

Philcon 2013
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.]

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This is a brief report on Philcon 2013, held November 8-10, 2015, in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

Art Collection in the Digital Age
Friday, 6:00 PM
Luke Stelmaszek (mod)

Description: "Whither the future of art collection in the absence of an 'original' and the possibility of unlimited identical printouts."

Estimated attendance: 8

[There was supposed to be a second panelist.]

- | Copies, etc., fade over time, especially ink-jet.
- | [Basically boils down to the question of what makes artwork valuable at all.]
- | [IMHO, the "panel" was a fizzle.]

Dystopia in Young Adult Fiction [Family Friendly]
Friday, 7:00 PM
Rebecca Robare (mod), Gil Cnaan, E.C. Myers, Christine Norris, Aurora Celeste

Description: "Dystopias have long been a part of science fiction, dating back to Huxley, Orwell, and other classic authors. In the 1980s, Young Adult authors like H.M. Hoover and William Sleator explored dystopic futures. Today, with the recent explosion of Young Adult science fiction and

fantasy, dystopia is all over, from Scott Westerfeld's 'Uglies' to Suzanne Collins's 'Hunger Games.' This panel will explore the use and meaning of dystopia and its special role in Young Adult fiction."

Estimated attendance: 10

- | [It was hard to understand some of this because the noise from the next room was bleeding through, and there were no microphones.]
- | Norris: "Hunger Games", "Lara Croft", "Pandemonium", and "Allegiant" series.
- | Meyers: High school is dystopian.
- | Norris: Kids against the government.
- | Celeste: Fiction says the world is dystopian but that they can change it.
- | Meyers: "I can't even change my office."
- | Cnaan: YA is also more tightly edited.
- | Meyers: Adult fiction emphasizes the world, YA fiction emphasizes characters.
- | Celeste: Adult fiction is about how you got there, YA fiction is how to fix it.
- | Cnaan: Fiction reflects society; if we are pessimistic, so is fiction.
- | Norris: "Hunger Games" series ending is not happy, but it is hopeful.
- | Cnaan: Kids have relatives with PTSD and they can relate to it.
- | Norris: Adult fiction has too much back story.
- | YA fiction is satirized in *The Princess Bride*.
- | Norris: "One of the rules of YA is that the character must save themselves."
- | Meyers: "That's why so many YA books have absent parents."
- | Robare: "Harry Potter" is a dystopia.
- | Robare: Now we have a different understanding of whether teens or younger can follow a long series.
- | Discussion of themes and agendas:
 - | Fear of independence
 - | Fear of abandonment
 - | Fear of becoming their parents

Good Science Fiction Spoiled by Bad Science

Friday, 8:00 PM

John Monahan (mod), Gina Martinelli, Carl Fink, Inge Heyer, JJ Brannon

Description: "The plot, the writing, the characters were great. The story was gripping, pages were turning, but then a massive scientific mistake thuds down into your suspension of disbelief. How big an error can be overlooked? What's a deal-breaker? What are some examples?"

Estimated attendance: 20

- | Fink: nitpicking.com
- | Monahan: Has students compete for most errors spotted in *Armageddon*.
- | Martinelli: *The Core*
- | Heyer: *Gravity* had bad science.
- | Monahan: Sound in space.
- | Fink/Heyer: Absence of momentum.
- | Audience: Banking in space, "red matter", IJ in the fridge
- | Heyer: A *consistent* transporter (e.g.) is okay.
- | Me: Square-cube law.
- | Fink: Bothered when the film is trying to be accurate, not if it does not focus on it.
- | Fink: Certainly if the solution to a problem is wrong, it is a failure.
- | [various "roles" of science in films]

- | Martinelli: It is harder now to come up with an original idea that is not known to be wrong.
- | Heyer: *Gravity* has maneuvers with loose gear in the cabin.
- | Fink: Tears were tear-drop shaped.
- | Heyer: Underwear; multiple ships in the same orbit.
- | Brannon: *Armageddon* has to show current continents even though it is 65 million years ago, or it would not be recognizable.
- | Martinelli: *Avengers'* use of technobabble.
- | Fink: "Sound sciency" blog.
- | Martinelli: *CSI* has "greatest bad science."
- | Monahan: Everyone does everything on *CSI*.
- | Heyer: Bas science raises expectations past reality.
- | Me: *War Games*
- | Martinelli: *Breaking Bad* is accurate.
- | Heyer: *Babylon 5*.
- | Fink: *Andromeda Strain*
- | Martinelli: *The Twilight Zone*
- | Brannon: *Good Will Hunting* equations were too basic (but accurate).
- | Audience: projectrho.com

Science Fiction Novels Which Have Had Major Social Impact
Saturday, 11:00 AM
Tom Doyle (mod), Andrew Breslin, Mary Spila, Samuel Lubell

Description: "We can cite examples: *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein, *Neuromancer* by William A. Gibson, *Looking Backward* by Bellamy or *1984* by George Orwell. There are some science fiction novels that have had a major impact on society. What makes these so special?"

Estimated attendance: 20

- | Spila: Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* is the ultimate in censorship, active censorship, being by Bradbury meant wide distribution.
- | Lubell: *Fahrenheit 451* has been censored [banned?]. Book memorization.
- | Doyle: *Fahrenheit 451* film is top-down oppression; book is more grass-roots.
- | Lubell: J. K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" inspired reading, more YA books, etc. Spila: When YA was a small pool, everything was good, now less consistent.
- | Doyle: Is it lasting?
- | Spila: "Harry Potter" will always be a "classic", but a new hit will appear.
- | Lubell: "Harry Potter" changed a generation.
- | Lubell: George Orwell's *1984* (obviously).
- | Doyle: Is its impact only in language?
- | Lubell: "One could argue that [Orwell] defeated or at least delayed the surveillance state."
- | Spila: Ironic that the first CCTV country was Britain.
- | Spila: In the United States, kids put everything out there voluntarily.
- | Audience: No delay, but language exists to identify/discuss it.
- | Doyle: Used to think we were in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, now drifting towards William Gibson's *Neuromancer*.
- | Spila: Robert A. Heinlein's Nehemiah Scudder and religious totalitarianism.
- | Lubell: *Brave New World*--we use Prozac, Ritalin, etc.
- | Lubell: Worried that YA is dystopian.
- | Doyle: Christian dystopias have come and gone.
- | Audience: Suzanne Collins's "Hunger Games", economic Circle [film?], no privacy

- | Me: Cory Doctorow's *Little Brother*, anti-terrorism
- | Spila: *Star Trek* has had a lasting effect (flip phones)
- | Doyle: Inter-racial casting
- | Lubell: More a reflection of society
- | Breslin: Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* were much more influential.
- | [Plato's *Republic*, Thomas More's *Utopia*]
- | Lubell: "A lot of science fiction is talking about the present using the future as a metaphor."
- | Doyle: Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* "changed the way the middle class viewed progress."
- | Spila: Science fiction and fantasy gives people an unreal situation in which to think about unpalatable situations.
- | Doyle: Ayn Rand
- | Spila: *Destination Moon* on space travel (unclear the source work)
- | Doyle: Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*
- | Lubell: Octavia Butler and Charles Stross are not widely enough read [for major social impact]
- | Breslin: Science fiction approaches to global warning concentrate on ultimately unworkable solutions rather than prevention.
- | Lubell: Kim Stanley Robinson
- | Breslin: People are better prepared for the zombie apocalypse and sentient computers [than climate change].
- | Audience: Zombies allow individual action; climate change requires group/societal action.
- | Spila: Neal Stephenson's *Zodiac* anti-pollution
- | Me: Robinson is three thick books, hence not widely read.
- | Lubell: Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (non-fiction)
- | Doyle: *1984*, no impact from films
- | Mark Leeper: There was impact from the BBC version of *1984*.
- | Audience: Canonization of works matters.
- | Lubell: Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* widely read
- | Breslin: But had no impact. "Raise awareness" is not useful.
- | Audience: How effective is an assigned book ("spinach lit")?
- | Lubell: Still being exposed to ideas.
- | [Paolo Bacigalupi says YA can reach people who can or will take action.]
- | Lubell: Three Laws of Robotics, etc., are easy; social movements are harder.

The 21st Century Disease

Saturday, 12:00 N

Dr. James Prego (mod), JJ Brannon, Andrew Breslin, Jay Wile, John Monahan

Description: "Humankind has largely overcome the deadly infectious diseases that were the leading cause of death for our ancestors. But we are now experiencing unprecedented epidemics of diseases that were rare or even unknown in past centuries: cancer, heart disease, allergy, auto-immune disease, obesity, diabetes, and autism. A growing body of evidence suggest that there may be some underlying connections between these disorders, and that aspects of the modern lifestyle may be involved. Can we find the causes and the cure for '21st century disease'?"

Estimated attendance: 20

- | Brannon: A hundred years of modern food manipulation and longer lifetimes
- | Prego: Lower life expectancy in previous times was due primarily to higher child mortality.
- | Brannon: Even if one lived to fifty or sixty, they did not get "diseases of longevity."
- | Breslin: Also, things like child-onset diabetes (by 2020, the prediction is 50% of United States

- children).
- | Brannon: This panel is very US-centric.
 - | Wile: Too much sanitation means we are not exposed early enough to become immune.
 - | Prego: "Hygiene hypothesis"
 - | Wile: Breast milk provides (provided) helpful bacteria.
 - | Brannon: Trans fats were developed in 1910 to make things more stable. Also high fructose corn syrup.
 - | Breslin: We evolved for scarcity. Fat is more efficient to store, so we crave fat, sugar, and salt.
 - | Monahan: We spend a lot of time in fight-or-flight situations, with it concomitant chemistry.
 - | Brannon: Our lighting and sleep cycles are unnatural.
 - | Wile: In Thailand, overweight men are popular.
 - | Breslin: The influence of government agencies is profound (and negative). Blame Earl Butts--he encouraged growing corn to make food cheaper than it should be. There are few subsidies for broccoli.
 - | Monahan: Artificial situations
 - | Wile: Home-schooled kids eat better lunches than in schools.
 - | Sudience/Brannon: Third World countries develop more obesity et al as they improve.
 - | Audience: Resistant bacteria from anti-biotics in farm animals, or is it different bacteria?
 - | [Long back-and-forth on Andrew Wakefield.]
 - | [CPAPs are so common that hotel staff in Zimbabwe know about them.]
 - | several: Genetics and environment interact.
 - | several: "23 and Me" program
 - | Audience: "Intern's Disease"
 - | Breslin: 50% of people [in the US] die of heart disease.
 - | [But is this a problem with the environment if your are ninety years old?]
 - | Breslin: The Department of Agriculture has conflicting ambits.
 - | Brannon: More diabetics, myopics, etc., are having children; we are defeating natural selection.
 - | Wile: Also people are older when they are having children, which increases the risk.
 - | Monahan/Brannon: One copy of a "bad" gene may prevent other diseases.
 - | Wile: Our current problems are much less serious than smallpox, diphtheria, etc.
 - | [There was little discussion of resistant diseases.]

Who is Avram Davidson, and Why Are They Still Talking About Him?

Saturday, 1:00 PM

Michael J. Walsh (mod), Darrell Schweitzer, Michael Swanwick, Gardner Dozois

Description: "*The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* said of him 'He is perhaps sf's most explicitly literary author.' Discover the works of one of science fiction's unique geniuses."

Estimated attendance: 10

- | Dozois: Davidson tried to edit *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* from Mexico, but then there was a postal strike.
- | Swanwick: He was a brilliant writer, but in a pulp field.
- | Dozois: Some of his pot-boiler novels are surprisingly good (e.g., *Rork*).
- | Swanwick: *Masters of the Maze*
- | Dozois: agrees
- | Schweitzer: *The Phoenix and the Mirror*
- | Dozois: But not its sequels
- | Swanwick: In later years, he lost the ability to plot. He constantly re-wrote, and was hard to proofread.

- | Dozois: *Vergil in Averno* (a prequel to *The Phoenix and the Mirror* is almost plotless.
- | Schweitzer/Swanwick: He started many trilogies he never finished.
- | Swanwick: He had a tremendous range, from "break-your-heart" to terribly gunny.(his re-telling of the *Odyssey*
- | Dozois: "Dr. Esterhazy" stories are "one of the great efforts of sustained imagination and imaginative world-building."
- | Walsh: "Jack Limekiller" stories and *The Avram Davison Treasury* from Tor
- | Swanwick: Grania Davis did work for White Wolf, but White Wolf would not do it, so Tor took it.
- | Swanwick: He was a devout Jew, and would not allow his work to be sold in Germany. When *Asimov's* was bought by Bertelsmann, he stopped writing for them. As he put it, "It wasn't my choice to think about the Holocaust every day of my life."
- | Schweitzer: He also said, "I will not dip my bread in my brother's blood."
- | Schweitzer: All that is in print is *The Avram Davidson Treasury*The Investigations of Avram Davidson. Gollancz will be doing some of his books. Neil Gaiman is reading the Esterhazy stories for an audiobook. Wildside Press has some material available on demand. And a John Betancourt anthology will have some stories by him.
- | Dozois: *Adventures in Unhistory* (non-fiction)
- | Schweitzer: "The Wailing of the Gaulish Dead"
- | Walsh: *Limekiller!* is in print.
- | Swanwick: Completed Davidson's "Vergil Magus, King Without Country" and inserted plot into plotless story. It was published in *Asimov's* (July 1998) (!) and *Moon Dogs*
- | Swanwick: There is a lot of Davidson still uncollected.
- | Dozois: *Mutiny in Space* was Davidson's worst book.
- | Swanwick: But it had a redeeming end (The opposite of Poul Anderson's *Virgin Planet*).
- | Dozois: Liked *Masters of the Maze*, *Rogue Dragon*, *The Island Under the Earth*, *Rork*, *The Enemy of My Enemy*, *The Kar-Chee Reign*, and *Ursus of Ultima Thule*
- | Walsh: "And on the Eighth Day" in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* and another *Ellery Queen* story
- | Walsh: He won many awards but was not widely appreciated.
- | Walsh: He edited *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction* for three years.
- | Swanwick: Eileen Gunn will be doing a biography after "certain people" die. He has "a really interesting life that no one understands."
- | Walsh: What was his influence?
- | Dozois: More on other authors.
- | Schweitzer: [R. A.] Lafferty was the Catholic version of Avram Davidson."
- | Schweitzer: Unique authors include R. A. Lafferty, Howard Waldrop, Avram Davidson.
- | Schweitzer: David Bunch also.
- | Swanwick: He said, "I'm dying impoverished and a failure" but admitted that might have happened even if he had sold out. He also said, "Leave something other than sh*t and piss and rags."

"Mundane" Science Fiction

Saturday, 3:00 PM

Gregory Frost (mod), Barbara Krasnoff, Allen Steele, Margaret Riley, Steve Miller

Description: "Science fiction can be set in the future without all of the impossible tropes, such as time travel, faster than light travel, psi powers and galactic empires. What are some examples, and what goes into creating it?"

Estimated attendance: 20

- | Frost: "Trope-free science fiction" is a better term.
- | Riley: The "Spaceport" series is trope-free.
- | Miller: "Stuff we can do right now where we are"--"angsty" stuff
- | Frost: *The Pure Cold Light* is mundane science fiction [well, sort of]
- | [Has anyone on this panel read the "Mundane Manifesto"?)
- | Steele: Michael Crichton does mundane science fiction.
- | Steele: Gregory Benford's *Eater* and *Artifact*, Edmund Cowper's *Sea Horse in the Sky*, Arthur C. Clarke's *Tales from the White Hart*, other stuff [but not by manifesto's terms]
- | [Kim Stanley Robinson's "Science in the Capital" series]
- | Krasnoff: alternate history, including Michael Chabon's *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, Walter M. Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, and generally most post-apocalypse novels
- | Steele: Mundane science fiction per Geoff Ryman is "denatured science fiction"--only present-day tech does not allow speculative science fiction, and it dates quickly.
- | [Panelists seem to think all this limits extrapolation. Mundane science fiction per Ryman rules out unlikely stuff, e.g., faster-than-light travel, but does not limit one to present-day tech. And one person thinking something is impossible is not everyone thinking it is impossible.]
- | [Daniel Keyes's *Flowers for Algernon*]
- | Steele: A double standard: science fiction does not predict the future, but we then point to novels outdated by time.
- | Krasnoff: Science fiction vs. speculative fiction. Mundane F must be about science or things like magical realism and fantasy will creep in.
- | Riley: "Spaceport" rules were logical progressions from today (mostly)
- | Steele: Martin Caidin's *Cyborg*; one error was that prosthetics will not turn you superhuman.
- | Audience: An exoskeleton can lift 600 to 900 pounds.
- | Steele: Okay, maybe he was not wrong.
- | Audience: Mind-powered helicopter toys are in the Hammacher Schlemmer catalog.
- | Audience: Charles Stross's *Accelerando* et al
- | Steele: William Gibson's *Neuromancer* does not travel [age] well: cyberpunk predicted only corporations and outlaws could handle computers.
- | [And then the fire alarm went off.]

"Dangerous Visions" Re-examined

Saturday, 4:00 PM

Tim W. Burke (mod), Edward Carmien, Tom Doyle, Jim Freund, Steve Miller

Description: "Taking another look at Harlan Ellison's ground breaking anthology. Did this change the field forever? Or is it overrated?"

Estimated attendance: 8

- | Freind: Breakthrough anthologies: the "Star Science Fiction" series, *Dangerous Visions*, *Women of Wonder*, *Mirrorshades*, *Dark Matter*
- | Miller: The Science Fiction Book Club was the major influence in novels, magazines in short fiction.
- | Doyle: Theodore Sturgeon, Philip K. Dick, J. G. Ballard were all "Dangerous Visions" authors before *Dangerous Visions* Dangerous Visions represents the advent of the New Wave
- | Carmien: Mostly younger authors, but who already have careers
- | Freund: The New Wave was already in England; *Dangerous Visions* was not creating it, but codifying it
- | Freund: Shows us (e.g.) a new Fred Pohl
- | Miller: Damon Knight was working to improve the writing with SFWA et al.

- | Doyle: Lengthy introductions for each author was unique.
- | Freund: [That was partly that] "Harlan can't shut up."
- | Carmien: You would find stories about sex, authority, and religion in *Dangerous Visions*, but not in the magazines.
- | Freund: The introduction for the Joanna Russ story ends, "She looks good in a bikini."
- | Miller: Harlan owed the authors for past favors.
- | Freund: "All anybody talked about for the longest time"
- | Freund: Could point to and say, "literary merit" and "revolutionary thinking".
- | Freund: In 1973, Fred Pohl publishes *The Female Man* and *Dhalgren*.
- | Me: Would no *Dangerous Visions* have made science fiction expand into the mainstream?
- | Freund, No, science fiction would still be a ghetto.
- | Ellen Asher: *Dangerous Visions* moved topics from metaphor to more open, but they had been there before.
- | Panel: The "New Yorker" [science fiction?] issue was all cross-over authors.
- | ["If it's cross-over, it's not science fiction."]
- | [Mainstream recognizes good science fiction, so we decide that author is not really a science-fiction author.]
- | [Why is the science fiction label so important?]
- | Audience: What was rejected for *Dangerous Visions*?
- | Carmien: Mainstream contains lots of science fiction (Philip Roth, Cormac McCarthy, Margaret Atwood)
- | Burke: Michael Chabon, Joyce Carol Oates, Jonathan Lethem
- | [Kazuo Ishiguro, Doris Lessing, José Saramago]
- | Freund: Kurt Vonnegut was up front about "not writing science fiction"
- | Miller: "Science fiction has gotten so broad" that the barriers are less meaningful.
- | Miller: We write good fun, plot-driven, character-driven [stories].
- | Doyle: *Dangerous Visions*'s table of contents is a snapshot in time. We should look at older works by authors as well.

Upgrading the Remakes. Are the Upgrades Needed?

Saturday, 5:00 PM

Jeff Warner (mod), Christopher Stout, Andre Lieven, Andrew C. Ely, Matt Black, Mark Leeper

Estimated attendance: 8

Description: "Movies and TV shows, such as Superman, Batman, Flash Gordon, Battlestar Galactica, Hulk, Spider-Man, X-Men, Sleepy Hollow, Dracula, and others, are being "modernized," updated, and rebooted. What are the pros and cons of tweaking the original? Join the panelists as they discuss which upgrades worked and which ones should have been left alone."

- | Warner: Do films need to be retooled?
- | Leeper: No. Well, some are better, e.g., *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. The worst was *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.
- | Black: The best was *Battlestar Galactica*. Remakes are okay if it has been long enough and you can say something new.
- | Ely: *The Thing* was the best. The worst are the endless "Star Trek" series 7Movies?].
- | Black: The worst are the J. J. Abrams movies.
- | Lieven: The best are *Get Smart* (2008) and *Battlestar Galactica*. Also likes the new "Doctor Who" series. The worst are *Bewitched* and *Miami Vice*.
- | Stout: The best are *Battlestar Galactica* and *Sherlock*. The worst is *The Wild, Wild West*.
- | [The worst was the new new *Twilight Zone* (2002-2003).{

- | Leeper: One reason for remakes of recent movies is that they must use the license of lose it, but the actors get too old for sequels.
- | Warner: Is there a time to *not* remake?
- | Ely: When you are changing the message.
- | Stout: You should not remake classics such as *Citizen Kane* or *Casablanca*.
- | [*The Wizard of Oz* was remade as *The Wiz*, proving the wisdom of this rule.]
- | Black: Do not remake a film if the original filmmaker is alive and working.
- | Warner: When is a remake okay?
- | Leeper: If it is based on a classic work, or if it is in obscurity (e.g. *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* or *Let Me In*), or if it is really dated or incompetent, or if the filmmaker can really bring something new.
- | [If the original is silent, though even then the remake is often not as good. But the original being in black and white is not a reason.]
- | Audience: Most remakes happen too soon.
- | Black: You need new and interesting things to say.
- | Warner: What about *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*?
- | Stout: The Tim Burton remake [*Planet of the Apes* (2001)] was abysmal, but the Franco is solid.
- | Black: Comments on the two versions are insightful.
- | Stout: Remakes mean something different in the comics world than in one-off movies.
- | Lievan: "Superman" comics are 75 years old, but Superman is not, so stories must run in parallel in alternate universes.
- | Leeper: The question is, "Does the audience buy it?"
- | Black: The difference between "remake" vs. "reboot" is in the attitude towards the canon.
- | Audience: Live theater is doing "remakes" all the time.
- | Lieven: Beethoven has no definitive performances, while the Beatles do, so there is a concept of remakes for them.
- | Warner: This is "the Jazz Age of Movie Making"--"There is no canonical X" just everyone's riffs on it.
- | [There are no younger (20s or 30s) fans on the panels]

The Ethics of Time Travel

Saturday, 6:00 PM

John Ashmead (mod), Evelyn Leeper, Andrew C. Ely

Estimated attendance: 40

Description: "Everyone talks about killing Hitler in his crib, or stopping Booth from shooting Lincoln. But if you could change the past, would you?"

- | Ashmead: In Michael Swanwick's *Bones of the Earth* they need to stay in the past to live with and possibly correct errors.
- | ?: *The Machine of Death* anthology.
- | Leeper: Pre-crime et al
- | Leeper: Utilitarianism vs. instrumentation
- | ?: People who gave up power George Washington, Otto von Bismarck, Cincinnatus, Augustus [?]
- | [As usual, I have fewer notes for panels I am on.]

Kowai: Ghosts, Yokai and Japanese Monster Culture

Saturday, 9:00 PM
Charles Dunbar (mod)

Estimated attendance: 10

Description: "The 'Anime Anthropologist' Charles Dunbar presents an exploration of ghosts, monsters and horror within Japanese mythology, folklore and modern media."

- | "Ko-wai" means "scary", "ka-wa-e" means cute.
- | There is a long history of "scary Japan".
- | All major matsuri (festivals) focus on the appeasement of kami (Shinto spirits of phenomena).
- | Women do not wear face masks at night.
- | 64% of Tokyo taxi drivers have served ghosts.
- | Various superstitions
- | "Moshimoshi" i like "shibboleth"; ghosts can say only "moshi".
- | "Yokai" is hard to define.
- | Godzilla is not a yokai; yokai are more subtle.
- | "Oni" are tricksters and ogres.
- | "Tanuki" derive their powers from testicles.
- | "Kappa" look like turtles and like cucumbers.
- | *Inugami* (movie
- | There are four types: animals with power, supernatural beings, inanimate objects, and angry women
- | Onibaba
- | Kyokatsu (the inspiration for *Ringu*)
- | Nure-Onna is the one with the long neck.
- | Namahage
- | Kara-Kasa is the umbrella.
- | Bura-Bura is the lantern.
- | *Yokai Daisenso* by Mikii
- | Shirime ("Eyeball Butt")

Tomorrow's Library
Sunday, 10:00 AM

Mary Spila (mod), Stephanie Gangone, Suzanne Rosin, ? Weisenstein

Estimated attendance: 5

Description: "Ebooks, Amazon, and Goodreads have taken over much of the library's place as the source of reading material and recommendations. How are libraries and librarians adapting? Is the library of the future a building full of books, a public Internet kiosk with a librarian on webchat, or something else?"

- | Spila: Works for the State Library of Pennsylvania.
- | Weisenstein: Spouse of librarian at Villa Nova
- | Rosin: Law firm librarian (multi-location)
- | Gangone: Long Island (Suffolk County) public library librarian
- | Spila: Obvious changes are Internet archives and digitization.
- | Mark Leeper: There is no real browsing capability (as in just looking down a shelf) in electronic media.
- | Rosin: Ages 45 to 50 is about where attitudes split; the older ones had no computers in their schools.

- | Gangone: But teens also prefer browsing.
- | Weisenstein: Electronic media can give you recommendations, but you never get anything unexpected.
- | Audience: Hard copy becomes a reference book (not checked out).
- | Gangone: Statistics drive acquisitions.
- | Wisenstein: Journals require annual subscriptions even to access old issues, which highlights the difference between owning and licensing.
- | Spila: Back access can be contracted.
- | Rosin: The same is true for ebooks.
- | Gangone: Copiague library, everything free, community programs, YA statistics are going up.
- | Spila: Libraries are education centers,
- | Rosin: Art shows.
- | Rosin: "Print is not going to die."
- | Gangone: "He thought Nicola Tesla was a woman." [I have no idea who "he" was.]
- | Rosein: People check out library books to decide whether to buy them.
- | Rosin: Sometimes ebooks and print are linked in contracts.
- | Worldcat

The Summer of Science Fiction
Sunday, 11:00 AM
Tony Finan, Orenthal Hawkins, Mark Leeper, Elektra Hammond

Estimated attendance: 5

Description: "2013 had an impressive line-up of genre films, from Star Trek Into Darkness and Elysium to Man of Steel and The Wolverine. Did this summer's blockbusters fulfill our geeky needs? Discuss with the panelists the pros and cons of this summer's movies and which ones you would buy on DVD."

- | Hawkins: There were lots of summer films. His favorite was *Pacific Rim*; "my inner ten-year-old was massaged [by] giant robots fighting giant monster." His least favorite was *After Earth*; for starters, it was not a Will Smith movie.
- | Finan: the *Pacific Rim* "cinematography was stunning" and used only realistic lighting. But his favorite was *Europa Report*: found footage, very claustrophobic, and similar to *Moon* and *Primer*. He hated *Star Trek Into Darkness*, which had plot holes and ditched the "Star Trek" universe.
- | Leeper: His favorite was *Europa Report*, which shows you do not need a big budget. *Gravity* was way more expensive but not as good. *Europa Report* used a fixed, locked-down camera, and was today's *Destination Moon* rather than today's *War of the Worlds*. It did the zero-gravity fairly well. The worst was *This Is the End*, which still may be "the best Seth Rogan gross-out film."
- | Hammond: Her favorite was *The Purge*, but also liked *Pacific Rim* and *Europa Report*. The worst were *After Earth* and *The Lone Ranger*.
- | Hawkins: People had a problem with Superman supposedly not killing (or people thinking that) re *Man of Steel*. [That sounds more a problem with the audience than the film.]
- | Finan: The animated *Batman Returns* went to DVD but was beautifully done.
- | Hammond: Re R.I.P.D.: "Dumb is fine as long as it's smart dumb."
- | Hawkins: *Pacific Rim* is full of tropes, but it knows it. "They went to a trope [vending] machine."
- | Leeper: *World War Z* was the first world-wide version of the zombie apocalypse. Michael Straczynski worked on the script.
- | Finan/Hammond: The film *World War Z* had no resemblance to the novel.

- | Hawkins: His guilty pleasure was *Fast and Furious 6*--"it has porn and testosterone."
- | Hammond: It also has women and minorities.
- | Hawkins: "These aren't meant to be high art."
- | Hammond: *Now You See Me* has magicians, stage magic, and (possibly?) real magic.
- | Finan: *Holy Rollers* has a Hasidic drug dealer. There is also *Cockneys vs. Zombies*
- | Leeper: *Oblivion* borrowed a lot from *Moon*.
- | Leeper: *Iron Man 3*--"as I'm getting older, action films don't do a lot for me." A chase has a binary outcome.
- | Hawkins: Robert Downey, Jr., is fantastic as Tony Stark, but the ending doesn't deliver.
- | Leeper: "He's essentially buying his way out of the problem."
- | Leeper: *Elysium* has interesting questions, then only action and bad science.
- | Audience: *Warm Bodies* (a zombie "Romeo & Juliet")
- | Finan: *Lord of Tears* and *And Teller*

Rude Astronauts and Junkie Cosmonauts

Sunday, 1:00 PM

Ian Randal Strock (mod), Barbara Krasnoff, Tom Purdom, Walter F. Cuirle

Estimated attendance: 15

Description: "One day, space travel will transition from a highly professional occupation to a blue collar job. How does writing about space change when, instead of brave explorers and scientists, your heroes are just 'Regular Joe's'?"

- | Purdom: "Cybergenteel"
- | Krasnoff: Has always been a science fiction trope.
- | Audience: *Forbidden Planet*
- | Purdom: Space travel will always be technical. Work on a factory floor now requires an associate degree and calculus.
- | Krasnoff: Een stringing wires requires skills.
- | Purdom: Heinlein wrote about menial workers ("Gentlemen, Be Seated"), construction workers, etc.
- | Krasnoff: "Blue collar" does not mean "unskilled".
- | Audience: The average Joe will have calculus.
- | Purdom: People who are plumbers and electricians
- | Audience: Steele wrote this sort of person; also *Alien* and *Outland* (see Daniel Kimmel's essay)
- | Krasnoff: They are [usually] background characters.
- | Strick: There are no Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of science fiction.
- | Audience: *Babylon 5*: "A View from the Gallery" and *Star Trek*: "Lower Decks"
- | [Similar to the first sailors, explorers, etc.]
- | Audience: Divers consider themselves to be blue collar but are skilled.
- | Purdom: Fiction traditionally dealt with the upper class."
- | Audience: Parallel to commercial shipping and the merchant marine.
- | Me: The father in *October Sky*.
- | Audience: The trend now is to require credentials.
- | [The trend seems to be *from* backyard *to* high-tech spaceship.]
- | Strock: "The Economics of the Lower Levels of Villainy in Fiction"
- | ?: YouTube: "Troops", "Space Janitors"; also *Star Cops* And *Quark*
- | Audience: *Firefly* has a mechanic and an engineer
- | Krasnoff: *Firefly* shows a class structure.
- | Audience: Astronauts are constantly on camera, not allowed to be rude.

- | Audience: One astronaut (Lisa Nowack) tried to kill another. [Actually, it was an astronaut's girlfriend she attacked.]

Miscellaneous

Many panels did not have enough microphones. Even two people sharing is difficult--three is impossible.

There was a lot of noise bleed-through, especially from the anime rooms.

Moderators are still letting panels run over their times.