

2. Some of you have complained that last issue the article we ran seemed familiar to you. A few have even suggested that the article as an out-and-out rerun. In fact, what you have observed is one of Nature's rarest phenomena in action. To understand exactly what happened, you have to perform this little experiment for yourself. Take a piece of paper and draw two X's about six inches apart. Now take a ruler and connect the two centers of the X's with a straight line. Now we all learned in geometry that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. That is certainly true in the Newtonian universe. But Einstein added a wrinkle to the whole procedure. Now assume that the sheet of paper is the fabric of space. Gravitation actually bends space. Take the two X's and fold the paper so that the X's are right over each other. Now the shortest distance between the two points is much shorter than the straight line. This is a wormhole in space.

Now you might reasonably object at this point that the two articles were not just close, they were identical. Well that is what a black hole does to space and time. It crushes it down to a single point. So now I want you to cut a hole in the paper completely removing one of the X's. Fold the piece of paper so that you can see the remaining X through the hole. Now take a piece of scotch tape and completely cover the hole and placing the X right in the center of the hole so that the two sheets of paper have in common a circle with an X in it. Let this model represent a wormhole through space and time, connecting two issues of the MT VOID. A single article, represented by the X on the piece of paper, sits in two different issues of the MT VOID. But, you might object, are you not minus one article because the wormhole in space and time has crushed together two issues and they intersect into one article. No. Wake up. You haven't been listening ... or reading ... or thinking about what you read ... whatever. Class, can any of you help out? Yes, you, Tommy. That's right. Did you all hear him, class? Yes find the piece you cut out of the original paper.

That's it. Now look carefully at it. It has the missing article. But you can't read the article, can you? The black hole has reduced it to a single point, but you have that point for the missing article. At least you are better off than you are with this week's article which anyone can see is totally pointless. Oh, and save a tree. Stop wasting paper by drawing X's and lines on it just because someone tells you they want to show you something silly about nature or there won't be any nature left.

3. This is to announce that our factotum, Evelyn Leeper, has again been nominated for the Hugo Award for Best Fan Writer. This makes her fifth nomination....

4. ... which brings us to the announcement of this year's Hugo nominees:

- Novel

- M_o_v_i_n_g_M_a_r_s by Greg Bear (Tor)
- G_l_o_r_y_S_e_a_s_o_n by David Brin (Bantam Spectra)
- V_i_r_t_u_a_l_L_i_g_h_t by William Gibson (Bantam Spectra)
- B_e_g_g_a_r_s_i_n_S_p_a_i_n by Nancy Kress (Morrow Avonova)
- G_r_e_e_n_M_a_r_s by Kim Stanley Robinson (HarperCollins UK; Bantam Spectra US)

- Novella

- "The Night We Buried Road Dog" by Jack Cady (F&SF, January 1993)
- "Mefisto in Onyx" by Harlan Ellison (Omni, October 1993; Mark V. Ziesing)
- "An American Childhood" by Pat Murphy (Asimov's, April 1993)

- "Into the Miranda Rift" by G. David Nordley (Analog, July 1993)
- "Down in the Bottomlands" by Harry Turtledove (Analog, January 1993)
- "Wall, Stone, Craft" by Walter Jon Williams (F&SF, October/November 1993; Axolotl)

- Novelette

- "The Shadow Knows" by Terry Bisson (Asimov's, September 1993; Bears Discover Fire (Tor))
- "The Franchise" by John Kessel (Asimov's, August 1993)
- "Dancing on Air" by Nancy Kress (Asimov's, July 1993)
- "Georgia on My Mind" by Charles Sheffield (Analog, January 1993)
- "Deep Eddy" by Bruce Sterling (Asimov's, August 1993)

- Short Story

- "England Underway" by Terry Bisson (Omni, July 1993; Bears Discover Fire (Tor))
- "The Good Pup" by Bridget McKenna (F&SF, March 1993)
- "Mwalimu in the Squared Circle" by Mike Resnick (Asimov's, March 1993; Alternate Warriors (Tor))
- "The Story So Far" by Martha Soukup (Full Spectrum 4 (Bantam Spectra))
- "Death on the Nile" by Connie Willis (Asimov's, March 1993)

- Non-Fiction Book

- O_n_c_e_A_r_o_u_n_d_t_h_e_B_l_o_c_h: A_n_U_n_a_u_t_h_o_r_i_z_e_d
A_u_t_o_b_i_o_g_r_a_p_h_y by
Robert Bloch (Tor)
- T_h_e_E_n_c_y_c_l_o_p_e_d_i_a_o_f_S_c_i_e_n_c_e_F_i_c_t_i_o_n edited by John Clute
and Peter Nicholls (Orbit UK; St. Martin's US)
- P_I_T_F_C_S: P_r_o_c_e_e_d_i_n_g_s_o_f_t_h_e_I_n_s_t_i_t_u_t_e_f_o_r_T_w_e_n_t_y-
F_i_r_s_t
C_e_n_t_u_r_y_S_t_u_d_i_e_s edited by Theodore R. Cogswell (Advent)

- Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art by Scott McCloud (Tundra; Kitchen Sink; Harper Perennial)
- The Art of Michael Whelan: Scenes/Visions by Michael Whelan (Bantam Spectra)

- Dramatic Presentation

- Addams Family Values (Paramount Pictures); Producer, Scott Rudin; Director, Barry Sonnenfeld; Screenwriter, Paul Rudnick
- "The Gathering" (Babylon 5) (Warner Brothers); Executive producers, Douglas Netter & J. Michael Straczynski; Director, Richard Compton; Writer, J. Michael Straczynski
- Groundhog Day (Columbia Pictures); Producers, Trevor Albert & Harold Ramis; Director, Harold Ramis; Screenwriters, Danny Rubin & Harold Ramis
- Jurassic Park (Universal); Producers, Kathleen Kennedy & Gerald R. Malen; Director, Steven Spielberg; Screenwriters, Michael Crichton & David Koepp
- The Night mare Before Christ mas (Touchstone Pictures); Producers, Tim Burton & Denise DiNovi; Director, Henry Selick; Screenwriter, Caroline Thompson

- Professional Editor

- Ellen Datlow (Omni, various anthologies)
- Gardner Dozois (Asimov's, various anthologies)
- Mike Resnick (various anthologies)
- Kristine Kathryn Rusch (Pulphouse, F&SF)
- Stanley Schmidt (Analog)

- Professional Artist

- Thomas Canty
- David Cherry
- Bob Eggleton
- Don Maitz
- Michael Whelan

- Original Artwork

- Cover of F&SF, October/November 1993 (illustrating "The Little Things", B. McKenna), by Thomas Canty

- Space Fantasy Commemorative Stamp Booklet, by Stephen Hickman (U.S. Postal Service)
- Cover of Asimov's, November 1993 (illustrating "Cold Iron", M. Swanwick), by Keith Parkinson
- Semi-Prozine
 - I_n_t_e_r_z_o_n_e edited by David Pringle
 - L_o_c_u_s edited by Charles N. Brown
 - T_h_e_N_e_w_Y_o_r_k_R_e_v_i_e_w_o_f_S_c_i_e_n_c_e_F_i_c_t_i_o_n edited by David G. Hartwell, Donald G. Keller, Robert K.J. Killheffer, and Gordon Van Gelder
 - P_u_l_p_h_o_u_s_e edited by Dean Wesley Smith and Jonathan E. Bond
 - S_c_i_e_n_c_e_F_i_c_t_i_o_n_C_h_r_o_n_i_c_l_e edited by Andrew Porter
 - T_o_m_o_r_r_o_w_S_p_e_c_u_l_a_t_i_v_e_F_i_c_t_i_o_n edited by Algis Budrys
- Fanzine
 - A_n_s_i_b_l_e edited by Dave Langford
 - F_i_l_e_7_7_0 edited by Mike Glyer
 - L_a_n's_L_a_n_t_e_r_n edited by George "Lan" Laskowski
 - M_i_m_o_s_a edited by Dick and Nicki Lynch
 - S_t_e_t edited by Leah Zeldes Smith and Dick Smith
- Fan Writer
 - Sharon Farber
 - Mike Glyer
 - Andy Hooper
 - Dave Langford
 - Evelyn C. Leeper
- Fan Artist
 - Brad W. Foster
 - Teddy Harvia
 - Linda Michaels
 - Peggy Ranson
 - William Rotsler
 - Stu Shiffman
- John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer of 1991-1992 (Sponsored by Dell Magazines)
 - Holly Lisle (2nd year of eligibility)
 - Jack Nimersheim (2nd year of eligibility)
 - Carrie Richerson (2nd year of eligibility)
 - Amy Thomson (1st year of eligibility)
 - Elizabeth Willey (1st year of eligibility)

5. CRONOS (a film review by Mark R. Leeper):

Capsule review: This is genuinely a cutting-edge art house monster movie. It is visually striking, has a real "what-happens-next?" plot, and some intriguing human relationships. It has been a long time since a new monster movie has played to art film audiences, but this one is worth it. Rating: high +2 (-4 to +4)

Sometime I say "don't trust me on this one because it is not my kind of film. On this one I say don't trust me because it is my kind of film. From an early age I have loved the horror film. But I have to say that the horror film rarely likes me. Too often the horror film just feeds off films made earlier. It has sequels that are really remakes and even films in which each ten minutes is a remake of the last ten minutes. The sort of thing you see is "Another teenager is fooling around for nine minutes, then Jason attacks and kills him." What changes from film to film is the prosthetic makeup, the special effects, and very little else. The feeling I most prize in a horror film is not chills but curiosity.

There are far too few films that make me wonder what the heck is going to happen next. Horror films that do that include Carnival

of Souls, Life force, The Devil Rides Out, To the Devil a Daughter,

Cronos, and not nearly enough other horror films. What makes

Cronos a particular surprise is that it comes from Mexico, a country whose horror films have so often lacked style and originality. Occasionally there will be an atmospheric scene in a Mexican vampire film, but by and large there has not been a whole lot to interest foreign markets. Now Guillermo Del Toro has made what may have been for me the most enjoyable and creative horror film of the 90s.

In 1536 an alchemist fleeing the Inquisition came to Mexico where he continued his work on immortality until his death in the 1930s.

The authorities were shocked by what they found in his rooms, sold off his belongings, and considered the matter closed. In 1996, an antiques dealer, Jesus Gris (played by Federico Luppi) finds a strange antique clockwork mechanism hidden in the base of a statue. It looks like a very large pocket watch, the size of a bar of soap, crossed with a mechanical scorpion. Wind it up and it sprouts legs and stings the hand that is holding it. It is a nasty trick, but that is just the beginning. Roughly speaking I will say that it does fall into an overly-familiar horror genre, but it presses buttons that genre rarely approaches.

This is a film of stylish images and delightful subtle humor. Little visual images like the monster walking the streets of Mexico in what looks like a tuxedo worn back to front (don't worry, in

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context it makes perfect sense) spice the film and make it a pure pleasure to watch. Del Toro, who both wrote and directed, has an impressive visual sense without ever letting the special effects or the makeup take over the film. Also to be treasured are the few looks we get inside the Cronos Device itself.

Del Toro is a well-known film fan in Latin America having grown up on United States and British horror films, O_u_t_e_r_L_i_m_i_t_s, and T_w_i_l_i_g_h_t_Z_o_n_e. He wrote the definitive Latin American study of the works of Alfred Hitchcock (which he calls a 540-page love letter to Hitchcock made public). Now he is making his own horror films to compete in Mexico with those made in the United States and if this first film is any indication he is exceeding his goal. Sr. Del Toro, please continue to make original films like this one.

C_r_o_n_o_s is one of the most enjoyable horror films I have seen since I was a teen, I would rate it a high +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

6. MAKING BOOK by Teresa Nielsen Hayden (NESFA Press, ISBN 0-915368-55-2, 1994, 158pp, US\$9.95) (a book review by Evelyn C. Leeper):

This collection of fifteen essays was one of two Boskone XXXI souvenir books. (The other was a Emma Bull-Will Shetterly collaboration.) The essays cover a wide range of topics: Mormon theology, narcolepsy, what was r_e_a_l_l_y wrong with Bret Easton Ellis's A_m_e_r_i_c_a_n_P_s_y_c_h_o, how academic research works, and the best explanation for and example of why the serial comma is needed (at least that I've seen).

The first (Mormon theology) is in "God and I," where, lest you be misled, Teresa Nielsen Hayden warns you up front that she had recently (as of 1980, when it was written) been excommunicated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the preferred term, especially if one is paid by the word--which of course I'm not). Narcolepsy is mentioned or discussed in several of the essays, since it was the reason for many of the lifestyle changes Teresa Nielsen Hayden went through. What was really wrong with A_m_e_r_i_c_a_n_P_s_y_c_h_o turns out to be everything, explained as only Teresa Nielsen Hayden could explain it. The problem with academic research, she says, is a "sort of scholarly equivalent of Gresham's Law about bad money driving out good," and uses the (one hopes) hypothetical Pastafazool Cycle as an example. And the serial comma? That would be telling.

It has traditionally been difficult to get examples off fannish writing. Computer networks are changing all that, of course. Most of the people nominated for Hugos for Fan Writer are on-line now.

And indeed, the last two essays here are from GENie. But if you want to see what was written back in the days of **gasp** stencils and mimeographs, then NESFA has provided it. If your local bookstore does have M_a_k_i_n_g_B_o_o_k, I'm amazed! But if it doesn't, you can order it from NESFA Press, P. O. Box 809, Framingham MA 01701-0203.

7. SERIAL MOM (a film review by Mark R. Leeper):

Capsule review: Turner has a great time mugging as

a psychopathic Donna-Reed-like housewife in a particularly interesting John Waters film. Objectively, this film is not very good, but it is still recommended to fans of Waters. Rating: 0 (-4 to +4)

David Lynch says it by showing a happy American family then panning his camera to show a chaos of worms and insects crawling around underground. Under the sterile and clean surface crawls and slithers the dark, hidden side of the world. John Waters makes the same point, but makes it a lot more fun. Inside every Harriet Nelson or Donna Reed is a raging, indignant Jack the Ripper struggling to get out and surgically slice away the ugliness from life. The first scene of S_e_r_i_a_l_M_o_m really tells it all. It is a sunny, spring morning and perky mother Beverly Sutphin (played by Kathleen Turner) is happily serving a nutritionally balanced breakfast to her family including her prosperous dentist husband (Sam Waterston) and children Misty and Chip. Suddenly the pristine sweetness of the morning is invaded by a fly and Beverly goes into action to defend her territory. She stalks the interloper and mercilessly swats the fly who, in dying, seems to contain more juice than a blueberry. Beverly is one of society's antibodies. She knows that her world needs rules to maintain order and she is ready to defend it from people who steal parking spaces, who refuse to recycle, or who cannot be bothered rewinding rented videocassettes.

Waters has made Beverly Sutphin into everyone who has ever shown contempt for his films and the lifestyles he depicts. She is the personification of the pristine norms of society and their less than charitable defense. But paradoxically she goes so far that she also is placing herself outside the norms of the society she is defending. And Waters cannot resist turning her into a sort of hero standing against society. There is more than a little feel of the feel of F_a_l_l_i_n_g_D_o_w_n here as Beverly channels our own indignant anger and takes vengeance for us against the selfish jerks who are making life worse for everyone else. So we have this interesting reversal for Waters where he is defending the precise people for

whom through his whole film career he has been showing contempt.

This is also a very unusual film for Turner. The script calls for someone a little bit frowzy and a little bit overweight. In fact the part could have even been played by Waters's former star Divine. But matronly is certainly how Turner appears. It is difficult to look at her here and see the woman who was the passionate attraction in B_o_d_y_H_e_a_t. But time has shown that that sort of film is not really where she is best. Where comedy is hard for most actors, it appears to come as naturally to Turner as it did to Carol Lombard.

I am a little unsure what to rate S_e_r_i_a_l_M_o_m. If I divorce myself from all knowledge of John Waters and the films he has made in the past and look at the film totally as a stand-alone film it is no better than cable fare. Certainly there is no shortage of films that make fun of the clean image of the 1950s situation comedy family. However, Waters has always made fun of those values so has special license to continue. It is a running gag. What gives this film its interest is that it is a John Waters film. I guess the fair thing to do would be to rate it only a 0 on the -4 to +4 scale, but still to urge fans of Waters and fringe fans (my category, by the way) to see the film. Even for them far more recommended would be the HBO film T_h_e_P_o_s_i_t_i_v_e_l_y_T_r_u_e_A_d_v_e_n_t_u_r_e_s_o_f_t_h_e_A_l_l_e_g_e_d_T_e_x_a_s_C_h_e_e_r_l_e_a_d_e_r-M_u_r_d_e_r_i_n_g_M_o_m which does everything this film does and still manages to ring true and be perceptive.

8. RED ROCK WEST (a film review by Mark R. Leeper):

Capsule review: Newcomer filmmakers John and Rick Dahl have the knack of really holding an audience's attention. This is a tense and twisty crime thriller worthy of Jim Thompson. Catch it quick because it is getting only a very short release.
Rating: +2 (-4 to +4)

The Coen Brothers, Joel and Ethan, introduced themselves to the world of cinema with B_l_o_o_d_S_i_m_p_l_e, an inexpensively made crime thriller set in Texas. Their next film was the comedy R_a_i_s_i_n_g_A_r_i_z_o_n and they never returned to their original style. Now two more brothers, John and Rick Dahl, have come on the scene with their own tightly-written crime thriller, and you can be certain these brothers will be around for a while. R_e_d_R_o_c_k_W_e_s_t is a tense, edge-of-the-seat sort of crime film that could easily be taken for some Coen Brothers lost second film.

The action takes place entirely in or near the fly-speck Wyoming town of the title. Michael (nicely under-played by Nicholas Cage)

comes to this area all the way from Texas for a promised job that evaporates when he is too honest about a knee injured during his time in the Marines. Out of luck and totally out of money he goes into Red Rock to see if he can get any kind of a job. There he meets Wayne (J. T. Walsh). Wayne has hired someone named Lyle from Texas for a job. Wayne sees Michael's license plates and assumes this is Lyle. Michael decides to pretend to be Lyle and grab up the job first. Then Michael finds out what the job is. He has to murder Wayne's wife Suzanne (Lara Flynn Boyle). Then the plot twists start coming. And they keep on coming. In fact, except for one sex scene there isn't a five-minute section of film that doesn't have some sort of radical plot twist. Michael is one innocent and honest man who finds himself in a nest of biting vipers. He has just the one wish: to get out of Red Rock. That sounds simple, but time and again events drag him into the town. As he gets more and more deeply involved his chances of just staying alive become smaller and smaller. One of the marks of how suspenseful this film is was the nervous laughter in audience as twists are revealed. The film is plotted so that nearly every apparent loose end attaches someplace else, much like Scorsese's
 _ A _ f _ t _ e _ r _ H _ o _ u _ r _ s .

After Cage's over-the-top performances in films like _ V _ a _ m _ p _ i _ r _ e ' _ s _ K _ i _ s _ s it is nice to see him underplaying a little. Walsh also is nicely menacing. Only Dennis Hopper seems insufficiently restrained as a fellow ex-Marine who runs into Michael almost literally.

_ R _ e _ d _ R _ o _ c _ k _ W _ e _ s _ t is a tidy little film noir thriller and an auspicious debut for the Brothers Dahl. The film has gotten only a very modest theatrical release and simultaneously is being released to video. Apparently no major distributor wanted to take a chance on it. With the reviews it has been getting there are going to be a lot of distribution executives looking for work in places like Red Rock, Wyoming. They should remember to find out what the new job is before they accept it.

Welcome to the film game, John and Rick. Stick around. I think you're gonna make it. I give _ R _ e _ d _ R _ o _ c _ k _ W _ e _ s _ t a +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

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The United States, to my eye, is incomparably the greatest show on earth ... we have clowns among us who are as far above the clowns of any other great state as Jack Dempsey is above the paralytic--and not a few dozen or score of them, but whole droves and herds.

-- H. L. Mencken