



WISCONSIN

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March 7-9, 1980

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*The program book cover, conceptualized and executed by Robert Kellough, was created out of a blend of science-fictional themes, characters from Joan Vinge's "Tin Soldier" and Octavia Butler's *Survivor*. Joan's space pilot poet and Octavia's survivor, Alanna, are here combined to represent our hopes for the mixture of their originators' talents at our convention, but separated by the abstract design element to represent their separate and unique talents as writers. Finally, the fictional individuals, females in both cases, were created with the idea that their faces should radiate strength of character rather than the sensuality that permeates most portraits of women on the covers of science-fiction novels. The needs of a convention program book, the characteristics of the authors, and the works of the authors were incorporated in the creation of this work. For me personally, it represents a lot of what WisCon and feminism within the science-fiction community are all about. It is a more eloquent expression of WisCon than I could put in any poem.

—JANICE BOGSTAD, Coordinator

WISCON 4 PROGRAMMING

Continuing Events

Art Show

[Organizers: James Andrew Cox,
Steven Vincent Johnson; Auc-
tioneer: James Andrew Cox]

A wide range of interests will be represented at WisCon 4, from drawings and paintings of drafting table precise realism, into the realm of the fantastic and creative aspects of imagination. The art awards will be presented Saturday afternoon, before the guest of honor interchange. There will be an auction Saturday evening 9:00 PM to 1:00 AM Sunday.

August Derleth Collection

[Wisconsin Historical Society]

This special display has been scheduled to coincide with WisCon. August Derleth was the editor and publisher of Arkham House of Sauk City, Wisconsin, a pioneer in the field of fantasy and science fiction. Derleth was also an avid collector and willed much of his enormous collection to the Historical Society. (The display is in the second floor library of the State Historical Society building, 816 State St., across the street and one block west of Wisconsin Center.)

Con Suite

[Host: Ken Konkol]

One review of WisCon 3 was headlined "And There Was a Well-stocked Bhathtub." Well, this obviously made an impression on at least one person, so we're doing it again this year. Also, there will be the Ken Konkol Kollection of Krunchies (i.e. rabbit food), as well as soft drinks and the standard junque food.

Our con suite isn't large—certainly nothing compared to that of MiniCon, where they issue a *map*--so we figure it'll be used mainly as a dropping-in place where you can meet nice folks, start a conversation, and go off to have your own party. There will be a concom member handy in case you have problems.

Like all Madison Inn functions, this will be a no-smoking event.

Filksing Room

[Host: Richard S. Russell]

"Filksinging" is probably a combination of the words "filthy" and "folksinging," but nobody knows for sure. It has come to refer to SF-oriented songs (often new lyrics to well-known melodies) which are performed by SF-oriented folk (filk?) at SF-oriented events. We don't have any filksingers in the Madison SF Group (at least not any who admit to it publically), but we figured that that shouldn't stand in the way of a good time, so we've reserved a room in the Madison Inn for anyone who feels inclined to try this fannish passtime.

Drop in. Most likely some old accomplished filksingers will be there to get things started, and maybe even pass out songsheets.

Do please note that we are not allowing food, beverages, or smoking in this room. The smoking hurts people's singing voices, and you'll understand about the food and beverages when you see the room.

Films

[Organizer: Perri Corrick-West;
Projectionists: Greg Rihn, Kris
Sellgren, Rick White]

As is normal for WisCons, there will be a rather eclectic selection of short and feature films. The two featured movies this year are *THE WIZARD OF OZ* and *ZARDOZ*. *The Wizard of Oz*, the timeless classic film fairy tale, has given us The Scarecrow, The Tin Man, The Cowardly Lion, Toto, and the Munchkins as part of our common heritage. Judy Garland is Dorothy, the innocent girl from Kansas who is transported via cyclone to the magical land of Oz. The Wicked Witch of the West (Margaret Hamilton) has endured as the scariest—and most thoroughly satisfying—villainess in the movies. Discover (or rediscover) the fresh, endearing qualities that make this film timeless.

Zardoz has been described as "surrealistic metaphysical theological science fiction." The time is 2293, and the world is desolate except for the Vortex, a Utopian commune ruled by the Eternals who have everything except the right to die. Into their paradise comes Sean Connery as a kind of reverse messiah with the gift of death.

In addition to the above, we will be showing Jean Cocteau's *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*, Jean Renoir's *THE RULES OF THE GAME*, Mel Brooks's *THE PRODUCERS*, the animated feature *THE YELLOW SUBMARINE*, the short "Hardware Wars", and much more.

The film program comes in several installments—part of it during the day, part of it during prime time, and part of it late into the various nights. See the separate film guide for details of time, place, and content.

Marathon Dungeons & Dragons

[Head Dungeonmaster: Bill
Hoffman]

For the third year in a row, you too can be an armchair hero/oiner. Slaying dragons, desecrating evil worshipper's temples, and leading enslaved

people to freedom without risking a bit of your own precious skin.

All petty advertising aside, the WisCon Marathon Dungeons and Dragons will again be at the Madison Inn until all hours of the night. Once in, you are not obligated to play until the game ends. Warning to all who bring their own favorite characters: This game comes equipped with its own characters and is closed to outside characters. There are independent DM's who will be playing in the Memorial Union on Friday and Saturday night.

Huckster Room

[Head Hucks: Karen Axness,
Laurence Gold]

The Huckster Room features a variety of science-fiction-related merchandise: New books and magazines, fanzines, and paraphernalia; older or out-of-print publications; games, prints, posters, craft items, et several ceteras will be on sale. The dealers in the hucksters' room vary from individual collectors to local and regional bookstores to those who make a profession of travelling from convention to convention to huck their wares. Come and browse, buy, beg or bargain! The treasures of the galaxy await you!

Masquerade

[Organizer: Lucy Nash]

Welcome to WisCon's first masquerade contest! Remember the film *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*, where the dancers are "tapped out" until the winners are left? Well, that's the plan and the "tappers" will be our illustrious guests of honor. The audience will also choose two special winners by applause. So bring your favorite costume, and don't forget your hambone! Kids are welcome too.

Multi-Media Room

[Organizer: Carl Kucharsky]

Here you will find slides, audio tapes, and video tapes, gathered or produced by the Madison Review of Books and SF³ for broadcast over WORT (89.7 FM in Madison) or cablecast by the Madison Community Access Center, Cable 4. Check the schedule outside the door for times. Special features include three half-hour videotape highlights of WisCon 3, with Suzy McKee Charnas, John Varley, and Elizabeth Lynn.

Opening Ceremonies

[Coordinator: Karen Jones]

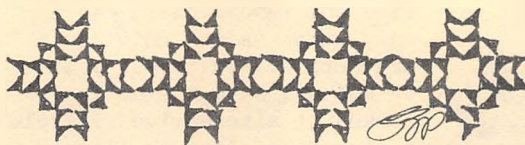
This year the opening ceremony will have a new twist. We decided that the ceremony would have to be on a somewhat less dramatic plane than *Das Reingold*. (Remember WisCons 1, 2, & 3?) So Karen Jones took over the difficult job of keeping the production within limits. We barely made it, and hope you will enjoy Karen's efforts.

Registration

[Registrar: Richard S. Russell]

If you're reading this, you're already registered, so you don't need to know about that. What you may have missed is that the registration desk also serves as the message and information center for WisCon. If you want to leave a message or pick one up, check here. If you're confused geographically, monetarily, temporally, culinarily, or otherwise, ask here; we don't guarantee the quality of the advice, but we've always got some. If you're trying to find someone, we may be able to help.

Please remember to wear your name badge; it gets you into all WisCon events. If you lose your badge, check back with registration, and we will administer a sound drubbing before issuing you a new one. And, of course, if you find a spare name badge lying around, please turn it in.



Friday

Food & SF: Fans Do Not Live By Food Alone

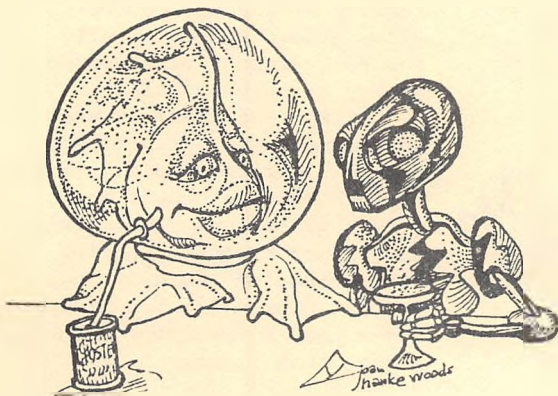
[Jon Singer and Co.]

Food is always involved in fannish gathering. It seems to be a unifying force that keeps fans from killing each other while discussing such controversial topics as the literary merits of John Norman's novels, or nuclear power.

Restaurants have often harbored fannish meetings, such as the nearly-every-Wednesday-at-Nick's here in Madison. Special trips to restaurants at conventions have gone down in fannish legend.

Some fans take a more aggressive attitude toward food and insist on preparing it themselves. Many are accomplished cooks, and will share their favorite recipes on request. Others go even farther, and write cookbooks. To meet some of these crazy people and hear famous fannish food anecdotes, come to this panel.

Featuring Tang freeze-dried crepe suzettes and powdered cold duck, it will be an interesting discussion of the theme of food and science fiction.



Women's Astronaut Program

[Presenter: Marina Hammerstrom]

Ms. Hammerstrom will be doing a presentation discussing her training as one of the first women considered for the astronaut program. As part of that program, she worked extensively with a group studying the effects of prolonged zero-gravity and isolation on human physiology and psychology. She will also be glad to answer questions about this aspect of space travel.

Saturday

Alien Discussion

[Moderator: Mike Lowrey]

Mike and some of Milwaukee fandom will be doing a discussion on the film *Alien*. Mike will not tell us exactly what he has planned, but we are sure that his panel will be as full of surprises as the movie. We hope he does not plan to spring anything on us, as it were.

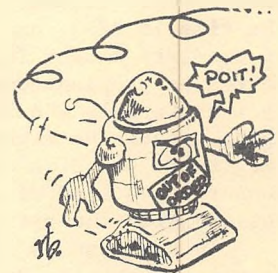
Androgynous Futures

[Panelists: Octavia E. Butler, Beverly Friend, Laurence Gold, Joyce Scrivner]

Speculative fiction explores alternative possibilities and impossibilities; for many, that is its chief attraction. In recent years, SF authors have increasingly looked at alternative sex-role patterns and have challenged or questioned the whole social institution of sex-roles.

"Androgynous Futures" will explore this process, beginning with a few definitions (What is androgyny? Is it a necessary element of a non-sexist social order?) and a discussion of the relevance of these concepts to our present and our possible future(s). Discussion will then use specific works to focus on elements of androgyny in literature. How well or badly do stories reflect imaginative consideration of sex-roles? How important or tangential is the concept of androgyny to an understanding of particular stories? Why have SF authors been relatively slow to question sexist institutions while revising ideas about almost everything else? Have editors/publishers encouraged or discouraged such speculation?

This panel/workshop has a broad topic to work with and so will be flexible and open to concerns of and suggestions from attendees.



Artificial Intelligence

[Panelists: Rex Thomas Nelson, Tom Jones, Jon Singer, Bill Wickart]

Remember when a four-function calculator cost over five-thousand bucks? Remember how that cost has plummeted? This year, Texas Instruments released an electronic pocket dictionary that pronounces words for you. And electronic pocket translators. Several companies are selling speech input and appliance control devices to attach to home computers. Chess computers have been available to the general consumer for several years.

The Basic "Blinkie"

[Panelists: Rex Thomas Nelson,
John Woodford, Rocky Wenz,
MaryLynn Skirvin, Dick Smith]

Have you been confused or frustrated by an inexplicable compulsion to put together one of those blinkies without any knowledge of electronics? Here is where you get your feet wet. For under three dollars you get a set of parts, a set of instructions and a helping hand. No experience or knowledge of electronics is necessary since the purpose of this panel is to overcome our inhibitions toward technology. Non-participants are welcome.

Dances of the Middle East

[Presenter: Karen Jones]

The program will begin with a brief look at dance in ancient times. Then it will focus on the introduction of Mideastern dance to the United States and explain how the popular term "belly dance" was coined. Members of Madison's Oasis Mid-East Dance Troupe will present a live demonstration of folkloric dance styles.

Children's Fantasy & SF: Why do they get to keep it in their library?

[Panelists: Joyce Corinne
Peterson (moderator), Bev
DeWeese, Leah Fisher, Mary
Wood, Randy Jones (respondent)]

Do you know what your children are reading tonight? Maybe you should check it out. According to four of the five panelists, who work in children's or young adult library collections, there are a lot of books in the children's library that are of more general interest. Did you know, for example, that *The Book of the Dun Cow* was sold exclusively as a children's book while

in hardcover? Or that Joy Chant's and Patricia McKillip's fantasy works are also considered the property of children and thus do not appear in adult libraries. Any of you who have become enchanted with H. M. Hoover, for example, can search far and wide and not find her books unless you invade the children's collection.

The panelists will list some of the books that fall into this category, and the respondent, Randy Jones, will offer his insights from the other perspective, that of a child who reads adult as well as children's SF and fantasy.

Dead Cat Pogrom

[Panelists: John Bartelt,
Jeanne Gomoll, Richard Labonté,
Kim Nash, Jon Singer]

It all started right here in MadCity as a defensive reaction to the demands of rabid cat-lovers (or "catists") who proliferate in fandom. In MadCity, some of us did not share the obsessive, kitty-photos-in-the-wallet, dogmatic love for cats with which some of our cohorts were afflicted. We did not, in fact, wish to live with cats, and at times scorned some catists' tendencies to anthropomorphize their feline roommates. Inevitably, there grew definite pro- and anti-cat factions within the MadSTF community.

Seeking to come out of the closet* so to speak, about our minority viewpoint, and to lend support to one another with a more *positive* self image, the "dead cat lovers" movement was born. The word has spread rapidly. Now, articles, artwork, and speeches on this subject are recorded frequently and internationally.

More work needs to be done, however, to encourage our sister and brother dead-cat lovers to come out and stand forward. Many need to be made aware of the historical precedent for the movement. Thus it is hoped that the slideshow "The Dead Cat Through History", cat-wrapping demonstrations, and discussion will be of some assistance to closet dead-cat lovers, as well as encouragement to those who have already joined us.

The Dialectics of Survivor

[Panelists: Janice M. Bogstad,
Octavia E. Butler, Judith
Clark]

The title of this panel is intended to entice and provoke panelists and audience alike. A definition of dialectics will be saved for the actual presentation, but some of the reactions of Butler and Clark have to this approach can be suggested. The core idea is that *Survivor* casts a new light on Butler's series of novels, *Mind of My Mind*, *Patternmaster*, *Survivor*, and the unreleased *Wild Seed*. Butler likes *Survivor* the least of all the books she has published and in some senses Clark concurs. Clark claims that the book makes her uncomfortable because its manifest feminist message, a woman surviving and fighting for her space, is undercut and contradicted by other elements in the work. There should be a lively discussion and perhaps we will learn about how fiction works for each of us.

Current Trends in Fantasy Literature

[Panelists: Bob Boyer, Greg
Rihn, Ken Zahorski]

Greg Rihn will moderate this discussion by two Saint Norbert's College scholars as they present a thesis from their upcoming book on the above-mentioned topic. Look here for a survey of the current status of fantasy literature and perhaps some indication of how these critics define it.

*The typist, being gay, hereby registers a protest against using this time-honored phrase to describe people who through perverse short-sightedness fail to recognize the innate worth of cats who, as all right-minded people recognize, are the noblest of creatures: Brave, strong, graceful, free, intelligent, gentle, soulful, lofty-idealed, omniscient,...

Fingerprints In Space

[Panelists: Perri Corrick-West, Richard West]

Science fiction as a genre has always found it rather easy to absorb other genres within its purview, and one of the more interesting overlaps is that between SF and crime fiction. We shall examine science fictional treatments of some of the many varieties of crime fiction, such as the hard-boiled detective tale, the police procedural, and the spy story, not forgetting what amounts to a sub-genre of science-fictional Sherlock Holmes adventures. Our primary focus, however, will be on the mystery category and the ratiocinative detective (that cousin of the investigative scientist). We shall discuss major examples of the SF/crime interface and how they succeed (as many do) in combining the two fields. We shall begin with such early works as Hal Clement's *Needle* (1949), Alfred Bester's *The Demolished Man* (1951), and Isaac Asimov's *Caves of Steel* (1953), and range over later stories by writers such as Anthony Boucher and Harry Harrison, down to the most recent efforts of such authors as Randall Garrett and Larry Niven.

The Function of Cats as a Cultural Motif in the Arts

[Panelists: Bev DeWeese, Joan Vinge, Diane Martin]

Covering: Sculpture, paintings, cinema, photographs, picture books, and cartoons, from Egyptian art to Heathcliffe;

and: Science fiction, mysteries, children's books, occult, and general literature—prose and poetry, fiction and non-fiction, cats both mythical and historical;

and: Selected musical interludes, from Scarlatti's *Cat's Fugue* to violin strings;

with: A special section on ailurophobia and superstitions.

This delightful overview of the many and varied contributions cats have made to our æsthetic enjoyment will be presented by Guests of Honor Beverly DeWeese and Joan Vinge, and well-known Madisonian ailurophile Diane Martin.

(Ed note: This may be the only WisCon workshop at which hissing is encouraged.)

Guest of Honor Interchange

[Guests of Honor: Octavia E. Butler, Beverly DeWeese, David Hartwell, Joan D. Vinge]

We decided to put all of our eggs in one basket, displaying our pro guests of honor interacting with one another. David Hartwell will be interviewing and reminiscing with Joan and Octavia on their experiences in the field of professional science fiction publishing. This is where you can get to know a little bit about each guest of honor, as ample time will be allowed for questions from the audience.

Our Fan GoH will be introducing the show with few reflections on the other GoH's and on her involvement in Fandom.

History of Paperback Publishing

[Panelists: David Hartwell, Jim Frenkel, Peter Manesis, Diane Martin]

This panel will discuss the phenomenon of mass-market paperback-book publishing, from its beginning in the 1930s to the present day. Panelists will include guest of honor David Hartwell, an editor at Pocket Books; Jim Frenkel, an editor at Dell; Peter Manesis, a collector of vintage paperbacks. Diane Martin, a novice collector, will moderate. Topics of discussion will include Dell mapbacks, the Golden and Silver Ages of paperbacks, Ace doubles, dust jackets, cover art, and the growing interest in paperback books as collectibles. Samples of early paperback books will be on display, and there will also be a slide presentation.

Joanna Russ: The Sexes in Society

[Panelists: Mary Kenny Badami, Judith Clark, Catherine McClenahan, Tom Moylan]

People who have read Joanna Russ's fiction are struck by two consistently manifested features of her work. The first is her clear-sighted commitment to a rigorous examination of sex roles in our own society by her metaphoric use of sex roles in "other" and "alien" societies. The second was mentioned by Samuel R. Delany in *SF Studies*. He noted that each of Ms. Russ's novels builds on the preceding one in terms of this commitment, forming a many-sided critique of sex roles while simultaneously depicting individuals who struggle towards alternatives. Each panelist will offer a short presentation of their understanding of these two insights into the why and wherefore of Joanna Russ's work.

Linguistics & SF

[Panelists: George Hartung, Jan Bogstad, Jim Frenkel, Betty Hull]

For the purpose of this discussion, we understand linguistics in the loosest possible sense, in that we want to consider how languages are treated in SF. Such things as novels and stories in which foreign languages, alien languages and computer translation become part of the story line, and the technique used in these narratives in order to deal with such story elements, these are the sorts of issues which will occupy our attention. Specific panelists will explore (Jan Bogstad) oriental languages in SF; (Jim Frenkel) SF vs normal English syntax; (Betty Hull) alien languages as a plot element. (George Hartung) SF and the language of technology. Come join us in opening up some of these questions.

On Illustrating & Being Illustrated

[Panelists: Richard Bruning, Jeanne Gomoll, Joan Hanke-Woods, Lawrence Juliano, Ole Kvern, Georgie Schnobrich, Mike Stein]

Recently more and more SF and fantasy has been published together with illustrations. The interactions and relationships between artists and authors is an interesting one. This and other topics having to do with the use of visual materials with published SF and fantasy will be touched upon by participants of this program.

SF: Genre or Continuum/If It's Good It Ain't SF

[Panelists: Janice Bogstad, Jim Frenkel, David Hartwell, Phil Kaveny]

In their discussion with David Hartwell which took place immediately before and after the interview presented in this program book, Phil and Jan each uncovered some common areas of inquiry that they shared with him. Jan is interested in the difficulty we are having in defining science fiction because she thinks this difficulty lies in "our trying to think of definitions only in terms of genre, or of literature, or of any *one* thing. Science fiction is not a static field. It is also not just literature. We must think of its definition in terms of interacting forces."

Phil is interested in the influence of what he identifies as the Jamesian aesthetic, although it is often understood to be the last word on the subject of literary quality. Phil refers us "back to the early part of the century when H. G. Wells and Henry James evolved the theory of 'the profound mind'" (which, incidentally, James did not believe a woman could have).

We have imported Jim Frenkel as an innocent and objective commentator on this already-begun debate. We do not expect him to side with Phil, with Jan, or with David.

With Jim, you never know what to expect. And since Phil and Jan have never conducted one of their literary debates in public before, the results could be even more controversial. Knives will be checked at the door.



Comic Book Slide Show

[Presenter: Greg Rihn]

Greg will be back with his award-winning slide show on the history of Marvel Comics. The award he won was an A plus in a design course as an art student. Greg has promised that he will include some new material for those of us who have had the pleasure of seeing it on previous occasions.

Fantasy, Folktales & Feminism

[Panelists: Meredith Ackley, Karen Axness, Ellen Kushner, Sue-Rae Rosenfeld, Joan Vinge]

Fairy tales and folk tales may serve as inspiration or provide a story-line for fantasy and science-fiction writers. Feminist writers must search for the exceptional heroine who is neither asleep nor waiting to be rescued. In the past ten years, many feminists have analyzed the position of women in myth and fairy tales and how it both mirrors and reinforces the subjection of women. At the same time, many tales with powerful, self-sufficient heroines have been reclaimed.

We will attempt to show connections between current fantasy by women and recent work by feminist researchers, using such books as: *Clever-Lazy, the Girl Who Invented Herself* by Joan Bodger, *The Bloody Chamber* by Angela Carter, *Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye* by Madonna Kolbenschlag, and *Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood* by Merlin Stone. Drawing on our collective experience as editors, writers, and readers of fantasy literature, we will also explore the current status of that genre from a feminist perspective. Thus Joan Vinge will be discussing her soon-to-be-released novel, *The Snow Queen*.



Movie Reviews: You Tell Me How

[Moderator: Richard S. Russell]

Here we are, 2½ years after *Star Wars*, two years after *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and one year after *Superman*. Have our movie screens been filled with SF spectaculars or sci-fi ripoffs? Are *Star Trek the Motion Picture* and *The Black Hole* in the same class as their illustrious predecessors? Is *Alien* a psychodrama or just an outer-space version of *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*? Do the TV productions of *Salem's Lot*, *The Lathe of Heaven*, and *The Martian Chronicles* herald a new era for SF on the tube, or are *Battlestar Galactica* and *Buck Rogers* (both of which had theatrical versions as well) more likely to be the norm?

Well, these are all interesting questions. We don't promise to find any answers, but we'll have fun talking about them. This program item is going to be a free-flowing interchange between you and *Janus's* movie reviewer. We'll start by looking at a couple of sample reviews (drafts of what will go in the next issue of *Janus*) and talk about what you do and don't like about them. (This presupposes, of course, that you've seen the movies involved, but most of you will have anyway.) Then we'll get into a more general rap session

about movies we've seen and liked or disliked and why. Finally, we'll try to summarize what it is that you look for in a movie and whether a good review should cover those subjects.

SF Film as a Cultural Text

[Panelists: Jennifer Bankier, Jan Bogstad, Judith Clark, Charles Grigsby, Phil Kaveny, Catherine McClenahan, Tom Moylan Julie Redding]

This year's commingling of politics and science fiction is in a workshop dealing with the two major films shown at the convention, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Zardoz*. It focusses on the manner in which the hegemonic power-structure of contemporary Western society manifests itself in both films. It will attempt to define the manner in which the creative vision of the science fiction film exists both inside and outside the purview of those elements, both human and structural, that control the means of production within our society. These two films should be thought of as the texts under discussion in the Sunday morning workshop. Those who have seen *THX-1138* might think of this film as another reference point. The workshop will also ruminate on the state of contemporary science fiction films. For interested individuals, there will be an informal pre-panel meeting sometime on Friday or Saturday. Contact Phil Kaveny, Operations, for time and place of the informal discussion.

Sci-Fi Porno

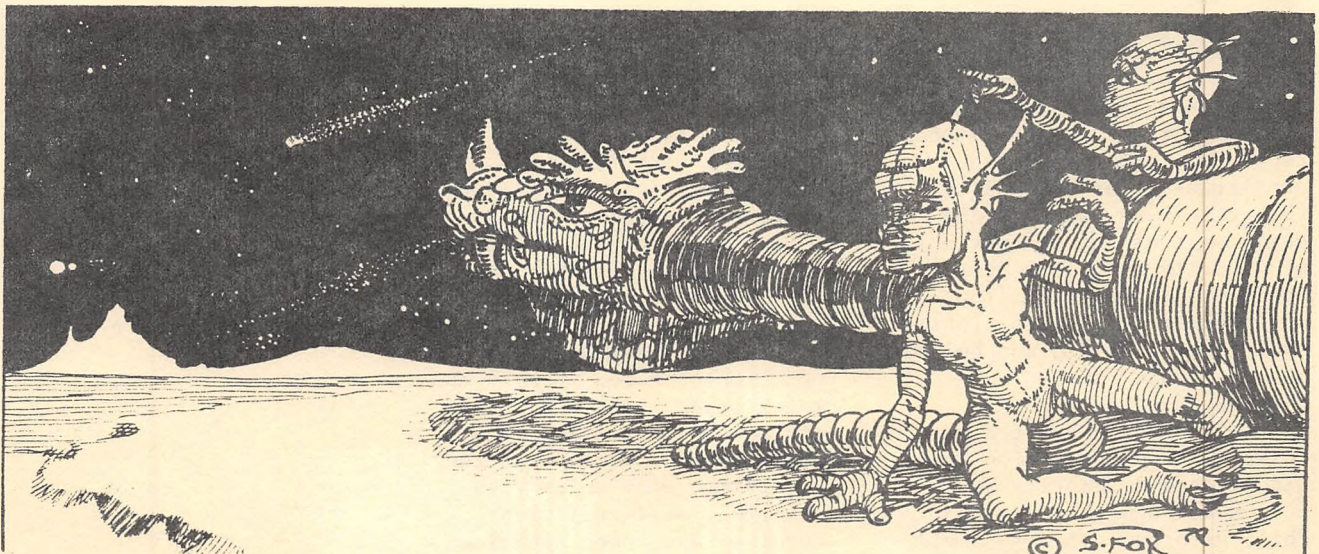
[Panelists: Jim Cox, Phyllis Eisenstein]

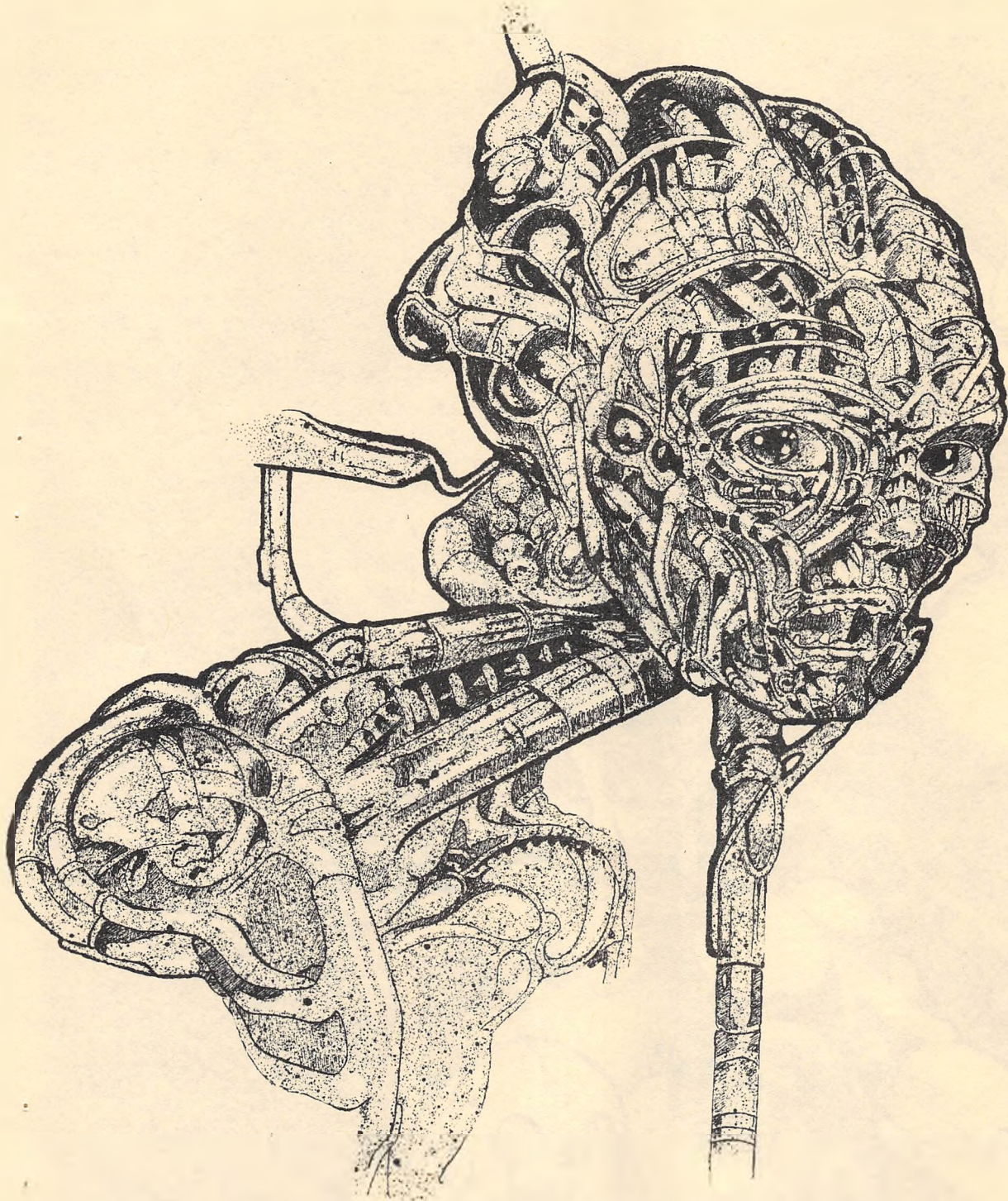
Some say science fiction was born in the great pornographic publishing houses of the West Coast. Others say that most SF still shows signs of this genesis. We say, what is pornography anyway? Is it what you point at when you say the name? Come to our panel and find out.

Space Colonies & Life in Space

[Panelists: Michael McFall, Rick White]

What would it be like to live on a space colony? Who is likely to end up there? How far away are we from the really comfortable space colonies that are big enough to simulate Earth conditions? How did the astronauts fare in Skylab, and what is the current status of the mainland Chinese space program? This presentation will attempt to answer some questions and raise others about the future of human life in space through the use of slides and discussion. It will also mention the influence of the L-5 Society and its implications for the American space program. All who would be dwellers between the planets should check out this presentation.



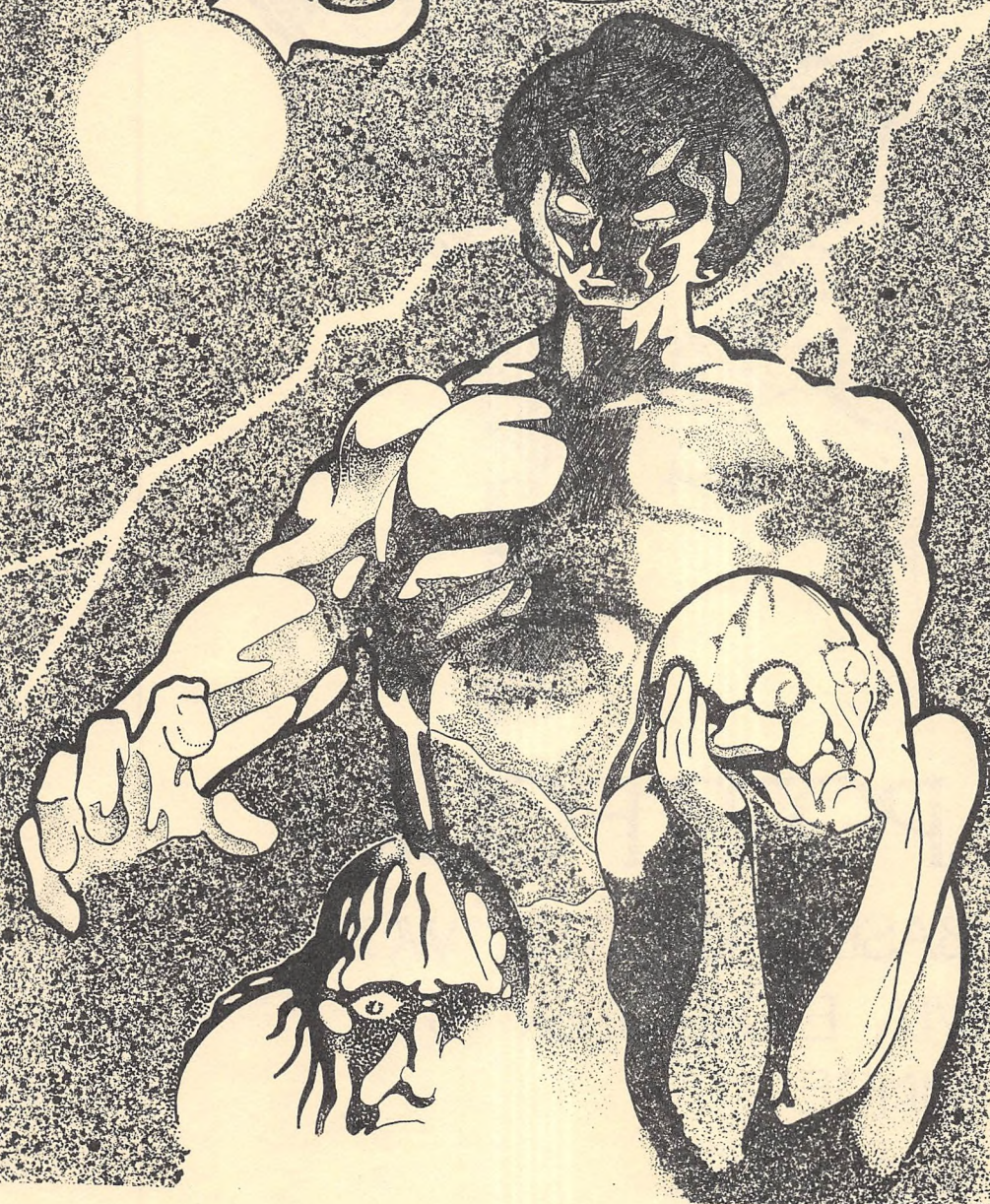


ART PORTFOLIO

IMAGES BASED ON THE WORK
OF OCTAVIA E. BUTLER &
JOAN D. VINGE

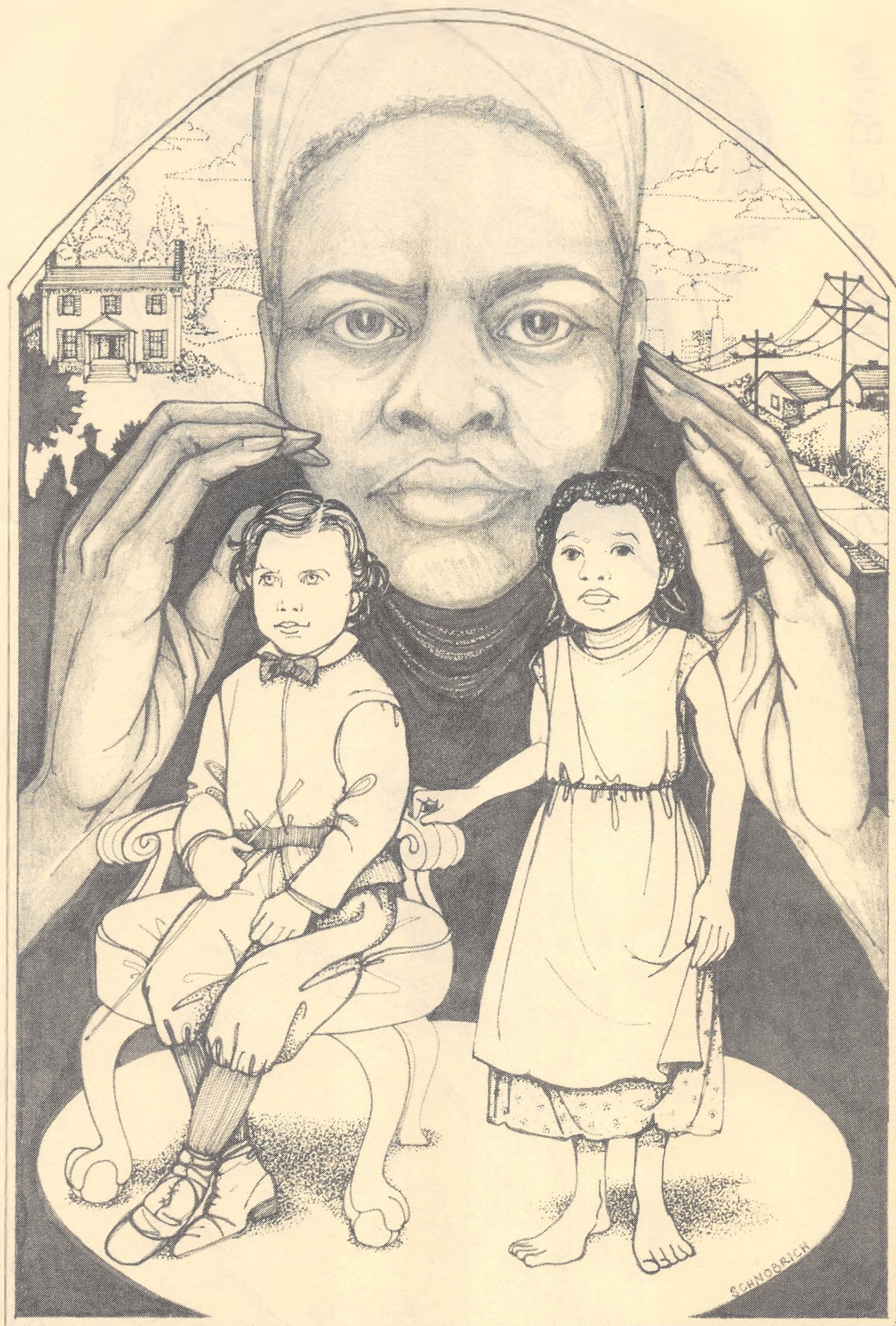


doro --
Octavia
Butler



MIND OF MY MIND

Octavia E. Butler

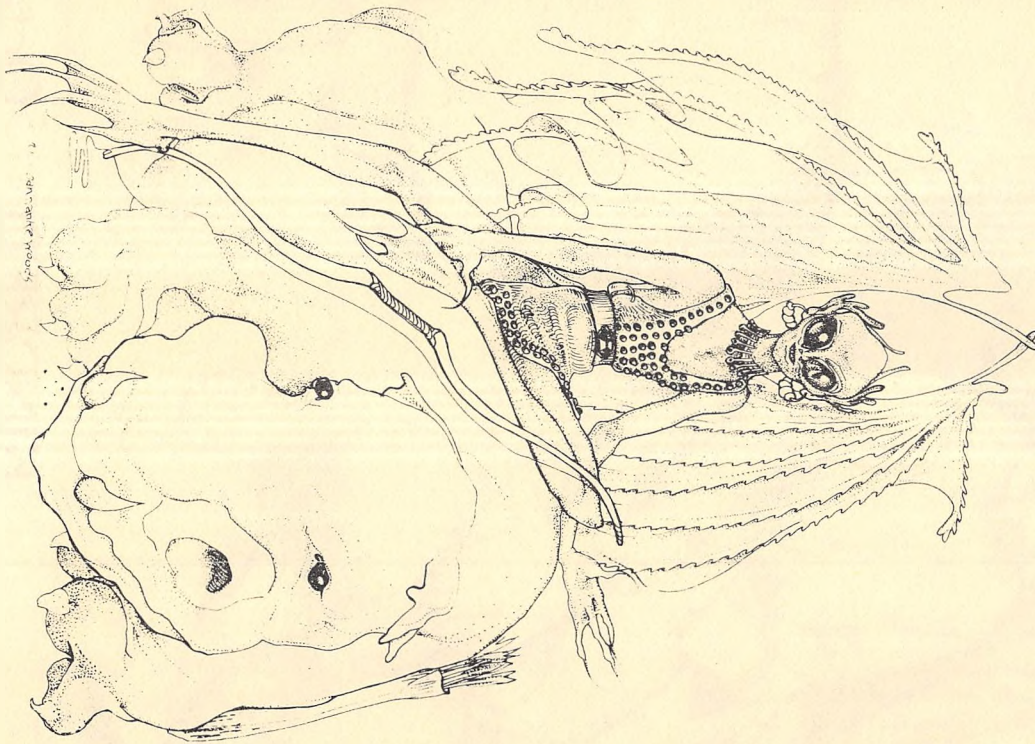


KINDRED

Octavia E. Butler

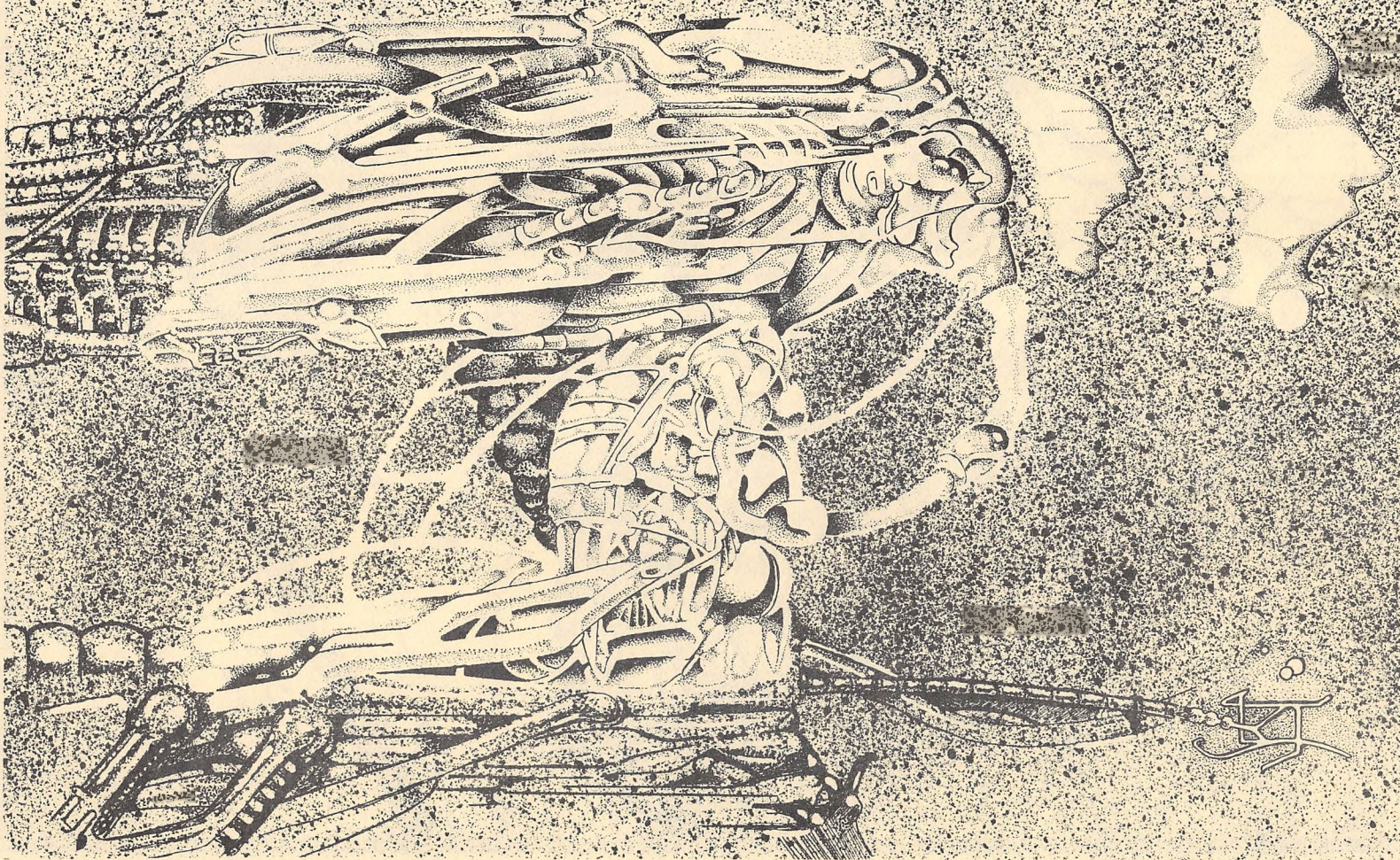
PATTERNMASTER

Octavia E. Butler



"Eyes of Amber" Joan D. Vinge

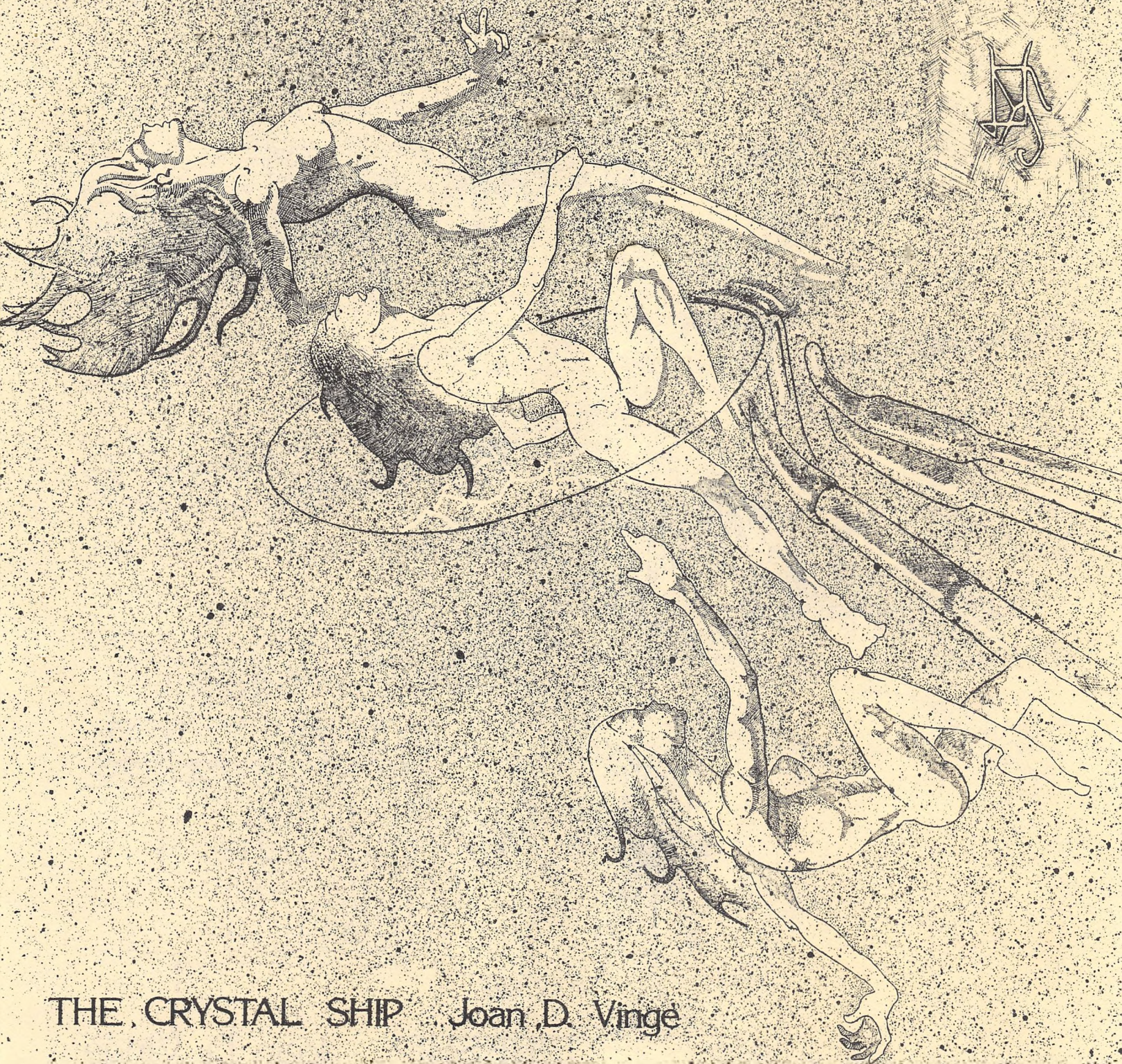
“Always helpless; helpless to escape the things I hated, helpless to embrace the things I loved.
I want to go home”



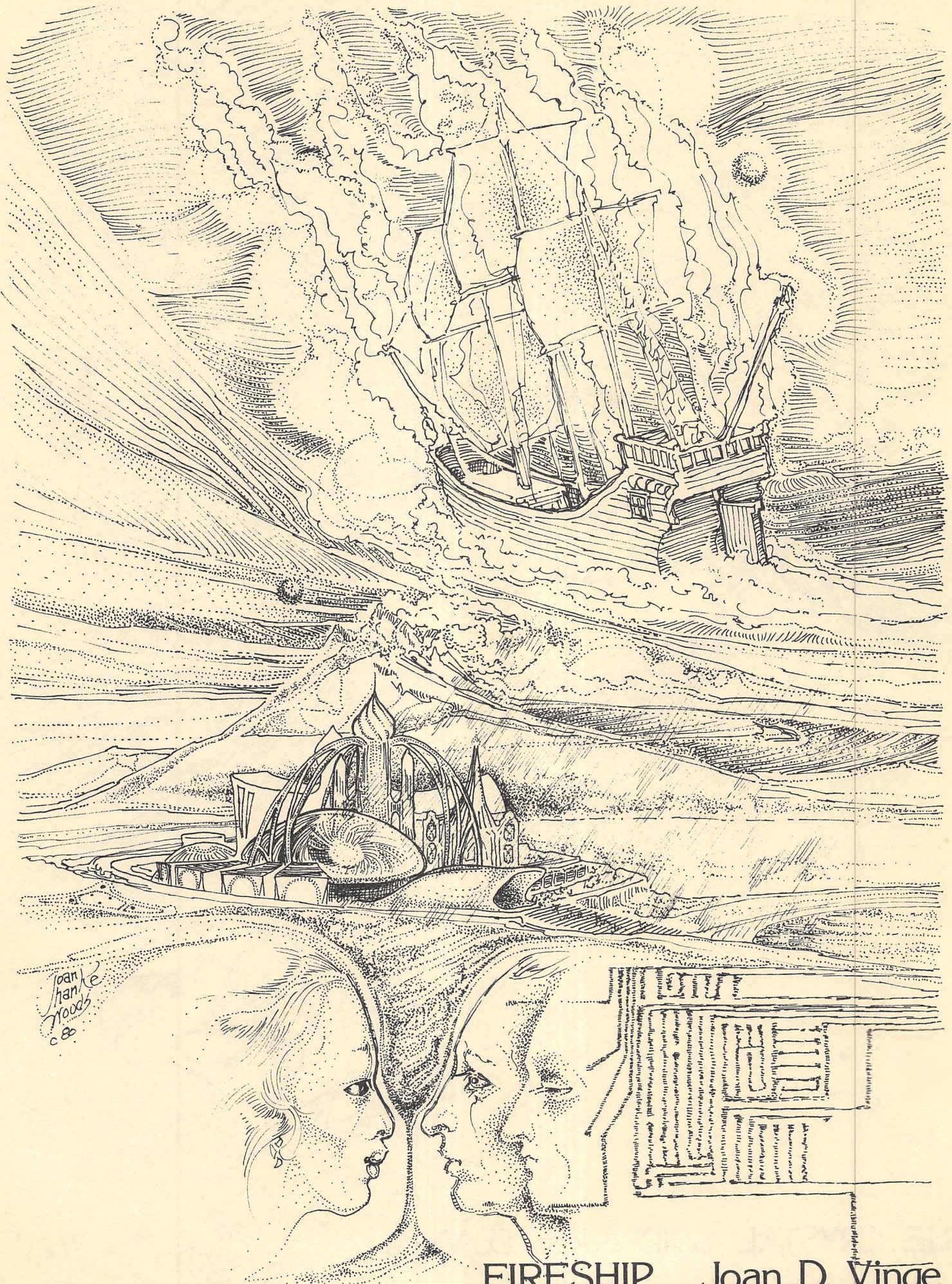
“View From a Height” Joan D. Vinge



MOTHER AND CHILD Joan D. Vinge

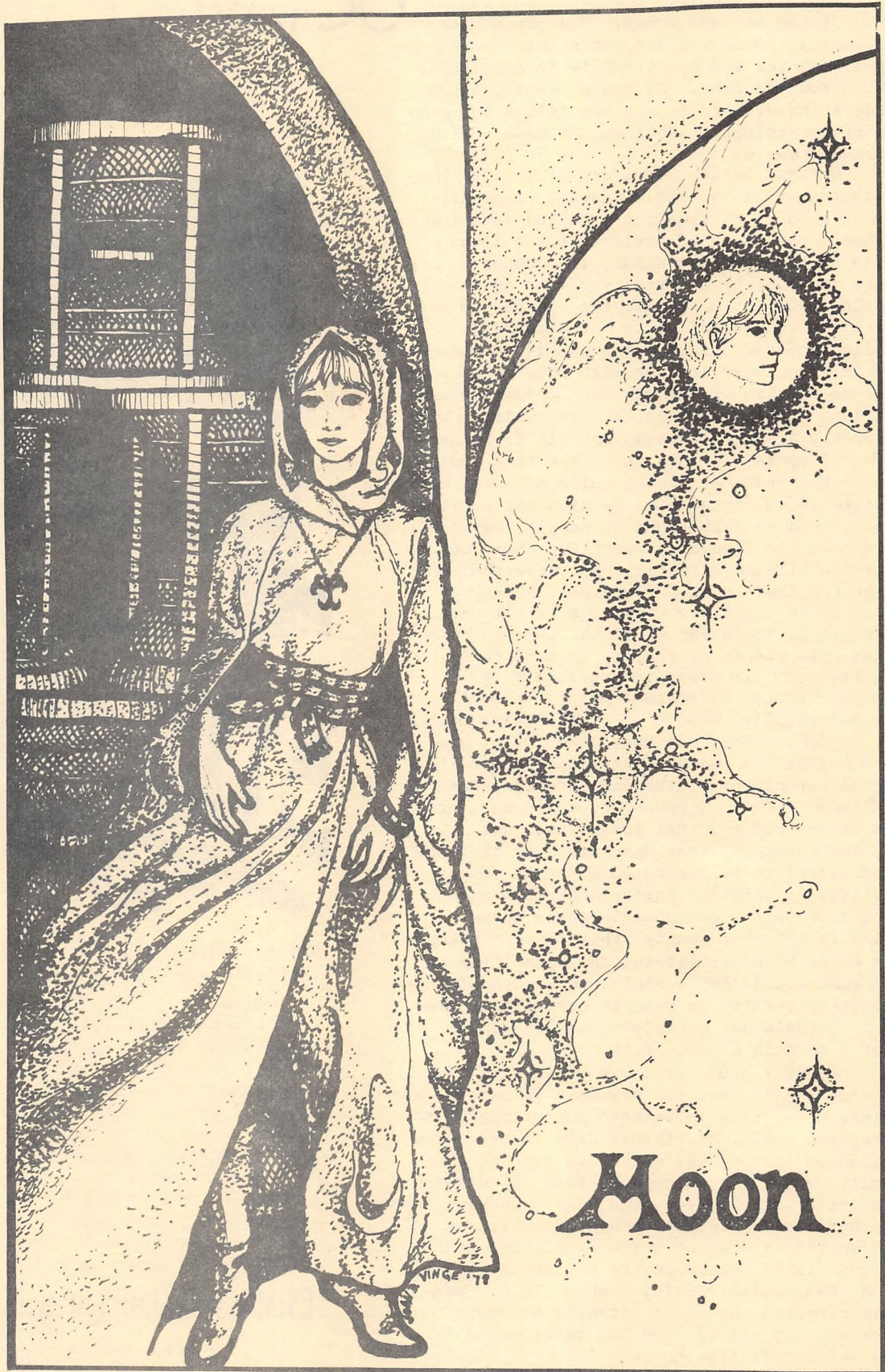


THE CRYSTAL SHIP .. Joan D. Vinge



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FIRESHIP Joan D. Vinge



Joan D. Vinge

THE SNOW QUEEN

INTRODUCTION TO OCTAVIA E. BUTLER

BY JAN BOGSTAD

Separate and therefore equal.
Who starts wars? Old men. Who fights them? Young men and women. Old men win and lose wars. Young men and women only lose thier lives, futures and hopes. Life in America is moving towards 1984. As young people, young readers and writers of science fition and movers of technological society, we make a truly brave new world.

Octavia Butler and I are of a size. Maybe that's why I had the courage to approach her at a panel at Iguanacon, having read two of her books, as an SF reviewer for a local radio station and for *Janus*. In a country where you must be a stereotype even to buy clothes, and you must have the clothes in order to be considered worthy of attention, finding another 6 foot woman who is, as she put it, "too much in love with food", and a science fiction writer who can support herself writing, is no mean feat. I must admit, I was favorably disposed towards Octavia E. Butler before I spoke with her the first time. But then I had read her books, which are difficult to like in an unqualified fashion but heartening to read as depictions of people, especially women, who find they must have power before they are allowed affection, but nevertheless fight for their space. Of course, neither Octavia nor I believe that this is all that there is to human interactions. She has selected this aspect of reality to explore in her fiction. In order to understand her series, we must understand her first book, chronologically. *Mind of My Mind!* begins with an old man, a very old man, named Doro, and Doro begins the psionic wars that reduce the social structures of the earth to the state in *Patternmaster*. I guess you could say, he's one of the old men that looses this war, but you could not say that Mary wins, or that she even wanted to be presented with the responsibility it entails. Butler describes existence in poverty, and powerlessness where power is all that counts. This is what makes her books both distasteful and compelling. We all must decide for ourselves how much of contemporary reality we want in our science fiction. Octavia has already chosen to represent a certain aspect of it.

Octavia and I are also of an age. I am 30, and she 32, but she was born in exotic Pasadena, California to parents who struggled to make ends meet. Her father died in her early childhood leaving her mother to support the family, while I grew up on a farm in northern Wisconsin with parents who were a farming team (mother's side occupation was six children and dad worked as a 40-hr per week electrician). Octavia liked horses in her childhood too, and read those Walter Farley books. In her case, this prompted the first attempts at short stories. By age 12, she had switched to SF. (We got a real live horse -- perhaps that's what stunted my writing career). She submitted her first story at age 13 and she's still writing, but now she can support herself at it, a recent occurrence. So she has time to come to our convention and tell us what drew her to SF, first as a reader and then a writer. Octavia can help us visualize a brave new world, but first we have to get through 1984.



Octavia Butler can best speak for herself...
[Butler's new book is titled *Kindred*.]

Octavia: It's the story of a black woman sent back in time to the ante-bellum South. I think it's the best thing I've ever written. It's a kind of nightmare that haunted me for several years before I finally buckled down and wrote it. I didn't want to do the research because I knew it would be ugly. I finally got myself to do it, and went to Maryland and looked around a lot. I could have done it without going to Maryland. It was set there—mostly. But I had never spent much time in the East, and I didn't know anything about the South, and

Butler Bibliography

- Kindred* [novel], Doubleday, 1979.
Mind of My Mind [novel], Doubleday, 1977; Avon 1978.
 "Near of Kin" [short story], *Chrysalis* 4, Zebra 1979
Patternmaster [novel], Doubleday, 1976; Avon 1979; Sphere Books Ltd., 1978
Survivor [novel], Doubleday 1978; Signet, 1979.

Octavia E. Butler Interviewed

I thought it would be a good time to go and find out and live there a couple of weeks at least, to use their libraries and wander about the countryside to see what I could find out. I think that really helped me, even though I could have done it without it.

The second book is *Wild Seed*. It is part of my Patternist series, but it's different because it's based on aspects of Igbo mythology that I sort of stumbled across and really liked. It's something I haven't tried before, working with a different culture that really exists, instead of inventing my own, different culture.

Jan: I heard you talking at a panel about the Igbo mythology and your interest in it. Maybe you could say a little bit more about the concepts like the one dealing with a spirit that goes from body to body and takes over different bodies.

Octavia: The Igbo have a kind of spirit called an ogbanje. The ogbanje is an evil child spirit, generally. That's the Igbo explanation for a woman who has several children all of whom died before they passed the age of six or eight. The Igbo believe that this is really one spirit returning again and again to torment this woman, and the only way one can prevent the child spirit from killing another child is to find the magical substance that controls the child's spirit—usually something buried some place. So that if you could find this substance, dig it up, give it to the—I guess you would say "medicine man" (they have a special name)—the child can be prevented from dying, can grow up to lead a normal life. Otherwise the evil spirit will torment the woman.

What I have is a kind of continuation of that idea. I have Doro growing up. He's my ogbanje character. He grows up, but he doesn't stop his evil habits. His mother is dead by the time he's an adult, so he doesn't die and go back to tormenting her. He torments other people. Well, he doesn't only torment them, he just kills them. He takes over their bodies, and when he takes over, they're dead.

My other Igbo character is Anyanwo. (Both of these characters, by the way, appear in *Mind of My Mind*.) Anyanwo has the name of Emma Daniels by the time *Mind of My Mind* takes place. She is a shapeshifter. The Igbo have legends of a whole clan of people who can change their shapes—or who have other magical abilities—but they have one specific legend of a shapeshifter named Atagbusi. This woman is supposed to have done a great deal to protect her people around Onitsha (This is a town along the Niger, in what's now Nigeria.) and instead of being considered a witch, as she would have been in most Western mythologies, she is revered, and there is a shrine there in her honor. I think it's still there. I used her instead of just letting her die, as no doubt she did, if such a person ever existed as a basis for the legend. I made her an immortal who simply and probably married one of the men there and took on another

new identity. It was fairly easy for a woman to move into a new village without too much explanation of where she had come from, just because she was a woman, and if she were young—child-bearing age—some man would be interested. It would be very difficult for a man to do the same thing. Sometimes Igbo paid their debts by sending off daughters or sisters or whatever into servitude. Also, it was possible that they might send them off to be married. One other thing I'm interested in is how you set out to write. Do you make an outline? Do you just sit down at the typewriter?

Octavia: Well, the way I write right now—it's strange. I've got two or three ideas going while I'm working on one thing, and I'm trying furiously to get through with the one. But, a more reasonable way—the way I used to write when I was better organized or just getting started—was to sit down and decide what I wanted to do. I didn't make an outline, because that spent whatever creative energy should have gone into the novel, but I did sit down and decide, "Well, what is this novel going to be about?" Until I could tell myself what it was going to be about in one or two sentences, I didn't think there was enough there to work with. And after that I'd look at the characters, and I'd do pages on them—episodes out of their lives that may or may not get into the novel, it doesn't matter. What I'm doing is getting to know them. I let them show me what their conflicts are—what I can build the story around—because even if I know what story I'm going to tell, it doesn't do me any good until I know how I can get my point across.

Jan: Does that seem to involve working with your characters until you know a lot of their characteristics?

Octavia: Yes. In fact, sometimes I write first-person journal pages of the characters. Then I start worrying about the conflict. For some reason, I write the last chapter first. I have to, because it gives me something very concrete to aim at. In *Kindred*, the time-travel story, it gave me a beginning, because in searching around, trying to find a good, strong beginning, to what had to be a very normal situation for the time travel, I couldn't find anything. I had a prologue that had been part of the last chapter that could involve the reader and make him or her ask a lot of questions. Most of these questions are not completely answered until the final chapter.

Jan: So this is like your outline at the end.

Octavia: No. For instance, in *Patternmaster* I didn't make an outline, but I had the story so clearly in my mind that... Have you read any of my novels?

Jan: Yes, I've read *Mind of My Mind* and *Patternmaster*, but I couldn't get hold of *Survivor* before I left.

Octavia: In *Patternmaster*, I was writing the story of this young man who was eventually going to wind up leaving his people after going through several trials, and this woman showed up, named Amber, who was supposed to

be practically a walk-on, and she wouldn't go away.

Jan: Yes, That's what I remember. I was very startled to hear you talk about the "man who" and the culture, as she was the character I remembered.

Octavia: She just wasn't there. It was him and his icky wife. And that was it. But when Amber came along, really, I had to hold her down, because she was literally taking... It was becoming her story. It could very easily have become so. He would have been left behind someplace. But I had to go back. (I was about half-way through when I realized there was no way I was gonna make her less than she was.) And I went back and tried to reorganize things a bit, so that it would look as though she belonged there all the time. Hopefully I succeeded, but no matter how much planning you do, this kind of thing can happen.

Jan: In *Mind of My Mind* did you construct the female character with the idea that she was going to play a major role?

Octavia: Yes, yes. That was different. She was my main character. In fact, an early version...

Okay, a little story of bad luck that turned out to be good luck. In an early version of *Mind of My Mind*—an almost complete market version—she was telling the whole story in the first person. I didn't feel then that I needed Doro's point of view, although later I did, because he seemed to be such a mindless villain I got into him more. The reason that version was never seen was, I was taking it to the library to do some work on it, and I put my briefcase down in Bullocks in Los Angeles, and walked away and left it. I came back several days in a row, crying about it and going around to lost-and-found, asking cashiers, anybody I could find. I never saw it again. [Apparently] some derelict picked it up, opened it—no money: paper, books, garbage—dumped it in the trash, and kept the briefcase....

It did make for a better novel, though. I mean, after I recovered, which took a while.

Also, I got laid off my job. That was another bad-news thing that turned out to be good news. I was eligible for enough unemployment compensation to support me, so I rewrote the novel altogether. A different novel, really. And it would have been the first novel that I had sold, but the first publisher I sent it to rejected it. So *Patternmaster* turned out to be the first, and they're published in reverse order. It wasn't the first novel that I finished, it's just that *Patternmaster* needed less work.

Jan: When I read [the two] novels, I kept trying to connect them. Is there a long time gap between the two?

Octavia: Oh, yeah! Several hundred years. As a matter of fact, there's supposed to be a novel, somewhere in my mind, a novel called *Claysark* that should explain the plague situation. *Survivor* is also connected to the series in a different way. It tells where the mutes who were not enslaved and who were not diseased went. Some ordinary people did

escape.

Jan: I did also wonder about the heavy-handed control that is so much a part of the books. I think you know what I'm talking about, that there's a only a certain amount of freedom for a certain amount of people.

Octavia: We have very powerful people who use their power. That's pretty ordinary, really. You expect, when you're writing SF, that people of great power are going to be either idealistic and good, like Zenna Henderson's People, or villainous and rotten and evil. But what I really wanted to do was just take some people who were fairly ordinary and see what they did with it, and I didn't see them being that gentle. I mean, they're not that evil, they're just people.

Jan: Do you have any political end in mind with your writing? Do you see it as influencing people's thinking? Or do you want it to do that?

Octavia: It would be nice, but I think that it might be hoping for too much. They are only novels. But, what I would really like to do is make people feel comfortable with characters who are not all male, who are not all white, and who just don't fit; who are not middle class, who don't fit the stereotypes. I remember a short story some years ago that made me furious even then before women's lib (or whatever) became prominent. Somebody wrote a short story about another world in which the kind of parasitic life-form there survived by taking on the shape of the female of whatever species it was imitating. It always became female. Why did it always become female? What got me was the automatic assumption that the females would be taken care of by the males because the middle-class ethic appears everywhere in the universe. That seemed to be the assumption.

Jan: And that's also an amazing assumption, too, given that it was not true that men took total care of women. Not in my family, certainly. It is impossible.

Octavia: Well, in my family the men tended to work themselves to death at fairly early ages, and the women wound up taking care of lots of children as best they could.

Jan: I grew up on a farm, and you know what a farm wife does.

Octavia: I grew up on a chicken farm with my grandmother for a while after my father died—oh, three years or something—so, those were my formative years, and I know what you mean. I think she worked herself to death. She died a lot younger than she should have. Really worked hard. Made a success of it and it killed her.

Jan: Have you always wanted to be a writer?

Octavia: Yes, since I wanted to be anything. Since I was 10 and got into writing. Well, then I wanted to be a horse-hack. I was crazy over horses. Going to the library and reading all the Walter Farley stuff. All the books that could be titled, *A Girl and Her Horse*.

INTRODUCTION TO JOAN D. VINGE

BY JIM FRENKEL

Born in Baltimore, Maryland a day too late to be a 1948 April Fool, Joan Dennison Vinge has come far. Her major new novel, *The Snow Queen* will be published this April, and the advance excitement is intense. Her novel-ette, "Eyes of Amber", won the Hugo for best of 1978. WisCon will mark the third time she's been a guest of honor at a SF convention within the past half-year.

But she wasn't always sure she even wanted to write science fiction. Though she was told by her mother that she made up stories to put herself to sleep at age three, her first conscious creative mode was drawing. Thoughts of space, fostered when her father showed her the moon and planets through a small backyard telescope, quickly faded upon the family's move to San Diego, California in 1956. Her father, an aircraft engineer, had found a better job, and Joan discovered southern California. For a girl born to the snowy winters and humid summers of the mid-Atlantic coasts, the sun and warmth of California made her receptive to outdoors activities, among them horses and playing at historical adventures. She played with dolls, too -- but they were always on secret missions.

Or they would talk about horses. Joan began to draw them, and then to write stories about them. But for her, the drawing was the important part. By junior high school she'd decided that she would pursue a career as an artist/illustrator. She kept at her art through high school, and into college. But in ninth grade fate took a hand (as they say in the movies), when she stumbled across *Storm Over Warlock* by Andre Norton. Though she continued to draw, her writing began to turn toward SF and fantasy, influenced by the colorful and affecting adventures by Norton. In addition to introducing her to SF, Andre Norton's work was to pique an interest in anthropology that later grew to dominate her college studies, and that permeates her writing today.

Through high school she read SF and fantasy. Having discovered SF, she found other authors in Norton's vein, and branched out to more different kinds of reading quickly. She got hooked, too, on folk music, which seemed part of the romantic and colorful past.

Entering San Diego State University as an art major in 1965, her ambitions lasted but three semesters until the arrogant criticisms of instructors drove her to switch majors. Disillusioned by her experience, she stopped drawing altogether at first. Five majors in two years followed, until anthropology/archaeology attracted her steady attention. Once again, it was Andre Norton's influence that pushed her toward this field.

Years before, *The Time Traders* had given her a haunting image of Great Britain 4,000 years ago. Nowhere in a history book could she discover enough about this prehistoric period when people know as the Beaker Folk lived; only by taking a class in archaeology could she study it. In doing so, she made a vital connection -- the continuum of anthropology from the far past to the far future. All times are linked by human experience. No matter what the time or place, people experience life.



The shared view, different from your own, yet connected by the bond of life, makes the world new -- stimulating, breathtaking, perhaps frightening. But always fascinating.

An interest in the views of others. . . worldbuilding from the individual on up. From her first published story, "Tin Soldier", there has always been a sense of place and culture in her fiction, and a great feeling for characters. But in 1970 there was no body of work. She had yet to meet Vernor Vinge. Her future husband was introduced to her when he came to speak to a science fiction class taught at SDSU by Harry Harrison. Having previously met Harry and his wife, Joan, whose son was taking a class taught by a friend of hers, she was demurely set up with Vernor, whom she held in awe.

At the time, he was an up-and-coming SF writer, having published short stories of note, and a novel that gained a good deal of critical attention, *Grimm's World*. He was also a Ph.D. candidate in mathematics -- she wasn't sure which side of him awed her more. Love triumphed over shyness, however, and they spent more and more time together, finally getting married. After a short stint in the Army, Vernor began to write full-time as they settled down in Ann Arbor, Michigan for a year. After finishing a second novel, he urged Joan to take her own writing more seriously. She had never finished anything she'd started work on, with the exception of a novel begun at age seventeen and redrafted many times without a satisfactory result.

In the summer of 1972 they moved back to San Diego, Vernor having landed a good job teaching math at SDSU, and in the fall she wrote "Tin Soldier". Vernor's editorial instincts were good, and he advised her to try to sell the story. Damon Knight bought it for *Orbit 14*.

Following the brief euphoria of nearly making the Nebula Awards ballot with "Tin Soldier", her creative fortunes seemed to slump. Writing slowly -- first in handwritten draft, then revising once, twice on a typewriter -- it seemed to take forever for her stories to be finished, and then published. But Ben Bova liked her work and published her stories in *Analog*. She and Vernor had collaborated on a story, "The Peddler's Apprentice", which appeared in two "Best of the Year" anthologies.

Writing remained an avocation, but as acceptances increased, so did her dedication. By 1977 her work had appeared twice solo in *Analog*, and she'd gotten novellas published in hardcover original-story anthologies. She also finished writing her first novel, *The Outcasts of Heaven Belt*, which she then tried to sell. But over a half-dozen publishers rejected first the proposal, then the manuscript until she decided to try *Analog* again -- and Ben Bova bought it. A book sale followed quickly, as artist Vincent DiFate, who illustrated the serial, recommended *Outcasts* to Sheila Gilbert, editor at New American Library.

In the meantime Bova had commissioned her to write a novelette as the lead fiction for the June 1977 All-Women issue of *Analog*. Her first commission and her first deadline, the assignment made her nervous. She managed to beat the deadline. . .but "Eyes of Amber" somehow felt to her like a stepchild, forced kicking and screaming into the world, without the loving care she'd lavished on previous, unhurried works. She didn't dislike the story, but she was surprised, to say the least, when a letter arrived from the Hugo Awards Committee of Iguanacon, the 1978 World SF Convention.

By August 1978 she had two books in the works and scheduled for release in December of that year! The Binary Star series editor at Dell Books had rejected two novellas, "Fire-ship" and "Mother and Child" on the grounds that neither of them was really long enough to fit his series, but he suggested making a book of those two stories together instead.

But her growing number of book contracts

didn't condition the author to expect to win the Hugo, and she was named "Most Surprised" Hugo winner when they announced her name. A tout sheet circulating at the convention just before the Awards ceremony had listed her odds as 40-1. Afterward, she was heard to curse herself for not betting on her own longshot!

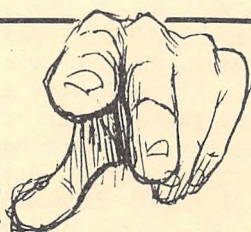
The Hugo was to change her professional life, as her personal life changed too. She and Vernor had grown apart in the time leading up to her Hugo success. The problems had nothing to do with her writing success. As their relationship cooled, she became buried in a massive new project, *The Snow Queen*. The idea came from the Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale of the little girl who rescues the prince from the clutches of the evil queen. She had also just read Robert Graves' *The White Goddess*, and the themes joined in a new idea, a science fiction novel in which the main characters were all women, though men weren't shunted aside or the objects of scorn. What started as a 60,000 word novel began to grow as the plot failed to resolve itself as she'd expected. Finally, fifteen months after beginning, she completed the 190,000 word epic and submitted it to her agent, who had two publishers very eager to see it. Several weeks later, *The Snow Queen* belonged to the Dell/Dial Quantum Books program.

Since then she's been asked to describe the book in a few short words on many occasions. The short plot summary takes about fifteen minutes. But as with all her work, the plot tells you little. The characters make the book, and along with them, the feeling. At conventions people talk about Joan Vinge and they mention things like vivid writing, compelling emotions, well-delineated characters. These elements have joined with a solid technical basis for her work which she owes in part to Vernor, who remains her technical advisor.

For the eighties, she has high goals -- to write fantasy and SF that she can feel expands her skill, to establish herself as an illustrator in pen-and-ink drawings, and to survive what she sees as a crucial decade in our struggle to adapt to the needs of the Earth.

Janus

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INTRODUCTION TO BEVERLY DEWEESE

BY JUANITA COULSON

WisCon is to be congratulated. It's got great taste, picking Bev DeWeese as a guest of honor. She's one of those superb choices: gracious, well-read (and how), witty, an interesting speaker, an accomplished woman for all seasons who'll fit in fine with all the various con attendees.

However...

I really feel I should warn you, out of my experience in Beverly-watching over more than two decades: she's sneaky. Yes, indeed, one of those very sneaky people, nice sneaky, but sneaky all the same, actually running the world. Ever since I've known her, she's pulled her own weight and that of half her friends and co-workers too. She's always been a feminist and independent, but she never let that get in the way of digging right in and doing everybody's share, to make sure the gears all meshed.

Be on the alert. Beverly's trademarks are "Get the Job Done" and "Speak Softly and Carry a Full Work Schedule". She's the original workaholic and has been since years before the term was invented. And if you don't watch out, your con may click along even more smoothly than you expected, unless you sit on your guest of honor to make sure she simply enjoys herself and does nothing else, for once.

I first met Beverly Joanne Amers in 1951 when we were sophomores at Ball State College in Muncie, Indiana (Middletown, USA). I was jabbering away to a casual acquaintance in the campus cafeteria one day on my favorite topic, SF. Beverly quietly injected a comment from nearby. She insists that all she said was, "Oh, yes, Heinlein," after which, she claims, I dragged her bodily across the table and made her talk SF with me until midnight. She exaggerates, slightly. But it was an instant-recognition thing. We quickly found plenty of interests and attitudes in common. Little did I know I was going to become an aider and abetter in Beverly's secret plan to make the world run right.

Her first tactic was to nudge and suggest and get me heading in a direction I wanted to go, but didn't realize: organizing an SF club and publishing a fanzine. (See if you can get Bev to tell you about our adventures in publishing the very first issue of what was going to become *Yandro*, if she can bear to remember the trauma.) Certain Wisconsin fans may well have had a taste of that sly persuasion themselves. Bev's a demon proofreader, editor, tidier-upper and general get-this-show-on-the-road person. If it's lying around needing work done on it, she's likely to head right for it and finish the job or inspire you to. I know *Yandro* never would have been launched if Bev-



erly hadn't been there. All she got out of it was a title of "editrix emeritus" and, I hope, some small satisfaction of a job well done.

Next, I found myself in the middle of a busy civil-rights group, the Human Rights Organization. It was a long time before Martin Luther King's campaigns or Brown vs. Board of Education, and Muncie is one of the most hidebound, politically reactionary places in the Midwest. It didn't seem possible we'd have the nerve to tackle those prejudice barriers, in the early '50s. But then Beverly was chivvying us along, leading the way even when she wasn't out in front. (This was also long before the days of consciousness about women's rights. Bev was conducting her own impressive personal campaign on that score. But in the meantime, justice against blacks and other minorities needed doing, and she's never one to let an injustice go uncorrected.)

While she was sparkplugging HRO and helping me start a club and SF fanzine, she was also a full-time English major, a live-in baby sitter, and woman-of-all-work for room and board with a family living near campus. I later figured out Bev operated on a 27-hour day. Just watching her exhausted me; it will you, too. But you'll have to watch closely; she doesn't make a lot of noise while she's sneakily taking over all the work and re-ordering the world. Those are the sneakiest kind of nice people of all: the quiet ones.

After graduation, Beverly was, for a while, practically the entire English and Drama Department of Eastern High School just outside Kokomo, Indiana. She taught ump-teen classes, directed the school play (probably finished the posters the kids botched, as well), supervised the yearbook and school paper, coached the seniors taking the then-equivalent of SAT tests, etc., etc., etc. I suspect the English Department eventually disintegrated when Bev moved to Milwaukee. They'd been getting 15 jobs done for the price of one-half. But their world sure ran smoothly while she was there.

Amid all this, she was still

[Continued on Inside Back Cover]

DAVID HARTWELL

INTERVIEWED BY JAN BOGSTAD

Jan: David, what were you doing before you worked in the publishing industry? Has this always been something that you wanted to do?

David: No, I actually fell into the publishing industry by accident. I've been a science-fiction reader and collector since I was in grade school in Pennsylvania. Throughout my high-school and college career I lived in the Boston area, and I'd go into the city and buy old science-fiction magazines. I learned of the Clarkson Collection at Harvard and met the head. I spend a lot of my spare time on college vacations picking up fill-in magazines for the Collection. I had been aware of fandom, but was not involved in it, other than subscribing to *Science Fiction Times* and being a member of a few conventions (which I didn't attend—but they'd send the material). I decided after college to go to graduate school in English and then switched to comparative medieval literature. Late in my graduate work, I was editing a little magazine called *The Little Magazine*, and one of the other editors was at my house one evening raving on about science fiction. I was vaguely aware of the fact that this man's father was in publishing in some responsible position. After dinner we were looking at my bookshelves, and I said, "Your father works for Bantam, right? Well, Bantam just made a very smart move in buying the rights to *The Stars My Destination*." (It used to be owned by Signet, and some one there allowed the rights to revert.) He said, "Gee, you know a lot about this?" I said, "Sure, I've been doing it for years. I have a large collection of science fiction and do a little bit of reviewing from time to time." He said, "Well, you should be in publishing." I said, "No, I should be finishing my dissertation." "My father is now the president of New American Library, that publishes Signet. And if they're reverting books like that, they need your help." I said, "I'd be happy to talk to him about it some time." The next Monday morning I got a

call from the president of New American Library asking if I'd be interested in doing some consulting editorial work and I became, for three years, the consulting editor in science fiction to Signet while I was completing my dissertation.

Jan: Did they pay you a set salary?

David: They paid me a set consultation fee by year, very small, but I did it for love and enjoyed it enormously and, when I left Signet, I became science-fiction consultant for Putnam/Berkley, again on a very part-time basis, and began to get involved in the work. Meanwhile, aside from completing my doctoral dissertation, I had been writing articles in the late '60s on rock music and science fiction and other things, for *Crowdaddy* magazine and a couple of underground newspapers, and *Crowdaddy* offered me the opportunity to do a monthly review column on science fiction, which I ended up doing for five years, including a fair amount of interviewing. I began to attend conventions regularly and meet people. Signet, by chance, was the publisher of the Clarion anthologies, and I got a chance to go out to Clarion when it was held in Pennsylvania and once, in Michigan, to meet the writers and talk to the students. That's proved to be one of the most valuable experiences I've had, because I've subsequently bought books from about half of the people I met.

Jan: Do you ever think about writing, yourself, or are you just interested in editing?

David: I'm very interested in editing. I do have a contract for a non-fiction book on science fiction with Richard Marik Corporation, collaborating with an old and close friend, Paul Williams, who is in fact the man who founded *Crowdaddy* and has been a fan since he was very young. I write a fair number of essays for the Gregg Press series out of Boston, which I edit. I've been giving serious consideration to writing fiction again.

Jan: So you've always been interested

in science fiction—as a reader, and then as an editor. When did you cross over from being a consultant to editing as your major occupation?

David: In fact, I've only been a full-time editor since last November [1978] when I changed jobs to Pocket Books and Simon & Schuster. I was a consulting editor in science fiction and finally the consulting editor-in-chief in science fiction. I found that this gave me a great deal of personal flexibility which initially I needed in order to complete my graduate work. It was not my principal source of income. I was, in fact, managing the medical-student dormitory for Columbia between 1965 and 1975. When I completed my dissertation in 1973, I had been investigating the job market in comparative medieval literature for a couple of years before that. So it took me about fifteen minutes to decide that, of the 250 PhDs that year in comparative or medieval fields, there were ten jobs open nationwide and only two jobs in universities that seemed interesting and challenging. I was getting more and more positive feedback for my work in science fiction. It was something I had enjoyed since I was a child and that I would pursue further, letting the medieval literature wait. I talked to my friends and advisors on the faculty and they said that you can, in fact, go back and pick up academic studies again in three or four years. Gradually however, over the course of the years '73 to '77, it became clear to me that I would work in science fiction for the foreseeable future. I had been teaching part-time right up into 1975, contemporary and modern American literature and science fiction, at Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey, and it was very pleasant because I was teaching only senior electives in the humanities department rather than the freshman introduction to literature or, even worse, expository writing to engineers.

Jan: Your degree was ultimately in English?

David: Yes, but in comparative medieval literature—English. In graduate school I'd never taken a single course in American literature or contemporary or modern literature, so it was ironic that I ended up teaching contemporary and modern American lit.

Jan: In other words, your viewpoint was unsullied by academic prejudices?

David: I did, as they say, read a lot.

Jan: You consider yourself to be a science-fiction fan and have been for a long time. So how did you arrive at what I understand to be an interest in science fiction as a place to apply theoretical approaches to literature? Through your academic training?

David: Partially through my academic program and partially through years of reading contemporary literature and science fiction. From the time I was quite young, sixth and seventh grade, I regarded the best science-fiction novels I was reading as equal to the best of any other novels I was reading.

Certainly, the science-fiction story in the late '50s and early '60s, when I was growing up, was the most active and interesting field in the contemporary short story, and I can remember discovering the first translations of Borges in the early '60s and saying, "Boy, this is as good as or better than most of the science fiction and it's like it too, in some ways." But science fiction seemed to me more varied and stylistically energetic than most contemporary fiction. I knew from the very beginning that it was unfashionable and the whole science-fiction field had an enormous amount of paranoia about the fact. People in the field knew that they were out of fashion and that the literature they wrote would not be taken seriously no matter what they wrote.

Jan: What does it mean to you that the literature is not taken seriously?

David: Well it means, for instance, that for fifteen years not a single science-fiction novel was reviewed in major places like the *Times* and most other of the "literary" media like the *Partisan Review* or *The Yale Review*. They would not review a major science-fiction title because, *a priori*, it was not in the ball game.

Jan: No matter how many copies of a book a science-fiction author sold, or what its stylistic features were?

David: Well, the number of copies sold has never been a good indication of literary quality. As to the other part of the question, I was invited once to the American-literature doctoral seminar at Columbia to speak on the subject of science fiction. The doctoral seminar that year was studying American literature from 1910 to the present, published in periodicals, and the director of the seminar thought that science fiction was a useful part of that study. And I did in fact go in to the seminar as an outside speaker, having prepared a reading list. When I arrived at the seminar I asked, in a friendly and polite manner, which of the people in the seminar had read any of the stories that I'd asked them to read. Only four people had. Two of the rest of them who had not read any of the stories were honest enough to say that they hadn't read the science fiction because they knew they couldn't possibly like it and couldn't possibly respect it even if they did read it.

Jan: They didn't even have the interest to make the effort?

David: Absolutely. It has been so completely and absolutely out of literary fashion for decades that there are a number of bright, well-educated people who already know that they would not like it and respect it even if they tried.

Jan: Okay, I guess we now know what "out of fashion" means. I've heard Chip Delany talk about not being able to get any of his hardback novels into any major hardback bookstore. They won't take it as long as it's called science fiction.

David: The whole situation has grown up over decades. As Ted Sturgeon said, "Science fiction is the only category of literature in the 20th Century that is invariably judged

by its worst examples." Everyone knows that the worst science fiction is terrible and therefore all science fiction is terrible. This is the kind of reverse logic that is applied to the field. Many people have investigated it in essays and discussions for years and years, asking why, and it really comes down to the word "science".

Jan: Well, I've heard analyses of it as the literature of the lower middle class, for example....

David: There are a lot of ways to put it down, but basically science and technology are extremely important to our culture in this century, perhaps more so than ever before. Science and technology have built up a mystique around the study of science and the vocabulary of science which alienates most readers. In our educational system, certainly, there is a profound difference between science students and literature students. I'm sure that you can perceive this intuitively.

Jan: It's often hard to get serious SF criticism accepted as criticism by graduate schools.

David: For approximately twelve years, there's been some movement towards theoretical criticism of science fiction. As we both know, there's never been a satisfactory definition of what we mean when we talk about science fiction. We need to engage in that kind of critical and theoretical discussion on a high level, levels incomprehensible to most readers because they require a technical vocabulary and a technical background inaccessible to anybody who hasn't studied criticism. Once the theoretical questions are settled, or at least the boundaries are drawn, then whatever principals have been developed can be applied and there will be a great deal more possibility for high level critical discussion between and among works of science fiction. The standard fashion in science fiction has always been to support whatever work you were talking about for its virtues and to basically remain silent about its faults.

Jan: How do you choose to buy a book for publication?

David: That is a question often asked of editors. Each has to answer it in the same way. I chose the books I like. An enormous component of editorial work is intuitive. The good editors, the editors who keep their jobs over a long time, and who in fact move up in companies they work for, have a good intuition for what the audience will like and what they will buy. It is a kind of commercial or market intuition as well as a strictly literary intuition. Style and audience go together too.

Jan: Do you ever find yourself with a novel in hand that you really like but you can't buy?

David: I have never found myself in that position. In fact, in the last ten years, I have attempted to buy every novel that I liked whether it was fantasy, science fiction, science fantasy, or a hybrid kind of technological fiction. I did not always succeed because I did not always have the authority, simply on my own work, to buy what I wanted. There have been cases in which I was forced to re-

ject books because of company policies over which I had no control and in one case was able to buy the same manuscript and publish it later. In general, I am fortunate now to be in a position to buy what I like and I am limited only by the number of works that the company can publish in a given time.

Jan: Do you routinely do a lot of work with authors?

David: Yes. There are occasions where I do little editorial work with an author because I feel that a manuscript is the best book that it can be. There are other times when I work for months to even a year and a half over the same manuscript, suggesting changes. In publishing, an editor becomes involved in the marketing aspects of the books, taking a lot of time away from the pure reading and editing. A normal paperback editor will be working on between thirty and sixty books at once, in several stages of the publishing process. So there's always a tension and pressure on editors in the field. As to how much of each work week will be devoted to acquisition and editing and how much will be devoted to packaging, promotional copy, advertising, attending meetings on the future of the science fiction program, etc. . . .

Jan: Do you find the life of an editor satisfying?

David: Oh, yes, I do. I find it exciting and involving. I particularly enjoy working with fantasy and science fiction right now because it is, in my opinion, where the literary action is. There's more good fiction, (certainly more bad fiction too) being published as fantasy and science fiction now than has ever before and I believe that it is the equal of anything else being written in the English language.

Jan: What do you want to do with your editing?

David: I am trying to produce, for my company, the biggest, best, most popular science fiction line in the world. It may take a while, but I'm working on it. I see the opportunity and support developing more and more for a career doing something that I consider to be very exciting and I want to continue.

Jan: I hope you do, because there are a lot of things that I think would not have been published had you not urged publishers in that direction. What do you hope to happen at WisCon and what has drawn you to our convention?

David: I came to WisCon for the first time last year because I heard from friends that the programming was serious and controversial. That there were a lot of good, serious and rather intelligent arguments that took place at WisCon and it had been eight or nine years since I had attended a convention anywhere in the country either academic, or fanish, where there was any controversy on the programming. Certainly at one convention or another there's an insult hurled here or there, but WisCon was billed as a place where I could find dead-to-rights discussion, real serious disagreement. And I did, and I enjoyed it enormously and that's why I want to come back.



The Official, Fully Documented, Based-On-True-Facts Spear-Carrier's Future History of WisCon 4

Philip Kaveny

If WisCon 4 were a Wagnerian opera, then I would be one of the fat guys who wears a funny hat with horns on it and carries a spear around. I would always have to pay attention to what the first soprano was doing. While being a spear-carrier ain't bad, nobody ever recognizes you in the crowd. Anyway, let me introduce you to some of the other spear-carriers. That's the purpose of this future history.

By the way, I have nothing against the first or second soprano or the handsome baritone, but you can find out about them elsewhere in the program book. So let me tell you a little more about the spear-carriers. Not necessarily in their order of importance.

George Hartung is a fiftyish silver fox of a man who happens to be the head of the UW Extension Liberal Studies Department. George loves language as a workman loves his tools. As a matter of fact, George was an engineer before he was an English professor. About four years ago, George came up with a radical idea. The Extension could sponsor a science fiction convention that would be both exciting and dynamic and justify itself as an educational program. "Preposterous," said the Extension; "Sercon," said the fans. Feminism, politics, and literary criticism? If nothing else, it's not boring. Well, George is still with us and if you look real carefully, you can catch him on Friday afternoon talking about one of his great loves, linguistics.

Sis Kopp works with George at

the UW-Extension. She keeps a beneficent eye on WisCon and at the same time keeps us in line with the Extension in this period of tight finances and retrenchment. Sis is the one who keeps the opera within budget. Sometimes, we have to do without even basic necessities. For example, I assured the Extension that an indispensable part of the security for any Extension program was walkie-talkies. They never believed me.

Lynne Morse calls herself a Gopher-Ferret. A lousy job, signing up people to work on the convention, but she volunteered for it. She is also an accomplished artist, calligrapher, and jewelry-maker whose work you should start seeing more of in the not-too-distant future. She told me that it's good luck to feed a gopher. So, if you send one out for a sandwich, remember they have to eat too.

There is a rumor going around that there has been a defection in the Madison anti-cat faction. You should see Richard Russell, who is kind of big and orange and furry and has a feline friend, Chuck, who sleeps on Richard's stomach as he drifts off watching the Green Bay Packers lose another one. Richard and Chuck understand each other. Richard handles registration for WisCon and will have your membership card color-coded whether you like it or not.

Karen Jones will be handling the WisCon opening ceremonies this year. When Karen said last summer that this would include some belly-dancing, we all thought that she

meant the sort of thing that goes on at the Dangle Lounge, a local strip-joint. Boy, were we dumb.

Karen's 11 year old son, Randy, is a real smart kid. So smart that he knows when to keep his mouth shut in WisCon meetings, although he will be opening it as a respondent in the "Children's Literature" panel. Tom Jones, Karen's husband and Randy's father, will be working with Rex Nelson on a panel on artificial intelligence. Rex will also be doing a discussion on what he calls "your basic blinkie."

Who was that masked man? Well, he wasn't wearing a mask. That was James Andrew Cox, WisCon's official Art Auctioneer and poetry-by-the-pound laureate. He is also the radio voice of the SF³ fantasy and science fiction hour on WORT. What can you say about Jim? He's kind of like a spring day, sort of breezy. And if you talk to him, he'll make you feel that way too.

Karen Axness is one of the people working in the huckster's room. In addition, she is a scholar of feminist literature and literature by women. Look for her on "Fantasy, Folktales and Feminism".

Terri Gregory, whom you will see scurrying around WisCon, is a poet who, in addition to her interest in science fiction, is deeply involved in Wisconsin Women in the Arts. She is one of the people who will be arranging the post-convention program.

Carl "Crowbar" Kucharski is the director of the Madison Community Access Center, a cable TV station. He and his motley crew—Paul Wells, Andy Garcia and Dennis Hackbart—believe that a science fiction convention can play an important part in the programming of public access television. They believe it so strongly that they will be willing to give up one of their few free weekends to videotape WisCon.

Greg Rihn, the fellow who sometimes wears a rather moldy tuxedo and cape and has rather pronounced canines, made the mistake of saying last March, "Well, we have had three WisCons, so do we really want to do it again?" After we let him up off the floor, he said, "I guess you do." I never thought of it before, but vampires make great movie projectionists. They stay up all night and you don't have to rent them a room.

We call Perri Corrick-West the Duchess, but not to her face. She is a person who has played a major role in most of the work required to put together the WisCon film program. She has made every WisCon meeting for years. And if you meet her, you'll see why we call her "the Duchess".

Hank Luttrell is a seedy-looking, lanky, literary omnivore and typical Madisonian. When I told Hank that I was going to write this article, he told me that he did not really approve, because he thought that once the con started, the distinction between the convention members was artificial once the con started. He said that the distinction led to misunderstanding in alternative projects. Well, Hank, you are right, and to prove it, I am writing this article to, in a sense, demystify what is going on with the con. Hank is also the deputy coordinator and he really

likes ducks.

This year, Lucy Nash said that we should include a masquerade. We told her that she should organize it and she did. Lucy is a student of costume design and related arts.

Bill Hoffman is sort of large, red-haired, and expressive. A berserker if I have ever seen one. Bill will be the master of this year's marathon D & D game. How you can tell Bill is a berserker is by the teeth-marks on his shield.

Diane Martin has been quietly converting the unbelievers to the gospel of pro-cat fandom. She has even gotten me to the point of benign neglect as far as those little furry creatures. I haven't pulled a tail in at least a week and my hands are healing nicely. Diane is the treasurer of SF³, the people who bring you WisCon. In addition, Diane takes real pretty pictures, produces slide shows and reads science fiction books real fast while watching the movie that goes with it. It allows her to find out the ending before the rest of us.

Susan Balliette is deeply involved in public access media, both radio and television. She will also be working with the fan access room. She keeps asking us what that is, but we won't tell her. In addition, Susan will be assisting those members who have hand-caps. It is hard to believe that Susan has only been with us a year.

Ken Konkell is this year's Mr. Hospitality for WisCon's con suite. Ken has only been to about twenty conventions this year. He claims that he invented the name WisCon four years ago when he was in Australia. Maybe he did.

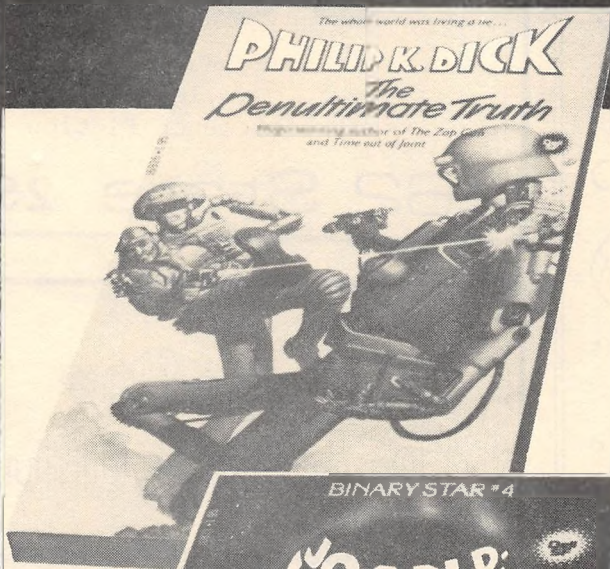
Laurence Gold (a famous and distinguished unknown) is also one of the spear carriers who will be helping in the huckster's room. He also typed the whole WisCon program book. Luckily, he was broke and hungry. Otherwise, he would not have settled for the two-hundred pounds of potatoes and the stuffed dodo we brought back from MiniCon.

Luther Nagle is the special assistant for coordination of operations and security for WisCon. As far as I know, he is the only spear-carrier about who has actually carried a spear. Mr. Nagle shares Stanislaw Lem's opinion of most science fiction and, in the presence of a freshly opened bottle of vodka, might talk to you about it.

Paul Norton will also be working with security and operations as special agent. I greatly respect Paul's critical acumen. In reference to Harlan Ellison's works he said, "Ellison used to be a creative, heroic writer. Now what he does is, as they say on the television, doo-doo." Who will argue with that?

Well, I just heard the drums roll, so I must get in place. WisCon is not really an opera. If it were, you would have to sit quietly through it until the fat lady finished her aria. In WisCon, we will all be getting a piece of the action. In a sense, everyone will be a star. So, have a good time, talk to people and feed several gophers for good luck. Don't forget to be kind to large creatures in blue fur. You might be surprised to learn how cuddly they are. We love you all.

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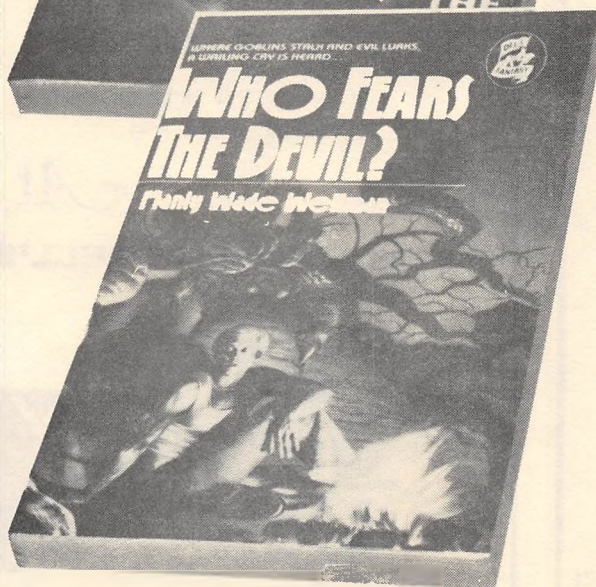


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[Continued from Page 23]

helping out on *Yandro*, going to conventions, regularly attending meetings of the SF club in Indianapolis and getting married to Gene DeWeese. Occasionally on the same weekend. (That's another tale you can nag her to tell you, how she got married and attended an SF club meeting all in one day.) She also had to cope with some incredible adventures with a far-out landlady, a burden of a school principal, the world's foremost elbow-killing pussycat and a husband who went in for 50-watt speakers for his record player and vintage recordings of train whistles, Enrico Caruso and Gene Autry. (Bev has a lot of stories to tell...a lot.)

When Beverly moved to Milwaukee, she discovered whole new fields that needed her super-efficient touch. She and Gene worked at AC Delco on the Apollo project equipment. Bev found all these manuals and technical writeups crying out for a firm touch, and for a change the captains of industry put the right person in charge of proofreading and supervising the typists. The engineers churning out incoherent prose and typesetters messing it up got a rude awakening. But the manuals never looked so good. We might not have got to the Moon without Beverly making sure the instruction sheets made sense.

Then Bev decided to study to be a librarian. (In her spare time, of course. She considers eating and sleeping non-essential; time is for really important things.)

I knew the Milwaukee Public Library was going to be dragged kicking and screaming out of its serenity. My best advice to them was not to get in her way.

Along the way to becoming a librarian, Bev stopped off briefly to arrange records for a local government department. They just wanted to use up some federal grant money. Before she got through with them, they had the best organized file system in the area. I'm sure they're still scratching their heads and asking each other, "Who was that little masked woman who went through here like a whirlwind?"

You may be asking yourselves the same thing before WisCon is over. But relax and enjoy it. Bev DeWeese deserves to be your guest, for long years of labor in the science-fictional vineyards, and you deserve to have her for your efforts in pulling this con together and you won't be disappointed in your guest, I guarantee.

She may try to sneak over to the registration desk and neaten up your cards, however, or get a derailed committee member back on the track, or... She's not after applause. It's just her style, and it's great. Give her plenty of applause anyway. The world needs lots more Bev DeWeeses, and we like to show our appreciation for the one we already know.

Enjoy your guest in good health. I give you -- Beverly Joanne Amers DeWeese.

WISCON 4 WORKERS

Ackley, Meredith (panelist) Ph.D. English
 Axness, Karen (huckster) Feminist Critic
 Badami, Mary Kenny (panelist) Prof. Communication Arts
 Balliette, Susan (fan access) Media Producer
 Bankier, Jennifer K. (panelist) Lawyer
 Bartelt, John (panelist) Astronomer
 Bogstad, Janice M. (coordinator) Marx/Feminist Critic
 Boyer, Bob (panelist) English Professor
 Bruning, Richard (panelist) Artist
 Butler, Octavia E. (pro-guest of honor) Writer
 Clark, Judith (panelist) Prof. of English
 Corrick-West, Perri (panelist) Pharmacy Instructor
 Cox, James Andrew (art show) Special Education Coordinator
 DeWeese, Beverly (fan guest of honor) Librarian
 DeWeese, Gene (panelist) Writer
 Eisenstein, Alex B. (panelist) Writer
 Eisenstein, Phyllis (panelist) Writer
 Frenkel, Jim (panelist) Editor
 Friend, Beverly (panelist) Prof. English
 Fisher, Leah (panelist) Librarian
 Garcia, Andrew (media room) Media Technician
 Gold, Laurence (huckster room) SF Critic
 Gomoll, Jeanne (programming) Artist
 Gregory, Terri (live kittens party) Meteorological Librarian
 Grigsby, Charles D. (security) Catholic Humanist
 Dennis Hackbart (media room) Media Technician
 Hammerstrom, Marina (panelist) Social Worker
 Hanke-Woods, Joan (panelist) Artist
 Hartung, George (panelist) Prof. English
 Hartwell, David (editor guest of honor) Editor
 Hoffman, William (D & D dungeonmaster) Med. Student
 Hull, Betty (panelist) Prof. English
 Johnson, Steven V. (art show) Artist
 Jones, Karen (opening ceremonies) Dance Teacher
 Jones, Randy (panelist) Precocious Child
 Jones, Thomas E. (panelist) NASA Comm. Satellite Coordinator
 Juliano, Laurence (panelist) Artist

Kaveny, Philip E. (security) Pop. Culture critic
 Konkol, Ken (con-suite) Engineer
 Kucharski, Carl (media room) Popular Culture Critic
 Kushner, Ellen (panelist) Editor
 Kellough, Robert (cover) Artist
 Kvern, Ole (panelist) Artist
 Labonte, Richard (panelist) Artist
 Lowrey, Michael (Milw. liason) Film Critic
 Luttrell, Hank (deputy coordinator) Bookseller
 Manesis, Peter (panelist) Artist
 McClenahan, Catherine (panelist) Ph. D. English
 McFall, Michael (panelist) Research Analyst
 Martin, Diane (cat critic) Office Manager
 Morse, Lynne (groundhogs) Artist
 Moylan, Thomas (panelist) Instructor-English
 Nash, Kim (masquerade) Research Analyst
 Nash, Lucy (masquerade) Textile Designer
 Nelson, Rex Thomas (panelist) Computer Technician
 Peterson, Joyce Corinne (panelist) Librarian
 Price, Douglas (Chicago liason) Computer Programmer
 Rihn, Gregory (panelist) Lawyer
 Rosenfeld, Sue-Rae (panelist) Outside Agitator
 Redding, Julie (panelist) Prof. Sociology
 Russell, Richard S. (registration) Film Critic
 Sellgren, Kris (projectionist) Astronomer
 Schnobrich, Georgie (panelist) Artist
 Schmidt, Stephanie (dance-music) Music Critic
 Scrivner, Joyce (panelist) Computer Specialist
 Scurvin, Mary Lynn (panelist) Computer Technician.
 Singer, Jon (panelist) Writer
 Smith, Dick (panelist) Computer Technician
 Vinge, Joan (pro-guest of honor) Writer
 Wells, Paul (media) Media Technician
 Wenz, Rocky (panelist) Free Lancer
 West, Richard (panelist) Librarian
 Wickart, Bill (panelist) Dungeonmaster
 Wood, Mary (panelist) Librarian
 Woodford, John (panelist) Student
 White, Rick (panelist) Astronomer
 Zahorski, Ken (panelist) English Professor

