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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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Social Media and The Changing Landscape of Communication Friday, 6:00 PM

Deborah Stanish (mod), Berakha Lana Guggenheim, Michael Ryan, Jay Smith, Ray Ridenour

Description: "How does Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, Reddit, Instagram and other social media affect the way we communicate with each other. How have they changed fandom and fan communities, and how might they continue to do so in the future?"

- Ridenbur is an artist, Smith is a podcaster ("Hidden Harbor Mysteries"), Guggenheim is a student, Ryan works for a branding agency, and Stanish is a podcaster.
- Stanish: Immediacy drops social barriers like manners.
- Ridenbur: It's a way to stay connected between conventions.
- Guggenheim: Friends she hasn't met yet.
- Guggenheim: Facebook allows "passive stalking."
- Stanish: Philcon has hardly any social media presence.
- Ryan: "Assume in on-line interactions that the other person is two drinks in."
- Ryan: "It is very easy to say something callous."
- Ridenbur: It makes people *feel* closer.

Nature, Red in Tooth and Claw? Friday, 7:00 PM Lisa Adler-Golden (mod), Carl Fink, Jay Wile, JJ Brannon

Description: "Recent scientific findings indicate that chimpanzees are violent in nature, committing acts that look like murder and even war. Does this mean that intra-species violence is inevitable?

Does it depend on the species? And what could it mean for humanity to learn that some of our closest relatives in the animal world are, like us, inclined to violence?"

- Fink: Bonobos have orgies to defuse tensions.
- Brannon: Most child abuse done by step-parents.
- Brannon: Biology is a predisposition, not a destiny.
- Wile: Brain size correlates only with latitude.
- Audience: Not brain size, but connectivity.
- Brannon/Fink: Most dolphin intercourse is rape.
- Brannon: Violence often occurs for moral reasons.
- Fink: We cannot eliminate violence, but we can limit it.
- Brannon: "Aggression mediation survival techniques"

Defying the Square Cube Law Friday, 8:00 PM Alex Shvartsman (mod), Bob Eggleton, Lawrence Kramer, James Prego

Description: "Consider really huge monsters. Sure we like 'em big and capable of stomping cities, but is there any way to make a Godzilla or Cthulhu plausible?"

- New York City is vertical; Texas is horizontal.
- Kramer: James White had a cell the size of a continent.
- Shvartsman: How can we cheat for plausibility?
- Kramer: Lower gravity, hive mind of many individuals.
- Eggleton: Solaris by Stanislaw Lem, Spacewhale by T. J. Bass
- [me: Star Maker by Olaf Stapledon]
- Prego?: More oxygen.

The Bug-Crusher Book: Pro and Con Saturday, 10:00 AM KT Pinto (mod), Evelyn Leeper, Gail Z. Martin, Robert Corry, Paul Dellechiaie

Description: "Why ARE so may fantasy and SF books (or series) so long? Do authors really need thousands of pages to tell one story, as Robert Jordan (with some help from Brian Sanderson) seemed to? But these books sell well, so someone must like them. What are the attractions of the really, really long form?"

- Martin: There are cheeseburgers, three-course meals, and 72-ounce steaks.
- More pages per penny.
- Small diamonds or a truckload of coal.
- I Steamer trunk versus carry-on luggage.
- Escapism versus schadenfreude.
- The bug-crusher genres are fantasy, biography, and alternate history.
- Martin: Publishers want three books facing out, hence split novels.
- Leeper: I am late in life, my memory is going, and I have to set priorities on what I spend time reading.

Saturday, 11:00 AM Neal Levin (mod), Hugh Casey, Brad Hafford, Fran Wilde

Description: "If all that gold that Smaug is hoarding gets into circulation, won't Middle Earth be wiped out by rampant inflation? If wizards can conjure up gold, Would it force the country switch over to the turnip standard? How does the economy work in Lankhmar or Hyborea? Which writers have dealt with this as a serious issue?"

- Hafford: Teaches a course on the history of money (dating back to 3000 B.C.E.).
- Casey: Vanguard Group retirement specialist.
- Levin: *The Hobbit*, gold statue
- Levin: Armorers all returning to their own kingdom.
- Wilde: Economics of paying gods for blessing
- Wilde: Food economics
- Wilde: Charles Stross's *Accelerando* and tax law.
- Hafford: Large amount of valued material hitting the market.
- Hafford: Older science fiction/fantasy did not consider economics or money.
- Casey: Gold was rare and stable.
- Levin: Religions balance out the economy by taking stuff out of circulation.
- Casey: Where is Sauron's supply chain?
- Casey: George R.R. Martin has the Castle of Winterfell alone in the center of the tundra; what is its supply chain?
- Casey: Armies of the Dead are really handy.
- Wilde: Price gouging: elven swords and mail.
- Casey: Elven swords are Damascus steel
- Casey: Money has value because we give it value.
- Casey: Doesn't need explanation, but wants acknowledgement of the problem.
- Casey: David Edding does this; he has a master of logistics.
- Hafford: Magic throws a wrench in.
- Casey: The "Harry Potter" universe multiplies gold in one of the movies.
- Wilde: The Midas structure has a cost.
- Casey: Rome and the Han Dynasty missed sharing a border by fifty miles and fifty years.
- Hafford: Trade routes date back to 10,000 B.C.E., based on obsidian coming from Anatolia.
- Wilde: Bitcoins are a different kind of fantasy money.
- Casey: J. K. Rowling's is an interesting economic system for the 14th century, not for the modern world.
- Casey: L. E. Modesitt is an economist.
- Wilde: Terry Pratchett does fun things with economics.
- Levin: Can a house elf (in the "Harry Potter" universe) bring you anything you ask for, or just what you own?
- Wilde: Slave systems of house elves.
- Casey: Also goblins are like medieval Jewish money lenders: everyone relies on them, but looks down on them.
- Casey: Harry Potter is an unreliable narrator.
- Wilde: Real-world "World of Warcraft" purchases ("Magic: The Gathering* arms dealers)
- Casey: Nobody runs the economy.
- Levin: "Star Trek"/Starfleet seems to use 3-D printing for "Earl Grey hot.""
- Levin: Quark's bar
- Casey: "Star Trek" is a post-scarcity society. How do they trade with societies that use money?
- Casey: Latinum cannot be replicated.
- Casey: Trading between planets cannot be trading between city-states scaled up. Any solar system has everything they need, unlike city-states.

The Psychology of Time Travel Saturday, 1:00 PM Rebecca Robare (mod), John Ashmead, JJ Brannon, James L. Cambias

Description: "This panel will explore the effects of time travel on the human psyche. We'll discuss types of time travel events such as repeating loops (Groundhog Day), one-way relativistic travel (Planet of the Apes), the grandfather paradox (Back to the Future), and other phenomena."

- Ashmead: *Time and the Inner Future: A Temporal Approach to Psychiatric Disorders* by Fredrick Towne Melges
- Brannon: As neo-natals, we learn time binding:
- Brnanon: Our earliest memories become detached from our hippocampus.
- Brannon: During the black-and-white film era, dreams were in black and white.
- Ashmead: Time travel as a spreadsheet: change an upper cell, and the change trickles down.
- Cambias: Physics has a hard time figuring out why there is time. [Is that a recursive statement? :-)]
- Cambias: Time has a direction because entropy demands it.
- Cambias: "Opposite Thermodynamics of Arrows of Time" by L. S. Schulman
- Ashmead: With time dilation effects, it is difficult to communicate with people outside the spaceship.
- Ashmead: Time dilation is achieved through high-gravity fields as well as through acceleration.
- Brannon: Adrenaline effect makes things seem to slow down.
- Ashmead: "Try and Change the Past" by Fritz Leiber [Where did the (incorrect) phrase "try and [do something]" come from?]
- Brannon: A time travel change is genocide.
- Cambias: People from the past are disposable.
- Audience: Vintage Season by C. L. Moore
- Ashmead: Fiction should not be too specific.
- Cambias: In manga, heroes are generic, villains are specific.
- Ashmead: All timelines possible using wormholes, etc., leading to paradoxes are self-canceling at the quantum level.
- Audience: Is time emergent or fundamental?

[Do past, present, and future co-exist and we just move through them, or are they created from moment to moment?]

[If a panel like this is signed for the hearing-impaired, how does a signer who is not a physicist convey technical, complex ideas and words, or even spell them correctly?]

The Next Extinction Saturday, 2:00 PM John Monahan (mod), Alexis Gilliland, Lawrence Kramer, Lisa Adler-Golden

Description: "Some scientists believe we are heading toward a mass extinction event. Some argue that it is beginning already. Our panelists will discuss the evidence, and the possibilities for preserving biodiversity and how human life and civilization will be impacted."

- Adler: Extinctions are bad when you are living through them, but good afterward.
- Adler: And it is not just "some" scientists.
- Kramer: Extinctions take a long period of time (several million years).
- Kramer: It is like a forest fire: bad at first, but better for things later on.

- Monahan: Define a "mass extinction."
- Kramer: One measure is that 25% to 90% of all families go extinct.
- Adler: Fossils cannot always show what species level.
- Kramer: 320 species have gone extinct in the last 500 years.
- Monahan: Extinctions can be caused by asteroid impacts, volcanoes, or atmospheric changes.
- Kramer: Radical changes over a short period of time versus slow change.
- Adler: Three causes suggested for megafauna extinction are kill, ill, and chill.
- Kramer: Loss of habitat and hunting are now the major causes, as well as invasive species and climate change.
- Asler: We are seeing loss of major species such as the Plains bison.
- Monahan: Wolves in Yellowstone.
- Adler: Ocean acidification: the coral is dying, but the jellyfish are thriving.
- Kramer: Invertebrates are down 45% in the last twenty-five years.
- Kramer: We are seeing genetic bottlenecks.
- Mohahan: Yes, in cheetahs and walruses.
- Adler: We need to worry about monocultures and diseases=
- Me: Is there anything we in the room can do?
- Audience: Support politicians' efforts.
- Adler: Support the Union of Concerned Scientists.
- Panel: Why is climate change bad?
- Audience: Large successful populations will crash.
- Adler/Kramer: Little animals (e.g., insects) will survive.
- Adler: Deep ocean dwellers will survive, as will rats.
- Audience: Adaptability and intelligence can help (tool-using animals, octopuses, extremophiles, corvids).
- Kramer: There is still time.
- [The Age of Stupid movie.]

The Modern Library Saturday, 3:00 PM Suzanne Rosin (mod), Tony Finan, Scheherazade Jackson, Christine Norris, Meredith Schwartz, Mary Spila

Description: "In the age of internet, Google, smartphone, and tablet, do we still need libraries? And, if so, what role do they have to play? And how has the role of librarian changed over time, and how might it continue to change going forward?"

- Rosin: Changing media.
- Finan: "Libraries are places of continuity."

[On the whole, this was a fairly boring panel with no real new information or insights.]

Jewish Folklore in Fantasy and Science Fiction Saturday, 4:00 PM Todd Dashoff (mod), Gil Cnaan, Berakha Lana Guggenheim, Hildy Silverman, Stephanie Feldman, Gary Ehrlich

Description: "THE GOLEM AND THE JINNI is a recent example. William Tenn and Avram Davidson have written classic examples. Discuss how Jewish Folklore has been used in the genre."

- [me: There are differences between Askenazic and Sephardic folklore.]
- [me: Also stories with dybbuks and Lisa Goldstein's *The Red Magician*.]
- Dashoff: There are books like *The Golem and the Jinni* and *Wandering Stars*.
- Cnaan: Television shows do episodes with golems.
- Feldman: *Everything Is Illuminated* by Jonathan Safran Foer, *If I Told You Once* by Judy Budnitz, and *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* by Michael Chabon.
- Silverman: Baba Yaga (but this is more Russian)
- Guggenheim: *Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword* by Barry Deautsch, *The Hyperion Cantos* by Dan Simmons
- [me: "MSG Golem" by Ken Liu]
- Feldman: The Wandering Jew [actually a Christian legend]
- Cnaan: Shabbatai Zvi
- Cnaan: Terry Pratchett has dwarfs as stand-ins for Jews.
- Guggenheim: Tolkien used Jews as the basis for his dwarfs.
- Frank Herbert used bastardized Hebrew in his works.
- Audience: Tim Burton's Corpse Bride
- Audience: Darren Aronofsky's Pi
- Audience: "39 Labors of Reb Palachi" (?) (gematria)
- Audience: *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks
- Audience: HebrewPunk by Lavie Tidhar
- Audience: The Puttermesser Papers by Cynthia Ozick
- Cnaan: My Grandmother's Stories by Adele Geras
- [me: James Morrow's various "Bible Stories"]
- Cnaan: Everything with kabbalah is mind-bogglingly bad.
- Silverman: Foucault's Pendulum by Umberto Eco
- Audience: Lilith
- Audience: The Ferengi in "Star Trek" are Jews.
- Cnaan: The "Kushiel" series by Jacqueline Carey.
- Dashoff: William Tenn, Avram Davidson, Isidore Haiblum

Epidemic Saturday, 5:00 PM

James Prego (mod), Brian Gray, Anna Kashina, Lawrence Kramer, Amy Fass, John Skylar

Description: "Ebola, now rampant in several countries in Western Africa, presents a scary threat to the continent and to the rest of the world. How scared should we be? Could Ebola make it to the United States in a major way? Could the virus mutate to spread through the air? What steps can and should countries and international NGOs take to limit its spread?"

- Gray: Rule 1 to avoid Ebola: don't lick the patient.
- Skylar: Phyloviruses: Ebola, Marburg, etc., originate in bats, hemorrhagic fevers in humans
- Gray: In bats, the effects are similar to the common cold.
- Skylar: Ebola is old, but only recently spread to humans (1976?).
- Gray: We will keep getting new strains of HIV.
- Skylar: Radio Lab: "Outbreak"
- Skylar: A pandemic requires multiple WHO regions with epidemics.
- Fass: People are more afraid of the severity of a threat than the probability of a threat. It also depends on how much control one has.
- Kramer: There are all sorts of conspiracy theories.
- Gray: Funeral practices help spread Ebola.
- Skylar: Ebola's R₀ (number of cases from each case) between 1 and 2. Influenza's is about 1. Measles is about 15.

- Kramer: Ebola kills you fast, and is only contagious when symptomatic. It requires knowledge and attention to combat.
- Skylar: Even a mediocre containment response will work.
- Skylar: Sweat, tears, urine, (especially) blood, and semen are dangerous, the last for up to two months.
- Prego: The virus lives for up to a week in tissue.
- Gray: The infectious dose is relatively high, so foamites (saliva, etc.) do not spread it.
- Skylar: Norovirus is a "tough little bugger"; Ebola is very fragile.
- Prego: How likely is mutation?
- Kramer: "To be airborne you have to survive in air."
- Skylar: The government could not mutate it when they were *trying*.
- Gray: HIV is the virus most prone to mutation. But once a virus finds a niche in which to replicate, it has no reason to mutate. We cannot even make HIV evolve.
- Audience: Media hype is fueling panic.
- Skylar: The Medical profession has been scared for years, but this is new to the public.
- Skylar: We have anti-virals now.
- Fass: *Andromeda Strain* has a global mutation.
- Skylar: There is an incentive for viruses to become less deadly.
- Skylar: Dengue fever is scary.
- Gray: Malaria (from climate change)
- Fass: Oversimplification is the problem.

Separating the Author from the Work Sunday, 10:00 AM Muriel Hykes (mod), Sharon Lee, Peter Prellwitz, Oz Drummond, Ian Randal Strock

Description: "Many authors of great works have been lees than great human beings. Some have had racist, anti-Semitic or extremist views. Should this color our perception of their work?"

- Hykes: She will excuse one who is a product of their times (Martin Luther, Richard Wagner, Orson Scott Card), but "Charlie Sheen gets no breaks in my book" for being drug-addled. Insanity is an excuse, though.
- Audience: Socially inept.
- Hykes: There is a small percentage of people who want to be outraged.
- Drummond: Cited Laura Mixon on the "rage-blogger 'Requires Hate'"
- Prellwitz: Opposes censorship.
- Audience: It is hard to separate the author and the work in literature because literature transmits ideas.
- Drummond: Orson Scott Card's and C. S. Lewis's beliefs overwhelm their world.
- Drummond: It is too late to not buy Marion Zimmer Bradley. It is also hard to match her personal life with her writing.
- Strock: The panel here is much more reasonable than the same panel at Arisia in 2012.
- Strock: The Internet (and Facebook in particular) promotes monocultures.
- Lee: You become just as fixed in your opinions as the people who have bad opinions.
- Prellwitz: Identifies as a Lutheran transgendered conservative.
- Lee: Science fiction should present ideas for consideration.
- Strock: Now it is used more for reinforcement.

Lawrence M. Schoen (mod), Rebecca Robare, Bernie Mojzes, Mark Mandel

Description: "Science fiction stories that address language and linguistics include Embassytown and Babel 17, among many others. Language is obviously going to be a crucial factor when contacting an alien species, and all kinds of interesting questions come up, such as, could there be alien languages that could never be understood by humans (or vice versa) and how much does language shape thought/psychology (and vice versa)."

- Schoen: What are the panelists' per peeves of language in science fiction?
- Schooen: His are that there are no dialects or variations in an alien language.
- Mandel or Mojzes[*]: The Universal Translator.
- Robare: All of the languages are spoken and all use speech sounds. [What about the tones in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind?*]
- Mandel or Mojzes[*]: We are able to speak their language. [What about *Star Wars*? Everyone (Greedo, Chewbacca, etc.) speaks their own language, which humans understand, but humans speak a human language]
- Schoen. Recommends *Embassytown* by China Miéville.
- | [me: Suzette Haden Elgin]
- Schoen: A game of pool (position, velocity) as a speech act.
- ["Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang]
- Schoen: Another example is the ingredients in a meal (main food, spices, temperature, etc.).
- Schoen: "Not everyone wants to be Tolkien; not everyone should be Tolkien."
- Robare: You need to avoid info dumps.
- Mojzes: Dislikes unpronounceable names, or books with seventeen different names that are mostly apostrophes.
- Mandel: Dislikes books where names are too similar. [A bit like life, though.]
- Schoen: Likes when it is done right (e.g., China Miéville).
- Mandel: A Fire Upon the Deep with "tines" and a shared consciousness.
- Robare: Stardance by Jeanne and Spider Robinson
- Schoen: What is language?
- [Smell would not work well because it does not have rapid fade.]
- Schoen: Language allows prevarication, etc.
- [me: In *The Day of the Dolphin*, dolphins did not understand conditionals.]
- Robare: Needs to distinguish between the abstract and the concrete, and be able to talk about things not present.
- Robare: "The horse raced past the barn fell" is a "garden-path sentence."
- Mandel: Embedding.
- Schoen: Suzette Haden Elgin's "Top Ten Errors in Science Fiction Linguistics" is worth reading even with her agenda. [I cannot find a reference to this anywhere--different title?]
- Audience: "Star Trek--Next Generation: Darmok"
- Panel: Endorses Weak Whorfian Hypothesis.
- Audience: *None But Man* by Gordon R. Dickson
- Mandel: Mirabile by Janet Kagan
- Schoen: "Irregular Verbs" (?) by Matthew Johnson
- (*) My notes are unclear as to which said this. Mea culpa.

Godzilla: The King of the Monster's 60-year Reign! Sunday, 12:00 N Bob Eggleton (mod), Luke Stelmaszek, Mark Leeper

Description: "From his first appearance in Honda's 1954 film GOJIRA, through his successful

blockbuster film this past year, Godzilla has become a cultural icon, and has evolved from being a metaphor for unstoppable disaster, to being a defender of humanity, and back again. We'll look back over the big guy's long career."

- Eggleton: November 3, 2014, was the 60th anniversary.
- Eggleton: The new one is better than "GINO" ("Godzilla In Name Only"--the 1998 American version).
- Eggleton: Roland Emmerich had to do "GINO" to do two other films he wanted, and Toho needed someone who could work fast.
- Leeper: Toho has a repertory company of monsters.
- Leeper: Was there enough Godzilla?
- Eggleton: Gareth Edwards did *Monsters* in 2010.
- Eggleton: There is too much in CGI films. Ray Harryhausen talked about "the rveeal." The latest had nine minutes of Godzilla, but forty-five minutes of mutos.
- Leeper: Is Godzilla too large?
- Eggleton: Buildings are bigger now, so Godzilla has to be bigger as well.
- Stelmaszek: *Monster Zero*
- Eggleton: Why do we remember Godzilla?
- Leeper: He has a name and a personality. Each generation gets its own Godzilla?
- Eggleton: The first one was grim. The second one (*The Return of Godzilla*) is a love story (dubbed in part by George Takeo and Keye Luke). And then there is *King King Vs. Godzilla*.
- Eggleton: The reason it took so long to release *Godzilla '84/Godzilla '85* is that the rights were tangled up.
- Leeper: There are "Indiana Jones" and "Terminator" references.
- Eggleton:The "Hesei" series was aimed at kids.
- Eggleton: Toho is not making films anymore. They are renting out studios and licensing characters.
- Stelmaszek: His favorites are Monster Zero, Godzilla '85, and King Kong Vs. Godzilla
- Leeper: Godzilla Vs. the Thing, Godzilla Vs. King Ghidorah, and King Kong Vs. Godzilla
- Eggleton: What about the worst? Godzilla Vs. Space Godzilla
- [me: *Monster Zero* with the "Godzilla dance"]
- Eggleton: Favorites are Monster Zero, Godzilla Vs. Destroyah, Tokyo S.O.S., Godzilla Vs. Megaguirus
- Eggleton: What non-Godzilla kaiju are good? war of the Gargantuas, Matango
- Leeper: Gamera 2: Attack of Legion and Gamera 3: Revenge of Iris
- Stelmaszek: War of the Gargantuas
- Audience: Cloverfield?
- Stelmaszek: It was interesting, a new point of view.
- Leeper: Thought it would end "Godzilla" films.
- Eggleton: It had a great marketing campaign. But there was a *really* long-lasting camera battery. *Trollhunter* is better as a "found footage" movie.
- □ Godzilla Vs. Gamera
- Gamera Vs. Cthulhu
- ı Godzilla Vs. Godzilla

Do I Have to Slog my Way through WAR AND PEACE? Sunday, 1:00 PM Darrell Schweitzer (mod), Deborah Stanish, Tom Purdom

Description: "While it seems to be true that someone who reads only science fiction will not make a very good SF writer, how much grounding in mainstream and classic literature is necessary? What classic works of non-SF fiction should aspiring writers read?"

- Purdom: Loves War and Peace even though it is 25% longer than The Lord of the Rings.
- Schweitzer: It is important to read mythology, etc.
- Schweitzer: There are non-science fiction authors very influential in science fiction, e.g., Rudyard Kipling, C. S. Forester, Arthur Conan Doyle, Ernest Hemingway, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, ...
- Purdom: There are "ex-classics" in the "Classics Illustrated" line.
- Panel: Translations matter.
- Panel: The basics are the Bible and Shakespeare.
- Panel: by Cixin Liu has footnotes by the translator, Ken Liu (no relation).
- Schweitzer: *The Dubliners* leads to *Ulysses* which leads to *Finnegans Wake*.

Miscellaneous

Crystal Ballroom 3 was very hot.

Mark was put on a panel that they failed to tell him about.