

**Philcon 2008**  
**A convention report by Evelyn C. Leeper**  
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[I have gotten several years behind in my Philcon reports and rather than give up altogether, I have decided to transcribe my notes without turning them into real sentences, paragraphs, etc. Maybe someday I will flesh them out, but I would not bet on it. At any rate, this report got done in only a few hours. And as they say, "The perfect is the enemy of the good."]

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Philcon 2008 was held in the Crowne Plaza Cherry Hill (NJ). One problem was that it was very cold and windy, and convention registration was opposite the door to the parking lot. There was no floor plan in the Pocket Program, and no room numbers were given except on the Program Grid. (For that matter, the map and restaurant guide did not arrive until Saturday morning.)

**Science Fiction From the Mainstream**  
**Friday, 7:00 PM**  
**Stuart Jaffe**

Description: "Science Fiction by non-science fiction writers. How does it compare to genre fiction?"

Estimated attendance: 12 people

- | Does "Eclectic Review" podcast
- | Best were always SF writers but lied about it, e.g. Vonnegut
- | Bad: Caleb Carr, *The Alienist* was excellent, sequel okay, time-travel bad (Grandfather Paradox); clichéd (but didn't read it!)
- | Either brilliant or mediocre: Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*
- | Literary style not enough
- | [Me: Kazuo Ishiguro, Margaret Atwood, Philip Roth, Michael Chabon]
- | Denzel's *Deja Vu* by people who don't know SF
- | Mark Leeper observed: Not writing for people familiar with SF
- | Atwood won't admit it's SF (for \$\$ reasons?)
- | Michael Chabon, Doris Lessing, Stephen King do say they write SF
- | *World War Z*
- | Considers Harry Turtledove the benchmark of alternate history
- | Murakami as well as Ishiguro
- | [Me: José Saramago, Philip K. Dick]
- | Dan Simmons
- | Korean film *Old Boy*

- | We copy/remake foreign films. not vice versa--except for India.
- | [Me: Kol Mil Gaia]
- | [Me: Guillermo Del Toro films not copies]
- | James Bond making more \$ overseas than here
- | James Patterson (winged children) "This is like science fiction."

**Continuing the Lovecraft Tradition  
Friday, 8:00 PM**

**Nathan Lilly (mod), Tim Powers, John Ashmead, Steve Vertlieb, C. j. Henderson**

Description: "We know we will never get enough of Cthulhu and company, so how can writers continue to expand upon Lovecraft's themes?"

Estimated attendance: 10 people

- | Henderson: written lots, including *Cthulhu Sex* magazine
- | Powers: no Mythos stories
- | Vertlieb: Lovecraft favorite writer, wrote for *The Girl in the Hairy Paw*, *The Monster Times*
- | Lilly: "Why is there a Cthulhu Mythos to begin with?"
- | Vertlieb: Poe was "polite horror"; Lovecraft was terrifying, "outlandish"
- | Vertlieb: After Lovecraft, he read Robert Bloch
- | Powers: Remembers when/where he read "Rats in the Walls"
- | Powers: "The horror didn't care about people ... was way older than people."
- | Henderson: Convergence of WWI, Nietzsche
- | Henderson: Claims everything now owes itself to Lovecraft (Freddie, Jason, Stephen King, *Ghostbusters*)
- | Henderson: Only eighteen stories in Cthulhu Mythos by Lovecraft
- | Powers: Derleth deserves credit for Arkham House
- | Powers: Negative on Derleth as continuer and as systematizer and codifier
- | Powers: Lovecraft never wanted this organization
- | Henderson: Lovecraft claimed he wrote SF, gods were aliens, not supernatural
- | Henderson: In *Alien* you see the aliens for two-and-a-half seconds, but it's so alien you can't comprehend it and think it's faster
- | Vertlieb: *Five Million Miles to Earth* is the only good Lovecraftian film
- | Lilly: The only good one is [TCoC--*The Cult of Cthulhu*?]
- | Powers: Lovecraft needs a narrator but in film it's awkward (as is true in P. G. Wodehouse as well)
- | Lilly: Same problem as Douglas Adams
- | Vertlieb: Boris Karloff's "Thriller" series best Lovecraftian cinema
- | Audience: "Night Gallery" did a couple
- | Henderson: New movie *Cthulhu* is an "amazing film"
- | [Me: *Cast a Deadly Spell*]
- | Henderson: Stuart Gordon's *From Beyond*
- | Powers: "Scary but very charming"
- | Powers: Fake Miskatonic memorabilia
- | Ashmead: "Lovecraft has managed to get his tentacles everywhere into popular culture."
- | Henderson: "Baby's First Mythos"
- | Ashmead: "Very infectious meme"
- | Ashmead: *Pulptime*, Gahan Wilson's "H. P. Lovecraft"
- | Vertlieb: Radio best medium for horror
- | Vertlieb: Best/most frightening horror film is *The Haunting*
- | Ashmead: *Graphic Classics*
- | Powers: "No reading aloud in the Metaphysical Section" (sign in library)

- | Ashmead: *The Necronomicon* single most famous imaginary book (patterned after *The King in Yellow*)
- | Lilly: *Frontier Cthulhu*, *High Seas Cthulhu*
- | Henderson: *Scream for Jeeves*
- | [Me: Their pronunciations of "Derleth" and "Cthulhu" are semi-random.]
- | Vertlieb: James Herbert "creates an atmosphere of horror deeply reminiscent of Lovecraft"
- | Ashmead: *Encyclopedia of Cthulhuiana* lists 2000-3000 stories spawned by Lovecraft's 18
- | Powers: Ligotti
- | Ashmead: Lumley, but too rational
- | Henderson: Long's *The Hounds of Tindalos*, cold rationality
- | Ashmead: Two perspectives--the time order in which things happen and the time order in which things are perceived by the narrator
- | Darrell Schweitzer says to read Lovecraft aloud
- | Powers: his love of secret history derives from Lovecraft
- | Powers: Lovecraft is always aggressively real in his details
- | Audience: "The Great Old Ones are not just hideous and scary, but also majestic."
- | Vertlieb: The last moment of the film *The Mist* is awesome.

**Are Alternate Histories Really Science Fiction?  
Saturday, 10:00 AM**

**Stephen C. Fisher (mod), Jan Howard Finder, Michael F. Flynn, Evelyn Leeper**

Description: "If the only difference between the setting of the story and our present day is a change in history with no fantastic element, is that Science Fiction?"

Estimated attendance: 40 people

- | Flynn: "Sciencia" is knowledge/certainty."
- | finder: David Palmer's *Tracking (Emergence* became alternate history)
- | [Me: Predictions likely and unlikely]
- | Fisher: Chaos theory, butterfly effect
- | finder: Jared Diamond
- | [Me: Extrapolation in history is similar to extrapolation in science]
- | finder: Upton Sinclair's "Lanny Budd" series
- | Flynn: Scientific change hovering in air
- | Audience: Griffith: *Angel of the Revolution*

**Lovecraft and the Rejection of the Supernatural  
Saturday, 12:00 N**

**Darrell Schweitzer (mod), Tim Powers, Roman Ranieri, James L. Cambias**

Description: "Lovecraft did not believe in ghosts, the after life or any aspect of the Judeo-Christian mythos. Nevertheless, he produced some of the greatest supernatural fiction of all time. How did he accomplish this?"

Estimated attendance: 25 people

- | Schweitzer: This is his 41st consecutive Philcon.
- | Schweitzer: Lovecraft complete skeptic, rejected theistic universe, even for purposes of Fiction
- | Schweitzer: Lovecraft would be in "Skeptical Inquirer"
- | Cambias: Also "would have the greatest blog in the world"

- | Ranieri: Discovered Lovecraft after Stoker, Shelley, etc.
- | Ranieri: Then Lovecraft, "who created something completely different"
- | Ranieri: "How cool is this interbreeding of humans with fish? That's really cool!"
- | Powers: "Aimed this at the corner of our brain that deals rationally with the supernatural"
- | Powers: "Rationalistic rigor"
- | Schweitzer: Always a very serious writer
- | Schweitzer: Wrote when relativity, size of the universe, Antarctic exploration were going on
- | Schweitzer: Wanted to convince himself as well as the reader
- | Cambias: Supernatural creatures lost their "oomph" after World War I
- | Cambias: In 1950s, monsters became more Lovecraftian (after World War II)
- | Schweitzer: "The whole point of Lovecraft is not that they're out to get us but that they don't care."
- | Cambias: Ghosts as agents of justice, etc.
- | Cambias: All re-assuring that there exists a moral order
- | Schweitzer: Lovecraft denies a moral order
- | Audience: *Cloverfield* is like that.
- | Schweitzer: Best bad Lovecraft film is *Re-Animator*
- | Schweitzer: *The Call of Cthulhu* is good, not included in blanket condemnation of Lovecraft films
- | Schweitzer: Wants to see a version a la James Whale's style
- | Ranieri: Lovecraft's protagonists all cower in inaction
- | Schweitzer: Lovecraft was trying to be realistic
- | Powers: "In Lovecraft's universe that's the only appropriate response--to cower and die."
- | Powers: Derleth was Catholic and the Catholic perspective doesn't mesh well with Lovecraft
- | Cambias: Someone called the Cthulhu Mythos "mental plutonium"
- | Powers: Lovecraft doesn't get obscure (unlike Merritt)
- | Powers: Modern minds need "that missing nutrient that Lovecraft provides."
- | Schweitzer: Big revival in irrationality and occultism in 1960s (*The Exorcist*, *Rosemary's Baby*)
- | Cambias: Slasher movies are mostly non-supernatural
- | Powers: Even supernatural writers need to take Lovecraft into account
- | Powers: Need to ground the supernatural more than in previous times
- | Schweitzer: There are no Old Testament vampires because the Devil invented vampires to parody the Resurrection
- | Powers: Having God as a character is like "trying to include a cinder block in you balsa wood castle"
- | Powers: Lovecraft doesn't want the reader to remember it's made up
- | Schweitzer: Lovecraft says that fiction was like "a well-engineered hoax"
- | Powers: No way to appease the colour out of space
- | Cambias: No moral order to it
- | Schweitzer: Totally impersonal universe, or force like gravity
- | Audience: Asian ghost stories don't imply justice or a moral order
- | [Me: What about Indian films?]
- | Schweitzer: Lovecraft is the "most documented literary figure in history."
- | Schweitzer: [Regarding Lovecraft's racism] Everybody has ideas that the future will consider unacceptable--"including us. We just don't know what they are."

**The Secret History as a Genre**  
**Saturday, 2:00 PM**

**Tim Powers, F. Paul Wilson, Andrew Breslin, James L. Cambias**

Description: "It is not an alternate history, it is what 'really happened' in the history that we know. Tim Powers is the best known practitioner. Who are the others?"

Estimated attendance: 60 people

- | Wilson: *Black Wind* is secret history; there are twenty stories in his secret history of the world
- | Powers: He thought he was writing fantasy, but people call it secret history
- | Wilson: In alternate history, the surface has changed. In secret history, the surface has stayed the same, but the motivation et al has changed.
- | Wilson: Robert Anton Wilson's "Illuminati"
- | Wilson: "Why it *really* happened?"
- | Cambias: What isn't *The Three Musketeers* secret history?
- | Powers: "What really happened which was supernatural or science fiction?"
- | Breslin: "What really happened is a secret (deliberately).
- | Powers: "Deliberately suppressed"
- | Wilson: Secret conspiracy
- | Breslin: *The Crying of Lot 49, Foucault's Pendulum*
- | Wilson: Best-known is *The Da Vinci Code*
- | Powers: Most slap-dash, "secret history should survive a glance at the Britannica"
- | Powers: Discovering the protagonist is nuts is cheating
- | Breslin: More fun than alternate history--has to mesh with reality
- | Powers: "I know this is real. I know they presented it as fiction--but I suppose they had to."
- | Cambias: "The brilliance of your research will be appreciated by no one."
- | Cambias: The best true things are unbelievable.
- | Wilson: "I looked it up, goddammit--it's going to be in the book."
- | Powers: Late at night he thinks, "I'm not making this up. I've stumbled on the true history of the world."
- | Cambias: "Sheer volume of weirdness" in Charles Ford
- | Powers: You are "an honorary paranoid schizophrenic"
- | Wilson: "You couldn't be going around a conspiracy convention taking notes [or talking into a recorder]"
- | Powers: "There's a part of your brain that says, 'I want this to be true.'"
- | Cambias: It imposes order on the chaos of history
- | Cambias: "Dan Brown didn't make that stuff up. He was borrowing from the work of hard-working crazy people."
- | Wilson: 09/11 novel, still sensitive issue
- | Wilson: When is it okay to use real events?
- | [Me: My take--not blame victimized groups]
- | Breslin: *Mother's Milk* (cows rule the world)
- | Breslin: *Day of the Jackal, Eye of the Needle* secret history, not supernatural
- | Cambias: *Day of the Jackal, Eye of the Needle* are really in an alternate universe
- | Breslin: "We never know how close we come to disaster."
- | Powers: "My apparent unfitness for the role [of secret agent] is part of my cover."
- | Powers: "Nothing us a coincidence" and what really happened?
- | Powers: Here "correlation inevitably implies causality."

**Not the American Century  
Saturday, 4:00 PM**

**Andrew Wheeler (mod), Andre Lieven, James Daniel Ross, Michael Swanwick, Catherine Asaro**

Description: "It seems increasingly likely that the 21st Century may not be dominated by the United States. Has there been much Science Fiction about this?"

Estimated attendance: 15 people

- | Swanwick: Wolfe's "Seven American Nights"
- | Asaro: *Veiled Web*--Morocco is more different than science fiction on other planets
- | Ross: What's fair in fantasy set in medieval societies is very different from what was fair in medieval societies, e.g., upward mobility
- | Asaro: In most cultures, everyone works (and not just as a housewife)
- | [Me: *Chung Kuo*?]
- | Wheeler: Trends in science fiction in who will supplant us (Japan, China, Europe, Arab/Islamic)
- | Asaro: Hispanic/Latino, or Indian [which kind? apparently she meant Native American]
- | Swanwick: Women
- | Ross: "Idea" of United States spreads like a virus through entertainment
- | Audience: "Alternative channels of culture" are much more available
- | Swanwick: World's largest science fiction magazine is in Chengdu, China (25,000 subscriptions/copies)
- | Swanwick: Peaks senior year of high school, down to zero after college [I think this is referencing the magazine above?]
- | Swanwick: China is like the United States of the 1930s in attitudes
- | Swanwick: We choose astronauts for "the right stuff" while Russia chooses them for their ability to get along with others
- | Wheeler: Science fiction not of the United States frequently has the United States "screwing up" rather than gradual change
- | Swanwick: "Ozymandias" about the world without the British Empire
- | Ross: ...which fell from 1939 through 1965
- | [Me: what about 1776?]
- | [Me: Vienna was also the center of a great empire, and is now a minor European capital]
- | Lieven: "Canada--a world that does not work in theory, only in practice"
- | Swanwick: Identifying one's culture without guns
- | Lieven: *Little Mosque on the Prairie*

**Beyond Philip Pullman- Is Atheism the Last Taboo?**  
**Saturday, 8:00 PM**  
**Richelle Mead, Michael D. Pederson, Mary Robinette Kowal**

Description: "Is it still difficult to market an explicitly atheist book in fantasy, particularly to children?"

Estimated attendance: 15 people

- | M: Writes YA urban fantasy
- | P: Became an atheist at 4
- | K: Campbell winner, professional puppeteer, husband is an atheist
- | P: Pullman is not atheistic, just anti-organized-religion
- | P: characters definitely have souls and a God (albeit absent) who is malevolent
- | Audience: no fuss until the movie
- | [Me: people don't read but they do go to movies]
- | P: Pullman is gnostic rather than atheistic
- | M: Her protagonist doesn't care about religion
- | M: Teens buy *Succubus Blues* after YA books; are they ready for it?
- | Audience: Teens talk to kids in Europe who are atheists
- | K: Ten-year-old reading Scalzi's *Android Dreams* (society has made-up religion)
- | K: Pullman very vocal outside his book about religion,
- | K: Scalzi is not marketed to teens
- | K: "Star Trek"'s Federation has no religion

- | M: With teens, books are filtered through parents
- | K: Pullman marketed to 10- to 13-year-olds (middle grades)
- | Audience: If a book doesn't mention religion, does that make it atheist?
- | K: There are no cultural referents (Goddamn, go to church, etc.)
- | K: In some universes we have grown out of religion, in others we have changed to new religion
- | Audience: Finds it bizarre that in science fiction we would retain religion
- | [Me: But a Christian would find it bizarre if we didn't]
- | K: We perpetuate the myth of Santa Claus, knowing it is false.
- | K: Mary Anning, discovered ichthyosaur, the idea something could go extinct, "last Tuesdayism", shot down when she discovered coprolite
- | Audience: Most alien races have only one religion, but in *Babylon 5* we show many
- | Audience: What would be an explicitly atheist book?
- | K: Evangelical atheist
- | Audience: Robert Sawyer's *Calculating God*
- | Audience: Doesn't accept Taoism or Buddhism as religion
- | Audience: How does one demonstrate there is no God?
- | [Me: Is "Lord of the Rings" atheistic? Does it have gods? (*The Simarillion* may, but I still think *The Hobbit* doesn't.)
- | K: Ted Kosmata, "The Prophet of Flores"
- | [Me: Greg Egan, "Oceanic"]
- | P: Theism vs. Deism (active vs. passive god)
- | P: Impossible to prove the non-existence of an omnipotent being.
- | P: What would prove that there is a God?
- | P: A life well-lived
- | P: Atheists should try to avoid being as annoying--and in exactly the same ways--as those they oppose

**The Original Story Does Not Resemble the Movie Very Much**  
**Saturday, 9:00 PM**  
**Richard Stout (mod)**

Description: "Of course a short story can only be a launch platform for a full length movie. How much does the story have to be changed to be made into a successful film?"

Estimated attendance: ? people

- | Novella/novelette is best length
- | Three-act structure
- | Most perfect screenplay is Mamet's *The Verdict*
- | humans respond best to three-act structure: 1) exposition, 2) everything turns around, 3) resolution
- | ?: call to adventure, begin the journey and hit low point, slay the dragon--mythic/fairy tale structure
- | Short story is idea-based, not hero-driven
- | Novel is pyramid structure, though now adopting three-act structure
- | ?: *Atonement* (e.g.) is not three-act structure
- | Page per minute, 90-100 pages
- | ?: Hero needs to want something, be actively engaged
- | [Me: *The Prestige*]
- | [Me: "Death and the Compass" untranslatable]
- | ?: "Producers are by and large very stupid people."

**Alternate Genomes**  
**Sunday, 11:00 AM**  
**John Ashmead (mod), James L. Cambias, Jay Wile**

Description: "Who says you have to make do with only twenty amino acids? What alternate routes could evolution have taken? With DNA or some equivalent thereof? Without DNA?"

Estimated attendance: 15 people

- | Wile: Has Ph.D. in nuclear chemistry, writes textbooks
- | Wile: In 2004 Morkenson and Johnson wrote about ways to encode genetic information
- | Wile: Redundancy, mutations
- | Wile:  $10^{13}$  different ways, took  $10^6$
- | Wile: Gaussian distribution on efficiency; ours is the most efficient
- | Ashmead: "Physical Review Letters" has similar articles
- | Ashmead: Genes to control overall body plan and genes to control expression within plan
- | Wile: DNA encodes prediction of proteins (formed from 20 amino acids)
- | Wile: Three nucleotide bases form a codon
- | Wile: There are four different nucleotide bases, hence 64 different codons;  $64 > 20$  so there is redundancy. E.g. CGT and CGA form the same protein.
- | Wile: Any biology needs codes for polymers
- | Ashmead: 2% of genome codes for proteins; 4% codes for RNA (?)
- | Ashmead: One codon means "stop"
- | Wile: 30,000 genes but 100,000 proteins
- | Wile: In eukaryotics, introns/spacers; sometimes only some sections are used.
- | Ashmead: Genes from father make fetus larger. from mother make it smaller
- | Ashmead: Autism from male. schizophrenia from female
- | Wile: But have to be on the sex chromosomes
- | Cambias: Autosomal genes could work differently in different sexes
- | Ashmead: Methylation can generate sex-related differences off the XY chromosome
- | [Me: Basically there is no agreement]
- | Cambis/Wile: "Methylation is like putting white-out on the gene."
- | Cambias: Doesn't have to be double helix, could be branching tree, etc.
- | Wile: Double helix allows turning on/off [not clear]
- | Wile: Could take 2 nucleotide bases 5 at a time
- | Ashmead: You can hide a virus in your code by putting it in the compiler
- | Audience: Paper by Brian Kernighan
- | Cambias: Feinberg and Shapiro say proteins could replace DNA
- | Cambias: Viruses have no proteins, which is how we realized it was DNA
- | Wile: Proteins need DNA, DNA needs proteins; RNA, however, can produce both
- | [left early]

**Science Fiction, Religion and Reason**  
**Sunday, 12:00 N**  
**Richard Stout (mod), Mitchell Gordon, Tim Powers, Jay Wile, Ef Deal**

Description: "Perhaps it is no coincidence that many of the major religious characters in classic science fiction are Jesuits. Perhaps there is something inherently Science- Fictional about an engineering approach to theology. Is there an inherent contradiction here or a possibility of reconciliation?"

Estimated attendance: 30 people



- | Deal: Methodist preacher, former Roman Catholic
- | Stout: Arthur C. Clarke's "The Star" has a Jesuit; most Jesuit scientists are astronomers
- | Gordon: (read some long statement)
- | Deal: Jesuits known for education
- | Deal: "Scientific, mechanical, let's get to the evidence"
- | Powers: Jesuits tried to "protect the heathen documents they came across"
- | Powers: Emphasis on what is true, not "true for you but not for me"
- | Wile: Divine revelation versus natural revelation
- | Powers: The Vatican has an observatory
- | Stout: "The Star"
- | Wile/Deal: Science and religion are not at odds.
- | Gordon: Baha'i
- | Gordon: Superman, E.T., Christ myths
- | [Me: Maybe they wanted to reclaim Moshiach]
- | Deal: Christ comes from Prometheus, etc.
- | Powers: Balder, Osiris, Dionysus retrieval
- | Wile: James Morrow's *Towing Jehovah*
- | Wile: Religion and atheism oppose
- | Powers: If chimps can lie, they can sin
- | Powers: So should we baptize them?
- | Powers: Atheists unhappy with how narrow a range permits life
- | Stout: Morrow says all hate the Corpus Dei: feminists, Roman Catholics, atheists
- | Stout: It's the "blind man and the elephant"
- | Audience: James Blish's *A Case of Conscience*
- | Stout: Mary Doria Russell's *The Sparrow, Children of God*
- | Stout: "Dante's Dream"
- | Gordon: Former member of Ancient Astronauts Society
- | [Me: David Brin's "Uplift", Olaf Stapledon's *Odd John*, Nigel Kneale's *Quatermass and the Pit*]
- | Powers: Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End*, A. E. Van Vogt's *Slan*
- | [Me: Clifford D. Simak's *City* has a hierarchy of beings with induced evolution]
- | Deal: Angels are really just messengers
- | Deal: "Text without a context is just a pretext."
- | Deal: Science fiction was in the Bible to begin with
- | Stout: In *Stargate* they are becoming more powerful, not more godlike
- | Wile: Perfection implies no story
- | [Me: But what about "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven"?)
- | Audience: Dante did it
- | Gordon: Science fiction as moral teacher
- | Powers: Not science fiction's job to improve the reader
- | Wile: Plenty of anti-moral science fiction stories

**Recommended Readings for Book Discussion Groups**  
**Sunday, 2:00 PM**  
**Oz Fontecchio (mod), Scheherazade Jackson, Andrew C. Ely**

Description: "[none given]"

Estimated attendance: 6 people

- | Oz: Runs the PSFS discussion group since 1987; has no complete record of books discussed
- | Jackson: Runs Scholastic Book Fair for 14- to 21-year-olds in west Philadelphia
- | Oz: His focus is adult science fiction because of the group

- | Ely: "Planet Trash"
- | Jackson: Books that will capture their imaginations
- | Jackson: "Children of the Lamp" series
- | Jackson: Focus is science fiction and fantasy because they already see horror and reality
- | Oz: Gets suggestions from group (29-60 years old, 12-15 people (max 25), 3-4 hours), rates books at the end
- | Oz: "Last Licks"
- | Ely: On-line Instant Messaging, 5-6 people
- | Jackson: Kids will recommend books (or ideas, like time travel to the Middle Ages)
- | Ely: Six years buying science fiction for a bookstore
- | Jackson: "Children of the Lamp" series (8-16), "Wrinkle in Time" series, *The Hobbit*, *The Last Unicorn*, "The Dark Is Rising" series, "Narnia" series, "His Dark Materials", the "Wizardology" series had issues
- | Jackson: "Harry Potter" movie/book combo; darkness bothered the girls more than the boys
- | Oz: Old and new
- | [discussion of library donations]
- | Oz: Books with some element of controversy: Robert A. Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* and *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*
- | Oz: In *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Valentine Michael Smith is a cult leader
- | Oz: *Dune*
- | Oz: "His Dark Materials" is the only series done
- | Ely: *Ender's Game*, earlier Isaac Asimov
- | Oz: Collections
- | Oz: *The Tempest*
- | Oz: "Butt-crusher" novels giving way to shorter stuff in marketplace
- | Audience/Ely: "Harry Potter" sleepover weekend

### **Miscellaneous**

There were lots of free books--all brought by other members--and reduced prices in the Dealers Room.

Why has there never been a panel about Bollywood horror films (or fantasy or science fiction)?