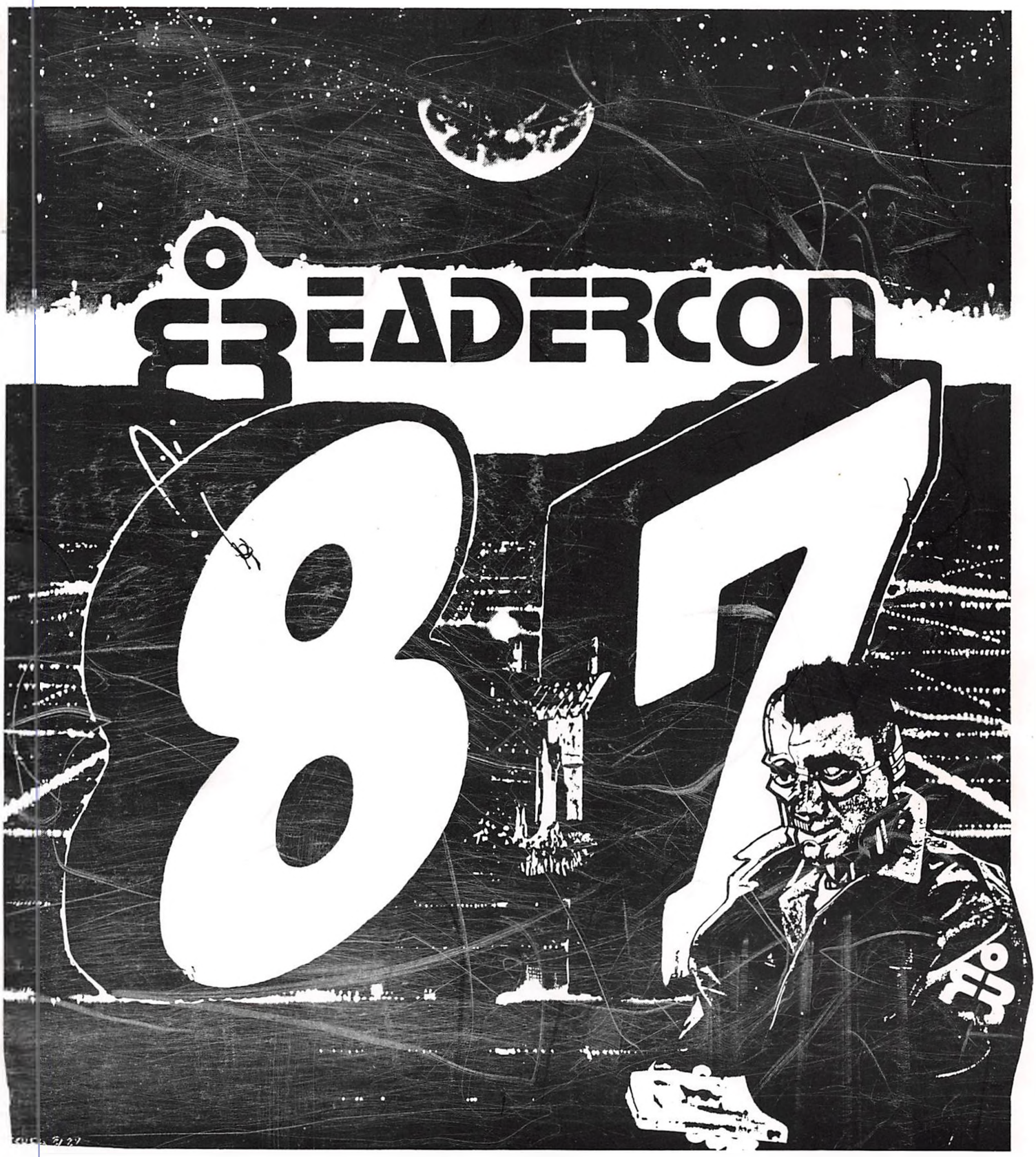
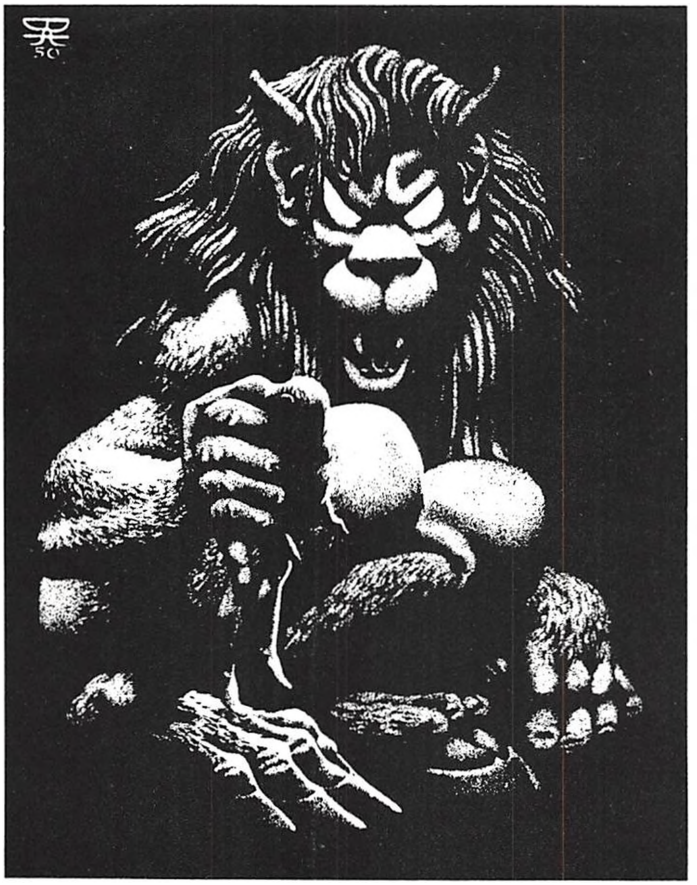


PROGRAM BOOK

AS A SERIOUS COLLECTOR CAN YOU REALLY
AFFORD TO MISS OUT ON UNCOMMON AND
VERY COLLECTABLE TITLES FROM OUR

FANTASY ARCHIVES



We have recently aquired for some of our more personable (and determined) clients, copies of some very difficult to obtain books, such as. . . . 9 Princes in Amber, Lord of Light, A Canticle for Leibowitz, Flowers for Algernon, Dawn of Flame, More Than Human, Green Odyssey, etc., etc. . . . Can't we assist you with the more difficult items on your want list?

THE

UNCOMMON

71 8th Avenue New York, N. Y. 10014

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COME SEE US IN THE HUCKSTERS' ROOM

Where Castle?

an introductory essay by ***Gene Wolfe***

I read Kipling a lot as a kid, and I'm reading him again now. What separates these dips into the British raj is most of my life. I still have his collected poetry, inscribed in my mother's hand: Gene R. Wolfe, Xmas 1945, 1619 Vassar St., Houston 6, Tex. K3 1929.

Well, it just goes to show you. We let one little number, that "6," in between the town and the state, and now we have nine-digit zip codes. Extrapolation proves conclusively that within a hundred years each zip code will occupy an entire page of fine print. I'm going to hate that.

But to get back to Kipling and me, the frontispiece shows a bald man with very small glasses and a white mustache. Although I loved some of his poems, it never occurred to me that he and I really had much in common. To start with, he was dead. I, on the other hand, was alive, a gawky fourteen-year-old with hair, a nude upper lip, and big glasses.

Lately that's started to seem wrong. For one thing, Kipling and I have the same British agent — A. P. Watt. I haven't yet grown a mustache, but my glasses are becoming smaller. Kipling said that England was the most interesting foreign country he had ever visited, and I feel just the same way. Kipling was born in Bombay, India; I was raised in Houston, which has the same murderously hot and muggy climate.

Kipling wrote some science fiction, of course; but not everything he wrote was science fiction. He wrote a book about a man who compulsively recalled the ancient world; I recently finished a book about a man who compulsively forgets the ancient world: *Soldier of the Mist.*

And yet I can't escape the feeling that parallels equally valid or invalid could be found in the lives of most writers; we are shaped by our craft as least as much as Mr. Sherlock Holmes (surely as great a Kipling fan as I) found weavers and sailors to be molded by theirs. And I think most of us are shaped as much by the reading as by the writing; it's a poor writer who doesn't read two or three times as much as he writes. If that's so, then we are not only people very much like you — we are you. Publishers would like to pigeonhole us, or so it seems to me; but we are forever climbing out and going next door to visit. Because we are living people, after all, people who don't always obey the rules because we're so much older than the rules, older than Kipling, older far than the ancient stone dwelling into which he settled after so much globe trotting.

Here, then, is our castle. And if it looks remarkably like a bookcase to those who don't live here, so much the worse for them. Our home is our castle, after all; and it is our hope. Welcome to our family reunion.

ADERCON

Gene Wolfe
Publisher G.O.H. Mark Ziesing
Holiday Inn of Boston at Brookline, 1200 Beacon Street, Brookline, Massachusetts 02146
June 27-28, 1987

Table of Contents

Readercon is:
Robert Colby/Chair • **Eric Van**/Program • **Spike MacPhee**/Staff Office • **David Broadbent**/Hotel Liaison • **Diane Rosenburg**/Registration • **Kathei Logue**/Treasurer, Operations • **Janis Hoffing**/Hucksters • **Adina Adler**/Information • **Janice Eisen**/Green Room, Con Newsletter • **Ken Meltsner**/Publications • **Anita Van**/GoH Liaison • **Marsha Finley**/Sales, Registration (asst.) • **Robert Ingria**/Network News
Special Thanks: David Hartwell, Arthur Hlavaty, Bernadette Bosky, James Turner, Joe Shea, Stanley Wiater, Ellen Kushner
P.O. Box 6138, Boston, MA 02209 • (617) 576-0415 (evenings/weekends)

Program Book Credits

Readercon logo by Joe Shea. Layout and design by Ken Meltsner using an Apple Macintosh and Laserwriter.

What We're All About

Why is there a Readercon? What could have possessed us to ask all of you to disrupt your lives (some of which are lived very, very far away) in order to show up for this thing? How did it all get started? And just what are we trying to do here, anyway?

In order to do that, I really should introduce myself first. My name is Robert Colby, the author of all the unsigned material in this Program Book, and I started all this. And while all conventions are group efforts (see the Table of Contents), this one is going to have trouble, at least for the first few years, avoiding the personal stamp of its maker; accordingly, much that gets written here may seem a tad more personal than is customary in con publications.

Readercon began as an attempt to do two things. The first was to meet a need. After many years away from the convention scene, I had begun going again, spurred by a belief that things were beginning to happen again creatively in science fiction. To put it mildly, things had changed, to the extent that, outside of panels, it was hard to find people with whom I could exchange opinions (and panels aren't really set up for socializing). Here was all this new blood, with all these new ideas, coming into the field; where were the people who wanted to talk about it? It seemed that large conventions had all the things I wanted except one: an atmosphere in which I wouldn't have to spend an inordinate time looking for them.Wouldn't it be nice to have a place to go where readers' interests were the whole agenda?

I don't think I'm alone in this desire, and the results we've achieved in our infancy bear this out. This is, it seems to me, part of a larger trend that will eventually lead to the establishment of many more specialized conventions. For a long time, it's been assumed that all the various interests that come to the large conventions are essentially alike because, after all, they are "all fans." That notion cries out for reconsideration today. Let's look at two people. One comes to conventions to find people who are interested in discussing writers like Gene Wolfe. Another comes to live out a fantasy of being a mighty warrior, or a princess, or a slavegirl, or a space cowboy. Without making any value judgments, can these two people really be said to have a whole lot more in common than any two people you could pull off the street at random (apart from both being a bit weird by the standards of normal society)? More to the point, do they have any compelling need to be in the same place at the same time? As time goes on, I think that more and more people on both sides of that line are going to say *no*.

The second thing we want to do is ask a question: what ways of getting together to appreciate literature can actually be of real use in encouraging and fostering an atmosphere of greater creativity, or most valuable to the reader? In doing what we're doing, there's a real danger of being seen as mere traditionalists, trying to restore the *status quo ante media*. With all respect to what's been achieved before, that's not really the idea here. Tradition is a double-edged sword (in the Readercon Lexicon, it's defined as "a decision you let someone else have the fun of making for you"). On one hand, it can unify a culture by providing a sense of continuity, identity, and purpose. On the other, the collective weight of all those decisions can eventually weigh you down to the point where you are no longer free to make any for yourself. We want to retain our freedom of movement, to the point where *everything* we do is open to reconsideration and replacement.

One thing we have to point out: while we announced our plans two years in advance precisely in order to learn the basics of how these things are put together, we are a new organization and there are many aspects of this kind of thing that can only be learned by *doing* them. So if our plans come out a little messy in the execution, if they get ragged around the edges or sag a bit in the middle, we pray you'll understand. We intend to apply everything we learn this time to Readercon 2, and we hope you'll be around then to check up on our progress.

Gene Wolfe: An Appreciation

I keep wondering if I'm the right sort of person to be writing something like this. Surely people expect appreciations to be written by experts, or at least by people who are widely and deeply knowledgable concerning their subjects. And while I intend to spend a measurable part of the next several decades becoming just that, you could hardly say that I've gone very far down that road (Eric Van, now *he* would be just perfect for this, but he's off making wedding arrangements right now; I can't blame him, and if you get to meet Anita Van sometime during the con, neither will you). But it's some pretty interesting territory I've been passing through in the last few years, so I'm going to try my hand at getting you to explore it.

Before I do, I should note that there are reasons beyond the purely aesthetic for you to appreciate Gene Wolfe, since Readercon probably wouldn't be here, at least in its current form, without him. On a superficial level, that's so because his agreement to be our first Writer GoH immediately transformed our planning from a very small, fairly unstructured gathering of local readers to what you see around you now. On a deeper level, it's so because *The Book of the New Sun,* and the fact that it actually gained a good-sized audience, restored my interest in this field almost by itself. As a reader whose tastes had been formed during the *Dangerous Visions/New Worlds* era, with its continuous, explosive construction/deconstruction of all kinds of cultures, I viewed the mid-to-late seventies with dismay as an age of safety, in which the greatest rewards seemed to go to those who challenged their audiences the least. For me, this began to change with *The Book of the New Sun*, and my renewed interest eventually led me to this project. So you have Gene to thank for all this.

But why should that be? What's so special about this work that its reception by something resembling a real audience should have had such an effect on my hopes for the whole field? The best way to start explaining the effect of his books and stories on me is to compare them to other books, books I enjoyed when reading them, but which aren't around my apartment anymore. Why? It's not that they were bad books, but they were written to deliver their entire charge in one shot, and I never felt the need to read them again. That's never going to happen to anything in my Wolfe collection.

Some people prefer everything to be straightforward and obvious. They want to know everything they need to know within the first few pages, they want to know who to root for and who to hiss, they want everything neat and tidy at the end. But life's not like that, is it? Someone you thought you could trust treats you like garbage and you vow never to talk to her again. A month later, and quite by accident, you overhear two other people talking about the terrible thing that happened to that person the day before that incident, and suddenly something you thought you understood acquires a whole new context. Life *is* like that, and so is Gene's work. It's not a motel room designed to take care of your needs for one night, never to be seen again; rather, it's a big house someone left you, that you spend the rest of your life exploring without a day passing that you don't run across something that casts a new light on something else.

And then there are people who can see that argument when it's applied to "mainstream" literature, but think it shouldn't apply to their particular brand, because it's supposed to be about something else (ideas, action, engineering problems, scariness, artful arrangement of clues) first. Yes, there's an honorable place for entertainment, balm for an aching brain; I need it myself sometimes. But for things that really matter, that deserve to last, a higher standard has to apply. No matter how imaginative and fanciful your situations are, somewhere down in the center, life has to feel like life. Philip K. Dick's work had this kind of emotional veracity, and it allowed him to stretch people's sense of reality to the breaking point without once making them feel as though they were being lied to. It's a quality Gene has in abundance.

And did you notice I haven't even mentioned *style* yet? I'm not a literary critic, and lack the proper jargon for such discussions, but I do have some ear for music, and if you have any concern for how words sound in your head when you read them, for how their textures can imply a wealth of things not explicitly stated, you have no excuse not to check Gene Wolfe out.

As I said, I've come a fairly short way down this road (I haven't even read *Peace* yet!). That's not too bad, though, because I've got that much more exploration ahead of me, and Gene's work is a field of exploration like few others. With any luck, Gene Wolfe will keep doing this for at least a few more decades. With any justice, he'll be remembered long into the next century, at least.

Books by Gene Wolfe

with notes by Gene Wolfe

Operation ARES, New York: Berkley, 1970. The only hard cover is Dobson, Brit., 1977. Now out of print.

The Fifth Head of Cerberus, New York: Scribners, 1972. Out of print. First paperback was Ace in June 1976.

Peace, New York: Harper and Row, 1975. Out of print in the U.S., but available in Britain. First paperback was Berkley in March 1982.

The Devil in a Forest, Chicago: Follett, 1976. Out of print, I believe. First paperback was November 1977.

The Island of Doctor Death and Other Stories and Other Stories, NewYork: Pocket, 1980 (collection). No hardcover. Out of print in paperback.

The Book of the New Sun

The Shadow of the Torturer, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980.

The Claw of the Conciliator, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981.

The Sword of the Lictor, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981.

The Citadel of the Autarch, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.

Available from the Science Fiction Book club and in paperback.

Gene Wolfe's Book of Days, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981 (collection). Out of print. No pb to date. Available from me (Gene Wolfe, P.O. Box 69, Barrington, IL 60011) for $17.

The Castle of the Otter: A Book About The Book of the New Sun, Willimantic, CT: Ziesing Brothers, 1982 (essay collection). Still available from the SF Book Club.

The Wolfe Archipelago, Willimantic, CT: Ziesing Brothers, 1983 (collection). Out of print, I believe.

Bibliomen, New Castle, VA: Cheap Street, 1984. Mock biographies of fictional people. A small press book in Publisher's and Collector's editions, both now out of print.

Plan(e)t Engineering, Cambridge, MA: NESFA Press, 1984 (short stories and poems, published in conjunction with Wolfe's appearance as Boskone 21 GoH — RC).

Free Live Free, Willimantic, CT: Mark V. Ziesing, 1984. The Tor hardcover of 1985 is shortened by about 4000 words, but adds a chronology. The Tor paperback of October 1986 has the same text as the Tor hardcover. All three editions are still in print.

Soldier of the Mist, New York: Tor, 1986. In print. No paperback as yet.

Forthcoming:

Empires of Foliage and Flower: The story of the green and yellow empires mentioned by Severian. It concerns a child who is taken in tow by the wizard Thyme and shown something of war and the destiny of man. To be published by Cheap Street, late June or early July 1987.

The Urth of the New Sun: Coda to *The Book of the New Sun.* To appear in hardcover from Tor, Fall 1987.

There are Doors: A contemporary fantasy about a department store clerk who falls in love with a goddess from an alternate universe and finds himself drawn into that universe, where the goddess manifests herself as a lawyer, a movie star, and a high-tech doll. To appear in hardcover from Tor, Fall 1988.

Soldier of Arete: Sequel to *Soldier of the Mist.* To appear in hardcover from Tor, Fall 1989.

Castleview: The villainess is Morgan Le Fay, and the hero is a Lincoln Mercury dealer. In progress; unsold.

All This and More: The Uncollected Wolfe

by Eric Van

So much of Gene's brilliant short fiction remains uncollected that only a faithful reader of magazines and anthologies (which I am not) could deign to call himself a true Wolfe expert. My original intention was to consult the available bibliographies and catalogs and read all of his uncollected work, and then offer my own list of the best, complete with brief, remarkably insightful comments.

My next intention was to ask Gene for *his* list of uncollected favorites, and then read just those before the con.

In other words, I was going to fake it.

Well, Gene did his part: The Dead Man ("because it was my first"); Trip Trap; A Method Bit in "B"; Beech Hill; The Headless Man; The Recording; Peritonitis; The Dark of the June/The Death of Hyle/From the Notebook of Doctor Stein/Thag (story series); Westwind; To the Dark Tower Came; Straw; Our Neighbor; Kevin Malone; The Woman Who Loved the Centaur Pholus; The God and His Man; The Woman the Unicorn Loved; On the Train; A Cabin On the Coast; The Last Thrilling Wonder Story; A Solar Labyrinth; The Map; The Cat; Redbeard; Love, Among the Corridors; The Boy Who Hooked The Sun; Checking Out; The Nebraskan and the Nereid; *Parkroads* — A Review; The Peace Spy.

"These are my uncollected best; some are fantasy; some SF. 'Redbeard' is straight horror, without a supernatural element ... 'The Cat' and 'The Map' are laid in the Commonwealth." (Gene also included most of the stories in *Plan(e)t Engineering* and "Death of the Island Doctor," which appeared in *The Wolfe Archipelago.)*

Someone else will have to add the citations [Joan Gordon, *Starmont Guide 29: Gene Wolfe*, Starmont House has all the details — RC]; I've got a wedding to plan (two weeks before the con!). On the other hand, I may spend part of my honeymoon in the MITSFS library....

Readercon membership by state and province:

Massachusetts	103
New York	27
Connecticut	9
Pennsylvania	8
New Hampshire	7
California	7
Rhode Island	5
New Jersey	5
Washington	5
Ohio	4
Illinois	3
Florida	3
Ontario	3
Vermont	2
Maryland	2
North Carolina	2
Missouri	2
Maine	1
Michigan	1
Utah	1
Colorado	1
Oregon	1
Texas	1
Total	203

Volunteer!!

As you know, conventions do not run themselves. If you've been to SF conventions before, you also know that they're usually run entirely by volunteer labor (the kind of conventions that can afford paid staff tend to be massive trade shows or the kind of "professional" business conferences that charge attendees $100 and up).

What this means is that we need your help! Regardless of how well we might have done in signing people up before the con, rest assured that there will still be lots of jobs around that would like to be done by you, if only for a few hours. The best way to do some of them at the con is show up at our Staff Office on the hotel's main floor. We'll be setting that up early Friday afternoon. We'll have a list of what needs to be done when; tell us what hours you're available and what you're good at, and we'll figure something out. There are all kinds of things that need to be done, from seeing to the needs of program participants and making sure that things happen on time, to getting things photocopied and taking messages.

Some of the areas that need help include Registration, Information, Staff Office, Operations, Green Room, Program, Hucksters' Room, and Auction.

© J. SHEA 37

READERCON PROGRAM SCHEDULE

[NOTE: "Main Program" items take place in Whitney B, run 50 minutes, and continue (assuming people want to) across the hall in State. "Mini-track" items run in Atrium A on the main floor. Exceptions to the above are noted. The Marathon Suite (usually Con Suite/Staff Office) is on the second floor.]

Saturday, June 27

9:30 A.M. Huckster Room opens

10:00 A.M. Main Program - The Legacy of Cyberpunk - *James Patrick Kelly, Martha Millard, Mark Ziesing.*
Mini-track - *Steven Popkes* reads

11:00 A.M. Main Program - GOH Interviews- *Gene Wolfe by Lise Eisenberg, Mark Ziesing by Eric Van*
Mini-track - *Jeffrey A. Carver* reads

Noon Main Program - What I Read That's Terrific but not Fantastic - *Richard Bowker, Elissa Malcohn, Steven Popkes, Michael Swanwick, and the attendees.*
Mini-track - *James Patrick Kelly* reads

1:00 P.M. Main Program - Shakespeare Signs for Next Three 'Romeo and Juliets': Art vs. Economics - *Craig Shaw Gardner, Martha Millard, James Morrow, Melissa Scott, D. Alexander Smith, Terri Windling*
Mini-track - *Michael Swanwick* reads

2:00 P.M. Main Program - Literature? Who? Us? Since When? - *Jeffrey A. Carver, Scott Edelman, David G. Hartwell, Arthur D. Hlavaty, Gene Wolfe.*
[This was not listed in the Program Book. It combines Big Issues 101 and Applied Big Issues 101 from Progress Report 3. Description is as follows:
"Since much of the discussion at Readercon will center around so-called 'literary' f&sf , we'll begin by taking a few minutes to define literature (after which, no doubt, we'll successfully refinance the national debt and prove the existence of God). Is literature simply work that survives to be read in later centuries? Or must higher standards be met (and what are they)? Which f&sf classics will still be read in the far future, and which will be forgotten? Will any of today's acclaimed mainstream lit be forgotten? And what about stuff from other genres - will they teach Jacqueline Suzanne at Yale?"]
Mini-track - *Scott E. Green* reads / leads informal poetry workshop.

3:00 P.M. Main Program - The Hero as Gene Wolfe - *Katherine Cramer, Heather McKenzie Holmes , Robert Ingria, Darrell Schweitzer, Michael Swanwick, Eric Van.*
[Combines The Book of the New Sun and Beyond the New Sun]
Mini-track - Character Creation Workshop led by *Elissa Malcohn*(90 min.)

4:00 P.M. Main Program - Out of Obscurity - *Craig Shaw Gardner, David G. Hartwell, Ellen Kushner, Mark Ziesing*
Mini-track - *Elissa Malcohn* reads (starting at 4:30)

5:00 P.M. Main Program - *Gene Wolfe's* Guest of Honor Speech

6:00 P.M. Main Program - You Can't Tell a Book by its Cover (packaging and marketing f &sf)
- *Gary Farber, J.F. Rivkin, Charles C. Ryan, Terri Windling*, Eric Van, Ellen Kushner
Mini-track - *Darrell Schweitzer* reads
State Room - Auction (to 7)
Hucksters' Room closes
7:00-8:00 DINNER BREAK

8:00 P.M. Meet the Pros(e) Party (Whitney B)
which includes....
9:00 P.M. Kirk Poland Memorial Bad Prose Competition - *Craig Shaw Gardner (MC), ~~Richard Fawcett~~, Geary Gravel, Darrell Schweitzer*

10:30 P.M. Reception for Mark Ziesing hosted by *Gene and Rosemary Wolfe* (Marathon Suite)

Sunday, June 28
9:30 A.M. Huckster Room opens

10:00 A.M. Main Program - Losing Money for Fun & Profit: Small Press How-to - *Scott Edelman, ~~Richard Fawcett~~, J.F. Rivkin, Mark Ziesing*, Ed Meskys (continuation will be in Mini-track area)

10:30 A.M. *Gene Wolfe* reads (State Room)

11:00 A.M. Main Program - Out of Boundaries (great imaginative literature not marketed as f&sf) - *Richard Bowker, Gary Farber, James Morrow, Michael Swanwick*, James Patrick Kelly
Writers of the Future Q&A with *Gene Wolfe* (State Room)

Noon Main Program - Alternate Histories We'd Like to See - *~~Jeff Hecht~~, Steven Popkes, Melissa Scott, Darrell Schweitzer*
Mini-track - *Delia Sherman* reads

1:00 P.M. Main Program - In Search of the 'Literary' Hard SF Novel - *Jeffrey A. Carver, Katherine Cramer, Charles C. Ryan*, Moshe Feder, Shelley Frier, Ed Meskys
Mini-track - *Ellen Kushner* reads

2:00 P.M. Main Program - Academic Attention: Good, Bad, or Ugly? - *Arthur D. Hlavaty, Fred Lerner, James Morrow, Delia Sherman*
Mini-track - Aliens Among Us: the Deaf and their Culture discussion group led by *Geary Gravel*

3:00 P.M. Main Program - What Will We Write About Next? - *Scott E. Green, ~~Jeffrey Hecht~~, Ellen Kushner, D. Alexander Smith*
Mini-track - ...But Some Philip K. Dick Books are More Equal Than Others - discussion group led by *Eric Van and Brad Collins*

4:00 P.M. Main Program - Exceptions to the rule (f&sf excellence in other media)
- *Jeffrey A. Carver, Melissa Scott, ~~Stanley Wiater~~, Eric Van*
Mini-track - The Military in SF - discussion group led by *Donald J. Roy*

5:00 P.M. Huckster Room closes

READ ME FIRST!

Intro

Welcome to READERCON! A number of things have happened since we put the Program Book to bed, and we'll tell you about them, but first we'd like to tell you about....

What you'll find in this package

[NOTE: We have made up 400 full membership kits, allowing for 150-or-so at-door memberships, which is probably optimistic. If it turns out to have been pessimistic, and you're joining after we've run out of the full kits, you can ignore the first couple of paragraphs in this section.]

The first thing you probably want to know is why there are two Program Books here, ours and someone else's. It turns out that a convention called Disclave had our Writer Guest of Honor (Gene Wolfe) as their Guest of Honor just last month. In the course of doing so, they produced a Program Book that contained a not-yet-published Wolfe short story and another appreciation (by agent Virginia Kidd), both items that we felt complemented very well what we had to say on the matter. So when Joe Mayhew (this year's Disclave chairman) offered to ship us some, we jumped at the chance. Thanks, Joe!

You will also find an issue of a magazine called Last Wave included. This is a magazine that features innovative and unusual fiction that will interest those whose tastes go beyond the obvious and predictable. It's on temporary hiatus, but plans to return on an occasional basis sometime later this year. Our thanks to editor Scott Edelman for providing these.

There are also some handouts in here. Most important is the Program Schedule, which has final info on who will be doing what, where, and when. In addition, we have our Exit Poll, a flyer for Readercon 2, and a restaurant guide (depending on our schedule, that item may be at Information instead of here).

Room changes

For various reasons, we have reversed halves of the ballroom (more properly known as Whitney Hall), so that our main program is now in Whitney B, not Whitney A, where the Hucksters' Room now is. Due to lack of phone plugs in the area planned for the Staff Office, we have decided to have it share quarters with the Con Suite. Both of these are in the Marathon Suite on the second floor. PROGRAM NOTE: We filled up the Mini-track with readings and discussion groups, so our nifty series of linked discussion groups that we talked about in the Program Book will have to wait.

Time changes

As noted in the Program Schedule, the Auction has been moved to 6 P.M. (it's still in the State Room). Also, due to staff constraints, Registration will be taking a break between 6 P.M. Saturday and the time it re-opens in the Staff Office at 8 P.M. (it's back in the Lobby Sunday).

Information

Last-minute budget constraints have forced us to do without a con newsletter. Additional updates will be posted on a small bulletin board next to the Information desk. Information will also be maintaining a list of open parties. Remember to tell them if you are planning one, and also remember that this area moves to the Staff Office at 8 P.M. Saturday night.

Post No bills!

The hotel has informed us that absolutely nothing can be posted on walls (new wallpaper), and that we will be charged for any damage to said wallpaper. So please, use the bulletin board (we know it's small, but it's the best we can do).

Autograph area

We are having an autograph area at the back of the Hucksters' Room. As this was decided late, we do not have a set schedule for this. There will be a place for authors to sign up for times, which will be posted.

Literature? Who? Us? Since When? - Other Voices compiled by Scott Edelman

There is no room in the life of the serious artist for the trivial.
--Robin Scott Wilson

I don't think that for any reason except dire economic necessity a writer ought to send out material merely because it's salable. I think he hurts himself; he hurts the field; he hurts the publication in which the material appears. Mere salability is the ethics of a K-Mart. I think writing is an art, and without trying to be too pretentious, I think it ought to have a better set of ethics than an army/navy store.
--Gene Wolfe

Every successful creative person creates with an audience of one in mind.
--Kurt Vonnegut

How about the requirements, as that a story shall have a beginning and a middle and an end? No, that's just a phrase that editors use sometimes. There was one of them who so loved the phrase that he extended it and declared that a wife should have a beginning and a middle and an end. It made more sense when applied to a wife than when applied to a story, but only a very little more. And it was one of the things that ended him with his wife. A story must be a living entity. Even a living story will be a living segment. And living things don't have beginnings and middles and ends, not in the topographic sense.
--R. A. Lafferty

The most any writer can hope for is to please his or her ideal readers; others will like it or not and it doesn't really matter.
--Kate Wilhelm

The real question that every science fiction writer must ultimately ask is this: Do I want to write in my own way, following my own vision, or do I want to manipulate the market, responding to the demands of critics and editors? Many writers just give in. They give the market what it wants; others do their own work and just happen to be liked; others still are excellent and ignored. These last are often pointed to by older professionals as "not understanding the market." I'm tired of all these Claggarts who have lost all ideals. They don't understand how anyone would want to have a critical, independent viewpoint on science fiction, especially if it means a loss of income and notice. They come to believe that there is "something" to bad taste; and worst of all they believe in the back of their minds that public taste cannot be improved, so you might as well dive in and swim around in it.
--George Zebrowski

Good novels are not written by orthodoxy-sniffers, nor by people who are conscious stricken about their own unorthodoxy. Good novels are written by people who are not frightened.
--George Orwell

I was a little shocked once, in the early fifties, when Tony Boucher mentioned casually that in a recent issue of F&SF, there was only one story that he had bought solely because of the author's name. I thought that was one too many. Famous names may help sell a magazine; they don't always, but if they do, it's because those writers have written good stories in the past. Every time you publish a poor story by a famous writer, you diminish the value of that name and defeat your purpose.
--Damon Knight

Failure of belief on the author's part is, I think, what turns so many books that mean to deal with the real things that really happen to the real souls and bodies of real people in the real world into the cramped little stages where varyingly fashionable marionettes jiggle and sing.
--Peter S. Beagle

Losing Money For Fun and Profit:

Small Press How-to

Other Voices compiled by Scott Edelman

So what if my telephone is turned off again at home? Or my electricity is shut off? Or my credit cards cancelled? If you don't bet, you don't have a chance to win. It's so silly in life not to pursue the highest possible thing you can imagine, even if you run the risk of losing it all, because if you don't pursue it you've lost it anyway. You can't be an artist and be safe.

--Francis Ford Coppola

You could bring the mag out twice in a month and then once in two years and everything would be fine if the stuff between the covers was good; you could bring it out on gloss paper using a letterpress or on a mimeo using recycled paper and it didn't make any difference; my God, you could print the magazine with rubber stamps and that wouldn't matter, that would not make it bad and it would not make it good, the method by which you got the word out was incidental, the important thing was to go after all those vague dissatisfactions, to get at the core of them, to not fall for the soft persuasions and rationalizations, to not cower in the foothills of the mountain of accumulated and historical evidence that tell you you are wrong.

--John Bennett

We are not given life to cast it aside, but neither is life to be lived for life's sake only. What cries aloud within us must be allowed its voice.

--Tanith Lee

11/51. PKD, 22, writing short stories (including "Roog," "Beyond Lies the Wub," and "The Defenders") while working at record store. First mainstream novel, **Voices From the Street** (still unpublished), is also from this period.

Early summer (?) '52. Quits job to write sf short fiction full-time. Writes *43* stories in a one-year period, including "Second Variety," "Breakfast at Twilight," "Human Is," "Imposter," "Time Pawn" (later expanded into **Dr. Futurity**, making it, in a way, Phil's earliest novel), and "The Father-Thing."

8/53 – 2/54. Writes **The Cosmic Puppets** as a magazine novella (the novel version is only slightly longer). A dozen more short stories. Attempts full-time work in September; nervous breakdown.

3/54 – 10/55. Turns to novel writing, alternating sf and mainstream while phasing out short fiction: **Solar Lottery**, the short story basis of **Vulcan's Hammer**, **Gather Yourselves Together** (unpublished mainstream), **The World Jones Made**, **Eye in the Sky**, **Mary and the Giant** (mainstream, published posthumously), **The Man Who Japed**. Also 11 stories, including "Autofac."

11/55 – 10/60. Quits sf to attack mainstream market: **A Time for George Stavros** (lost), **Pilgrim on the Hill** (lost), **The Broken Bubble of Thisbe Holt** (unpublished), **Puttering About in a Small Land** (posthumous), **Nicholas and the Higs** (lost; apparently mainstream/sf hybrid), **Time Out of Joint** (only sale in this period – mainstream/sf hybrid published as "a novel of menace"), **In Milton Lumky Territory** (posthumous) (... Phil meets Anne Rubinstein and divorces his wife Kleo to marry her, events which form part of his next novel) ... **Confessions of a Crap Artist** (published 1975), **The Man Whose Teeth Were All Exactly Alike** (posthumous), **Humpty Dumpty in Oakland** (posthumous; apparently based on **George Stavros**).

At the start of this period, Phil is spending 5 months on each book; by the end, twice that, although **Time Out of Joint** was apparently dashed off as a potboiler (!). Phil's only other sales in these years were two stories and the expansions of **Dr. Futurity** and **Vulcan's Hamnmer**.

12/60. Quits writing and works in wife's store.

9/61 – 2/63. Returns to sf: **The Man in the High Castle**, **We Can Build You** (published 1979), **Martian Time Slip**, **Dr. Bloodmoney**. Three to five months per book.

2/63 – 5/64. Failure of **We Can Build You** to sell causes conscious lowering of ambition. Phil warms up with 11 short stories in as many weeks, and then turns on the afterburners: *eight* novels (plus the outline for a ninth, and three stories) in *one year*. **The Game Players of Titan**, **The Simulacra**, **The Crack in Space**, **Now Wait For Last Year**, **Clans of the Alphane Moon**, **The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch** ... at this point (3/64) Phil has a nervous breakdown, leaves his wife ... **The Zap Gun**, **The Penultimate Truth** ... he starts **Deus Irae** but dislocates his shoulder while

totalling his VW, and either that or simple burnout causes total writer's block.

5/64 - 8/65. Phil manages only **The Unteleported Man** on his own. With Ray Nelson, writes the **The Ganymede Takeover** and an outline for a sequel to **The Man in the High Castle**. Phil meets his next wife, Nancy.

8/65 - 12/66. With his divorce imminent, Phil returns to writing, warming up with six short stories, including "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" and "Faith of Our Fathers." Divorce final; Phil writes **Counter-Clock World**, **Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?**, and **Ubik**, taking four to six months per book.

1/67 - 8/70. For reasons somewhat unclear, Phil seems to be burning out again, but he keeps plugging away on and off: **Galactic Pot Healer**, **A Maze of Death**, and "The Electric Ant" in 1968, **Our Friends From Frolix 8** in 1969, then the **Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said** first draft. Wife Nancy leaves him.

8/70 - 1/73. All sorts of problems. Quits writing. House used as local druggie crashpad. The infamous break-in (11/71) by forces unknown. Moves to Canada 2/72. Suicide attempt 3/72. Moves to Southern CA 4/72, meets next wife.

2/73 - 2/74. Resumes writing with "A Little Something For Us Tempunauts," the first draft of **A Scanner Darkly**, and serious rewrites of **Flow My Tears**.

3/74. The "VALIS" experiences; Phil either goes crazy, sees God, or both.

11/74. Ubik screenplay.

1975. Finishes **Deus Irae** as a collaboration with Roger Zelazny, and finishes rewriting **A Scanner Darkly**.

2/76. Wife Tessa leaves him; second suicide attempt.

8/76. First attempt at fictionalizing the March 1974 experiences, as **Radio Free Albemuth** (published posthumously).

10/78 - 11/78. Autobiographical introduction to the short story collection **The Golden Man**; and the heavily autobiographical **Valis**.

6/79 - 6/80 Although much of his energy is still devoted to the vast "Exegesis" of the 3/74 experiences, Phil resumes writing fairly steadily with five short stories and **The Divine Invasion**. Phil then signs contracts for a mainstream novel, which intimidates him for a while.

4/81 - 5/81. Phil finally writes **The Transmigration of Timothy Archer**.

6/81 - 2/82. Production of **Blade Runner** is another distraction; **The Owl in Daylight** is contracted for and (perhaps) outlined.

March 2 1982. Dies of a stroke in Santa Ana at age 53.

READERCON 2

Guest Of Honor: Samuel R. Delany

Dates: September 23-25, 1988
Location: Boston area (inside rt. 128)
Membership:

$10 while you're here at Readercon (join at Registration)
$15 from 6/29/87 until 08/12/88
$20 thereafter, and at the door

If you like what we've been trying to do here, let's get back together and do it again !!

(turn this in here, or mail to Readercon, P.O. Box 6138, Boston, MA 02209)

☐ Sign me up! Enclosed is ____ for ___ memberships (prices above).

NAME (S): _____
ADDRESS(ES):
_____
_____
_____
_____

☐ I would like to be one of the Readercon people, and work on next year's convention. I'd like to work on the following (details optional)
_____
_____
_____

PHONE #/HRS (WORK)_____ (HOME)_____

☐ I would like to participate in programming for next year's Readercon. Send me detailed panel descriptions as they become available.

EXIT POLL

THINGS YOU LIKED MOST ABOUT READERCON:

_____

_____

_____

_____

THINGS YOU LIKED LEAST ABOUT READERCON:

_____

_____

_____

_____

THINGS WE SHOULD DO:

_____

_____

_____

_____

RATE THE FOLLOWING (1-5, or N/A):

Main Program : Concept ___ Execution ___

Mini-track: ___

Auction: ___ Hucksters ___

Publications: Content ___ Appearance ___

IF YOU COULD, PLEASE GIVE US A ROUGH ESTIMATE (IN %) OF HOW YOU SPENT YOUR TIME (WAKING HOURS) AT READERCON:

Main Program ___ Continuation Area ___ Mini-track ___

Hucksters' ___ Socializing (parties,Con Suite,lounge, etc.) ___

Volunteering ___ On the town ___

ANY OTHER COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

WILL YOU BE BACK (We'll probably be in the near suburbs next time) ? ___

NAME: _____ MEM # ___

ADDRESS: _____

_____

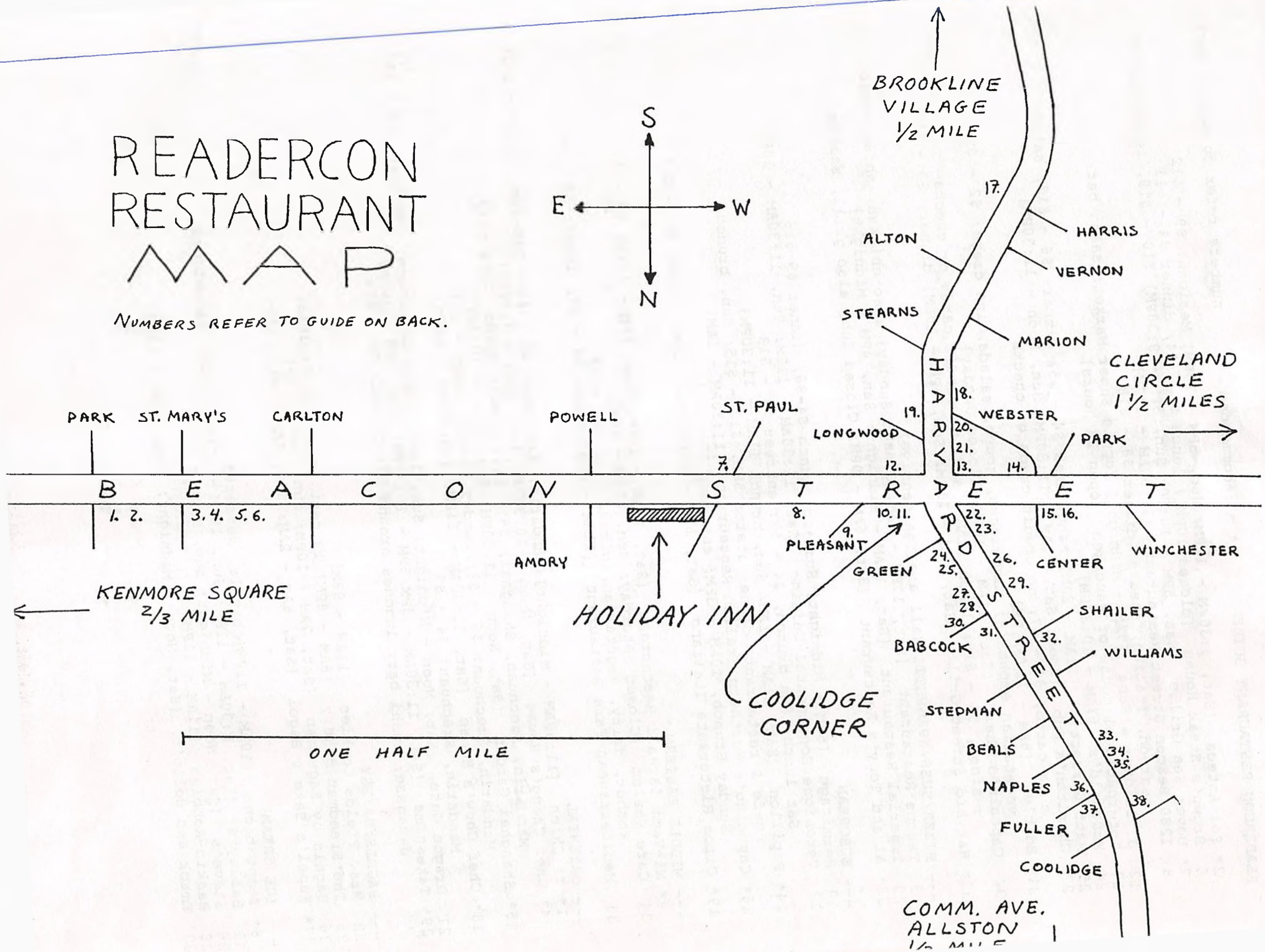
PH: HOME/HRS: _____

BUS/HRS: _____

Send To: Readercon, P.O. Box 6138, Boston, MA 02209

READERCON RESTAURANT MAP

NUMBERS REFER TO GUIDE ON BACK.



READERCON RESTAURANT GUIDE * = recommended numbers refer to map on back

2* Sol Azteca [Sat, 5:30PM - 11PM; Sun, 5PM - 10PM] Mexican; $9 - $12
5 Brown's Steak House [closes 10PM]; lunch $3 - $4; dinner $4 - $11
7* Dover Sea Grille [Sat, 5PM - 10:30; Sun, 5PM - 9:30PM] $10 - $19, reservations
8 1280 Beacon Street Restaurant [11:30AM - 11PM]
seafood, Italian, steaks; dinner $8 - $18
12 J. Bildner & Sons [7AM - Midnight] Yuppie Super Market; salad bar
17 International House of Pancakes [open 24 hours]
24 McDonald's [7AM - 10:30PM]
25* Matt Garrett's [11AM - 2AM] sandwiches $4 - $5; dinners $6 - $12; salads
27 Charlton's Pub [food: Sat, 11AM - 11:30PM; Sun, Noon - 11:30PM]
a la carte, $4 - $7; no credit cards or checks
31* Edibles [8AM - 11(?) PM]
vegetarian emphasis; sandwiches, soups, salads, ice cream; $2 - $5
32 Captain's Wharf [Sat, 11AM - 10PM; Closed Sunday]
seafood, $6 - $10; lunch 11AM - 4PM; no credit cards or checks
33* Harvard Street Grill [Sat, 5PM - 11PM; Sun, 5PM - 10PM] dinner, $9 - $17

--- PIZZA/SUBS/SPAGHETTI (all are inexpensive)
3 Taurus Restaurant [Sat, 11PM - 1AM; Closed Sunday] also chicken, shish kebab
20 Imperial Restaurant [Sat, 11AM - Midnight; Sun, 4PM - Midnight]
33* Al and Tony's Restaurant [Sat, 6AM - 9PM; Closed Sun] also grill, salads

--- EUROPEAN
10 Hermitage [5PM - Midnight] Russian; lunch $4-$6, dinner $9-$16
13 Veronique Continental Cuisine [Sat, 11:30AM - 11PM; Sun, 11:30AM - 10PM]
Sat lunch, Sun brunch, $4 - $7; entrees $9 - $18
14* Papillon [Sat, 11AM - 1AM; Sun, brunch 11AM - 11:30PM]
cafe & restaurant; dinner starts 5PM, $12 - $15; Sun. brunch
16* Capucino's Northern Italian Restaurant [11:30AM - 1AM]
Sunday Brunch, 10AM - 3PM; entrees, $7 - $12
19* Ciros Ristorante Italiano [Sat, 5PM - 11PM; Sun, 5PM - 10PM] $7 - $13

--- MIDDLE EASTERN
9* Mi-Vami Isreali Restaurant [Sat, 11AM - 10PM; Sun, 5PM - 10PM] $3 - $7
34 Cafe Shalom [Closed Saturday; Sun, 11AM - 9PM]
kosher, dairy, vegetarian, pizza, fish; $4 - $9
38 Mediterranean Fare Restaurant [11AM - 9PM] lunch $4 - $7, dinner $5 - $9

--- ORIENTAL
1* Ta Chien [11:30AM - Midnight] Mandarin, Szechuan; $6 - $11; Dim Sum: 11:30 - 2:30
4* Chef Chang's House [Sat, Noon - 10:30PM; Sun, Noon - 9:30PM]
Mandarin, Szechuan, Shanghai; $6 - $10; credit cards: AmEx only
15* Shanghai Garden [Sat, Noon - 11:30PM; Sun, Noon - 10:30PM]
Mandarin, Szechuan; $6 - $8; Sunday Brunch, Noon - 3PM
18* Chef Chow's House [Sat, 11:30AM - 11PM; Sun, Noon - 10PM]
Mandarin, Szechuan; $4 - $9
21 Dragon Gate [Sat, Noon - Midnight; Sun, 1PM - 11PM] Cantonese, Szechuan; $5 - $10
29* Takeshima [Sat, 11:30AM - 3PM/5PM - 10:30PM; Sun, 5PM - 10PM]
Japanese; sushi bar; lunches around $7; dinners $8 - $14

--- BAGELS/BAKERY
22 Mrs. Fields Cookies [11AM - 9PM]
35 The Freedman Bakery [6AM - 8PM] 19 cent bagels on Saturday
36 Bagels by Eagerman [Sat, 7AM - 10PM; Sun, 7AM - 9PM]
37* Kupel's Bake & Bagel [Sat, 6AM - 2AM; Sun, 6AM - Midnight]

--- ICE CREAM
6* Temptations [10AM - 11PM] bagels, desserts
11 Bailey's [Sat, 8:30AM - 11PM; Sun, 10AM - 11PM] candy, sandwiches
26 Steve's [Sat, Noon - Midnight; Sun, Noon - 11PM]
28 Baskin-Robbins [11AM - 11PM]
30 Emack and Bolio's [Sat, Noon - Midnight; Sun, Noon - 11PM]

Mark Ziesing

If writing is an art form that too often acts like a business, publishing has the opposite identity problem, that of a business which too rarely reveals its potential as an art form. A lot of people would think that's no problem at all; art is art and business is business, and why should the latter try to emulate the former? But if one way to define art is by saying that it's a statement of a personal vision, then a publishing program, with all the values implicit in the selection process, can surely be art. I'm lucky that some people worry about these things, and I hope you feel lucky too. It's the reason small presses will always be on the agenda at Readercon, and it's why we're honoring Mark Ziesing.

Why Ziesing specifically? Well, for one thing, his selection as a Guest of Honor is, like Gene's, a good signpost by which to tell you what to expect from future GoHs. Mark's emphasis on publishing only work that he really believes in represents the kind of outlook and values we want to encourage here.

But he goes even further than that, applying this outlook to his retail (specialty bookselling) operation as well. As he explained in a recent issue of *New Pathways* (an excellent new fiction magazine), his philosophy is to place the books that *deserve* attention at the front of the store and the popular stuff, which is the bread and butter of even an SF specialty store, in a corner at the back. Then he tries like hell to make the former into the latter. An offshoot of this is his mail-order catalogue, which you've got to read once if for no other reason than to sample his comments, both enthusiastic and otherwise, on the various merchandise he sells, and for the engagingly zany column "The Joey Zone," by our artist Joe Shea. It's available for a letter to Mark (at P.O. Box 806, Willimantic, CT 06226). And while you're here, stop by his table in the Hucksters' Room and chat.

There are other things I'd like to tell you about Mark, but I don't know all the details. For instance, I know he's a drummer (see Joe Shea's illo at left) with a rock-and-roll band called the Gadgets, but I can't tell you what they sound like. I'd really like to hear them sometime, though; I've gotten used to associating Mark with good stuff.

A Mark Ziesing Bibliography

From 1977 to 1982, Mark produced about a dozen small items (chapbooks and perfect-bound books) for which he has no records. They were mostly poetry and mainstream short stories.

As Ziesing Brothers:

Gene Wolfe, *The Castle of the Otter: A Book about The Book of The New Sun*. Hardcover, 1982.

Gene Wolfe, *The Wolfe Archipelago* (short stories). Hardcover, 1983.

As Mark V. Ziesing:

Philip K. Dick, *The Man Whose Teeth Were All Exactly Alike* (posthumously). Hardcover, 1984. Trade paperback issued in 1986.

Gene Wolfe, *Free Live Free*. Hardcover, 1984.

A.A. Attanasio, *Beastmarks* (short stories). Hardcover, 1985.

Ian Watson, *The Book of Ian Watson* (short stories and essays). Hardcover, 1985.

Michael Bishop, "To a Chimp Held Captive for Purposes of Research" (broadside with J.K. Potter art), 1986.

Forthcoming:

Alien Graffiti by Michael Bishop, *The Silver Pillow: A Tale of Horror* by Thomas M. Disch, and a number of other interesting items.

Hotel Information

General Information:

The Holiday Inn of Boston at Brookline (that's the full title; we've been calling it The Holiday Inn of Brookline) is a completely rebuilt hotel which in its previous incarnation was part of the TraveLodge chain. Its official address is 1200 Beacon Street in Brookline, although the new entrance actually faces on St. Paul Street at the corner of Beacon and St. Paul. There is a parking garage and ample on-street parking.

Construction continues as of this writing, and there may still be some work being done at con time.

Getting a Room?

If you haven't got a room yet, good luck! From the information we've been given, it looks unlikely that there'll be any rooms available at the con rate by the time the con starts (which is 3 weeks after they release our room block). If there are, and you've come in without a reservation, make sure you show the hotel your badge (they require proof of con registration for persons who don't have reservations) in order to get the con rate.

About Your Room:

All sleeping rooms in our section of the hotel have been completely refurbished in line with Holiday Inn standards. Rooms feature either one king-size bed or two twin beds, and are openable by magnetic key card.

The block of rooms we are inhabiting has the extra feature of being set around a courtyard containing a pool. Pool hours haven't been set yet (it's possible that the pool may not be finished by con time).

Hotel check-in time is the same as check-out time (1 pm). Late check-out is *not* available, alas. As a hotel guest, you are entitled to park free.

A Couple of Things you Should Know:

We hope your stay in this hotel is pleasant and trouble-free. To help make it more so, you should be aware of the following:

Corkage: This is the hotel's term for what they will charge people who bring food and beverage into the hotel, since their policy is that you should buy all of that from them (by patronizing their lounge, restaurant, and soda machines). As a convention, we can't do much about the effect this has on our own functions (like the Con Suite), since anything we serve is right out in the open. Suffice it to say that *you* don't want to have to pay these charges. Therefore, let discretion be your guide (keep it covered when it's not in your room). Note: this policy (which has become a lot stricter since the management change-over) is one reason we may be somewhere else next year).

Neighbors: We've got 'em. If you're used to large conventions, you may *not* be used to having people in the next room who are not con members, and who in fact sleep regular hours (of all things). Many of you may have to deal with the ugly reality of this situation, since it looks as though a large portion of our room block will be taken by persons other than yourselves (tsk, tsk, don't you locals like to throw parties anymore?). We've got more to say about both corkage and neighbors a bit further down in "Some Policies" in the section on parties.

Need Help Dealing with the Hotel?

If you have any hassles, we're here to help you. Go to Information, give them the necessary info, and they'll get in touch with our Hotel Liaison. Assuming that you've been reasonable, we should be able to do something for you.

As stated elsewhere, Information will move to the Staff Office until at least 10 pm Saturday night. After that hour, we will post a notice on the door telling you how to get in touch with us.

Getting Around

The hotel's new entrance faces St. Paul Street on the corner of Beacon and St. Paul. From the lobby, it's a short walk to two rooms which will serve the following purposes:

1) *Mini-Track:* This room will run a program of special items such as readings, discussion groups, and a special 90-minute session by author and poet Elissa Malcohn. These are described in our Program section.

2) *Staff Office:* A place where people working on the convention can go to volunteer, get assignments, plan, organize, etc. **Registration** and **Information** will be run out of this area on Friday from 2 to 8 pm, and on Saturday night until 10 pm. In addition, all *program participants* will register here throughout the convention.

There is also a restaurant nearby. Beyond this area is the hotel pool and courtyard. Close to the two function rooms described above is a staircase leading down to...

The Conference Center:

This area has several function rooms:

1) ***Ballroom:*** This area is divisible into two parts. Ballroom A is where our main track of panels will be held, as well as the Meet the Pros(e) Party Saturday night. Ballroom B will contain the **Hucksters' Room**. We have made plans for an autographing area in this room.

2) ***State Room*** : This room will be the *continuation area* where discussions begun in previous panels can continue uninterrupted, except when we're holding special functions (so far, that's the Auction, Gene Wolfe's reading, and the Q&A session for *Writers of the Future*).

3) ***Lobby:*** You'll find **Registration** and **Information** here most of the time. We open at 9:30 Saturday and Sunday mornings. As noted above, these areas will be run out of the Staff Office on Friday, andfrom 8 to at least 10 pm on Saturday. Program participants will also register there.

4) There is also a lounge (off the lobby), which will hold about 40 people.

Reversing direction and going to the floor ***above*** the main level will (if you follow the signs) bring you to the...

Con Suite:

This suite should be open for general socializing for most of the convention. We're planning a special Friday night reception for early arrivals, as well as one for Publisher GOH Mark Ziesing (hosted by Gene Wolfe) for Saturday night. A schedule will be posted next to the door.

Unfortunately, the hotel's policy on food and beverage is simple: we must buy everything from them. This policy is probably derived from the fact that most other types of conferences are business-oriented and largely attended by people on expense accounts who can afford the large membership fees necessary to make a real hospitality suite affordable. This obviously doesn't apply to us. We regret this, since Con Suites can be a very important part of small conventions. However, while we can't promise a continuous tide of goodies, we are now looking very hard at our budget to see what *can* be done.

A Few Hints:

The following are a few suggestions aimed at making this a more enjoyable con.

1) ***Read the handouts:*** You received a sheet entitled "Read Me First." Do so; it will provide you with a list of everything that has changed since early May. Also, inside this book should be a final schedule. We know that a lot of the detailed information in program books goes largely unread in the rush to go everywhere and do everything, but please make an exception in this case (especially if you're coming in Friday and have some time on your hands). We've tried to make this book as definitive a statement as we can of what we're doing and why; the more you know about us, the more you'll get out of the con.

2) ***During the con,*** check with Information for updates contained in our con newsletter (we expect to do two issues, one each on Saturday and Sunday), party news, etc. We also expect to have a bulletin board up for messages, flyers, and so forth.

3) ***Before you leave,*** please stop by Information, take an Exit Poll, and send it back to us as soon as possible. We need to know what kind of time you had!

Some Policies

Things we won't be doing: Films, video, gaming, or any *events* for costumes, although you can wear what you like within reason, except for weapons. Also, we won't be doing an Art Show until we can come up with an innovative approach that also reflects our special emphasis. We can't say when that will be.

No Weapons (period!): Massachusetts laws are quite specific on this, and anything we consider hazardous in a public area is prohibited. Nor do we wish to see fake or display weapons, which detract from the atmosphere we're trying to create.

The committee reserves the right to revoke memberships without refund for those who don't cooperate with our requests in this matter.

Badge-checking: Conventions both locally and around the country have been having trouble lately as the word has spread among people not involved with *any* of the aspects of SF fandom (literary or non-literary) that these are great places to party. While we want to make this con as much fun for you as possible, and while our smallness and focus will probably make

us less attractive to troublemakers, we need to do a few small things to make sure we avoid these kinds of hassles. One way is to make sure that only people who *should* be attending the con do so. Therefore, we will be checking badges for as many function areas as we can assign badge-checkers to.

This situation also affects our party policy.

No Smoking in program areas or Hucksters' Room.

No Eating or Drinking by customers in the Hucksters' Room

No Pets (except for guide dogs). Many con attendees are allergic to a number of animals. As we are in enclosed spaces, we must ask you to respect their rights. Also, hotels tend not to like snakes. If you brought a pet, send it home *immediately* by itself.

Child Policy: Small children attached to adults do not need a membership. Anyone old enough to benefit from the program *does*. Children of any age seen wandering around on their own will be judged to be in the latter category. Please note: our facilities and budget do not allow for babysitting or any kind of children's programming.

Party Policy: As we've noted, the hotel's policy is that food and beverage cannot be brought into the hotel. We've also noted that we're likely to have neighbors who are not attending the convention, and that SF conventions have been attracting people lately that we would not want to have around. Keeping all of this in mind, we make the following requests: be very discreet about party supplies, try to avoid hassles with neighbors who are trying to sleep (you *don't* want to have to deal with hotel security), admit only members with badges or people you've invited, and check with us at Information for any updates.

Also note that Massachusetts strictly enforces its 21-and-over drinking age and liquor liability laws. Officially, the *only* valid proof-of-age is a Massachusetts driver's license or liquor purchase card.

Panels

Eric Van

Before turning you over to the devastating wit of Eric Van, I'd like to remind you that these descriptions are not final. Some of these may still be dropped if we can't get enough good people for them, and it's still possible that by the time you read this we'll have added one or two.

Shakespeare Signs for next three **Romeo and Juliets*—Art vs. Economics:*** Do some writers actually write whatever they want with zero regard for the marketplace? Or do commercial realities affect the lives of even our most committed artists?

Do some writers really write whatever they think will sell? Or does artistic ambition creep into the soul of even the most shameless hack?

And what about the vast bulk of writers who fall in between those extremes? Sometimes Art and Economics fit hand-in-glove, but more often they fit fish-in-bicycle. How do different writers juggle two so very different objects? Are some writers squandering genuine artistic talent in the quest for a new Volvo? Are others squandering the Volvo in a fruitless quest for Art? Can we name names? I mean, can we talk?

What I Read That's Terrific, But Not Fantastic: More than just a recommended reading panel, although that *is* a big part of it. We'll also look at the qualities that attract us to f&sf, and see if they're reflected in our other reading. Why, for example, is it likely that a Philip K. Dick fan will like *Red Harvest* best of Dashiell Hammett's novels?

On the other hand, which of our other reading (besides box scores and stock market quotations) attracts us because it offers us things that f&sf can't?

Alternate Histories We'd Like to See: Readers ignorant of all history propose alternate worlds they'd like to see novels set in, while the scholarly few attempt to devise chains of events that might have brought them about. Alternately, readers ignorant of all sociology propose events that could have happened differently, while the scholarly few attempt to figure out what kind of worlds would have resulted.

The Legacy of Cyberpunk: No doubt you've seen or heard this "new" SF movement defined, praised, and condemned more times in the past year or two than you can count (with or without the aid of man-machine interfaces). Enough already! With its founders signaling their desire to strike out in new directions, it's time to say more than "dig the new breed!" What are the actual accomplishments of this school? What paths may its graduates take next? What kinds of writers will the cyber-reading youth of today grow up to be? And what will the whole field look like when it's over?

The Book of the New Sun: A discussion of Gene Wolfe's four-volume masterwork.

Beyond the New Sun: Examining the *other* fiction of Gene Wolfe.

You Can't Tell a Book by its Cover (Unfortunately): But you can tell a cover by its book! Which is to say, the average publisher gets a manuscript, classifies it in the most superficial way possible, and then orders up the corresponding cover from Marketing (you know, barbarian with sword, two high-tech starships in battle, etc.). Aren't these covers often misleading —isn't a lot of fine stuff being passed off as generic blather? How do you tell the difference?

This isn't just an art panel, though. When every fantasy novel published in the last twenty years has a cover blurb that says, "Not since Tolkien...," how do you read between the lines? Which famous f&sf authors are reliable and which will plug anything?

And finally, how can writers, agents, and readers get publishers to do a better job of recognizing and reaching a book's potential market?

Out of Obscurity: A bunch of folks recommend obscure f&sf books to each other. Why are certain novels underrated? Overrated?

What Will We Write About Next?: What are the scientific, political, and cultural developments that will form the basis of the imaginative literature of the future?

Philip K. Dick—Evaluating the Opus: Okay, *The Man in the High Castle* is brilliant. After that the disagreements start (yes, even *Ubik* has its detractors). Which of the oft-ignored slapdash efforts of the sixties are actually neglected gems? What about those thorny periods at either end of his career — the posthumously published mainstream novels of the fifties and the *Valis* tetraology of the seventies? Just how many masterpieces is one person allowed anyway?

Academic Attention—Good, Bad, or Ugly?: Academic attention may be the best thing that's ever happened to the genre, as writers get real-world attention and correspondence increases in advances. Or it might be the worst disaster of them all, as the very lifeblood/sap/coolant fluid is drained from the genre's twitching body. Or maybe it depends on which academic attention? Absolutely no firearms or other weapons will be allowed in the program area for this panel.

Losing Money for Fun and Profit—Small Press How-to: Nearly self-explanatory.

Out of Boundaries: Many works of imaginative literature are not, for a variety of reasons, marketed as f&sf. We'll try to bring as many of these to light as possible, but like our other "recommended reading" panels, we'll discuss the phenomenon, too. What factors make publishers — and other writers — downplay the fantastic or science-fictional aspects of certain books?

That's Entertainment?—The Future of the Arts: What's the future of interactive computer fiction? What other new potential art forms lie in store for us? And how will technology change existing forms?

Stalking the "Literary" Hard SF Novel: We'll focus on the conflicting demands of literary craftmanship and hard science. Will the themes and goals of hard SF ever attain the "legitimacy" of soft SF/mainstream? How successful have the novels of Greg Benford, David Brin and others been in forging this alliance?

Exceptions to the Rule: All con long we've talked about the ideas, styles, and aesthetic values that distinguish good literature, because written literature is the medium where we expect the creative cutting edge of the f&sf field to lie. But is it *always* that way? Can the intelligence and subtlety that inform a great novel or short story translate to other forms? Are there ways that those forms, properly used, could surpass written literature at the things we expect literature to do best? As well as identifying some outstanding existing work, we'll talk about we'd like to see in the future.

The Kirk Poland Memorial Bad Prose Competition: Not a panel, but an incredible stimulation. Named after ("in honor of" doesn't seem quite right) the quintessential hack so brilliantly portrayed in Barry Malzberg's *Herovit's World*, this will kick off our Meet the Pros(e) Party Saturday night. If you know the game "Fictionary" (itself derived from "Dictionary"), you know the competition. If not, it goes like so:

A sample of genuine bad SF prose is read — only it ends in mid-sentence (often in mid-metaphor). It is *not* identified. Each panelist completes the sentence (on paper). All these bogus sentence endings are then collected, and read aloud — along with the real ending. Audience members then vote for the ending they think is genuine. Panelists get a point for each poor fan they fool, while audience members earn a point for spotting the real ending. Anyone able to identify the immortal prose scrap in question earns two points (on the honor system, most likely).

Winners get a John Norman novel. Runners-up get two John Norman novels.

The Mini-Track

This is our collection of small, non-panel items. These will all be in the same room (but not simultaneously) on the hotel's main floor.

Readings

So far we have been able to sign up both fiction writers and poets for this; at this writing, the list includes James Patrick Kelly, Ellen Kushner, Jeffrey A. Carver, Darrell Schweitzer, Cordelia Sherman, Scott Green, and Elissa Malcohn.

Discussion Groups

These come in two flavors. First is the group of items that you have asked us to let you organize. So far we have two of these. The second is an experiment directed by us. First described in PR2, we call it "If you like X, then you'll *love*...." Here's how it works: say you like a particular writer or writers (Gene Wolfe and Ursula LeGuin, or William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, or Clive Barker and Ramsey Campbell, or Philip K. Dick, or whatever). What do you think other fans of that sort of thing might like, and what would you like to turn them on to? We will set up discussion groups based on this idea for different values of X; your job is to talk, not about X, but about *other* authors you think will be of interest to people who share your tastes. Along the way, we hope to generate some insight into the attributes that draw different types of readers to different types of writing. The number of these we'll do depends on how much time remains on this track after subtracting everything else. A schedule will be posted on the door of the Mini-Track room.

Persona Workshop

Led by local author and poet Elissa Malcohn, this 90-minute session will focus on character creation. You (as a group) will do just that: create at least one character. This is a *very* insufficient description of what is sure to be one of the most interesting activities of the weekend. There is a maximum limit of **20** people for this item; check with Information to see if there is any space available (writers only, please!).

Events

Receptions/Saturday Night Party

There will be two receptions in the Con Suite, on Friday and Saturday night. The Friday night reception is for those of you who've arrived pre-con. The Saturday night reception is for our Publisher GoH (Mark Ziesing), and will be hosted by our Writer GoH (Gene Wolfe); it will start after the Saturday night party in the ballroom ends.

The Saturday night party will be our main social event, and will begin with the freewheeling bad prose competition described in "Panels." Read "Read Me First!" for details on these events.

Auction

We think this should be a lot of fun: an auction for both collectors and readers. Both donated and on-consignment materials will be auctioned off, with proceeds and commissions going to support Readercon. Material we've been promised includes stuff from the collections of Gene Wolfe, Geary Gravel and Mark Ziesing, some nice Wolfe-related items from the Science Fantasy Bookstore in Cambridge, some books donated by Arbor House, and other things as well.

If you have material of interest to collectors (first editions, galleys, manuscripts, bound or rare magazines, correspondence or signed items) that you would like to sell (we ask a 10% commission) or donate, please get in touch with us through Information, telling us what you have, whether it's a donation, what minimum bid you would like us to set if it's not, and anything else you'd like us to know about.

Of interest to writers...

We're working on a system that will help you organize writers' workshops on your own. The Information desk at the con (next to Registration) will have a writers' questionnaire available. It will have space for you to describe your location, experience and taste. Turn it in at the con or send it to us later, with a request to be put in touch with other writers either on a geographical basis, or with people who have similar tastes and artistic goals (or you might want the challenge of working with your artistic *opposites*). We will send you a list of who we think you should get in touch with (we'd appreciate hearing the results, too). Our thanks to Helana Findeisen of Boston for getting us interested in this.

We will also be having a Q&A session with Gene Wolfe concerning the *Writers of the Future* program, which offers advice, recognition, publication and cash awards to aspiring writers. This will take place in the State Room.

Looking Ahead

We hope you're enjoying yourself. If so, we also hope that you're asking yourself "what next?" The following represents our best guess as to what lies ahead (from the vantage point of early May; you who are reading this know a lot more than I do about how things are actually going to go).

Learning from experience

After a suitable vacation (let's say July and August), we'll be getting back together to assess a number of things: our expectations, your reactions, what happened, what we'd like to have happen. We'll have a lot of information on hand that we couldn't have had earlier, such as:

- How many people actually showed up
- The ratio of local to out-of-state attendees
- What percentage of you joined at the door (very helpful when estimating income)
- What percentage of members take hotel rooms (something you need to know when negotiating with hotels)
- What areas you made the most use of
- Whether we managed to avoid altogether the problems larger conventions have been having with crashers and the like
- And what you thought of it all

As a result of all that, we'll be able to come up with a budget that will better match what we can expect to take in with what we can afford to spend (I should explain here that we went into this knowing that we'd lose money, and when we talk about staying within budget this time, we mean not doing anything that would cause us to lose *more* than we planned on; it's break-even from here on in.). We'll also have a better grasp on where to go from here.

The Final Report and other publications

Particularly affected by the above considerations will be our *publications*. Outside of function space, this has been our biggest expense. We're still going ahead with our plans to produce a Final Report (which will include GOH speeches, a short history, the final roster and program, a financial report, and more details on future plans). We think this is the kind of thing you'd like to have, but we really don't know yet whether future Readercons can do it and still break even. Because we're not sure what we'll do in the future for publications, we are not currently accepting *supporting* (publications only) memberships for next year's con.

The Independent Press Awards

After soliciting the opinions of a number of people from the small press scene, we've made some decisions on how to go about establishing our awards system. Since the whole idea of this award is to cast light on small press publications that aren't widely known, a simple vote wouldn't do. Nor would a straight jury system; although it would reflect the expertise we were looking for, it wouldn't reflect a wide enough range of opinion. So we're doing both. Sometime early next year, we will appoint a nominating board for the first Awards for Small Press Excellence in Imaginative Literature. This will lead to a ballot which will be publicized. More details when we have them.

New dates

We'll be moving next year's con to a later date. Although there are few conventions out there that are explicitly based on the same ideas as ours, there are many (spaced throughout the year) that attract various constituencies that we also appeal to (industry people, fanzine fans, scholars, certain groups or types of authors, local people, etc.). What we need to do is balance all of these conflicts and come up with a date that is as convenient as possible for the people we would like to have, and who we think would like Readercon. For 1988, this will need to be a later date (we need at least a year to implement all the things we've learned), and with that limitation, Readercon 2 will probably be unable to avoid *some* of the conflicts listed above. We hope to have a date to announce by the time you get here.

About Readercon, Inc.

One of the primary ways we are going to do all of the things we're talking about is by strengthening our own organization. Where are we right now? By the time you read this, we'll be a corporation and will have filed for non-profit status. This is no easy process (it can take more than a year, and is decided by the IRS). Getting that status will make it easier, in a number of ways, to do what we're doing (special bulk postage permits, the ability for supporters to deduct contributions, etc.). There are a number of things we still need to decide (classes of organizational membership, etc.). So if the ideas we've been talking about appeal to you and you'd like to become one of the Readercon people, stay tuned! By the time the Final Report comes out, we'll have had a few more months to develop our plans and will be able to present you with more details on how you can participate. In the meantime, feel free to give us a call and inquire.

The Schedule So Far...

Since the last time we came up with a schedule (for PR3, which was a month ago your time, but, due to the greater lead time involved with something like the Program Book, only a week ago our time), we have managed to figure out which GoH activities will be taking place on which day. Beyond that, there are still a few things that won't be nailed down for a few weeks yet (our time). Please check the final schedule.

Friday, June 26

2-10 pm	Early registration (in the staff room)
4-9	Hucksters' Room set-up
6-7	Staff descends on local eateries for get-acquainted supper
8	Reception for Friday arrivals begins

Saturday, June 27

8 am	Staff office opens
8-9:30	Hucksters' Room set-up (cont.)
9:10	Registration opens (Conference Center lobby)
9:30-6 pm	Hucksters' Room open
9:59	Opening Ceremonies
10	Main Program and Mini-Track start.
4:30 pm	Auction begins (State Room)
8	Registration and Information move to the Staff Office
8-10	Meet the Pros(e) party
10:30	Reception for Mark Ziesing begins

PLUS: GOH Speeches and interviews

Sunday, June 28

9:10-10 am	Areas open as on Saturday
10:30	Gene Wolfe Reading (State Room)
11:00	Q&A: *Writers of the Future* Program (Gene Wolfe/State Room)
5 pm	Hucksters' Room closes
5-7	Dealer close-out
6	Programming ends
7:30	Staff Office closes
7:30-10	Clean-up