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The conference on imaginative literature, thirty-third edition.

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Readercon 15 program

All items are 50 minutes unless otherwise noted, beginning on the hour. (M) indicates Moderator only and is listed first. (+M) indicates Participant/Moderator and is listed alphabetically. Times with "a" at the end are before noon; all others noon and later.

FRIDAY

*** Fri 02:00 Ballroom Lobby
Registration & Information open.

*** Fri 03:00 Room 630
Con Suite opens.

[#1] Fri 03:00 H
"Understanding" Superhuman Intelligence. Brian Attebery (+M), Stepan Chapman, James Alan Gardner, Matt Jarpe, Graham Sleight. It's generally acknowledged that a story cannot depict intelligence far above the human level, since the author is only human. We notice that this observation has not kept authors (including Tom Disch, Ted Chiang, and Charles Stross) from trying anyway. What techniques have these authors used? How successful have they been? How will these stories change as neuroscience evolves?

[#2] Fri 03:30 VT

F. Brett Cox reads a new short story, as yet untitled, that combines the legend of the New England Sea Serpent with the temperance riot in Rockport, Mass. in the 1850s. (30 min).

*** Fri 04:00 E

Bookshop opens.

[#3] Fri 04:00 H

Offbeat! Michael Cisco, Paul Di Filippo, Theodora Goss, Rudy Rucker, Gordon Van Gelder (+M), Gene Wolfe. It's a bit like pornography -- it's hard to say just what we mean when we say a story or a writer is "offbeat," but we all know it when we see it. Just what are the qualities that make a story offbeat, beyond the requisite denial or circumvention of expectation? Can a writer choose to be offbeat for a single story, or does being truly and effectively offbeat derive from something deeper in a writer's psyche? Some writers are always offbeat in the same way, but the true masters (like Guest of Honor Howard Waldrop) are offbeat in a different way each time -- which seems to be a formidable feat. Are there conscious methods at work here, or is it just something you're born with?

[#4] Fri 04:00 RI

Why Science Fiction Novels Aren't Novels (But Are Actually Something Else). Debra Doyle. Talk / Discussion (60 min). A live, expanded, and interactive version of an online rant (www.sff.net/people/doylemacdonald/genre2.htm). Doyle believes that there are "two conflicting artistic ideologies working to shape contemporary science fiction. Both parties want to make the genre better, everybody involved seriously cares about what they're doing and why they're doing it . . . and their prescriptions for improvement are, I think, mutually exclusive." One party believes (mistakenly, says Doyle), that sf novels are, speaking theoretically and taxonomically, Novels; the other realizes that they are in fact Something Else.

[#5] Fri 04:00 NH

Barry B. Longyear reads the opening chapters of *The Hangman's Son*, a mystery. (60 min).

[#6] Fri 04:00 VT

John Langan reads from a novel-in-progress (working title *Der Schwartzkünstler*, or, *The Fishermen*). Two men who have lost their wives and families take a fishing trip to a haunted stream in upstate New York. Along the way, they learn the stream's history, which is bound together with the history of the eponymous sorcerer. (30 min).

[#7] Fri 04:30 VT

Ann Tonsor Zeddies reads from *Steel Helix*, a prequel to *Typhon's Children* and *Riders of Leviathan*. (30 min).

[#8] Fri 05:00 F

Horror and Pornography: Separated at Birth (or is it Death)? Richard Bowes, F. Brett Cox (+M), Ellen Datlow, Scott Edelman, Thomas Monteleone, Gene O'Neill. Horror and pornography are both genres defined by the effect they have on the reader/viewer. (And it's probably not a coincidence that at least one pop psychologist has tried to reduce all human emotion to fear versus love). What can we learn about horror as a genre by comparing and contrasting it to its secret sibling?

[#9] Fri 05:00 H

The Science Fiction of Hal Clement. Catherine Asaro, Carl Frederick, Matt Jarpe, Tony Lewis (+M), Ed Meskys. We can all list numerous writers who are known for their hard sf, but this often means speculation about exotic quantum or cosmological phenomena only loosely tied to

any known science. In contrast, Hal Clement's rigorous scientific extrapolation has generally been closely tied to current laboratory science. Getting a novel out of the phase diagram of water-ammonia mixtures was a more challenging feat than attempted by many of his peers, in his generation or the several after. We cannot think of another writer who has made science not the seasoning but the main course, at such a consistently high level, for so long.

[#10] Fri 05:00 RI

Bookaholics Anonymous Annual Meeting. Wen Spencer with Holly Black, Terry McGarry, and attendees. Discussion (60 min). The most controversial of all 12-step groups. Despite the appearance of self-approbation, despite the formal public proclamations by members that they find their behavior humiliating and intend to change it, this group, in fact, is alleged to secretly encourage its members to succumb to their addictions. The shame, in other words, is a sham. Within the subtext of the members' pathetic testimony, it is claimed, all the worst vices are covertly endorsed: book-buying, book-hoarding, book-stacking, book-sniffing, even book-reading. Could this be true? Come testify yourself!

[#11] Fri 05:00 NH

Paul Levinson reads from *The Pixel Eye*, the new Phil D'Amato novel forthcoming from Tor in August. It takes place in post-September-11 New York City, where holograms, advanced cellphones, and squirrels are used for surveillance -- by government and terrorists -- and perhaps as new "organic" bombs. (30 min).

[#12] Fri 05:00 VT

Greer Gilman reads from "A Crowd of Bone," out any second now in *Trampoline*, from Small Beer Press. (30 min).

[#13] Fri 05:00 E

Autographs. See Information Kiosk for possible additional session.

[#14] Fri 05:30 NH

James D. Macdonald reads from the next Peter Crossman mystery, *The Gates of Time*. (30 min).

[#15] Fri 05:30 VT

Glenn Grant reads from the novella "Burning Day," an android police procedural set in a future Toronto, forthcoming in *Island Dreams: Montreal Authors of the Fantastic* (to be launched by Vehicule Press at the Toronto Worldcon). (30 min).

[#16] Fri 06:00 F

The Closet at Bag-End. Ellen Asher, Richard Bowes, Connie Hirsch, John Morressy, Elspeth Potter (+M), Ann Tonsor Zeddies; introduced by Eric M. Van. Certainly J.R.R. Tolkien had no conscious conception of Frodo as gay. However, the character of Frodo was almost certainly based on young men he had known in real life. Because Frodo's character is defined by his resistance of the Ring, Tolkien would have been drawn to model Frodo on men who projected a powerful sense of self-abnegation, of resistance to or denial of desire. These real-life models were apparently lifelong bachelors with no evident interest in sexuality; hence Frodo is the same, an aspect of his character that Tolkien need not have "understood" as we do in order to portray. If the real-life models for Frodo were indeed gay and closeted (perhaps even from themselves), doesn't it make sense to regard Frodo as the same? Do we need to "make sense" of his asexuality in this way, and does this reading add to the text? How should we view his relationship to (the explicitly heterosexual) Sam?

[#17] Fri 06:00 H

Adventures in Other Dimensions. Michael A. Burstein, Kurt Engfehr, Paul Levinson (+M), Rudy Rucker, Ian Randal Strock. Radical shifts in perspective can be gained from imagined

worlds having a different -- usually greater -- number of spatial dimensions than our own boring three. Yet such stories, centering on the perception and physics of higher dimensions, are rare. Too hard to write? Asking too much of the reader (but surely not of Readercon regulars)? Come help us strike out in new dimensions.

[#18] Fri 06:00 ME

Break on Through (to Another Side). Stepan Chapman, Leigh Grossman (+M), Walter H. Hunt, Farah Mendlesohn, Patrick O'Leary. Every so often we read a work by a writer we thought we knew thoroughly, and are taken by surprise when they go places or do things we didn't know they were capable of. Such stories may mark a change in career direction or growth to a new level, or they may just represent one of a writer's (often especially interesting) other sides. We'll talk about some of our favorite breakaway works, and explore the ways such works impact their authors' careers.

[#19] Fri 06:00 RI

The Art of Revising. Wen Spencer. Talk (30 min). Too many times, writers throw out the baby with the bathwater, merely reproducing more first draft instead of refining what is already there. Spencer speaks to beginners about how to revise a novel.

[#20] Fri 06:00 NH

Ellen Kushner reads from the next novel in the Swordspoint universe, set forty years earlier than *The Fall of the Kings*. (30 min).

[#21] Fri 06:00 VT

Scott Edelman reads "The Old-Fashioned Way." (60 min).

[#22] Fri 06:00 E

Autographs. Debra Doyle and James D. Macdonald; Thomas Monteleone.

[#23] Fri 06:30 RI

Small Press: Learning, Proving or Killing Ground? Steven Sawicki. Talk (30 min). If you're a writer, should you embrace it or avoid it? And is any of it worth reading?

[#24] Fri 06:30 NH

Laurie J. Marks reads from *Earth Logic*, forthcoming in February 2004 (30 min).

*** Fri 07:00 E

Bookshop closes.

[#25] Fri 07:00 F

SF's Greatest Generation. Hal Clement, Jeff Hecht <replacing Jean Marie Stine who arrives later>, Barry N. Malzberg, Andrew I. Porter (+M), Allen Steele. World War II was a dramatic time for sf. Isaac Asimov, James Blish, Leigh Brackett, Hal Clement, Robert A. Heinlein, Murray Leinster, A.E. Van Vogt -- many great careers got started around then. The number of sf magazines reached its all-time high. And John W. Campbell got investigated by the government when he published a story about a U-235 fission bomb. How did the war affect what got written, and how did what was written affect the conduct of the war and its aftermath?

[#26] Fri 07:00 H

Was This Review Helpful To You?: The Rise of Internet Criticism. John Clute, John Klima, Ernest Lilley (+M), Terry McGarry, Teresa Nielsen Hayden. With the explosion of the Web, readers now have more access than ever before to opinions about published fiction -- not just more opinions, but a vastly wider range of idiosyncratic viewpoints than generally found in print. User reviews on sites like Amazon are an almost entirely amateur enterprise, and offer a

remarkably broad range of form and content, in marked contrast to traditional reviews. Is this state of anything-goes criticism too prone to wildly unsupported assertions? Or does easy access to both professional and amateur reviews provide the ideal mix of consumer information?

[#27] Fri 07:00 ME

The Write Stuff. Barry B. Longyear. Talk / Discussion (60 min). How to prepare for a writing career, how to approach it, and how to do it. Longyear will answer any and all questions the audience has about writing.

[#28] Fri 07:00 RI

Dickens, the Father of Us All. Gregory Feeley. Discussion (60 min). If science fiction and modern fantasy are half-siblings, their shared parent is Charles Dickens. The texture of *Great Expectations* pervades Ian R. MacLeod's *The Light Years*, and also John Fowles's *The Magus* and Gene Wolfe's *The Book of the New Sun*. Dickens is the single most important precursor of steampunk, and his influence upon modern urban fantasy (coming in large part via Mervyn Peake, who was fascinated by him) is readily apparent in the recent novels of China Mieville. Indeed, the "alternate" futures portrayed in *A Christmas Carol* represent the first playing with historical timelines in the history of literature. A discussion of Dickens's immense and largely submerged influence upon modern genre fiction.

[#29] Fri 07:00 NH

Michael Swanwick reads "Coyote at the End of History," (forthcoming in Asimov's). "Coyote was walking up and down the Earth, as he did in those days, when he decided to visit the spaceport at First Landing, which was then called Kansas City. He had heard a lot about the Star People, and he wanted to see them for himself." (30 min).

[#30] Fri 07:00 VT

Aline Boucher Kaplan reads "Living in the Death Zone." What will climbing Mount Everest be like in fifty years, when gear and technology have changed both the mountain and how climbers approach it? One man finds out when he gets into trouble and needs help from an unusual guide. (30 min).

[#31] Fri 07:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. James Alan Gardner; Gene Wolfe.

[#32] Fri 07:30 NH

Alexander C. Irvine reads a chapter from an upcoming book. (30 min).

[#33] Fri 07:30 VT

James L. Cambias reads from "The Ocean of the Blind," forthcoming in *F&SF*. A story of scientists on an alien world meeting scientists on an alien world. (30 min).

[#34] Fri 08:00 F

Howard Waldrop reads two new stories.

[#35] Fri 08:00 H

Regency Fiction and the Single Reader. Ellen Asher, Leigh Grossman, Ed Meskys, Teresa Nielsen Hayden (+M), Delia Sherman, Wen Spencer. The work of Jane Austen and of Georgette Heyer and other Regency authors is especially appealing to some avid fantasy readers and writers. What is the attraction of this genre? Certainly the setting has some inherent appeal -- and it also lends itself superbly to character-driven fiction of true excellence.

[#36] Fri 08:00 ME

The Infodump as Poetry. Debra Doyle, Glenn Grant, Geary Gravel, Paul Levinson (+M),

Patrick Nielsen Hayden. "One light-year is not much as galactic distances go." The "infodump" is a highly evolved, practical means for an sf writer to convey necessary background information about an imagined world or situation. Whether meditative, as in the Poul Anderson story just quoted from, or frantically paced and fact-crammed as in Charles Stross's current "Accelerando" stories in Asimov's, these short passages are often well worth reading for their own sake, as standalone prose poems of a sort. And they're often what we remember of a story. We'll discuss our favorite examples; bring some of your own.

[#37] Fri 08:00 RI

Homo Sapiens Idaltu: Proof of the Multiregional Hypothesis?. John Costello. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Recently the fossilized skulls of two adults and a child were discovered in the Afar triangle and have been dated to 160,000 years BP, making them the oldest remains yet assigned to Homo sapiens. Are they? The papers published in Nature will be reviewed in the light of the two competing theories -- human replacement and multiregional evolution -- to see which theory they fit.

[#38] Fri 08:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Samuel R. Delany; James Morrow.

*** Fri 09:00 Ballroom Lobby

Registration & Information closes.

*** Fri 09:00 Room 630

Con Suite closes.

[#39] Fri 09:00 ME

What to Read After Harry Potter: One Man's Lists. Daniel P. Dern. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Like many, Dern has encountered many young readers who have devoured the Harry Potter books (and perhaps Philip Pullman and some Lemony Snickett) and want to know what to read next. He has carefully avoided reading other people's similar advice (although he will point you in its direction) and has concentrated on constructing his own set of manageable lists. Here they are.

[#40] Fri 09:00 RI

Is the Life of Buddha a Fantasy Novel? (An Interstitial Problem.) Heinz Insu Fenkl. Talk / Discussion (60 min).. Writing a novel about a historical / religious figure presents unique problems which are additionally complicated by the problem of readership. Since most religious narratives like the Christian Gospels and the Buddhist scriptures contain elements that would be construed as fantastical by non-believers, a novel incorporating these elements would by definition be a fantasy novel. On the other hand, from the point of view of literary realism, including only the historical "facts" about a religious figure would severely limit a narrative, and so "realistic" extrapolation to fill in such a narrative would constitute the "fiction." Fenkl will use his forthcoming work, Siddhartha Gautama: The Buddha Sakyamuni as a point of departure for discussing these complex questions.

[#41] Fri 09:00 NH

Hal Clement reads a story tentatively titled "Credit," a sequel to "Exchange Rate" from the Winter 1999 Absolute Magnitude. (60 min).

[#42] Fri 09:00 VT

Group Reading: The Thackery T. Lamshead Pocket Guide to Rare and Discredited Diseases. Hosted by John Klima; Stepan Chapman, Michael Cisco, Paul Di Filippo, Jeffrey Thomas, and Robert Freeman Wexler read from the anthology forthcoming from the Ministry of Whimsy Press. (60 min).

[#43] Fri 09:00 Vin
Kaffeeklatsches. John Morressy; Patrick O'Leary.

*** Fri 10:00 F/H
Meet the Pros(e) Party. All of the above (and then some.) Each writer at the party has selected a short, pithy quotation from his or her own work and is armed with a sheet of 30 printed labels that quote replicated on each. As attendees mingle and meet each pro, they obtain one of his or her labels, collecting them on the wax paper provided. Atheists, agnostics, and the lazy can leave them in the order they acquire them, resulting in one of at least nine billion Random Prose Poems. Those who believe in the reversal of entropy can rearrange them to make a Statement. Wearing labels as apparel is also popular. The total number of possibilities (linguistic and sartorial) is thought to exceed the number of still-functional synapses in George W. Bush's brain.

SATURDAY

*** Sat 09:00a Ballroom Lobby
Registration & Information open.

*** Sat 09:00a Room 630
Con Suite opens.

[#44] Sat 09:00a Vin
Kaffeeklatsch. Glen Cook.

*** Sat 10:00a E
Bookshop opens.

[#45] Sat 10:00a F
Does Your Baby Make You Smarter? Kathryn Cramer (M), Samuel R. Delany, Alexander C. Irvine, James Morrow, Kit Reed, Katya Reimann. Kathryn Cramer says: "The conventional wisdom is that having a baby wrecks your career and halves your I.Q., but I think the reality is much more interesting." The pitfalls are often discussed, but what are the benefits to the creative process of having a small child in your life? Can simply talking and reading with a child on a regular basis change the way you approach your art? Do such activities actually change your brain as well as your child's?

[#46] Sat 10:00a H
The Fiction of R. A. Lafferty. Bryan Cholfin, Greg Ketter, Lissanne Lake (+M), Darrell Schweitzer, Michael Swanwick, Howard Waldrop. Memorial Guest of Honor R. A. Lafferty lived most of his life in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he plied his trades as an electrical engineer and a writer. His stories are often absurd, surreal, humorous, and reminiscent of traditional tall tales, reflecting his legendary personal eccentricity. Neil Gaiman wrote that Lafferty "was undoubtedly the finest writer of whatever it was that he did that ever there was." And he was probably the best at what he did that ever will be. We will discuss his unique work, and we hope those present who had the good fortune to meet him will share their memories with us.

[#47] Sat 10:00a ME
The Odyssey Writing Workshop. Jeanne M. Cavelos. Talk (60 min). Director Cavelos, a former senior editor at Bantam Doubleday Dell and winner of the World Fantasy Award, describes the workings of Odyssey, an intensive six-week workshop for fantasy, science fiction, and horror writers held each summer at Southern New Hampshire University. Guest

lecturers have included Harlan Ellison, Dan Simmons, Jane Yolen, Terry Brooks, and Gene Wolfe. Graduates of the program will discuss their experiences.

[#48] Sat 10:00a RI

Mathematics and SF. Catherine Asaro, Michael A. Burstein, Donald Kingsbury, Rudy Rucker (+M), Diana Reed Slattery. A discussion touching on the very particular, specialized character of the mathematical subgenre of sf. By its very nature as a cousin of hard science, sf affords a unique fictional outlet for mathematical ideas and themes. What are some successful examples, old and new? How well can technical arcana be integrated (no pun intended) into good storytelling? And is truly outre mathematics actually explicable in this medium?

[#49] Sat 10:00a NH

Delia Sherman reads "Cotillion," forthcoming in *Firebirds* from VikingPenguin. (30 min).

[#50] Sat 10:00a VT

Thomas Monteleone reads "Hate Puppet? What the Hell's a Hate Puppet?" from *The Mothers and Fathers Italian Association*. (30 min).

[#51] Sat 10:00a Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Hal Clement; Ellen Datlow.

[#52] Sat 10:00a E

Autographs. John Morressy; Wen Spencer.

[#53] Sat 10:30a NH

Andrea Hairston reads an excerpt from her novel *Mindscape*, forthcoming in January 2004 in *Dark Matter: Reading the Bones* (Sheree R. Thomas, ed.); and an excerpt from her play *Archangels of Funk*, a sci-fi theatre jam that won a Massachusetts Cultural Council Artists Fellowship in Playwriting/New Theatre Works in 2003. (30 min).

[#54] Sat 10:30a VT

William Shunn reads two short sf horror stories: "Mrs. Janokowski Hits One out of the Park," from *Electric Velocipede #4*; and "Strong Medicine," unpublished. (30 min).

[#55] Sat 11:00a F

The Joy of Writing: The Creative Challenge of F&SF. Holly Black, Hal Clement, Ellen Kushner (+M), Barry B. Longyear, Rudy Rucker, Gene Wolfe. Jonathan Franzen said: ". . . the reader doesn't get the intense pleasure of figuring out the solution to problems that have been sitting on you for years. I think all of the bad days are balanced out, probably overbalanced, indeed, by the high you get when you actually get something right after years of trying and failing. So it's true that the behind-the-scenes work is of a very different character than the enjoyment I hope the reader gets from that work." He wasn't speaking about sf, but his point may be even more apt here. Does the writing of really original speculative works entail solving especially challenging problems relative to those faced by mainstream authors, with correspondingly greater satisfaction? Is this one of the features of sf that keeps its best practitioners involved?

[#56] Sat 11:00a H

The Fiction of Howard Waldrop. Brian Attebery, F. Brett Cox, Ken Houghton (+M), Elspeth Potter, Graham Sleight. Modern science fiction seems dominated by novels, but a few writers still build their careers on short stories. Howard Waldrop is known for taking years to craft his exquisite stories. They are original to a degree rarely approached by his peers, and formidably researched, with background detail worthy of a novel. Whether tracing the alternate history of airpower in the Civil and Indian Wars, or the possible survival of the dodo, or the fate of one who loves the cinema too well, Waldrop brings us stories no one could improve upon.

[#57] Sat 11:00a ME

The Chronology Protection Radio Case. Paul Levinson. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Phil D'Amato's first case -- "The Chronology Protection Case" (Analog, 1995) -- has been reprinted five times, made into a low-budget film (shown at Readercon last year), and, last September, made into an audioplay (when it was taped before a live audience at the Museum of Television and Radio in New York City). The radioplay was nominated for an Edgar Award for best play of 2002 by the Mystery Writers of America and will be broadcast soon on NPR. Levinson will play a CD of this play (35 minutes), and then talk to the audience about how it feels, as an author, to have one's story made into a low-budget movie and a high-budget radio play.

[#58] Sat 11:00a RI

From Shit to Shinola, or, Reversals in Definition of the Term "Space Opera." David G. Hartwell. Talk (30 min). The original meaning of Space Opera was simply, and definitively, crud. Not a guilty pleasure, not an unfashionable mode -- crud. The way the meaning shifted, and who shifted it, and why, is a fascinating piece of sf literary-historical archaeology. Come hear the real story.

[#59] Sat 11:00a NH

Darrell Schweitzer reads "The Order of Things Must Be Preserved." (30 min).

[#60] Sat 11:00a VT

Walter H. Hunt reads from The Dark Ascent, a coming sequel to The Dark Path. (30 min).

[#61] Sat 11:00a Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Geary Gravel, Rosemary Kirstein, and Ann Tonsor Zeddies; Teresa Nielsen Hayden.

[#62] Sat 11:00a E

Autographs. Terry McGarry; Patrick O'Leary.

[#63] Sat 11:30a RI

The Golem: Hero with Feet (and everything else) of Clay. Faye Ringel. Talk (30 min). The past five years have seen the Golem emerge from the Ghetto of Jewish legend and the genres of the fantastic to mainstream fame. The success of Pete Hamill's Snow in August and Michael Chabon's The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay may reflect increased popular interest in Kabbalah in general as well as a quest for heroes in unlikely places. The Golem, once seen as monster, perhaps even as the origin of Frankenstein's creature, is now a superhero, defender of Jews and even some Gentiles. As part of her continuing research into modern medievalism, Ringel will place the return of the Golem in this context. Attendees are welcome to offer more examples of the Golem in various media.

[#64] Sat 11:30a NH

Katya Reimann reads from Pattern-maker (in progress). (30 min).

[#65] Sat 11:30a VT

Gene O'Neill reads from The Burden of Indigo. (30 min).

[#66] Sat 12:00 F

Political Rebellion in SF&F. Samuel R. Delany, Gregory Feeley, James Alan Gardner, Daniel Hatch (+M), Shariann Lewitt, Howard Waldrop. Imaginative literature is particularly well adapted to exploring the nature of political rebellion: its causes, structure, and development. Do science fiction and fantasy texts inherently make different arguments from one another about the nature of this rebellion (because sf generally incorporates a particular type of societal change based on technology)? How do different texts argue for or against the "great man"

theory of history?

[#67] Sat 12:00 H

The Year in Short Fiction. Ellen Datlow, Adam Golaski, David G. Hartwell, Steven Sawicki, Gordon Van Gelder (+M). Including a look at the state of the magazines (professional and semi-pro).

[#68] Sat 12:00 ME

The Nature of Depression. Eric M. Van. Talk (60 min). What's the simple cure for most cases of clinical depression that works literally overnight? (And, obviously, what's the catch there?) Why should parents strictly limit their children's caffeine consumption? Why does the brain's most important chemical only get two sentences in the Bible of neuropharmacology? Van offers his original-and-yet-it-isn't theory on the chemical nature of depression, and integrates it with theories about serotonin and emotions presented at Readercons past.

[#69] Sat 12:00 RI

How I Wrote The Moon's Shadow. Catherine Asaro. Talk (30 min).

[#70] Sat 12:00 NH

James Morrow reads from Prometheus Wept (in progress). (60 min).

[#71] Sat 12:00 VT

Elsbeth Potter reads (30 min).

[#72] Sat 12:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. John Clute; Barry B. Longyear.

[#73] Sat 12:00 E

Autographs. Stepan Chapman; Paul Levinson.

[#74] Sat 12:30 RI

How I Wrote The Ballad of Wuntvor trilogy. Craig Shaw Gardner. Talk (30 min).

[#75] Sat 12:30 VT

Robert Freeman Wexler reads from his novella, In Springdale Town (30 min).

[#76] Sat 01:00 F

For Aficionados Only: Has SF Become Too Specialized? Thomas A. Easton, Scott Edelman, Rosemary Kirstein, Fred Lerner (+M), Barry N. Malzberg, Allen Steele. "The level of technical accomplishment today is remarkable. A run-of-the-mill issue of Asimov's is an astonishment. . . . [it] has outreached the capacity of the audience to follow. It is so sophisticated, so difficult, I don't see how anyone without a good reading background in science fiction could read that magazine with any pleasure today." -- Barry Malzberg, interviewed in Locus. Assuming Malzberg is right, is this a sign that sf editors are carving out a more specialized, evolved product than ever before -- a phenomenon reminiscent of the late history of jazz -- or that the authors are simply that much older, better read, and more accomplished? Is such artistic achievement simply good news for jaded readers, or does it come at a high cost in accessibility, and does it represent a kind of inbreeding that could be dangerous for the future of the field?

[#77] Sat 01:00 H

Is Slipstream the New Mainstream? Michael Cisco, F. Brett Cox (+M), Alexander C. Irvine, James Morrow, Kit Reed, Faye Ringel. Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* achieved such a rare combination of critical and popular acclaim that we couldn't help checking it out as a barometer of the state of the art in "mainstream," mimetic fiction. Surprise! There's a minor yet

absolutely crucial plot element that is not mimetic but fantastic (a new improbably specific psychoactive drug). Sf people know that any attempt to accurately portray today's world should contain some near-future speculation, else by the time the book is finished and published the portrait will feel out of date. Now we're wondering whether Franzen isn't the only acclaimed "mainstream" writer to have realized this -- in which case we're headed for a golden age of slipstream and a continued blurring of the boundary between sf and the mundane.

[#78] Sat 01:00 ME

Planet of 51 Pegasi. Hal Clement. Talk (60 min). A slide presentation of the scenario development for "Exchange Rate" and "Credit" which showcases one of Guest of Honor Hal Clement's explorations of science and art, and the way they intersect in his work.

[#79] Sat 01:00 RI

Writing's a Mug's Game -- You Sure You Want to Play? Thomas Monteleone. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Some of the tricks and lessons Monteleone has learned during thirty years of staying alive by selling what he writes.

[#80] Sat 01:00 NH

John Morressy reads from a serious work in progress, or a lighter one -- audience choice. (60 min).

[#81] Sat 01:00 VT

Elizabeth Hand reads from *Mortal Love* (forthcoming). (30 min).

[#82] Sat 01:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Walter H. Hunt; Michael Swanwick.

[#83] Sat 01:00 E

Autographs. Jeffrey A. Carver; Donald Kingsbury.

[#84] Sat 01:30 VT

Jeffrey Thomas reads from *Monstrosity*, which combines far-future sf with the Cthulhu mythos of H. P. Lovecraft. (30 min).

[#85] Sat 02:00 F

The Death and Possible Coming Rebirth of SF. Judith Berman, John Clute, David G. Hartwell (+M), Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Graham Sleight, Allen Steele. John Clute has stated that sf was a response to the Industrial Revolution and is nearly played out. But aren't we in the early years of an information revolution, with a biotechnical or genetic revolution to possibly follow? If the pace of these revolutions quicken, might we see enough societal change to birth new forms of fiction? If so, would such new forms still be recognizable as sf, or would they be fundamentally different?

[#86] Sat 02:00 H

The Horror Tropes of Tomorrow. Jeanne M. Cavelos, Don D'Amassa, Craig Shaw Gardner, Adam Golaski, John Langan, Thomas Monteleone (+M). Recent horror fiction and movies have been dominated by a handful of tropes, such as vampires and slashers and serial killers. Certainly there are other things that scare us -- terrorism, infectious diseases, technology run amok -- and while each of these have been treated successfully in fiction, none has been dealt with frequently enough to achieve the status of trope, where each new work in the same vein is in (conscious or unconscious) dialogue with its predecessors. Our panelists have their fingers on the pulse of contemporary horror, and make some guesses as to which of today's potent storylines might become tomorrow's tropes.

[#87] Sat 02:00 ME

Interstitial Arts: Writing Between the Boundaries. Heinz Insu Fenkl (+M), Theodora Goss, Ellen Kushner, Delia Sherman, Sarah Smith. Discussion (60 min). The Interstitial Arts Foundation is group of "Artists Without Borders" fighting the Balkanization of art. They celebrate work that crosses or straddles the borders between mediums, the borders between genres, the borders between "high art" and popular culture. They are not opposed to mainstream fiction or genre fiction, nor are they seeking to create a new category. They are just particularly excited by border-crossing fiction (and music and art), and want to support the creation of such works and to establish better ways of engaging with them. Interstitial Arts is an idea, a conversation, not a hard-and-fast definition -- and it's a conversation you are invited to join.

[#88] Sat 02:00 RI

TV That Doesn't Suck: How To Fund Your Own Shows. Kurt Engfehr. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Tired of having your favorite show canceled? 600 channels and nothing to watch? The Viewer Consortium may be able to help. The VC is a company formed by sf fans angry at having their favorite shows canceled and determined to do something about it. By forming an organized funding operation, the VC hopes to bankroll shows in order to keep them on the air when networks have decided to cancel them. The VC has begun preliminary negotiations with various networks and production companies in an attempt to get a 5th season of Farscape funded. We'd like feedback from you, the actual sf audience.

[#89] Sat 02:00 NH

Samuel R. Delany reads "Driftglass." (60 min).

[#90] Sat 02:00 VT

Ellen Brody reads "The Skinny People of Leptophlebo Street" and "Slow Tuesday Night" by R. A. Lafferty. (60 min).

[#91] Sat 02:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Elizabeth Hand; Paul Levinson.

[#92] Sat 02:00 E

Autographs. Hal Clement; Barry B. Longyear.

[#93] Sat 02:30 VT

CANCELLED: <Ursula Pflug reads a chapter from Green Music. (30 min).>

[#94] Sat 03:00 F

The Unique Authorial Voice. Samuel R. Delany, Greer Gilman, Theodora Goss (+M), Geary Gravel, Barry N. Malzberg, Michael Swanwick. Good writers generally evolve recognizable styles during the course of their careers, but few create an oeuvre with a truly distinct signature voice. This brief list includes Avram Davidson, Carol Emshwiller, and Memorial Guest of Honor R.A. Lafferty. Can we determine what else such writers have in common, in order to define what makes them singular? How do such cohesive styles evolve? What is the nature of the connection between this uniqueness and the tiny but fanatical followings that these writers almost invariably have?

[#95] Sat 03:00 H

September 11 and Fiction. Richard Bowes, Paul Levinson, Teresa Nielsen Hayden (+M), Gordon Van Gelder, Howard Waldrop. Some people have said that it will be ten years before readers are able to read stories that deal with September 11, 2001, and yet editors report receiving a number of these stories already. How have the events of September 11 and their aftermath affected recent published fiction (or been paralleled in earlier work), in the US and abroad? And how are readers coping with the strong feelings evoked by these stories?

- [#96] Sat 03:00 ME
Hollywood, the Movies, and Your Book. Jean Marie Stine. Talk (60 min). How Stine's Season of the Witch, the most unlikely of books, got produced as the movie Synapse. Stine (who has written Hollywood journalism off and on for more than three decades) explains the dynamics of Hollywood, and why sf, fantasy, and horror novels rarely become films. What they are looking for in books and screenplays, and what does a book need to sell to them?
- [#97] Sat 03:00 RI
Who Is This Shakespeare and Why Are People Saying Funny Things About Him? Sarah Smith. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Hear about the Shakespeare authorship controversy (why serious people can be interested in it, what kinds of evidence have been uncovered in recent years) and how Smith used it in Chasing Shakespeares.
- [#98] Sat 03:00 NH
Catherine Asaro reads from Skyfall (forthcoming from Tor in October 2003), a prequel in the Ruby Dynasty series about the parents of the established characters. (30 min).
- [#99] Sat 03:00 VT
Michael Cisco reads from The Tyrant. (30 min).
- [#100] Sat 03:00 Vin
Genrettes Book Release Party. Rosemary Kirstein, Ellen Kushner, Laurie J. Marks, and Delia Sherman. Includes autographing.
- [#101] Sat 03:00 E
Autographs. Rudy Rucker; Ann Tonsor Zeddies.
- [#102] Sat 03:30 NH
Shariann Lewitt reads "Immortal," a brand new story. (30 min).
- [#103] Sat 03:30 VT
Jeanne M. Cavelos reads from Fatal Spiral (in progress), a near-future thriller about genetic manipulation. (30 min).
- [#104] Sat 04:00 F
Hal Clement Interviewed by Michael A. Burstein. (45 min)
- [#105] Sat 04:45 F
Rudy Rucker GoH Speech: Power Chords, Thought Experiments, Transrealism and Monomyths. (45 min)
- [#106] Sat 05:30 F
Howard Waldrop Interviewed by Ellen Datlow. (45 min)
- *** Sat 06:00 Ballroom Lobby
Registration and Information close.
- *** Sat 06:00 E
Bookshop closes.
- [#107] Sat 08:15 F/H
The 18th Kirk Poland Memorial Bad Prose Competition. Eric M. Van (M), Craig Shaw Gardner (+M), Glenn Grant, Yves Meynard, Patrick O'Leary. (Doors open at 8:00; c.75 min)
Our traditional evening entertainment, named in memory of the pseudonym and alter ego of

Jonathan Herovit of Barry Malzberg's Herovit's World. Ringleader Craig Shaw Gardner reads a passage of unidentified but genuine, published, bad sf, fantasy, or horror prose, which has been truncated in mid-sentence. Each of our panelists -- Craig and his co-moderator Eric M. Van, new champion Glenn Grant, returning challenger Patrick O'Leary and new provocateur Yves Meynard -- then reads an ending for the passage. One ending is the real one; the others are imposters concocted by our contestants (including Craig) ahead of time. None of the players knows who wrote any passage other than their own, except for Eric, who gets to play God as a reward for the truly onerous duty of unearthing these gems. Craig then asks for the audience vote on the authenticity of each passage (recapping each in turn by quoting a pithy phrase or three from them), and the Ace Readercon Joint Census Team counts up each show of hands faster than you can say "Bambi pranced." Eric then reveals the truth. Each contestant receives a point for each audience member they fooled, while the audience collectively scores a point for everyone who spots the real answer. As a rule, the audience finishes third or fourth. Warning: the Sturgeon General has determined that this trash is hazardous to your health; i.e., if it hurts to laugh, you're in big trouble.

*** Sat midnight Room 630
Con Suite closes.

SUNDAY

*** Sun 09:00a Ballroom Lobby
Registration & Information open.

*** Sun 09:00a Room 630
Con Suite opens.

*** Sun 10:00a E
Bookshop opens.

[#108] Sun 10:00a F
Catholicism and Imaginative Literature. Elizabeth Hand, James D. Macdonald (+M), John Morressy, Michael Swanwick, Gene Wolfe. J.R.R. Tolkien, Gene Wolfe, G.K. Chesterton, John Crowley, C.S. Lewis, and R.A. Lafferty are among our favorite writers whose work is or was affected by their Catholicism, in both obvious and subtle ways. How does being Catholic influence the process of creating fiction, and its structure, style, and content? Other deeply held belief systems are influential to writers, but the influence of Catholicism seems qualitatively different. How do fundamentally Catholic works succeed in appealing so strongly, even to those who reject the underlying beliefs?

[#109] Sun 10:00a H
The Golden Age of Science Fiction is Now. Hal Clement, Ellen Datlow, Paul Di Filippo (+M), David G. Hartwell, Farah Mendlesohn, Shane Tourtellotte. Furrowed brows over the state and future of sf are the standard at conventions, perhaps necessarily so, but today we stop to consider how good we have it. The standard of writing, at all lengths, is higher than it has ever been. More writers than ever are building on the past in ever-more-inventive ways. Reprint projects are making available the best of the past. Many of us are finding that there are far more fine books than time to read them. An exploration of our many reasons to be cheerful.

[#110] Sun 10:00a ME
The Manner of Fantasy, Amended and Restated. Donald G. Keller. Talk (60 min). In a 1991 issue of The New York Review of Science Fiction, Keller coined the term "fantasy of

manners" to refer to a new subgenre he perceived in the works of writers like Ellen Kushner, Delia Sherman, Terri Windling, and the Scribbles in Minneapolis. For a time there was intense online discussion of fantasy of manners (and its not-quite-synonym "mannerpunk"), and Keller wrote an entry on the subject for John Clute's Encyclopedia of Fantasy. Discussion of the subgenre has resurfaced recently, and the time seems apropos for Keller to take another look at his definition and consider some recent works that may fall under its rubric.

[#111] Sun 10:00a RI

The Future of Education in Fiction. Jeff Hecht, Donald Kingsbury, Laurie J. Marks (+M), Rajnar Vajra, Ann Tonsor Zeddies. The future of education is a popular subject that is often explored in sf and fantasy, either as a major subject or an interesting tangent. The advent of standardized testing realizes some of our literature's darkest fears. How will the trend towards educational homogeneity in the US today impact these fictional extrapolations?

[#112] Sun 10:00a NH

Rudy Rucker reads either a selection from his new novel Frek and the Elixir, or all of his new story "The Men in the Back Room at the Country Club." (60 min).

[#113] Sun 10:00a VT

James Alan Gardner reads something chosen from among "The Eightfold Career Path; or Invisible Duties"; "Kent State Descending the Gravity Well," and Radiant. (30 min).

[#114] Sun 10:00a Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Daniel P. Dern; Terry McGarry.

[#115] Sun 10:00a E

Autographs. James Morrow; Allen Steele.

[#116] Sun 10:30a VT

Wen Spencer reads from Tinker (forthcoming from Baen in November). Inventor, girl genius, Tinker lives in a near-future Pittsburgh which adjoins Elfland. She runs her salvage business and keeps the local ambient level of magic down with her gadgets, until a pack of wargs chases an Elf noble into her scrap yard.. (30 min).

[#117] Sun 11:00a F

Why We Love Buffy. Mark Bernstein, Michael A. Burstein (+M), Craig Shaw Gardner, Connie Hirsch, Donald G. Keller, Resa Nelson. By our next convention, all seven seasons of Buffy the Vampire Slayer should be available on DVD. If you're not already in the process of buying them all and watching them several times, then you need to come hear why folks who read high-falutin' postmodern literary Readercon-correct imaginative literature widely regard BtVS as the greatest TV show ever.

[#118] Sun 11:00a H

The Career of Rudy Rucker. Jim Freund (M), Paul Di Filippo, Glenn Grant, Ken Houghton, Diana Reed Slattery. As a mathematician, computer scientist, professor, and writer of both fiction and nonfiction, Rudy Rucker explores many dimensions, and each of his interests informs the others. As a writer, he is particularly known for his *ware series of novels, for which he is considered one of the founding fathers of the cyberpunk movement. He also espouses a style he calls "transrealism" which he defines as writing about one's real life in fantastic terms, in novels such as The Hacker and the Ants. And he has recently forayed into historical fiction with a novel about Peter Bruegel. Come join our exploration and celebration of this protean talent.

[#119] Sun 11:00a ME

Memoir Writing for Fun and Profit. William Shunn. Discussion (60 min). Every person has

lived a life worthy of recording in book form. The only question is, how do you get started? Whether you're aiming at an audience of family and a few friends or the bestseller lists, you'll get tips on organizing, writing, and publishing your life story -- well, organizing and writing, anyway -- from Shunn, author of the as-yet-unpublished memoir *Missionary Man: My Adventures as a Foot Soldier in the Mormon Army*. Bring your pencils!

[#120] Sun 11:00a RI

How I Wrote *The Impossible Bird*. Patrick O'Leary. Talk (30 min).

[#121] Sun 11:00a NH

Holly Black reads "The Night Market," written for Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling's forthcoming *Faerie Reel* anthology. Set in the Philippines, one sister has been cursed by an *enkanto* and the other must find a way to make her well again. (30 min).

[#122] Sun 11:00a VT

Stepan Chapman reads "The Obscure Medical History of the Twentieth Century As Revealed By the Lamshead Pocket Guide," an essay from the upcoming concept anthology *The Thackery T. Lamshead Pocket Guide to Obscure and Discredited Diseases* (Jeff VanderMeer, Mark Roberts, eds.). (30 min).

[#123] Sun 11:00a Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Debra Doyle and James D. Macdonald; Kathryn Cramer and David G. Hartwell.

[#124] Sun 11:00a E

Autographs. Samuel R. Delany; Michael Swanwick.

[#125] Sun 11:30a RI

How I Wrote *Steel Helix*. Ann Tonsor Zeddies. Talk (30 min).

[#126] Sun 11:30a NH

Shane Tourtellotte reads "Extended Family," forthcoming in December in *New Faces in Science Fiction* (Mike Resnick, ed.). (30 min).

[#127] Sun 11:30a VT

Theodora Goss reads "Her Mother's Ghosts" and another story. (30 min).

[#128] Sun 12:00 F

Ambizione! John Clute, Ellen Kushner, Barry N. Malzberg, Laurie J. Marks, David Alexander Smith (+M), Howard Waldrop. Italo Calvino wrote: "Overambitious projects may be objectionable in many fields, but not in literature. Literature remains alive only if we set ourselves immeasurable goals, far beyond all hope of achievement. Only if poets and writers set themselves tasks that no one else dares imagine will literature continue to have a function." We'll talk about reading and writing works of great ambition, and how one affects the other.

[#129] Sun 12:00 H

What is Reality -- And Why Is It So Popular? Hal Clement, Samuel R. Delany, Kurt Engfehr, Andrea Hairston, Shariann Lewitt, James Morrow (+M). True stories have always had a special appeal. If the popularity of "reality TV" is an indicator, this appeal is burgeoning, to the point where even obviously manufactured "true" stories are, for many, preferable to fiction. What's behind this phenomenon? Does this fascination with the "real" pose any threat to the future of fiction? Are there any insights into the appeal of stories here for the tellers of "untrue" stories? We can't guarantee that truth is stranger than fiction: at Readercon it is frequently the other way around.

[#130] Sun 12:00 ME

Comics of the Iron Age. John Morressy. Talk / Discussion (60 min). In the early days of the Golden Age, superheroes in gaudy costumes were all over the place. Some went on to enjoy lengthy careers, others faded away. But why did Whizzer and the Human Top and Hydroman fade away, while Superman, Batman, Green Lantern, Captain America, and others go on and on, surviving crippling injury and even death? What became of all those magicians and soldiers of fortune and Tarzan clones? What does it take to make a hero super?

[#131] Sun 12:00 RI

The Glide Project: Story Languages as Altered Consciousness. Diana Reed Slattery. Talk (60 min). The emergence of a language specific to a story world is familiar to us from Tolkien, Elgin, Le Guin, and Delany, to name a few. One "constructed language" web site lists more than 200 such projects; the Glide Project is a reflection of such obsession. Slattery will discuss the close coupling of language and consciousness in her 2003 novel, *The Maze Game*. As she wrote, "it became evident that the Glide language was intricately involved at every level of the story, and was, in a sense, both generating the story, a driving force in the evolution of both events and characters, and, itself, a character in the story." This presentation includes a chance to use the interactive "playspaces" that allow one to experiment with the language: the Collabyrinth (Glide language editor), the Oracle (Glide as an I Ching-like oracle) and LiveGlide, a performance mode where Glide-writing is done with 3D objects, moving and changing in a world-space.

[#132] Sun 12:00 NH

Greg Ketter reads from and discusses R.A. Lafferty's unpublished *Sardinian Summer* (1854-1862). (60 min).

[#133] Sun 12:00 VT

Patrick O'Leary reads one of two stories (one about sex, one about the end of the world). Or something completely different. But definitely some poetry. (30 min).

[#134] Sun 12:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Donald Kingsbury; Ian Randal Strock.

[#135] Sun 12:00 E

Autographs. Catherine Asaro; James Alan Gardner.

[#136] Sun 12:30 VT

Judith Berman reads "After Liberation," about the aftermath of an alien invasion, forthcoming in Asimov's. (30 min).

*** Sun 01:00 Ballroom Lobby

Registration and Information close.

[#137] Sun 01:00 F

Psychology, Myth, and Fantasy. Delia Sherman (M), Judith Berman, Greer Gilman, Elizabeth Hand, Donald G. Keller, Patrick O'Leary. Guy Gavriel Kay said: ". . . the genre [at the time *The Fionavar Tapestry* was written] seemed to be utterly lacking of any awareness of psychological underpinnings of myth and legend forms . . . being clued into myth, to legend while being very uncomfortable with, say, the sexuality that underlies [them] . . . the contribution of Freud is to suggest that these myths and legends are powerful for reasons that Tolkien would have been very uncomfortable with." What other works of modern fantasy appear to be psychologically informed? Which works rely on the Jungian, and which seem to adopt a neuroscientific perspective? Is a psychological understanding of myths and legends necessarily helpful? A sword, after all, is sometimes just a sword . . .

[#138] Sun 01:00 H

Children's SF = A Free Lunch? Brian Attebery, James L. Cambias, Jeffrey A. Carver, Debra Doyle (+M), Farah Mendlesohn. Farah Mendlesohn has argued that "there ain't no such thing as children's science fiction. And a good thing too." Heinlein argued that the ability to do higher mathematics was an indication of intellectual maturity and suggested it emerged around the age of twelve. Can the same be said about the ability to read science fiction? Does this explain why there is so little sf for children, and why most twelve-and-over readers shift very quickly to the YA and adult market?

[#139] Sun 01:00 ME

Collaborating With the Dead. Katya Reimann. Talk (60 min). Reimann will talk about preparing Cherry Wilder's final novel for publication. What is it like to work with a (favorite, respected) author who can't talk back when you make changes? How to make decisions about what to leave in -- and what to take out? What are the compromises one should make for style, for readability? Reimann wrestled with all these questions and more -- was Wilder turning in her grave or cheering her onward? Come find out how Reimann earned her co-writing credit

[#140] Sun 01:00 RI

The Promise of Genre. John Langan. Talk / Discussion (60 min). Douglas Winter's essay "The Pathos of Genre" has had a fairly significant influence on the horror field in the four or five years since it first appeared. He argued that the notion of horror as a genre is really only useful to second-rate writers looking to churn out formulaic potboilers and to publishers looking to shoehorn works into easy-to-market categories. Peter Straub and S. T. Joshi have echoed these comments. Langan respectfully disagrees with these writers, believing they've confused genre as a marketing category (necessarily restrictive and probably to be eschewed) with genre as a critical category. Langan will argue that the latter holds great promise for creative expression by acting as a frame for the writer's concerns (thus serving a parallel function to that served by form in poetry). These ideas are relevant not just to horror but to all genres.

[#141] Sun 01:00 NH

Rosemary Kirstein reads from *The Language of Power*, the fourth book in the Steerswoman series, forthcoming from Del Rey in 2004. (30 min).

[#142] Sun 01:00 VT

Jeff Hecht reads "Draft Dodger's Rag," just sold to Analog. (30 min).

[#143] Sun 01:00 Vin

Kaffeeklatsches. Scott Edelman; Wen Spencer.

[#144] Sun 01:00 E

Autographs. Ellen Datlow; Walter H. Hunt.

[#145] Sun 01:30 NH

Terry McGarry reads from *The Binder's Road*. A streetwise tradertown orphan, who can sense the dead, is forced to venture into a hauntwood in search of treasure, fighting to save what's left of her family. (30 min).

[#146] Sun 01:30 VT

Don D'Amassa reads "A Good Offense," plus an unpublished short short. (30 min).

*** Sun 02:00 Room 630

Con Suite closes.

*** Sun 02:00 E

Bookshop Closes

[#147] Sun 02:00 F

Atomic Power and the Singularity: Great White Tropes of SF? Catherine Asaro, Jeffrey A. Carver, Kathryn Cramer, Jeff Hecht (+M), Rudy Rucker. The sf of the 1940s seems, in retrospect, to be filled with both large and tiny atomic generators producing clean, unlimited power. The reality turned out differently. The sf of today is filled with various human/computer hybrids achieving transcendent states of mind. We suggest that the Singularity may be to the 2000s as atomic power was to the 1940s. What might this say about the state of today's sf? Can we imagine how the reality might be a bit more complicated?

[#148] Sun 02:00 H

The Merits of "Sci-Fi". F. Brett Cox, Debra Doyle, Andrea Hairston, Walter H. Hunt, Jeff Paris (+M). We all recognize that most media sf is in most ways equivalent to the written sf of the 1930s, and many of us use the term "sci-fi" (or even "skiffy") to distinguish this stuff from modern sf. Where does the enormous popularity of a "sci-fi" classic like Star Wars come from -- is it just the combination of great story and eye candy, or does the best "sci-fi" also serve as modern myth?

[#149] Sun 02:00 VT

Adam Golaski reads excerpts (forthcoming in Supernatural Tales #8) from a collection, Color Plates. (30 min).

[#150] Sun 02:30 VT

John Costello reads from his translation of Alice: The Girl From Earth by Kir Bulychev, published by Fossicker Press. (30 min).

*** Sun 03:00 F

Readercon 15 Debriefing. Members of the Readercon 15 Committee.

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