

we tend to eat out in restaurants a lot. We don't go to fancy places, just family restaurants usually. And it's there we run into the chief drawback of family restaurants--namely, families. For some reason people think they can bring their kids to family restaurants. I don't know where they got that idea. I can tell

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you when I was a kid my parents thought that restaurant manners were very important. These days restaurant manners, at least for some kids, are very different. Kids seem to run the length and breadth of the restaurants using strategies I thought went out with the Golden Horde. They yell, they scream, they come running by my table grabbing food off. Stick out one little foot to trip them and you should hear the fuss. From the parents. Jeez!

Parents seem just not to care any more. They spend more time with the younger kids. Tell me: is it S_e_s_a_m_e_S_t_r_e_e_t that is mis-educating kids or what? Why is it that every four-year-old in the world thinks that number one on every adult's hit parade is the alphabet song? I know the alphabet song! What's more, I know the alphabet. Why do all the younger ones sing it with those little voices at the top of their lungs. Admittedly the tune is Mozart (or didn't you know that?), but this is no way to hear Mozart. Now, it's not that I really have anything against S_e_s_a_m_e_S_t_r_e_e_t. But most of the kids who started their education on that street will end up on another street. You know that a significant fraction of high school students--I'm talking 25%--could not correctly name the three countries that make up North America. Pi-T-ful! The only thing that keeps me going is the knowledge that it is those kids who are going to be paying my Social Security. But I can tell you I'm watching the economy. If Social Security goes belly-up, some kid screaming the alphabet song is going to pay, I can tell you.

2. The 1993 Nebula winners are D_o_o_m_s_d_a_y_B_o_o_k by Connie Willis (novel), "City Of Truth" by James Morrow (novella), "Danny Goes to Mars" by Pamela Sargent (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Oct) (novelette), "Even the Queen" by Connie Willis (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Apr) (short story), and Frederik Pohl as Grand Master.

3. Attached is the list of Hugo nominations for this year, out

remarkably promptly from ConFrancisco. Since we have already discussed or scheduled discussions for three of the nominees (S_t_e_e_l B_e_a_c_h, A_F_i_r_e_U_p_o_n_t_h_e_D_e_e_p, and D_o_o_m_s_d_a_y_B_o_o_k), we might as well go for the other two, especially since they are available in paperback (or trade paperback). We have re-arranged the schedule a bit so that these are scheduled before the Hugo balloting deadline; see the schedule for the set of dates. (No, I don't know yet for the Hugo-nominated short stories will be available electronically, but I know Brad Templeton is working on it. Details will follow as they become available. In any case, they are probably fairly easy to track down: three of them are in a single issue of A_s_i_m_o_v'_s!)
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If you attack stupidity you attack an entrenched interest
with friends in government and every walk of public life,
and you will make small progress against it.

-- Samuel Marchbanks

Hugo Nominees

- Novel

- C_h_i_n_a_M_o_u_n_t_a_i_n_Z_h_a_n_g by Maureen McHugh (Tor)
- R_e_d_M_a_r_s by Kim Stanley Robinson (HarperCollins (UK), Bantam Spectra)
- S_t_e_e_l_B_e_a_c_h by John Varley (Ace/Putnam)
- A_F_i_r_e_U_p_o_n_t_h_e_D_e_e_p by Vernor Vinge (Tor)
- D_o_o_m_s_d_a_y_B_o_o_k by Connie Willis (Bantam)

- Novella

- "Uh-Oh City," by Jonathan Carroll (F&S_F June)
- "The Territory" by Bradley Denton (F&S_F July)
- "Protection" by Maureen McHugh (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Apr)
- S_t_o_p_p_i_n_g_a_t_S_l_o_w_y_e_a_r by Frederik Pohl (Axolotl/Pulphouse, Bantam)
- "Barnacle Bill the Spacer" by Lucius Shepard (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s July)

- Novelette

- "True Faces" by Pat Cadigan (F&S Apr)
- "The Nutcracker Coup" by Janet Kagan (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Dec)
- "In the Stone House" by Barry N. Malzberg (A_l_t_e_r_n_a_t_e
K_e_n_n_e_d_y_s)
- "Danny Goes to Mars," by Pamela Sargent (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Oct)
- "Suppose They Gave a Peace..." by Susan Shwartz (A_l_t_e_r_n_a_t_e
P_r_e_s_i_d_e_n_t_s)

- Short Story

- "The Winterberry" by Nicholas A. DiChario (A_l_t_e_r_n_a_t_e
K_e_n_n_e_d_y_s)
- "The Mountain to Mohammed" by Nancy Kress (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Apr)
- "The Lotus and the Spear" by Mike Resnick (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Aug)
- "The Arbitrary Placement of Walls" by Martha Soukup
(A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Apr)
- "Even the Queen" by Connie Willis (A_s_i_m_o_v'_s Apr)

- Non-Fiction Book

- E_n_t_e_r_p_r_i_s_i_n_g_W_o_m_e_n: T_e_l_e_v_i_s_i_o_n_f_a_n_d_o_m_a_n_d_t_h_e
c_r_e_a_t_i_o_n_o_f
p_o_p_u_l_a_r_m_y_t_h by Camille Bacon-Smith (University of PA
Press)
- T_h_e_C_o_s_t_u_m_e_m_a_k_e'r's_A_r_t edited by Thom Boswell (Lark)
- V_i_r_g_i_l_F_i_n_l_a_y's_W_o_m_e_n_o_f_t_h_e_A_g_e_s by Virgil Finlay
(Underwood-Miller)
- M_o_n_a_d_N_u_m_b_e_r_T_w_o edited by Damon Knight (Pulphouse)

- L_e_t's_H_e_a_r_I_t_F_o_r_T_h_e_D_e_a_f_M_a_n by Dave Langford (NESFA Press)
- A_W_e_a_l_t_h_o_f_F_a_b_l_e:_A_n_i_n_f_o_r_m_a_l_h_i_s_t_o_r_y_o_f_s_c_i_e_n_c_e_f_i_c_t_i_o_n_f_a_n_d_o_m_i_n_t_h_e_1_9_5_0_s by Harry Warner Jr. (SCIFI)

- Dramatic Presentation

- A_l_a_d_d_i_n (Walt Disney Pictures)
- A_l_i_e_n_3 (20th Century Fox)
- B_a_t_m_a_n_R_e_t_u_r_n_s (Warner Brothers)
- B_r_a_m_S_t_o_k_e_r's_D_r_a_c_u_l_a (Columbia Pictures)
- "The Inner Light" (S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k:_T_h_e_N_e_x_t_G_e_n_e_r_a_t_i_o_n) (Paramount Television)

- Professional Editor

- Ellen Datlow (O_m_n_i, various anthologies)
- Gardner Dozois (A_s_i_m_o_v's, various anthologies)
- Beth Meacham (Tor)
- Kristine Kathryn Rusch (Pulphouse, F&S_F)
- Stanley Schmidt (A_n_a_l_o_g)

- Professional Artist

- Thomas Canty
- David A. Cherry
- Bob Eggleton
- James Gurney
- Don Maitz

- Original Artwork

- Cover of A_r_i_s_t_o_i (W. J. Williams) by Jim Burns (Tor)
- D_i_n_o_t_o_p_i_a by James Gurney (Turner)
- Cover of F&S_F, Oct-Nov, illustrating "Bridges" by C. de Lint), by Ron Walotsky
- Cover of I_l_l_u_s_i_o_n (P. Volsky) by Michael Whelan (Bantam)
- Cover of A_s_i_m_o_v's, Nov (Asimov portrait), by Michael Whelan

- Semi-Prozine

- Interzone edited by David Pringle
- Locus edited by Charles N. Brown
- The New York Review of Science Fiction edited by David G. Hartwell, Donald G. Keller, Robert K. J. Kilheffer, and Gordon Van Gelder
- Pulp house edited by Dean Wesley Smith
- Science Fiction Chronicle edited by Andy Porter

- Fanzine

- File 770 edited by Mike Glyer
- FOSFAX edited by Timothy Lane and Janice Moore
- Lan's Lantern edited by George J. Laskowski, Jr.
- Mimosa edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch
- Stet edited by Leah Smith

- Fan Writer

- Mike Glyer
- Andy Hooper
- Dave Langford
- Evelyn C. Leeper
- Harry Warner, Jr.

- Fan Artist

- Teddy Harvia
- Merle Insinga
- Linda Michaels
- Peggy Ransom
- Stu Shiffman
- Diana Harlan Stein

- John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer of 1991-1992
(Sponsored by Dell Magazines)

- Barbara Delaplace (2nd year of eligibility)
- Nicholas A. DiChario (2nd year of eligibility)
- Holly Lisle (1st year of eligibility)
- Laura Resnick (2nd year of eligibility)
- Carrie Richerson (1st year of eligibility)
- Michelle Sagara (2nd year of eligibility)

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCK FINN
A film review by Mark R. Leeper
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Capsule review: This is a reasonably faithful adaptation of what may be the great American novel. Although whittled down from the intricate novel, this version will entertain kids and adults. Rating: +1 (-4 to +4).

As unlikely as it seems, the great novel of Spain is a burlesque about a madman who anachronistically thinks he is a knight. D_o_n_Q_u_i_x_o_t_e is a novel you can read at nearly any age. It is simple enough to enjoy at age ten and as you grow it becomes more and more sophisticated. England's great story for all ages is A_l_i_c_e_i_n_W_o_n_d_e_r_l_a_n_d. In the United States we also have our story for all ages. It is not even a stand-alone, but is the second book in a series that also includes boy detective stories. Yet T_h_e_A_d_v_e_n_t_u_r_e_s_o_f_H_u_c_k_l_e_b_e_r_r_y_F_i_n_n--often considered to be the finest American novel ever written--is a book you can read and enjoy at ten or at sixty. Disney Studios has adapted the picaresque novel into a fairly entertaining adventure film.

For those lucky people who still have their first reading of H_u_c_k_l_e_b_e_r_r_y_F_i_n_n ahead of them, here is what the story is about: The setting is the pre-Civil War South. Huck (played by Elijah Wood), the wild adoptee of two old women, is kidnapped by his real father, a violent alcoholic. Huck escapes to the Mississippi River and runs into runaway slave Jim (played by Courtney B. Vance). They strike up a partnership made uneasy by Huck's conscience telling him it is wrong to help a slave escape. The novel tells of the strange people they meet during their escape and of Huck's growing respect for Jim.

This version, while occasionally adopting modern values, is actually fairly accurate to the novel, though the character Tom Sawyer has been written out. Wood as Huck is an odd casting choice

since he seems too young and cute. Ron Perlman, who played a gentle beast in the television series B_e_a_u_t_y_a_n_d_t_h_e_B_e_a_s_t, plays a not-so-gentle monster as Pap Finn. Younger children may be frightened by Pap's drunken rage.

The recreation of the Old South seems fairly authentic. Bill Conti has written a striking orchestral score. This production, like the book, can be appreciated at nearly any age. I rate the film a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

[Seen at the Strathmore Theater in Matawan, NJ.]

INDOCHINE

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

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Capsule review: There is human drama, political spectacle, and beautiful scenery in this D_r._Z_h_i_v_a_g_o of Vietnam. A story of a love triangle is told against the backdrop of the Vietnamese revolt against French imperialism. Recommended. Rating: +3 (-4 to +4).

Like I_n_d_o_c_h_i_n_e is a D_r._Z_h_i_v_a_g_o for Indochina/Vietnam.

D_r._Z_h_i_v_a_g_o, it is an almost melodramatic love triangle story set against the backdrop of a country in revolution. It is a story of people living through the death of one world they knew and the birth of another world where they must survive.

Eliane (played by Catherine Deneuve) is a very independent French woman who runs a rubber plantation in French Indochina in the 1930s. As the film opens she is attending the funeral of two close Indochinese friends. She adopts their young daughter and tries to bring up young Camille (played by Linh Dan Pham) in the ways of the French aristocracy. Camille tries to be French, but we see her as

much more the same flesh as the workers that Eliane occasionally beats. Into this relationship comes Jean-Baptiste (played by Vincent Perez), a handsome French naval officer. Eliane falls for Jean-Baptiste, having a short passionate affair with him. Then Jean-Baptiste saves Camille from a terrorist and mother and daughter discover that they love the same man. The tension tears the small family apart and Camille runs away from home. Traveling on foot on her own gives Camille a chance to see what the French colonial power is really doing to her country. Eventually she becomes a pawn in the Vietnamese revolt against the French.

Director Régis Wargnier has an eye for the stunning scenery of Vietnam, both natural and in the native Vietnamese cultural costumes. The film takes its time, 158 minutes, to tell a story that covers a long span in the characters' lives. While the film's sympathies are obviously against the French occupation, the political viewpoint is somewhat understated. Wargnier's hand is considerably more subtle than Bernardo Bertolucci's was in films such as 1 9 0 0 and T h e L a s t E m p e r o r.

I n d o c h i n e is intelligent and entertaining, certainly one of the best films of 1992. I give it a +3 on the -4 to +4 scale.

[Seen at the Loew's Theater in Red Bank, NJ.]

PASSION FISH

A film review by Mark R. Leeper
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Capsule review: John Sayles's latest film is a nice pleasant story of two women learning to get along and survive with each other. This leisurely story of a paraplegic and her nurse learning to deal with and then help each other has few surprises, but it does do a detailed portrait of its major characters. Rating: low +2 (-4 to +4).

May-Alice Culhane (played by Mary McDonnell) was once the queen of the soaps. Then a reckless taxi driver turned her into an unemployed paraplegic. She wakes in a hospital with no memory of the accident and with a vicious attitude toward life. She determines to return to her family home in Louisiana's Cajun country to drink, watch television, and generally pity herself. In this state she goes through several nurses. Either she could not stand them or they could not stand her.

Finally, Chantelle (played by Alfre Woodard) is sent by the agency. Chantelle wants the job, but has little experience and a bad background. Surprisingly, she is a natural at dealing with May-Alice. Each battles the other and has enough need to put up with the other's bullying. Chantelle starts seeing a man from town while May-Alice strikes up a friendship with an old potential beau, Rennie (played by David Strathairn). Rennie is already married with five children and May-Alice's condition makes sex impossible, but there clearly is some interest.

John Sayles both wrote and directed P a s s i o n F i s h, taking his time to do it right. In showing us some of May-Alice's old friends, Sayles is able to have some fun at the expense of the soap opera industry and at overly demure Southern womanhood. The film is longish at 134 minutes, but it does not drag. Some of the Louisiana scenery is very well photographed. I give P a s s i o n F i s h a low +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

[Seen at the Montgomery Theater in Rocky Hill, NJ.]