sorry, but one must relay an accurate feel for the panel.)

Feeley began the panel proper (as opposed to the panel improper) by noting that Rudyard Kipling lived from 1865 to 1936, he was the first Englishman to win the Nobel Prize for literature in 1907, was the youngest ever to receive it, and was for years a superstar. (Feeley qualified that, saying, "for years the youngest," but in checking, I see that Kipling is *still* the youngest, at 42, with Albert Camus at age 44 the runner-up. In part this is because Nobel prizes must be awarded to living authors, so there is a natural tendency to award them to older authors, on the theory that the younger ones can win them in some future year.) And not only was Kipling a superstar, but according to Feeley, "His poetry was very near as popular as his verse." [sic] (What was meant was that his poetry was very near as popular as his prose, but I felt I should include the actual quote, in case Bob Devney wanted it.) And not only that, but Feeley quoted someone as saying that Kipling is even better than his admirers realize.

Flynn pointed out that Kipling's influence extends far beyond the obvious. For example, the film *Rules of Engagement* is based heavily on Kipling's "A Conference of the Powers."

Feeley gave a brief history of Kipling as an author. Kipling began writing at age eighteen, with "The Gate of a Hundred Sorrows." He grew up with many family connections to the arts, and was surrounded by Pre-Raphaelites. Though they were in India, his family were neither military nor civil service. Rather, his father was the curator of a museum. On his return to England, he was rather abruptly dumped into a lower-class foster home for several years before being sent to a public school which was full of military sons also destined for the military. "He spent all his life telling us how he had no problem getting over [being sent to a foster home]," noted Feeley, and wrote about it specifically in "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep" (1888).

Flynn pointed out that this shows up a lot in Kipling's work, in the theme of sudden betrayal by people who are trusted, and sudden rescue from an unexpected sources. Flynn summarized this as "the gods of things as they are" ruling the universe. Lerner made the science fiction analogy that Kipling believed in "the cold equations." Flynn agreed, but said in his writing that Kipling did it better. Feeley said that Kipling probably had contact with missionaries who had as their god "the god of things as they should be," but are routed.

Kipling wrote in many genres; there is even a book that is a collection of his science fiction stories. He was considered the "Bard of Empire" from 1885 to 1900 or so, when his writing shifted in both style and content. His later stories were dense, elusive, and tended toward literary modernism. Feeley warns, "Most of what people know about Kipling applies only to his early years." Kipling's poems were famous for being both epigrammatic and easily set to music. (Clough noted that Kipling was superstitious about taking money for his poetry and would not do it.)

Feeley said that it is easy to call Kipling a racist, particularly by today's standards. He loved India, said Feeley, but ferociously felt that Britain should always rule it, and that the Indians had wonderful gifts (that "people who eat with forks little know"), but not a talent for self- government. And he hated miscegenation. Lerner noted that when Kipling talked about Indian self-rule, he saw that as being rule by the rajas rather than anything like the current democracy, and that Kipling's famous phrase "lesser breeds without the law" did not refer to Indians, but to Germans. And the phrase for which Kipling is best-known, "White Man's burden," is from a poem decidedly mixed in its attitude and written as a result of United States imperialism after the Spanish-American War. Salman Rushdie distinguishes between "Rudy Baba" and "Kipling Sahib."

Kipling was not a populist, Feeley pointed out. His "Stalky and Company" stories shows specific types: Stalky as the noble Englishman, Beetle as the intellectual, and M'Turk as the Irishman. These stories (in particular "The Moral Reformers") show how the characters learn to distinguish between the fundamental rules and what can be "gotten around" (in Kipling's opinion) to serve the higher law. Kipling himself was rebellious, often beaten for it, and apparently developed a taste for it.

Feeley does think that Kipling is not a perfect author. In particular, he feels that Kipling overdid writing in dialect (such as with characters like Mulvaney).

The panelists were asked to name their five favorite stories by Kipling. Clough listed "Mowgli's Brothers," "Kim," and "Rikki Tikki Ravi." Flynn (apparently numerically challenged, even though by profession he is a statistician) named "Mary Postgate," "With the Main Guard," "A Madonna of the Trenches," "On Greenhow Hill," and "The Gate of a Hundred Sorrows," "Lispeth," and "Swept and Garnished." Feeley cited "Mrs. Bathurst," "The Gardener," "Dayspring Mishandled," and "The Wish House." Lerner said his favorites were "The Church That Was at Antioch," "My Son's Wife," *Kim*, *Stalky and Company*, and "Brushwood Boy."

There is a Kipling Society, with a home page of <http://www.kipling.org.uk>. It contains a page listing all Kipling's stories and the collections in which they appeared.

Dinner was, as usual, at the Naked Fish with a friend of Mark's from high school, her family, Kate Pott, and Dan Kimmel. The talk, as usual, was about old (and new) movies.

Afterwards, I went to the UK in '05 party where I discovered 1) I do not like whiskey, and 2) the convention would be held before the Edinburgh Festival. (Later someone claimed the dates were *during* the Edinburgh Festival. I hope not--I had wanted to attend both, and then proceed to the Toronto International Film Festival after that. Though now I hear that the main venue for the TIFF will be closed by 2005, so who knows what will happen?)

Hugo Suggestions and Discussion Group
Saturday 10:00PM Dover
John R. Douglas, Greg Ketter, Jim Mann, Mark L. Olson

Description: "It's time to nominate for the Hugos! What was good in 2001? (And what from 2000 is still eligible because of overseas publication?) Look at fiction, non-fiction, art, editing, and fannish categories."

This was mostly just a going-over of the items on A<http://www.nesfa.org/hugos01.html>, with comments on various items. One warning on Donald Kingsbury's *Psychohistorical Crisis* is that it has expository lumps. This led to a discussion of the "Moby Dick" test regarding whether the reader will like expository lumps.

Mann recommended the Pratchett, saying "I don't think people who think Pratchett writes light fantasy have read Pratchett very closely."

For Dramatic Presentation, I mentioned I was surprised no one had listed *Waking Life*. I would also recommend Terri Windling as a professional editor, since I feel her selections of the year's best fantasy in the annual collection she co-edits with Ellen Datlow does an excellent job of finding fantasy not written in the familiar magazines. (Windling selects the fantasy pieces, Datlow the horror.)

Where History Went Wrong
Sunday 10:00am Wayland C/N
Michael F. Flynn, Esther Friesner, Leigh Grossman, Donald Kingsbury, Evelyn C. Leeper (m)

Description: "Identify some turning points in history where something unexpected happened -- and

take it from there (building an alternate history if the 'expected' happened.) But first, examine why the turning point was 'unexpected'....it's not like there are actually cycles in history.....um, are there?"

I said at the beginning that I was going to be one of those non-participatory moderators, as this sort of exercise is *not* my cup of tea. (If I could come up with great alternate history plots, I would try writing the stuff myself.) And of course, since I was moderating, my notes are sketchy.

Flynn talked about an event during the Mexican War when one of the United States soldiers was scouting when he heard Mexican soldiers approaching. He hid under a log that the soldiers then sat down on to have a long conversation. If Robert E. Lee had been discovered then, Flynn suggested, things might have turned out differently.

Friesner suggested a scenario in which Henry II of France dies in a joust. (He apparently loved to participate, and they weren't fixed.) Grossman had one in which the Ukraine becomes a dominant force and hence primogeniture never becomes common. (I think this referred to primogeniture in succession, not in inheritance, because if inheritances get split up every generation, it's hard to maintain any sort of empire.) Flynn elaborated on primogeniture in the Ottoman Empire, where a Sultan would have many children to insure that at least one survived to succeed him, with all but the eldest kept in "the cage" (actually a small suite of rooms in Topkapi), and the first thing a new Sultan would do would be to kill all his younger brothers. Flynn described this as "WWF but for keeps."

Grossman had another one revolving around the widespread practice of employing free-lance spies in the 18th and 19th centuries. Because they weren't paid unless they found conspiracies, this could leave to all sorts of variations. Grossman also talked about how the Russians tried to disable German tanks by using bombs strapped to dogs, but unfortunately the dogs tended to run under the Russian tanks instead. Mark Leeper said this was similar to the story of how someone had tried to develop "incendiary bats" as a weapon, but they burned the training base down, leading to someone's suggestion of a new television show, "Funniest Military Animal Videos." (Yes, I know this seems to have diverged wildly from the purported topic.)

Flynn suggested that a stronger Czechoslovakia, with British and French support, might have resulted in World War II starting earlier (with Germany invading Czechoslovakia rather than being handed it). Grossman talked about France "gearing up for war in a France-like way" with strikes and shut-downs the whole time.

Flynn said that there was a meeting on the field between Patton and MacArthur during World War I. If a German shell had hit that spot, World War II certainly would have been different.

Other topics mentioned were "panasocracy" (which I can't find a definition for), Harriet Beecher Stowe, the Library of Alexandria, and various Islamic turning points. There was some discussion of Jewish history, leading someone (Grossman?) to say, "The Sanhedrin make fandom look apolitical." And regarding the Spanish invasion of South America, Flynn noted that the Incas seemed to think that they could pay the Spanish off and the Spanish would go away. However, he said, "You don't get Spaniards to go away by giving them gold."

Someone in the audience suggested that too many alternate histories seem to revolve around battles, and that he would like to hear some revolving around cultural or other non-military changes. I concur, and I'm beginning to think that if a panel is going to talk about battles, it should have a white board for drawing them on.

**The Next Great Fantasy Flick
Sunday 11:00am Wayland C/N**

Bob Devney, MaryAnn Johanson (m), Mark R. Leeper, Marv Wolfman

Description: "Now that they've done Potter and LotR, what's next' (Besides the sequels, we mean.) At the very least, what do you want to be next (and why)? (Go ahead - review and cast your dream production, if you're so inclined....)"

Devney began by saying that the next great fantasy flick was obviously *The Two Towers*. What he would *like* to see as the next great fantasy flick would be David Fincher (of *Se7en* and *Fight Club*) doing Gene Wolfe's *The Shadow of the Torturer*. (How about a version of Dante's *Inferno* by Fincher?) Johnson said she wanted Pern with CGI effects. Wolfman wanted *Elfquest* or Robert Heinlein's *Citizen of the Galaxy*. Leeper said he hoped for an accurate version of *War of the Worlds*. (Given the recent *Time Machine*, done by Wells's descendent no less, I suspect this is an futile hope.)

Suggestions for books that could translate well into films included Isaac Asimov's *Caves of Steel* and other robot novels, Terry Pratchett's *Discworld*, Larry Niven's *Ringworld* or *The Mote in God's Eye*, or T. A. Barron's *The Lost Years of Merlin*.

The panelists felt that there was now more opportunity for doing longer works, since we are now seeing more mini-series (four hours or more) on channels such as the Sci-Fi Channel. Someone suggested that Philip Jose Farmer's *Riverworld* might be a good candidate.

One suggestion the panel had was that these films use relative unknowns for the leads, since people have formed their own images from reading the books (and also, it's cheaper). Wolfman said they should just use actors, rather than movie stars, saying as an example, "Tommy Lee Jones is an actor; he's not a movie star. Devney suggested that the same was true of Meg Ryan in *Prelude to a Kiss*. Wolfman added that one sign of an actor is that he or she takes chances, and gave Brad Pitt and Johnny Depp as examples of this. Someone in the audience suggested Sigourney Weaver as another. Wolfman thought that Russell Crowe was a good example, and in addition that Crowe picks his movies well.

Devney wanted to see Homer's *Odyssey* done with Robert DeNiro as the lead. He also mentioned he liked *Prospero's Books*, leading Johnson to mention (recommend?) *Scotland, PA*, a modern-day retelling of *Macbeth*.

Leeper thought that James Blish's books *Black Easter* and *The Day After Judgment* would be good on the screen. Johnson suggested Brian Jacques's "Redwall" series. Devney wanted to see just about any Tim Powers, but particularly *The Stress of Her Regard*. He also noted that Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Wizard of Earthsea* has been optioned. Wolfman said that one shouldn't put too much stock in being optioned [my pun, not his], and said that currently Edgar Rice Burroughs's *A Princess of Mars* has four different scripts floating around.

Someone in the audience suggested that the Sci-Fi Channel should make Spider Robinson's "Callahan" series into a series.

**Worldcon/Boston in 2004 Brainstorming
Sunday 1:00PM Wayland S
Deb Geisler, Tom Whitmore**

This seemed to have been retitled to "What Do You Want in a Worldcon?" and Whitmore, as chair of the ConJose committee was there to see what might be implemented before 2004. Geisler said one reason for this panel was, "We don't want to make the same mistakes. You will see brand-new creative errors you have never seen before." She did say that they had already decided, "We will not

allow the French judge to judge."

I asked for at least *some* 9AM panels. Someone requested included listing the attending pros (participants?) on the web page; I think this is done when they actually start to know who will be attending. People wanted an easy- to-navigate website and a searchable website. Another request was for a text- only web site (my experience with it under Netscape 4.77 is that it is impossible to use the current without images turned on).

After the problems with the driving (and other) directions for Millennium Philcon, people said that good directions for all modes of transportation was important. (I would add that restaurant guides need to be up-to-date-- admittedly less of a problem at Worldcons than at regionals where there is a temptation to just re-use the previous year's version.)

Printed materials should be timely. I would particularly note the unacceptable delay in last year's Hugo ballots here. Several people mentioned that putting material up on the web site did not release the con from this requirement, since there are many people who rely on the printed materials.

Badges need to be readable, but the badge itself should not be too large.

Pocket programs should be pocket-sized.

There should be a program downloadable for PDAs. (I would add there should be a plain ASCII text version downloadable as well, since not everyone has a Palm Pilot.)

The convention should be cautious about corporate sponsorship. (This was mostly in reference to Bridge Publications' "sponsorship" of the Hugo Awards ceremony at Conspiracy.)

There should be a paper voodoo board, and there should be only one. People do not want to have to leave messages in multiple places, or have to look in multiple places for them.

The ushers should be strict at the masquerade about people taking flash pictures, etc.

Figure out how to seat the large events early and in an orderly fashion. The earlier you can open the doors, the better--people are much less unruly and cranky waiting *inside* the auditorium. And having closed-circuit TV with a good camera operator for the big events helps as well.

Limit panels to four panelists, and consider asking moderators to be non- participating moderators. The rules for moderators that have been floating around should be distributed to all moderators. ConJose did mention they were going to use 75-minute panels in 90-minute slots, and people said that it was important that everyone understood that, and didn't try to have the panel run ninety minutes.

Do more "non-panel" stuff: talks, two-person dialogues, interviews, etc. Geisler said in this regard, "William Tenn wants to dance naked on the stage." Someone asked, "Is this a 75-minute item or a 90-minute item?"

The question of tracks was raised, and someone suggested that rather than trying to say, "This is in the literature track," or "This is in the media track," that icons for the various areas be used, and an item could have multiple icons, indicating a cross-track item.

The Fan Lounge should be accessible, and not in a distant hotel. The Fan Guests of Honor should also be accessible. I suggested that someone should explain the difference between the Con Suite and the Fan Lounge (and explain to me why there need to be two separate areas).

There was a request for some physical activities. One suggestion was an area for tai chi in the mornings. Another was the sort of hands-on item that "junk wars" would be.

The issue of sign language interpreters (and their cost) was mentioned. If cost became a factor, people would rather see an interpreter for the Hugo Awards ceremony than for the Masquerade. (Could we manage to get more interpreters by offering them free convention memberships in exchange for short stretches of interpreting?)

Mention of the Hugo Awards ceremony led me to note simply, "Don't make any of the mistakes at the Hugo Awards ceremony that Chicon 2K did." (See <http://fanac.org/worldcon/Chicon/x00-rpt.html#hugos> for details.)

Get the room sizes right. Remember PNH's Law: "Science items always attract more people than you expect." Or maybe it was "Conventions always forget how popular science items are." In any case, you get the idea.

Analyze the traffic flow. (Do not, as Chicon 2K did, put the voodoo board at the narrowest part of a connecting hallway.)

Have big signs.

**Movies on the Internet
Sunday 2:00PM Wayland S
Kurt Lancaster**

Description: "This panel will show you how to find films on the Internet, how to watch them, and explain how you can build your own home movie studio so you can start shooting and getting your own short films on the Web."

This was a sort of combination of a panel on how to find and watch films on the Internet, and how to put films on the Internet. Since most of my interest is in the former, I don't have a whole lot to say about the other half. (In fact, my only notes are that if you're going to make your own movies for the Internet, use a professional microphone, and often you can use the equipment from your local cable access station to make films, which you can also get aired over the local access station.)

Most films on the Internet are streams rather than downloadable files, which means you need a decent connection to the Internet. You also need, according to Lancaster, at least a Pentium 3 and 256KB of RAM. (Since my machine has 96KB of RAM, and is probably about a Pentium 0.0000002, no wonder we have problems!)

Lancaster spent some time plugging his own site (<http://www.LettersFromOrion.com>)

- | <http://www.atomfilms.com>
- | <http://www.ifilms.com>
- | <http://www.scifi.com>

Lancaster also said that his book (*Building a Home Movie Studio & Getting Your Films Online*) lists two dozen "Internet cineplexes" where one can load or view movies. Usually these are available in the three most common formats (RealPlayer/RealOne, Quicktime, and Windows Media Player).

Recommended films available on the Internet include "Troops" (a take-off on "Cops") and "George Lucas in Love."

Gripe Session....and Whither Boskone!?
Sunday 3:00PM Wayland C/N
Pam Fremon, Priscilla Olson, Sharon Sbarsky

Description: " What went wrong? What went right? What should we do next year in Boston? How can we improve in the future? Whither Boskone? Join up for a going-away party as we leave Framingham."

I missed the beginning of this, so there were probably some great comments I missed.

It was strongly suggested that there be a separate program grid, or pocket program. (The current pocket program spans more than one sheet in the program book, or rather program newspaper.) With the move back to Boston, a new restaurant guide is needed. (And perhaps a bookstore guide, if someone wants to figure out what's close to the convention.)

I asked that the hotel liaison ask the housekeeping staff to turn off the alarm clocks in the rooms after the last people checked out. (I would think this would be a standard thing to do in hotels, but apparently not.)

There will probably not be a banquet, since it's usually more than people want to pay for the food, and the ever-expanding dietary needs of fans make holding an inclusive one more and more difficult. Also, it's just easier to set up the hall for whatever follows the banquet if you want to maximize attendance.

NESFA hopes for around the same number of attendees as this year (a little over a thousand). The Guests of Honor are David Brin, Jim Burns, and Charles N. Brown. (Clearly, the "B" of Boston and Boskone has had some subtle effect here. :-)

There was discussion of how to encourage younger (i.e., college-age) fans to attend. One item to be looked into was the possibility of setting up some sort of room-sharing bulletin board ahead of time, or at least contacting local college clubs and giving them information on cheaper accommodations, etc.

Conflicting requests were made to have substantive panels in the evening, and not to schedule substantive panels opposite parties and other evening events. (I vote with the former, and so does Kate Pott, who bemoaned the fact that at most conventions "after six o'clock, no one talks about books.") Given that there is really less than two days total of programming, giving up the evenings leaves Boskone with hardly any time at all.) In any case, people did not want any evening cabaret to run into the filking time. People wanted more panels focusing on a single author (either current or "forgotten"), and more non-panel items such as interviews. (Given that Brin has written a "Foundation" novel, and Donald Kingsbury has written a "roman a clef" "Foundation" novel, perhaps next year there could be a panel of people who have written in Asimov's universe talking about Asimov.)

I wanted the Dealers Room near the panels so that people could run in between panels and buy books that had been recommended. Other people preferred the Dealers Room further away and the Con Suite closer. (I said this at the beginning of this report also.)

Miscellaneous

Most of my suggestions are included in the Worldcon and Boskone panels above, but the other one that might be overlooked is that, given their rather heated exchange on the rediscovery panel, I think

a panel/debate with Darrell Schweitzer and Greg Feeley on the history of science fiction might be quite thought-provoking.

As I noted at the beginning, I was concerned that with the move back to Boston, we wouldn't be able to make it to Boskone, but retirement has its benefits, and I'm looking forward to next year in Boston.

Evelyn C. Leeper may be reached via [e-mail](#) or you may visit her [Homepage](#).

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