

The SFSFS



137



South Florida Science Fiction Society

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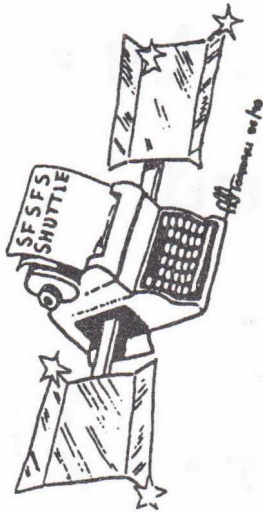
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Upcoming Meetings and Events



January: Creating your own SF/F/H television show. With the end of B5 and the last season of DS9 upon us, where do we go from here? Does anyone have the idea for the next *Far out Space Nuts* updated for the next Millenium? Is there too much of the genre stuff on the tube, or not enough? Presented by Judi Goodman and George Peterson.

February: IMAX 3D Theater for *T-Rex: Back to the Cretaceous*.

March 20, 1999-2 PM: The conference for an author interview! This year's guests are Kim Stanley Robinson, John Clute and Brian Aldiss. The International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts (ICFA) runs March 17-20, 1999 in Ft Lauderdale at the Airport Hilton. The theme is *Utopias and Dystopias*. Also, don't forget to volunteer to help out. The Palm Beach Bookfest is this same weekend and we are hoping that some of their guest may drop by the Conference as well.

April 17, 1999 Noon: Annual Picnic. Join us at Hugh Taylor Birch State Park. Will Edie get mauled by the family pet? Will people sweat enough to fill up a kiddy pool? Will the EPA once again be summoned to clean an unsightly ring off the Fort Lauderdale beach? Who can say? Why not attend and find out? Contact George Peterson for food and drink coordination. Those who bring stuff will be allowed to eat. Those who do not will have a mill stone placed around their necks and be thrown into the intercoastal. I'm sure those who had this happen to them last year can well attest that this is not a pleasant affair.

May 15, 1999 2PM: Radio Host (and new SFSFS member) Joey Reynolds leads us in a discussion of SF radio. From the old time radio plays to today's radio theatre, Joey will help us examine some of what we may be missing. If enough people ask, perhaps we can get Joey to demonstrate the Gridley Wave for us. This event is of course at the clubhouse and not at Hugh Taylor Birch State park. We can usually only show our faces there once a year. They don't approve of throwing people into the intercoastal nor leaving unsightly rings.

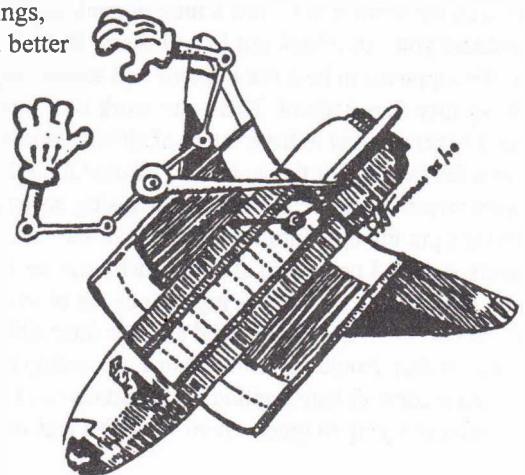
June-19, 1999 2 PM: The Dread Hugo Discussion. Join our panel of "experts" (AKA those of us too slow to come up with other excuses) as they rummage through the list of Hugo nominees in hopes of picking the "winner". Your job, if you are not on the panel, is to read everything the panelists did not so you can embarrass them with your acute knowledge of a subject they are supposed to be experts on.

July-November 1999: TBA. Any ideas or volunteers?

December: Annual Dinner. Our yearly opportunity to practice table manners. And an opportunity to perhaps say good bye to everyone in case the rapture hits or the Y2K bug is as bad as everyone seems to make out. Start collecting your canned goods and bottled water now.

This is a listing of only the general meetings. SFSFS does much more than this. We have writers and gamers groups, bi-monthly book discussions, media events, fanzine readings, Tropicon preparation and just about anything else you can think of. For a better listing as the year goes by join us on our online mailing list or pester us to send you our monthly postcard. You can check us out on line at: <http://scifi.squawk.com/sfsfs.html>

The SFSFS Shuttle #137 January-February, 1999. Let's pretend we didn't skip a couple of months shall we? The SFSFS Shuttle is published by the South Florida Science Fiction Society, a Florida non-profit educational organization recognized by the IRS under Section 501(c)(3). Membership information is on page ?? The views and opinions expressed in this issue are the pride of the contributors, and probably not those of the publishers. This box looks awful!





Eating Dirt 1967

This has to be short and sweet. I have no other way of doing it and still meet my space quota. I'm squeezing things in as it is. Two reasons prevent me from completely removing this column to make space for other things. First, the readership needs an explanation and second, my personal vanity must be satisfied.

I've no room for long-winded excuses or detailed apologies so let me just say one or two things. As mentioned elsewhere, this issue is late. I completely skipped the November/December edition and am now running late for the January/February edition. There are many and sundry reasons for this, none of them big and huge like being kidnapped by aliens or going into a fugue state where I believed myself to be Ming the Merciless of Planet Mongo. Oh, those would have been so convenient. Mostly it was little excuses here and there. The one I used most often is that I'm building a super computer which saps all my time and strength. Why, I don't know, but building the thing does. If you want to look around on the internet, look at www.beowulf.org some time. I'm building one of those for the university I work for. Secondly, perhaps the *Shuttle* seems on the surface to be just a little podunk kind of newsletter you can whack out in an instant. Well, to me it's not. It's supposed to be a masterpiece and something people will say nice things about. This takes work and time, and since I never seemed to have much of either I kind of gave up and felt helpless at times, instead of muddling through. In some ways this issue is a tad embarrassing because I could not put the time into it to fiddle with the fonts and the artwork (which I never had all *that* much time for in the past.) And thirdly, there's this mysterious list of stuff that's supposed to be in the *Shuttle*, and another intangible list of other stuff that should be in the *Shuttle*, according to your dirt eating editor. I hate hunting down details (and don't), so instead of trying to ignore them I just fret and fret and

Forward is Forearmed (or the apology...)

eventually publish something else in the *Shuttle*.

Enough of that. Let me apologize now for a few things. There's not much art in this issue. The art I used is mostly from Adam-Troy Castro, and that's because he personally handed me a fistful and I happen to really like his work. That's why you see it here. We have an art box full of stuff, but I couldn't take the time to wade through it. Secondly, I have not included at least one letter we received. Hopefully I can excavate it for Carlos' *Shuttle*. Also, this *Shuttle* is mostly a letters edition. I happen to like letters. I think it's great that we get so many of them, and that all those who send us a loc should be thanked over and over again. I think they've really breathed life into the *Shuttle*. This group of letter writers are the people I most feel guilty about for not getting the *Shuttle* out sooner. They take the time to write to us, and share a little part of their lives, and we in turn should be able to put out something on time to let them know we cared and are thankful for their comments. In some ways, getting locs is the best part of the *Shuttle* since you really get to see what people think about your work. Finally, since I had so many locs and George's article was big I had to do a bit of cramming to fit in everything. I did not have the space to comment on Teddy Harvia's wonderful lemur postcard. The original postcard was in colored pencil. Hopefully it will reproduce well enough here. I've got it up on my desk next to the Mars lander postcard I got from him. It really tickles my fancy that someone would take the time to actually draw something like that.

I've tried to write this editorial two or three other times, each time producing enough of an editorial to fill up an entire *Shuttle*. I don't know why, but this time I've had an editorial block, as it were. One of the aforementioned editorials included a detailed list of all of the wonderful things SFSFS did and accomplished last year. We still have our clubhouse, and we continue to get more and more members. We've started that slow trickle which hopefully will turn into a huge flood. Johnny Ricoh continues to

(Continued on Page 23)

RECENT SFSFS ACTIVITIES

By now, you probably know what the above title means, so I'll get on with it. I must cover many months, and my memory is fading fast of events. [Mal says: *In an effort to save myself some time, I am omitting the roll call of stars this time around. I do have much of the information, but deciphering it will require another hour or so, which I do not have. Needless to say from some of the Locs we had, the roll call of stars seemed to at least raise some eyebrows, and we hope to implement it again in the future.*]

October:

Media Event: *What Dreams May Come*

I did not attend this event, so I can give no real input on it. As rumors have it, people liked this movie. That's about all I can say. No doubt, not enough people attended this event, and the membership of SFSFS should receive a finger wagging, or at least a tongue lashing about it.

General Meeting: *Scary Monsters presented by Carlos Perez*

Well, at least this is what the postcard said. I believe the real topic was *Monsters That Scare Us*. With it being October and nearly Halloween, it seemed appropriate at the time. Sad to say, I can't give a blow by blow account of the event, because it's been too long and my memory is going. I'll try to at least capture some of this event for our viewers at home.

Carlos Perez was in charge of this shindig, and I believe our Chair Judi Goodman was late or not present, putting Carlos on the spot to run the meeting. Since the last few meetings had been rather chaotic, we decided to go back to using the standard meeting program outlined in the SFSFS rules and regulations. These guidelines can be thought of as a sort of life preserver or perhaps a straw (as in clutching at). It's a way to try to control the chaos of the meeting.

The idea behind this general meeting was to guide the seething crowd in a discussion of what sort of things scared us. Much of this meeting consisted of audience participation, with the topics being gently guided along by Carlos from time to time. Several different things were discussed, including how something that frightened us as children might not frighten us now, and visa versa. For example, if you take me, you'll recall in a previous issue of the *Shuttle* my abject horror as a child of the scene in *Missile to the Moon* where the guy steps out into the sun and gets burned down to the bone in nothing flat. I look at this scene now and it's not scary, though I still feel a twinge from childhood memories.

Another topic we discussed was how different things frighten us in modern times than in days gone by.

Back in olden times (you know, the time even before some of our senior SFSFS members were born, or even before they all had hair), people were much more scared of being dragged down into hell or having their souls eternally damned.

The final topic discussed was how horror has changed over the years. It used to be that Count Dracula was something to scare the stuffings out of you, but now it takes an axe wielding maniac with the heart of a politician and a taste for raw human kidneys to put a scare into us. Strangely enough, one thing pointed out is that the horror of today is like H.P. Lovecraft, in that the victim of the horror is often completely overwhelmed and helpless against the horror. There is little or no chance to fight back.

After our general meeting and assorted business we had an auction. We made around \$30 for the clubhouse fund, and everyone involved had a good time. Finally we handed out the door prizes with one going to the littlest Lowrey. The prize in question this time was a XXL T-shirt (X-tra Small in Fandom size) which was big enough to be used as a tent by the winner. Much amusement was had by the crowd, along with much amusement by the winner who apparently insisted upon wearing it on the way home.

Book Discussion: *Good Omens and assorted Graphic Stuff*.

That evening, following the general meeting, we had a book discussion on *Good Omens* by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett. Gaiman was our upcoming Tropicon Guest. Besides *Good Omens*, Joe Siclari, who runs these intellectual exercises, brought a gigantic sample of assorted graphic novels, comics and so forth (by a large assortment of authors), many of which would not make prime time viewing, if you catch my drift. Many of us oogled and oggled and scratched our heads at the various graphic representations. We looked at all of the assorted graphic novel stuff because both Neil Gaiman and Charles Vess, our Artist GoH, do work in this area.

Sad to say, no one in the crowd was very enthusiastic about *Good Omens*. Apparently many people like this book, but most of our crowd had a bland reception toward it. One of the comments made was that the crowd would have liked other Neil Gaiman books better. (Which, I gather from later comments, they did. I think *Good Omens* was picked because at the time it was one of the few things we could get on short notice.)

Besides the discussion of *Good Omens* and the occasional pause to clean off the fogged glasses from viewing some of Joe's graphic novel collection, we discussed exactly what a graphic novel consists of, and how it differs from a typical comic book. The general consensus was that a graphic novel is a work or piece that could stand on its own, while a comic tends to be part of a continuing saga.

Writers Workshop:

Yet another gathering of the writers group, where we continued to read segments of Adam-Troy Castro's next Spiderman novel, along with the first version of a Pete Rawlik story. David Lowrey put in his first appearance and graced us with assorted comments and the promise of a story for the next meeting. It's always good to have new blood in the writers group. It keeps us from becoming intergalactic yes men with much back slapping and "bully for you" kinds of things.

Tropicon Meeting:

Finally, there was a Tropicon meeting where everyone panicked and reported on the immense amount of work which still needed doing. Again, for those of you playing along at home, if you want to see what this sort of meeting looks like, why not attend one? Tropicon is always on the lookout for more help, and we can always use more volunteers. This may become especially important for the future if you want to run for Tropicon Chair. *[Mal says: At the November General Business meeting, SFSFS passed an amendment to the operating procedures requiring that all future Tropicon Chairs be elected. The voting for the 2000 Tropicon Chair was to take place in February but so far we have had no takers.]*

November:**Tropicon Dry Run:**

The first weekend of November was the Tropicon dry run, where an assortment of people gathered at the clubhouse to get some final bits of Tropicon straightened out, mostly in the area of the Goblin Market, this years version of the Velvet Comet. Part of the chronic nightmare of ugliness this year was the creation of new tokens for the games. For some mysterious reason, new tokens had to be created for this Tropicon. The tokens needed to be spray painted black, which involved going outside and spraying them in the alley. The weather, of course, refused to cooperate, and there were gusts of wind sending the pogs sailing -- much like the cows, people in rowboats, old ladies knitting, and hatchet-faced people on bicycles do, in a twister. I'll not go into further technical details here, save to say that to get out of the wind, the pogs were sprayed indoors in the clubhouse, asphyxiating us. Next up on the hit parade was producing the program book, where we ran into a snag. Johnny Ricoh couldn't deal with giant slabs of paper the way we thought (because we had failed to read the directions closely) it might. But we improvised, and the program book turned out wonderfully. For those of you at home who missed Tropicon, you can still purchase a program book, or (I think) a T-shirt from the Tropicon Chairs. The books contain an *original* Neil Gaiman story which apparently is hot stuff -- everyone should have a copy if they are a Gaiman fan.

To top this off, we got a first look at the incredible

amount of stuff to give away at the Goblin Market. Basically what we did this year was gamble a bit to get tokens, then trade these tokens for assorted junk from the various goblins, and then trade this assorted junk to the old obnoxious wizard (who made us do the most demeaning things to get anything) for the real prizes. The Rawliks supplied the Goblin Junk and there was an entire wheelbarrow full of the most astounding collection of gew-gaws. Thanks to the Goblin Market, the Rawliks were able to remove so much junk from their house that they finally had a place to put their then soon-to-be-born baby.

Anyway, fun and grief were had by all (at the meeting -- bet you'd forgotten what we were initially talking about, hadn't you!), and not enough people showed up. More hands would have made lighter work, but still, this small showing did not seem to cause too many problems with Tropicon, which seemed to come off with a lot of good comments.

General Meeting: *The Hero's Journey in Babylon 5 by George Peterson*

The week after Tropicon was our general meeting. This time around, George Peterson presented his second program about *Babylon 5*. This time, he focused on the ideas of a hero, and the concept of a Hero's journey as put forth by Joseph Campbell and used in *B5*. There was much lecturing and video clips, with the crowd being fascinated. George could have gone on forever about the topic, but had to limit himself. For those of you who don't know what a Hero's journey is (according to Campbell), there are an assortment of them which are repeated over and over again. One that comes to mind off the top of my head is the descent into hell and eventual rescue or return, such as Ishtar's journey into hell, or Orpheus, or I'm sure there must be others. A journey of this nature occurs to the hero in *B5*. I'm not that much up on the show so I can't go into that. Maybe our readers can encourage George to do a bit of a write-up on the Hero's journey for those who could not make it to his presentations, or perhaps he could do something along those lines at the next Tropicon.

One thing that struck me here, which all the *Babylon* fans ignored or didn't notice, was that there were some scenes shown from *B5* which I swear could have been basically lifted from the scene of *Return of the Jedi* when Lord Vader reveals his terrible geneological secret. Still, what do I know? Maybe the scene in *Jedi* was lifted from yet another source, and is a very good illustration of the Hero's journey, since it is a classic kind of situation and story. The hero is tempted to embrace evil, and instead casts himself into the abyss.

[Mal says: You'll have to wait for Carlos' Shuttle for another installment. I've run out of time and space here.]

The Glankerson's Baltimore Vacation aka WorldCon Trip Report Part II

by George Peterson

When last we met, George and Christy (meaning my sweetie and I) had just been to Joe Straczynski's *Babylon 5* presentation. This was Thursday night. We ambled back to the Omni and took a breather in the room.

However, there was night programming going on in the Omni, so no rest for our weary heads.

At 11:00 PM, a program on Soviet Space Disasters was being held in the Mencken room. The speaker was Space flight historian Hugh Gregory, who was supposed to be showing a video and discussing disasters from the Soviet space flight program.

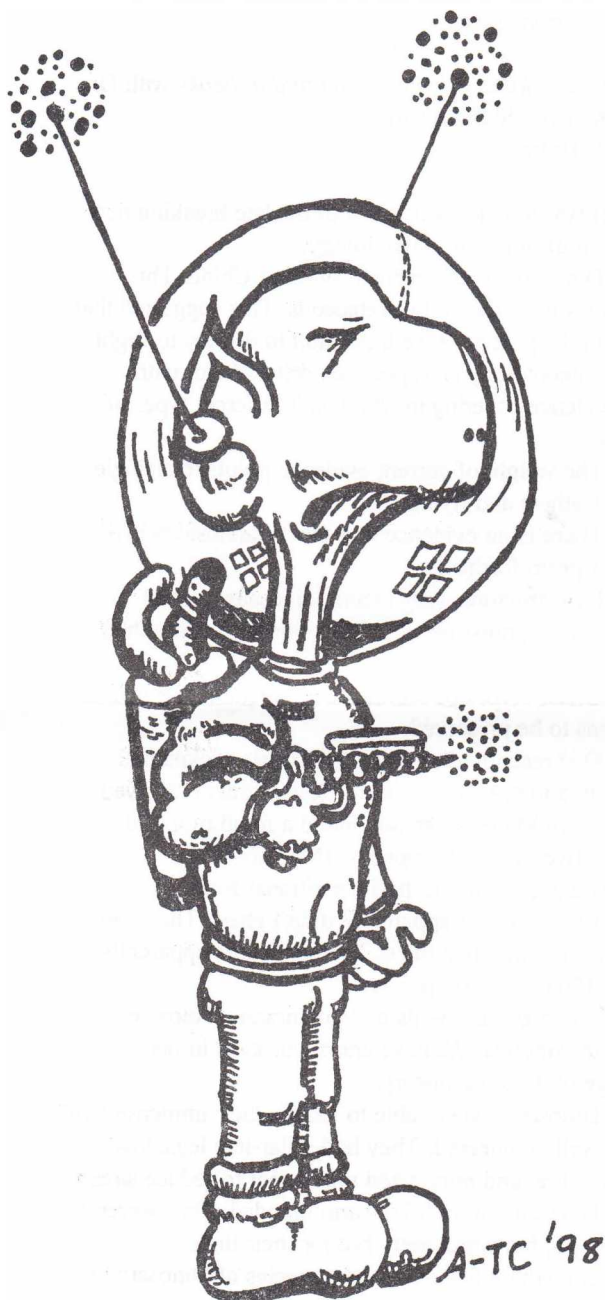
Alas, there was no video. We arrived to find an already packed room, but we were able to scrounge a couple of seats near the front. Things hadn't gotten started because they were still waiting for the TV/VCR to arrive. Gregory decided to begin anyway. The video equipment never showed up, but he truthfully didn't need it. This man gets my highest recommendation as a speaker. He kept everyone rapt with his descriptions of the wild and woolly world of the Soviet Space Program.

The Soviets apparently made up for their lack of fancy technology with brute force, their biggest problem being a lack of materials. For example, for many years their control center was located in a railway car. They could only afford one, so they had to be able to move it from launch pad to launch pad.

I didn't take notes, but Gregory described malfunctioning rockets, crashed space capsules, cosmonauts suffocating, and cosmonauts who had to be literally shoveled from their capsules. Some of it was enough to make one's hair stand on end, and I definitely had chills up and down my spine on occasion. At the end of the hour, most of the audience wanted him to continue. We left because Christy was about to fall over asleep (she's of the 'early-to-bed' persuasion). I heard that the next day, Gregory got another slot to show the actual video, but we didn't make it.

Chapter 3 – Friday

Well, Friday morning we arose, zombie-like, from our beds to, once again, take on the Worldcon. In going back to my notes, it's interesting, or at least amusing to note that the amount of detail begins to fall off. For example, I no longer noted where we ate dinner or what we had. Or who I met under what circumstances. I guess I just got busy with other stuff and didn't pay as much attention to writing it all down. Of course, with the passage of the weeks and months, my memory has faded.



For those of you who rebel at the length of this Leeperesque Con-report, this may be cause for rejoicing. But I'm not done yet!

Getting There From Here: With Jane Francher, Barry B. Longyear (m), Jack Nimersheim, Charles Sheffield, Michael Swanwick.

This panel was to explore the means of achieving the creation of a utopia, or at least some the more hopeful aspects of science fiction. (E.g.: colonization of the Solar system, eradication of disease, extended life spans, cheap rapid global transportation, exploration of the nearer stars etc.)

Barry B. Longyear suggested that World Peace would be a good place to start.

Francher said that the biggest barrier was changing peoples' mindsets; getting them to think in terms other than fighting. Sheffield thought it would come about as a product of Universal Aging. As people get older on average, they're less interested in risking it in conflict.

Swanwick said he thought that World Peace was over-rated. He also said he'd like immortality, but thought that the population issue alone made it a bad idea. He pointed to studies regarding the fact that it rains more on weekends. All the smog generated by traffic on the weekday causes this. The particulate matter helps rain condense out of the atmosphere.

He also mentioned the threats of coming plagues as diseases evolve.

Other points that were brought up: Sheffield thought that immortality is probably coming whether it's a good idea or not. Francher said that controlling population would require getting rid of the notion that everyone should be making babies. Swanwick pointed out that nothing was going to happen to any plan. He also asked what would be the consequences of a society where there were 5 men to every woman (Francher: "Nice?")

During the summation, Sheffield made the point that, "we're not smart enough to take into account everything that's going to happen in the next 50 years."

At noon, Adam-Troy Castro, author, friend and fellow SFSFSian, was scheduled to do a reading. Friends that we are, we all arranged to be in the audience (just in case nobody else was there). But there was no need to worry; Adam actually got a pretty good-sized audience.

He'd brought several things, but the item that got read was a story called, "From Hell it Came." This was supposed to have been published in the third volume of *The Book of the Dead*. This was a series of anthologies of stories set in the World of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead*. The anthology fell through, and his story is as yet unpublished.

The story deals with a plumber battling a disembodied penis which is traveling around, getting the other zombies pregnant.

No, I didn't make this up.

This is Adam we're dealing with here, remember?

The story is hilarious. The whole audience laughed all the way through it. Adam is a very good reader, in general, and he was doing a good job here. Especially with the audience's feedback reinforcing it.

Afterward, Adam told me that this was the best reading he'd ever given.

Dinosaurs: The latest info you won't find in books with Dr. Michael K. Brett-Surman (m) Thomas R. Holtz, Jr.

This panel was to talk about some of the late breaking news in the realm of dinosaur paleontology:

Dinosaurs with feathers found in China. This critter comes from the early Cretaceous. This suggested that the steps in the process were insulation to display to flight.

Paleontology is a specimen driven field, with current evidence covering maybe 1 in 7 different types of dinosaurs.

The weight of current evidence points to a single origin of feathers and flying.

There is no evidence that the Tyrannosaurs had feathers or proto feathers.

Egg structures vary among dinosaurs just as dinosaurs varied, however all of them appear to have had hard shells.

Certain types of sediments are required for feather impressions to be preserved.

One recently discovered specimen, nicknamed "Skippy" had impressions of the digestive tract preserved.

From Madagascar was found a fossil of a bird more primitive than Archaeopteryx. (Madagascar is apparently a great place to find transitional forms).

Big dinosaurs apparently didn't chew. They had very, very long digestive tracts. Brachiosaurs apparently ate about 350 lbs of food per day.

There are no fossils of Mid-Jurassic Dinosaurs from North America. We have enormous gaps in our knowledge of dinosaur history.

Dinosaurs were able to handle their immense size by being well-engineered. They had pillar-like legs, low-weight vertebrae, and minimized movement to reduce stress.

Dinosaurs were luke-warm blooded. They weren't like mammals, but were pretty hot for their time.

Something like seven new species of Dinosaur are discovered every year.

What Will the Aliens Really Look Like? With Roger MacBride Allen, Wayne D. Barlowe, N. Taylor Blanchard (m), Hal Clement, Diane Kelly - Biologist studying functional morphology

This discussion covered the question of, if extraterrestrials came to visit us, what would they really be like.

Hal came right out and nixed gaseous (not stable

enough) and crystalline (too stable). Life, he said, is a collection of phenomena that is extremely complex machinery and chemistry and needs to reflect a good balance of stability and change.

Kelly said they wouldn't look anything like us, and that we needed to abandon our large mammalian bias. She suggested several parameters:

- 1) relatively large (more than cat-sized),
- 2) They will take in energy, eliminate, and reproduce
- 3) Will have some sort of circulatory system.
- 4) Will have a head (cephalization is a common form of convergence (it's better to have your primary sense organs near a brain)).

Allen agreed that aliens won't look anything like us, but then, "neither do we." He pointed out that there's really a lot of physical variation among humans.

He went on to point out that biology drives society. Humans, for instance, usually have one baby at a time, but armadillos always have quads. What sort of impact would that have on a society. Other suggestions he made were, they won't be slimy (too much moisture lost), and he voted for bilateral symmetry.

Blanchard pointed out that since they're coming to visit us, they have to be able to pick stuff up and operate complex machinery. All things considered, they'd need sight and probably use sound to communicate.

Blanchard asked if intelligence mandated a certain form? Hal said yes, but the form may not be intrinsic.

Kelly recommended a book called *Life's Devices*.

It now being 4:00 PM, the plan was to head back to the hotel and get ready for the Hugo Awards Ceremony that night.

Adam Castro, was, as you may remember, rooming with us. He was already in the room when Christy, my Mom, and I barged in. He'd been trying to take a nap. Fat chance of continuing.

Being a Hugo Award Nominee for his most excellent story, *Funeral March of the Marionettes*, Adam was pretty nervous. It didn't help that we heckled him while he was getting dressed. In fact, he hardly said or ate anything at dinner. Adam, stalwart trencherman that he is, can usually tuck it away pretty good (just like you — Yeah, you!). But all he had was a caesar salad, and he didn't finish that.

We had dinner at Shula's in the Omni. Except for Adam, we all ordered steaks, but we actually found the food a little disappointing there.

Afterward we tromped over to the convention center.

I won't go into detail as to the award ceremony. It went pretty well, not dragging on too much the way these things sometimes will. The results have been posted in many locations. Just to point out the obvious, Adam didn't win. Granted that Allen Steele wrote a very good story, I

thought Adam's was better. And I'm not saying that because I'm his friend. I really love it. I still remember where I was when I finished it; I was at work, reading it on my lunch hour. When I read the last words, I was tempted to call Adam immediately and leave a message on his machine telling him how much I loved it.

But Adam was happy. He had a respectable showing in the voting, and after the ceremony he was back to his usual talkative self, running about congratulating the winners and gabbing with friends. Meanwhile I bought little ribbon dragons from Kathy Oltion for my mom, my sweetie, and myself. (Throughout the rest of the convention I had people coming up to me asking where I'd got the thing.)

Adam smuggled us into the Hugo Losers Party, but I wasn't much impressed. So we left shortly thereafter.

I put Christy and my mom to bed, but didn't feel like being in the room, so I went down to the programming area in the Omni. I poked my head into a panel called, "Star Trek: The State of the Franchise," but there wasn't much going on there I was interested in.

They were showing *Contact* in one theater. This was the Hugo winner for dramatic presentation. This is a well made film that I actually found strangely irritating. Mostly for the way the film makers violated Carl Sagan's basic point.

In the other room they were showing a Chinese horror movie called *Mr. Vampire* which I actually found more entertaining than *Contact*. It was quite amusing. Just don't ask me to explain what it was about. I spent the next hour or so switching back and forth between *Contact* and *Mr. Vampire*. Talk about channel surfing!

Then they showed John Carpenter's *Big Trouble in Little China*.

How shall I explain this. I don't know if it's true for everyone, but for some people, there seem to be movies that they feel almost compelled to watch. These aren't necessarily great, or even good films, just films that strike some chord, fulfill some need, trigger some Pavlovian response, so that every time the damned thing shows up on TV, we find ourselves watching it. We may admire the brilliance of *Citizen Kane* or *Lawrence of Arabia*, but on Saturday afternoon, it's *Poltergeist II* that we're watching, or in the darkness before the dawn when we can't or don't want to sleep, we're sliding a tape of *Excalibur*, or *Holiday Inn*, or *Joe vs the Volcano* into the VCR to watch for the 84th time. Our significant others may ask us why, our friends and relatives may ask us why. We may ask ourselves why. But there we sit watching *Tremors* again.

John Carpenter's *Big Trouble in Little China* is one of those movies for me.

And so, there I sat, in the post-midnight dark, watching this movie again for the uncounted dozenth time. I loved every moment.

Besides, I'd never seen it on the big screen before.

Chapter 4 – Saturday

And so the penultimate day of the convention

dawned.

After hauling ourselves up and getting some food we went off to the convention center, once again. Christina went off to check her art (that is to make sure no one upped the bid on the pieces she wanted). I explored the Dealer's room some more. Among other things, I signed up to have Kelly Freas draw my picture. I've seen him selling caricatures to people at other Worldcons I'd been to, but missed out on it myself. This time I thought I'd get right in there and get it done!

1:00 PM

This was the time allotted for the second Babylon 5 presentation. This was the video portion where they showed blooper reels and other such items. I got there early to save seats. Then Adam showed, with a friend of his. But no Christy. The room began to fill up. Then things started up. I went to wait for her at the entrance. They were showing a music video sort of thing with music from the series combined with clips of the show. Meanwhile I'm standing outside. Finally, she came along.

She'd been guarding *her* art from others who might bid on it.

The presentation was fun. Straczynski wasn't there of course (being unable to attend due to pneumonia), but he was represented by an assistant and someone from the fan club. The blooper reels included new stuff from the upcoming Season 5. A lot of it was the usual mis-spoken line stuff, but a couple of scenes stuck out. One was Londo introducing G'Kar as his body guard. At which point G'Kar pops on a pair of sunglasses. The second was Peter Jurasik in full Londo costume with a life-size cutout of himself as Londo, singing *Me and My Shadow*.

We were also shown footage of the Excalibur, the new ship featured in the upcoming series, *Crusade*.

The presentation was slotted for 2 hours but lasted one, because Straczynski was not there to add commentary and to answer questions.

Oceans: The Real Next Frontier with Dave Kratz, Joan Slonczewski (m), Allen Steele

I got to this one late, but I was there to hear a few interesting tidbits. One was that the Aswan Dam, by preventing the Nile from flowing to the sea properly, is actually changing the salinity of the Mediterranean Sea, with all sorts of dire consequences for native life.

The Abyssal Plains are deserts with the thermal vents creating the occasional oasis.

After being depressed by those revelations, I went to hear what Stan Schmidt had to say in his Guest of Honor Speech. ("It's mine! All mine!")

I usually enjoy Stan's editorials in *Analog*. I find them thought provoking and interesting to read. So I was looking forward to hearing what he had to say as a GoH at Worldcon.

The speech got off to a good start with Stan telling us about his first visit to Baltimore, 16 years ago. He spent 1½ hours trying to find a parking space, while driving a '78 Pinto with no air conditioning. And only a single idiot light for oil and temperature.

He also had a few comments about the strangenesses of being a writer and going to conventions. ('Is it business or pleasure: it's a federal offense to enjoy your work, but it's okay if you make money.')

But when he got into the main part of the speech, what did he do? He ended up complaining about media tie-ins!

Now I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm getting pretty sick and tired of SF professionals bitching and moaning about media tie-ins. I've heard about suggestions made that the people who write these aren't real writers and therefore shouldn't be let into SFWA. To listen to the whiners, you'd think that the bookshelves in stores were sagging under the weight of Star Trek and Prattlestar Galaxative novelizations, with nary another type to be found.

But a recent trip to Borders showed it to be quite the reverse. In just a short time, I saw dozens of books that looked interesting. The dreaded media-books were mostly relegated to just one bookcase at one end of the section. Beyond my own personal observation, a recent statistic I spotted indicated that media tie-ins made up all of 15% of the total SF & F published.

I'm not sure exactly what all the fuss is about. I think it may, at least partly, be due to some vague notion that it's all a zero sum game. If Joe Fan is buying a copy of Star Trek: The Curse of Woof's Zit, then he isn't buying a copy of Norman Spindizzy's latest deep novel. But I don't think that's really true. If not for media tie-ins, many of these fans might not be reading at all.

And many, if not most, writers do at least some hack work in the course of their careers. It all goes toward making ends meet.

I don't want to go on at length about this. We've all heard all sides of the issue, ad nauseam. It was just a disappointment for me to hear Stan Schmidt repeating them in his speech. It was just preaching to the choir.

There was another disappointment waiting for me this afternoon. I had signed up to get my picture drawn by Kelly Freas. When I arrived, his wife told me he wasn't feeling well, and wouldn't be able to do it. She was kind enough to refund my money.

Oh well, maybe at the next Worldcon I can attend. I just hoped that Kelly was feeling better soon after.

Well since my deadline is approaching I must bring this piece to a close.

But stay tuned to the next issue of the *SFSFS Shuttle!* There's still much to go with three of the best panels of the convention.

Coming up, *The Future of Solar Power Satellites*, *The Kirk Poland Memorial Bad Prose Competition*, Demi Moore's exploding breast implants, and other wonders of the World Science Fiction Convention.

STAR TREK - RESURRECTION (uh...sorry that's INSURRECTION)

A Movie Commentary by David Lowrey

The battle for paradise has begun. My wife told me to reach for my wallet; we were going to see Star Trek—Insurrection. My reaction—let's wait for a review first. I never had a chance.

My kids loved the movie. My wife loved it also. Action, adventure, romance, humor—Insurrection has all the things I detest in modern science fiction.

Let's face it, Star Trek has become perverted over the years. In 1966, it was a bold, fresh concept with interesting characters, strong plots, and fascinating scenery. It also portrayed a plausible future world, at least as seen from the perspective of the sixties. Today, after three television incarnations and many movies (at least three too many), Star Trek has become a hackneyed fantasy world for the culturally depraved. If you don't agree, answer this question: which Enterprise are they cruising on now? The Enterprise NCC1701-F? NCC1701-G? You see my point. That doesn't mean the movie is without fun, I enjoyed myself—especially Data's final joke, a "gotcha" on Jonathan Frakes (a nice touch, making fun of the director). Nevertheless, how many jokes can we endure before Insurrection becomes a comedy? Despite the well-directed and effective humor—there are too many jokes. After Data asked Worf about his breasts, I had a hard time taking the movie seriously.

Another line best not crossed—the romantic scenes with Troi and Riker. Although an admirable attempt, screenwriter Michael Piller still hasn't figured out how to give Counselor Troi a meaningful role in the Next Generation. He did manage to get Worf on the Enterprise from Deep Space 9 (no need to even bother with an explanation this time). Piller also got that God-awful visor off Geordi's eyes (can anyone say Deus machina?). So why can't I just shut up and enjoy the movie? After all, it's a fun movie, right?

It's because I'm a science fiction fan. I grew up with Heinlein, Asimov, Sturgeon, Bester—I sleep with a copy of *Analog* Magazine under my pillow at night. These authors (as well as any that publish in *Analog*) write plausible science fiction—stories that extrapolate the future from current scientific facts. As a science fiction reader, I want to learn about worlds that could be, not worlds that could never be. As a fan of science fiction movies, I want to see *Bladerunner* or *Alien*, not *Armageddon*.

Does Insurrection contain any plausible science fiction? Let's think about that for a minute.

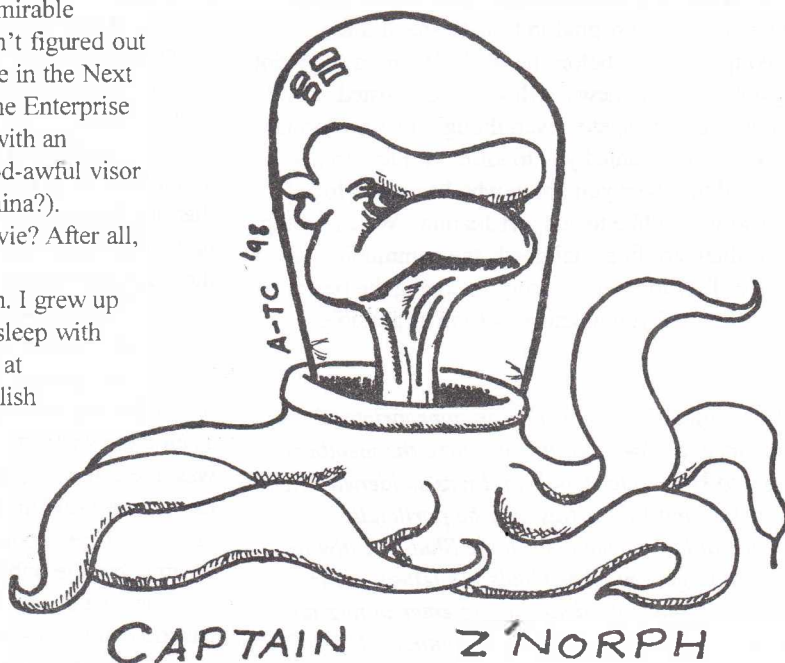
The movie's premise: a fountain of youth provided by the radiation from the rings of a planet. What's wrong with this?

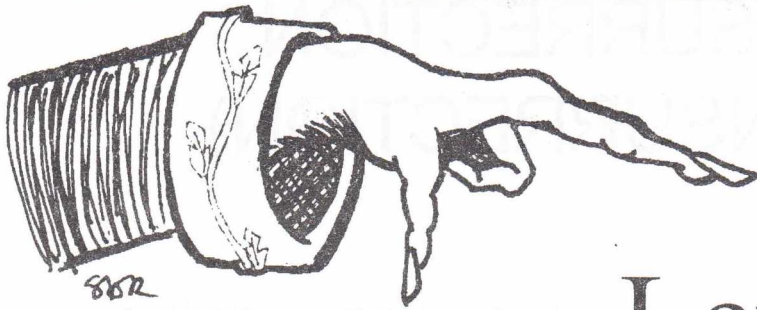
This is a planet with rings, but it's not a gas giant. There's a problem with gravity here—a planet must be massive, like Jupiter or Saturn, to retain orbiting particles small enough to make up rings. However, the gravity of the Ba'ku planet in the movie must be the same as Earth because the crew's movement on the surface isn't hindered. That's not plausible.

The clouds of explosive metron stellar gas that Riker deploys to destroy the ships pursuing the Enterprise—they explode and destroy the ships—only in one direction.

About that life-renewing radiation—what was it again? Polarimetric? Gravimetric? Organometric? Orgasmetric? Does it matter? Insert any of the above. In the case of Troi and Riker, it appeared to be orgasmetric.

Most of you will enjoy the movie, go see it. Just don't expect to see any plausible science fiction.





Letters

Date: Fri, 19 Feb 1999 21:15:25 -0500
 From: Joe Siclari <jsiclari@icanect.net>

Subject: [sfsfs-discuss] Buck Coulson (fwd)]

I thought I would pass this news on to **SFSFS** sad as it is because Buck has been writing LoCs regularly to the Shuttle. He will be missed.

When I first got into fandom, Buck was the first person I had "discussions" with when I first locced the Coulson's fanzine *Yandro*. *Yandro* was one of the major fanzines — and had over 250 issues. Juanita did the publishing but Buck provided the "personality".

- Joe

----- Forwarded Message Follows -----

Date: Fri, 19 Feb 1999 15:58:17 -0500
 From: Sally Childs <SChilds@statelib.lib.in.us>
 Subject: Sad news

Forgive me for passing this on in this way, but Michael Longcor just called and said Buck Coulson died this morning. He had been hospitalized, and got through the night, but started to fail this morning. The nurses called Juanita, who got to the hospital in time to spend a few minutes talking with him before he died. We're at the point of sending out the initial news; will keep you posted as to the funeral arrangements, etc., even though it's way too far for you to come. We wanted you to know and feel free to spread the word to others you know who knew and loved Buck and who would like to support Juanita. Wolf is going to find out if there are financial needs the community can help with as well. More later—sorry for being the bearer of bad news, but wanted you to know as soon as possible.

Love,
 Sally

[Mal says: This seems like an appropriate place to include this since, as Joe says, this is where the membership of SFSFS got to know Buck Coulson. I was saddened when I heard about this, and I think this may be partially responsible for at least some deal in the Shuttle. I always looked forward to getting Buck Coulson's letters in the p.o. box. They always guaranteed something entertaining and worth reading. My portable typewriter continues to work

thanks to Buck Coulson, who gave me the idea of winding store bought ribbons onto the existing spools when the spools themselves could no longer be bought.

On occasion we talk about scanning in documents for various fan related projects and the Shuttle. Buck Coulson's letters always came up because even though they were easy to read with the eye, the scanner could never deal with them because of the faded nature of the typewriter ribbon. We had recently been seriously considering doing an entire Shuttle in a faded typewriter font in honor of what we perpetually got from Buck Coulson.

I really do not know how to make comments about this letter, so I am going to print it as we received it. I'm sure the readers of the Shuttle will miss the present of Buck Coulson in these pages since he has become a regular part of the Shuttle letters column.]

Mr. Robert Coulson
 2677 W. 500 N
 Hartford City, IN 47348-9575
 11/10/98

Dear Shuttle,

I didn't really see anything in the last Shuttle that I wanted to comment on, so let's see what I can do anyway. Lack of inspiration should never stop an author — and seldom does.

Up here in the Nawth we did get enough news about the first to feel that most of the state was on fire. But then the hurricane took over the news, so I thought maybe it had put the fires out. Or associated phenomena did; I guess the hurricane damaged mostly Central America.

I forget when I last did see a movie, except on TV. Comes of living in a town where there are no theaters. There was a downtown theater when we moved here, but it didn't draw enough customers and went out of business. Then there was a drive-in, but it never showed anything I was interested in. (And, actually; we lived 7 miles from the town, so we seldom went in to just see a movie.) Anyways, I get a lot of free books in the mail. I'm reviewing for a fanzine, but the publishers don't seem to care, and I make sure they get a copy of the reviews. If Tom Sadler says he has too many of my reviews, I'll send you some.

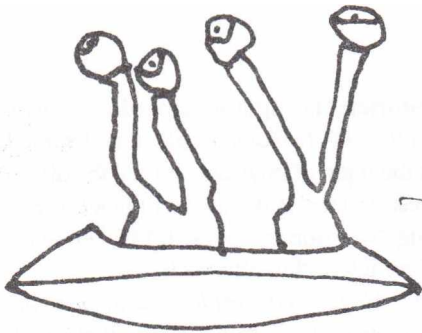
Juanita and I both got into fandom as adults, as did

our friends Gene and Bev DeWeese, so it seems natural.

As I'm part of the graying of fandom I don't worry about it except in specific cases. Bob Tucker won't be able to go on forever, though he seems to be making a good stab at it, and fandom will miss him, as it missed his sometime sparring partner, Bob Block. At 70, I'm older than I ever expected to be, having so far survived 2 heart attacks and long-term diabetes. (But then, I've always lived well away from fan clubs and their power struggles, which may have helped.) Maybe going to conventions frequently helped, too. We have 2 this month, which will make 13 for the year, assuming we actually get to both. Lots of cons around the Midwest, though going to cons on consecutive weekends was a bit much... None in December, but then Juanita will be going to a filkcon in Georgia in January. I probably won't; I'll stay home with the dog. (Nothing like a 75-pound housedog to keep on one's toes...)

One of my recent books was *Loose Coins*, by Joe Hensley and Guy Townsend, which Joe sent us. He's a really old-time fan, going back to the late 1930's or early 1940s, but he writes mysteries — pretty good ones. He's also been a state legislator (he claims to have written, "First Fandom shall not die!" on the wall of the men's room in the state capitol), and a circuit court judge, both of which inclined him toward crime fiction. Currently I'm partway through a new hardcover by Maureen McHugh, a fan-turned-pro from the Cincinnati area somewhere. We see her at cons occasionally. So far it's good. After that I may be back to my other loves of history and biography for a while. I have them stacked up too, and either they were gifts from friends or I paid for them, so I shouldn't just let them sit.

Buck



[Mal says: These are the texts of a couple of postcards we received from Sheryl Birkhead.]

Dr. S. L. Birkhead
23629 Woodfield Rd
Gaithersburg, MD 20882-2819
Greetings:

I think I sent more material your way, but I wouldn't swear to it. Good to see Phil Tortorici files! (I love Mary Hanson-Roberts' work and wish she'd show up more frequently) The Nebula Awards trip sounded eventful (what a menu!)- not sure about the open space on page 13... Hmm-I've heard some good things about *Kiniyaga*— and also read *very* negative reviews — guess I need to read for myself. The offer of artist still there— but ya gotta say so! PS I agree with Harry's comment about the fan writer nominations.

[Mal says: My fading memory tells me that we received a couple of covers from you and some bits of art. This was several months ago. One of your covers does not grace this issue because I wanted to use Cindy's cover. Artwork from the local membership is few and far between and should always be encouraged.]

Maybe if we keep bombarding Phil Tortorici with Shuttles he'll crack under the strain again and send us some more material. Many folks have been quite pleased to see his art appearing in these pages, especially since he is a local. The space on page thirteen was intentional. Art was supposed to appear there but never did, or so my sources tell me. I didn't edit that issue.

You should read Kiniyaga, after all Mike Resnick is our next Tropicon guest. (Mal loudly rattles art box, producing a sound similar to a beggar rattling his tin cup containing only an old shirt button.) One assumption I always make about the Shuttle is that hopefully the readership, when they see a large amount of my art, will become so badly frightened by it that they will, out of sheer desperation to make it go away, send us other art so they don't have to see anything I do.]

Friday the 13th.

Hi:

Apropos of nothing - do centaurs have two hearts? The horse heart is in the chest and so is mans.. do they have two sets of ribs? Ah yes- and for this I lose sleep! My cats sit on the printer, mouse page, my lab, and the table behind me -usually not all at once - and resent the printer printing.(I presume the diabetes and hypertension came before the pregnancy? Since both are not too uncommon during pregnancy— wasn't sure, but since you seem to be rolling with the information -etc I hear you knew about it "just" yes no.) Only saw Buccaneer for two short visits, but so far it sounds as if people enjoyed it.

[Mal says: I'll leave it up to the viewers at home to figure out how many hearts a centaur has. I'm pressed for time here. I can't put together some plasticine mockups or program some computer simulations right now. The question of two hearts could lead one to wonder if a centaur has two souls? One horse and one man?]

As for questions that keep you up late at night...try having a very late Shuttle in your lap sometime. I read through these letters and it really pounds home just how late. Everyone is already gearing up for Australia by eating at the Outback Steak House and watching Crocodile Dundee and here I am, printing comments about Buccaneer.]

P.O. Box 426069, Kendall Sq. Stn.
Cambridge, MA 02142
Nov.11, 1998

Dear People,

Thanks for *SFSFS Shuttle* 136 (in which I see you have prominently displayed bits of my letter tastefully interspersed among the editorial interjections). [*Mal says: Ah yes, this is a real editorial bugaboo we need to try to work on and get out of the way. I honestly try to put the editorial at the end, but when I've done that in the past then my comments didn't make sense anymore. I suppose I could resort to some sort of paragraph numbering scheme or some other highly technical way of marking text, which no doubt NESFA has already invented. This is a chronic problem with the Shuttle and we no doubt need to work really hard at eliminating it. I've seen other zines which have managed to wrestle this problem to the ground but I've yet to develop the necessary skill. I suppose it also would help if one did not comment on every little thing. Our problem may also stem from multiple editors getting into the works and making a bigger hash of things. Perhaps the governing board of SFSFS can put together a committee of some sort to investigate this problem and get to the bottom of this.*]By the way, when I reported on your emulation of NESFA, one person remarked that at least *Johnny Ricoh* was funnier than *Mr. Gestetner*; don't let it go to your heads, though.

"These are actually cataloged by NESFA so they must be worth something right?" This is a misapprehension; We are completists and will index anything, regardless of whether it has any redeeming social value. (The MagiCon bookmarks were pretty neat, though.)

[*Mal says: The book marks are quite a treasure here at SFSFS, still. Occasionally copies of them turn up and are given out as valuable door prizes or auction items, much in the same vein as, say, an "I survived King Dinosaur" button.*]

You say that "the SFSFS P.O. Box is completely incapable of holding any long metal objects." Don't want any Hugo rockets, eh? Anyway, who needs P.O. boxes? Any such hypothetical objects could be shipped directly to that "vast archival repository" of yours. (By the way, want any flamingos? Valuable historical artifacts, suitable for illustrating Worldcon War Stories.)

[*Mal says: Sure, we can use flamingos. We have some already in the clubhouse, and have used them in the past for various SFSFS related things. I actually saw my first live Florida flamingo at the zoo around Christmas. I've lived here since 1990 or so, and that's the first one I've seen. With the way they seem to symbolize "Florida" to northerners, one might expect them to be some sort of plague, like pigeons in NYC, or perhaps the endless supplies of Boston Baked Beans people are constantly hocking on the street corners of Boston.]*

Sincerely yours,
George Flynn.

From: Dlowrey1@aol.com
Date: Wed, 9 Dec 1998 09:36:45 EST

Dear SFSFS members:

The Lowrey family greatly appreciates the kind and thoughtful words in last month's *Shuttle*, especially the warm welcome our children have received. Olivia, Belen, and Papo (William) look forward to each future SFSFS meeting with greater and greater anticipation—as they are true science-fiction fanatics. All of us enjoyed the roundtables on "Really scary things" and "The hero motif in Babylon 5." Even the graphic description of the XXX video at Worldcon was a good laugh (although I had a lot of explaining to do about that one).

For myself, I have enjoyed participating in the Writer's workshop and only wish I had more time to attend other SFSFS functions like the book discussions and media events.

Thanks to all for making us feel welcome.

David, Vicky, Belen, Olivia, and William

Lowrey

1409 Christy Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040
Telephone: (502) 584-9926
E-mail: jtmajor@iglou.com
<http://members.iglou.com/jtmajor>
September 9, 1998

Dear SFSFSians:

Worldcon War Stories: Having just scanned in a post-con report from Laura Resnick (Mike's daughter, and a good writer herself) on the topic of how can you tell the difference now that Northwest Airlines is on strike, I think there might be some interesting "war stories." Myself, I had an uneventful worldcon and an interesting aftermath.

[*Mal says: How can a worldcon be uneventful when you were nominated for a Hugo. Surely that should provide an extra spice to the events.*]

Book Discussion: The funny thing was that *City on Fire* was *also* a sequel and yet it made perfect sense without having read the first in the series, *Metropolitan*.

[*Mal says: While reading it, I occasionally felt like*

I was missing something from a previous book. Then again, maybe that was only because I knew a previous book existed. I've still yet to go back and read this. I have this terrible habit of buying other books that seem to cry out to be read first, before that one.]

Talking about Translations from British into United-Statesish, I recall becoming decidedly annoyed at one point in Sir Ran Fiennes's *The Feather Men* where he was supposedly saying that he joined the National Guard. Not only was the editing stupid, it was sloppy, since elsewhere in the book it said (correctly) that he joined the Territorial Army.

[Mal says: With translations, the ones that always make me curious are the Lem translations. Is The Cyberiad as funny in the original language as in English, for example. It always struck me that it would be odd if that was not the case. It would be like Tolkien being translated into Japanese and then turning out sort of like Terry Pratchett books.]

A Word from Your Editor: Martin Hoare read the Langford acceptance speech backwards. It ended, or began, with a doleful comment about anagrams. The Hugo ceremony people indicated that acceptees should be brief.

[Mal says: See the end of this for the speech. Thanks for sending it along. I was curious to see it.]

The acceptee for *Contact* had been associated with all five nominated movies, he said. Saves on seating. Arguably dividing the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo would give non-JMS types a better chance (though one can note that no episode of *B5* made it this year) but there is always the problem of politicking; one imagines flaming denunciations of anime and comebacks in like spirit, not to mention the problem of whether or not the Best TV should allow an entire season to be nominated.

[Mal says: Aren't the Hugos in many ways politicking anyway? Would adding more awards really increase the existing silliness? I think the Sci-Fi channel was covering the Hugos in LA a couple years ago and they were interviewing people going into the ceremony. I know they interviewed at least one couple that said something to the effect that they hoped an individual would win a Hugo because the people thought they were really nice.]

I thought Hugos were supposed to be for some sort of creative achievement not being "nice". Surely there must be some other award in fandom given out for being "nice". Or maybe the Hugo can be modified such that "nice" people have a special gold halo added to their award.]

Armageddon Review: The *Entertainment Weekly* reviewer said that "[Michael] Bay makes films like a man with a live tiger shark caught in his underwear." (*Entertainment Weekly*, July 10, 1998, p.46). Siskel and Ebert also turned thumbs down. Yet as of the last weekend in August it had grossed \$188.5 million. Think, in terror, that those audiences are the ones who grew up on music videos and see nothing whatsoever wrong with a movie where no shot lasts more than two seconds.

[Mal says: I like the shark description. I still

haven't seen the movie and don't plan to. Maybe these days it's the media hype about a movie that is more important than the movie itself. A good enough advertising campaign and some big movie stars mean sales at the box office no matter how bad the movie turns out to be. This could be compared to a circus side show where they paint those lurid murals on the tent advertising Otis the Frog boy or the Snake Eating Lady of the Ozarks. People pay money to go inside only to discover a disappointment, yet next year they'll go back to see another such show. It's the thrill of the advertising and the expectancy of the promise that sells tickets, not the show itself.]

Also, with the way movies are hyped and the seeming importance people give to attending the first showing of a movie, they also bank on people lumbering to the theaters like Walt Disney's mythical lemmings running into the sea. Word of mouth on just how bad the movie is won't spread for a few hours or days at least, giving them some profit to start with. Many people ignore movie critics because they seem to be often wrong, and there is always at least one of them out there who will say something good about the movie to insure their name gets plastered across a movie poster—or is it there are just so many movie critics that one of them is bound to like it due to there being enough brain deficiencies in the general populace that at least one movie critic will have a defect?]

Meet Johnny Ricoh: Okay, you have a mimeo. Now you have to find Genuine Twiltone somewhere. Then you can purge all writing about that sci-fi shit and replace it with long prosy articles about your favorite sports, drinking places, etc. Intersperse them with articles on how wonderful things were thirty years ago when fandom was really faanish. Well, maybe you can write about how comic books or TV are the real true SF (the era of "X", with *The X-Men*, *The X-Files*, and *Xena*). Then you will be taken seriously as a tru trufaenish faanzine.

[Mal says: I think we may be able to get some Genuine Twiltone eventually. We've not tried hard because apparently Twiltone and a Ricoh has a similar problem to cat and fur. Our Ricoh would start coughing up lint balls due to the fuzzy nature of Twiltone. (Which basically means we would have to clean it more.)]

I sometimes think we may have to resort to those articles you mention of tru faanish nature just to fill space. This might be hard in some cases because several of our contributors and editors would be hard pressed to tell of the glorious days of fandom thirty years ago when they were still eating dirt or were not even born. Then again we could just make it up. "I remember in the old days when Opie and I used to go down the Mayberry theater and catch the Captain Marvel serial and then some sort of bug eyed monster movie. We were so excited about the whole thing that we pestered Opie's father to let us use the mimeograph machine at the police station to start a fanzine. Opie's father's deputy Barney was supposed to supervise us but as soon as we started talking about disintegrator pistols or bug eyed monsters from the moon he get all frightened and hid

in the bathroom until we went home for dinner. Aunt Bee saw a copy of our fanzine and soon put a stop to it claiming it would warp our young minds..."

Would we be more likely to win a Hugo if we printed articles on our favorite t.v. drinking sports rather than reviews of wretched movies like Armageddon, or editorial rants on Hugo over the Internet?

Does real tru faanish SF include slash fiction as well?

Personally, I really liked how the Shuttle turned out on the Ricoh – the look that is. I think ink on paper looks far better than boring old Xerox toner.

We also needed an article on the Ricoh because it was a big expenditure for the membership. It seemed like we owed them some sort of explanation on where the money went and why.]

Locs: Noise? At one point, when Grant McCormick was wavering on the border between obnoxious and weird, he suggested that I emulate a friend who set off .22 Long Rifle rim fires with a hammer and chisel. He did not say that this was a late friend, either.

Yes, the used bookshelves are being filled with thick slices of Processed Fantasy Product. What gets really annoying is when they have #1, #3, and #4 in the series, but never #2.

[Mal says: I love this! So which franchised universe most closely resembles olive loaf? And which resembles Treet, that dreadful counterfeit Spam?]

I think the size constraints were because of binding. A book had to be around 70,000 words because that approximated to just over 200 pages, which was about at the limit of binding then. I remember this because the teacher once asked my high school English class to read a novel of over 200 pages. She had everyone give the page count and everyone's book was just over 200 pages - I think some may have been as long as 210 pages. It was very embarrassing.

[Mal says: So what has changed in book binding to make books over 200 pages these days? Is there some new miracle binding glue thanks to the race to the moon? Or did the technology come to light from the Roswell crash, from which supposedly comes so much else?

I was always under the impression that books were bigger now because they cost so much. The average consumer would feel cheated at \$6 for a mere two hundred pages. Or that some trend developed in science fiction to have grand, sweeping, elephant-choking wads of novels instead of the shorter, more compact stories of yesteryear.]

Not only does *The Syndic* have machine-gun polo, it has some room for explosions, not to mention chase scenes. But it may be too much for the Michael Bay mentality.

Joseph T. Major

Langford Hugo speech: "Award Hugo this for much very all you thanks Langford Dave. Surprise complete a

as came it. A.M. four at me telephone to going is Hoare bastard that suppose I now. Maybe, year next ana-grams!"

1409 Christy Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040
Telephone: (502) 584-9926
E-mail: jtmajor@iglou.com
<http://members.iglou.com/jtmajor>
November 12, 1998

Dear SFSFSians:

Well, I thought I locced #135. (Copy enclosed.)
[Mal says: Somehow it got left out of the last Shuttle. I've included it here. Forgive my terseness here with replies, but I'm striving to get this out the door.]

A Current Ongoing SFSFS Survey: Well, Mal Barker can ask for a copy of my essay on *Have Spacesuit - Will Travel*, or he can go to my web page at <http://members.iglou.com/jtmajor> and read it.

[Mal says: Thank you for sending this along. I went out and pulled down your one essay immediately. I also see you have all of Heinlein's other juveniles there as well. When I read my first few Fosfax these were the articles I liked most in them. Since reading that, I have ended up plowing once again through all the Heinlein juveniles I own. I have trouble reading his adult novels, except for The Moon is a Harsh Mistress. For some reason, I'll read a few juveniles, and then try one of his adult novels and get stalled out.]

All right, all right:

The Vampire Killers by Clifford L. Linedecker
(November 9)

The Story of the Crusades by Alfred Duggan
(November 10)

The Twilight Realm by Christopher Carpenter
(November 11)

Linedecker: An interesting look at some people who really lost their connection with reality. You understand, this was a boy from Kentucky who went down to Florida to murder his girlfriend's parents so he could go up a level in the Vampire hierarchy.

Duggan: You realized how the religious impulse conflicted with the needs of the people who actually had to live there when the latest batch of Crusaders had gone away after starting a war with the Infidel.

Carpenter: An unusual twist on the "people becoming their r.p.g characters" in that they actually learned something from the experience, and did not become Monty Hall benefactors.

(Only 36 books read last month. I am slacking off.)

[Mal says: I envy your ability to read that many books and keep up with your correspondence — something I can't seem to be able to do these days. Florida is such a fun

state, isn't it? *We have the oddest things happen to us here.*

My last three books (in case anyone cared) were:

The Return of Dr. Fu Manchu by Sax Rohmer

Farmer in the Sky by Robert Heinlein

A History of the Devil by Gerald Messadie.

The last being a walk through history showing that most of "The Devil" was an invention of the Zoasters, and the Christians apparently borrowed much from them. Other cultures might have had evil characters, but none of them had a real devil.]

The Clunkerson's Baltimore Vacation, Part I:

So far we managed to share exactly one panel, **Space Disasters That Didn't Quite Happen**. Hugh Gregory (veteran of that panel) deserves a Special Worldcon Award for Overcoming Disaster, as when he did his initial lecture on Soviet Space Disasters *without* the video. When we finally got to see the video, it was quite interesting.

LOCs: There is a further advantage for preferring videos over actually going to the movies. If you have a dire personal emergency, you can stop the tape and go take care of it, then resume where you left off. I missed a crucial plot element in *White Nights* because of this.

I doubt the Poopy Panda Planned Community **Elizabeth Osborne** and **Mags** worried about will have all the features of the suburb in *Edward Scissorhands*. It will definitely lack that charming castle-topped crag in the middle. In fact, in many ways that suburb reminded me of the town in *A Wrinkle In Time* where everyone was controlled by the great brain downtown...

Teletubbies were invented by people who thought that Barney the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of Hell and Enemy of Thinking Human Beings - was at too high an intellectual plane for children to comprehend. By the time that Mal's son is of an age to comprehend, he will have available to him on TV something created by people who believe that the Teletubbies are at too high an intellectual plane for children to comprehend.

[Mal says: I'm not sure the Teletubbies are on any intellectual plane mankind has ever heard of. I've caught a glimpse or two of the show lately and it still completely baffles me, reminding me of something that perhaps might be an alien broadcast. Just think what Contact would have been like if, instead of them seeing old Nazi television broadcasts, they got the Teletubbies instead. Now, of course, there is the problem with the largest Teletubby being a gay role model. Still, I think if one were to take a close look at this show, one could find some far more disturbing symbolism than just one of the characters being gay. I mean, what is this tubby custard they are eating, and why does it does it get squirted out of a huge machine? And what's with all the rabbits?]

Ruth M. Shields

1410 McDowell Rd.

Jackson, MS 39204-5147

Email: Rshields@aol . com

January 14, 1999

Dear Hard-working Editors:

Thanks for sending #136, I enjoyed it thoroughly. Now that I am shaking off my pre-Christmas non-fanac mood, it is obviously time to comment on your zine.

Reading the *Shuttle* brings back bittersweet memories of editing the clubzine for our now-defunct local club. That combination of fun, satisfaction with a finished issue, and frustration that more people don't get involved, is very familiar. Our club dissolved when too many people moved away, or became involved with media and SCA activities, but we were never a large club. I hope you overcome your doldrums and turn up more fans who are willing to work for their fun.

[Bill says: Fans who move away (and this should be outlawed!) are always missed and never completely replaceable. Much of SFSFS' strength as an organization I credit to the diversity of interests among its members. The orientation of our monthly meetings may tilt toward one specific aspect of the genre as enthusiasms prevail, but many of us consider ourselves general science-fiction/fantasy fans. When we don't participate in a particular group, it is mostly because we just can't do it all.]

The meeting report was entertaining, and I'm looking forward to reading more of George's Worldcon report. I most enjoyed the letter column, with the running commentary of both Mal and Mags.

I hope Mags is doing well in her pregnancy, or has safely delivered her son (or daughter, if the technician had it wrong!)

If you would like some fillos, let me know. At present my supply is low, so I won't send any on spec, but I'm planning to work on that so I should be able to send some pieces if you want them.

Sincerely,

[Mal says: As I edit all this stuff together I could make some comments here, but to save time see elsewhere for some of it, like the birth of young master Pete. I'm glad you liked the meeting summary. I try to avoid making them into some sort of laundry list because I find that sort of report boring. I'm not sure exactly where I got some of what I do from, but I think part of it was how entertaining I found the LASFS meeting minutes when I first started reading them. Part of it, as well, is to try to capture some of the fun we do have at these meetings, and especially the fun of trying to ride herd as a board member.

If anything, since my last Shuttle, things look more positive for SFSFS. We've had scads of people join SFSFS, along with others who have at least expressed some interest in us.

The Shuttle fell by the wayside for a while, perhaps I'll talk about that in my editorial. One exists now, but it contains too much of my patented sarcasm to be of use to the average reader. One lesson I've learned lately is that a building a super computer can be a real vampire of your time. Hopefully you'll get at least one chuckle out of this issue somewhere, and perhaps something will spark your interest in something. That's all I'm trying for, here. I don't want a dull, boring clubzine. I want something people can pick through and find something to laugh at, besides the poor spelling.

Yes, we can use fillos. The SFSFS membership much appreciates fillos from people, because it means there is less of a temptation for me to scribble down some illusrtaion.]

1810 South Rittenhouse Square, 1708
Philadelphia, PA 19103-5837
October 1, 1998

Dear Editor,

I see that wild lemurs made you send me Shuttle issue 135. One of my anthropology professors told the following story which I now pass on to your working crew of lower primates, which will appreciate it. Some of the humans on the staff may enjoy it too.

It was in the days when he was a very young graduate student doing his first fieldwork, and his own mentor took him along on a visit to the Very Famous Couple who were considered supreme in the specialty. The VFC had a tent enclave of considerable luxury,

including a field kitchen and a shower. The traveling pair used the shower and were looking forward to a real meal from the kitchen. Antelope chops and sugar without ants in it, that sort of thing.

They were all sitting around with drinks, wearing the sort of robe and pajama garb traditional in safari camps, chatting about this and that and watching the camp's two pet lemurs climb up and down the tent ropes. The student expressed surprise that the two, of different species and sex, got along so well and were so tame. The wife of the VFC said, "Oh, they even have a child," and went off to find it. When she returned she casually handed the beast to the student, who was not a pet man at the best of times and had received as part of his prepping for going overseas a lecture on not handling wild animals. He beamed his pleasure at his hostess and put the creature on the ground.

Hybridization had produced an unusual result, for the young lemur was twice the size of either of its parents, and having lived in camp all its life, very accustomed to human attention. Slighted, Junior began to climb back into the student's lap to collect its due admiration.

Whatever crossbreeding had done, it had not increased the creature's intelligence, for it decided to make the climb *inside its* neglectful admirer's pants leg, heading for regions highly prized by males of our species. As the lump moved swiftly up his pants leg, everyone looked at the student to see what he would do.

His first reaction, which was to batter the damn thing to death in defense of the family jewels, seemed unwise if he ever wanted to do anything more scholarly than construction work. His second, to cross his legs and so close

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33307-0143

the route being used for the blitzkrieg, came to him instants too late to execute it without executing the invader.

"Oh, how nice," purred his hostess. "He likes you." She sipped her third warm Scotch delicately.

Over her shoulder his adviser grimaced in a way that suggested the student's career might terminate on the spot, possibly fatally, if any harm came to the lemur, which was now entering a critical zone. Careless paws equipped with claws were traversing regions too tender for such roughshod abuse.

So the student did the only thing he could think off, which was to stand up, turn away from the lady, open his robe and unbutton. The lemur popped its head out and was persuaded to roost on a tent rope. Refastening his pants and his robe, he turned back, seized his own Scotch in a shaking hand and downed it in one warm, smoky, overwhelmingly-alcoholic swallow.

Everyone laughed. Apparently every naive newcomer was subjected to this ordeal. He had passed the test with flying colors, but he never did feel quite the same about his adviser again. Which was just as well, for as it turned out, his mentor also enjoyed placing odd, living objects in bedroom slippers...

A good issue, and thank you for sending it.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mintz

[Mal says: Ah ha! Managed to sneak lemurs in here again and it wasn't even me! Loved the story.]

423 Summit Avenue,
Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740
October 24, 1998.

Dear Mal or Shirlene or Peter or fan or fans unknown:

I'm very late responding to the 135th Shuttle. This saves me from charges of inconsistent loc behavior, because I've been late in almost all comments to all fanzines in recent months, except for those I've failed altogether to loc.

[Mal says: Well, all is forgiven here. Think nothing of it. Thanks to me being editor, we managed to miss an entire issue of the Shuttle. Surely this must count more than missing a loc or two. Then again, a missed loc from you is probably more of a disaster than a missed Shuttle. All I mostly have to contend with is angry SFSFSians, while no doubt the entire fanzine reading population of the world goes into the blind staggers of withdrawal ever time one of your locs fails to surface.]

The Recent SFSFS Activities section refers to something that has puzzled me. It's the faith that paperback publishers put in series. Obviously there must be some financial returns that cause them to continue interminable series of stories featuring the same characters, or inflation of

a normal-length novel into so many unnecessary words that it can be published as a trilogy, or in even more volumes. But you mention an important drawback to this scheme, in that a person may not want to buy a given paperback because it is the latest release in a series and he hasn't seen the preceding titles. You don't mention another possibility, that the person who dislikes one paperback title may refuse to try any more featuring the same character or shared world or whatever. I would think that these two factors would take away some of the possible revenue from the concept that a person will buy every book in a series and thus spend more on paperbacks than he would if only independent, unsequenced novels were offered.

[Mal says: I agree with you there. I can't understand how some of these sequels continue. Perhaps there may be some pure attraction from the fact that sequels exist. This would fall into the same area as the reason that they have gigantic 500 page books instead of the old 150 or 200 page books. The average consumer faced with buying a 500 sheet roll or a 1000 sheets will think the 1000 is a better value. Perhaps when people see series they figure they are getting more value for their money because there is more of it to enjoy.]

Also, I think if you look at some series, like the Star Trek books for example, there will always be a built in audience. No matter how many times some of these people are burned, they will always come back for more. My wife has a great line about this. When confronted with something bad from this genre, the consumer just ignores it and buys the next one, kind of like a person who opens a can of soup and finds it is full of roaches. Instead of being shocked and horrified and not buying that brand again, they go out and buy yet another can. If it happens again, they still never learn.

Maybe there's some sort of deficiency in people that a series fills. Look at all the soap operas and other assorted series. Perhaps people could care less about the content, all they care about is that continuation, and that there will always be more.

I also think that series might be in some ways easier to write, or to continue to produce. You have a basic set of characters and just keep throwing recycled stuff at them plot-wise, and the series can continue forever. If the author gives out on you for whatever reason, there is always some other author who you can slot into his place like a fresh lightbulb replacing a burned out one.]

Maybe Michael Bay was the director for the Fox Network's coverage of the recent World Series. Adam-Troy's description of Michael's *Armageddon* seems to fit equally well the telecasts of those baseball games earlier this month. There was the same custom of cutting to another camera every four or five seconds, the artificial noises that were generated to accompany this or that happening on the screen, and the shrillness of the crowd noise [in the] background, which sounded different from the crowd's noises on a typical baseball telecast. I had great difficulty figuring out which seconds of the telecast showed the game

as it was happening, and which were instant replays or reruns of stuff that had happened in a previous game, not to mention the interminable cutting to ugly baseball people sitting motionless in the dugouts and even, during the New York City games, to the decidedly unanimated monuments beyond the center field fence. I have often wondered if there was ever a person who wrote or telephoned a television station or network requesting this kind of every-few-seconds cutting, or if it is an idiocy that the television industry thought up all by itself, like the obtrusive network or station signs in one corner of the screen. I've read that it started on MTV. That cable channel has an average audience of only 330,000 people the last time I saw the ratings, which doesn't seem to prove that this practice attracts big ratings.

[Mal says: I'm not a sports fan so I don't watch such things, but I know exactly what you are talking about. For awhile, they were even doing this on science shows, with the drunk-cam or whatever you want to call it. It sounds like they were trying to make the World Series resemble some sort of Playstation video game rather than the real thing, especially with the sound effects and such.]

Probably they were allowed to do this because the audience for the World Series is built-in and will put up with about anything. You could do all manner of completely wretched things and people would still watch it. Replace the announcers with handpuppets. Use computer effects to make the video be like an old grainy movie. Split the screen in half and play commercials constantly throughout the game.

It sounds like baseball has been watching all of the pro wrestling TV shows and trying to incorporate some of their hype into what they are doing. I wouldn't be surprised if, in a couple of years, they start up with the soap opera-like antics that go on with pro wrestling. Who will be baseball's Hulk Hogan? How long until you tune in to baseball and you see about five minutes of game time and the rest consists of players strutting around making speeches and getting into fist fights?]

I had difficulty seeing clearly the little stranger to whom Shirlene is giving hospitality. But as far as I can determine, the baby is not in the foetal position we read so much about when adults assume it at moments of stress. I'm sure this is evidence that it will be a remarkable child who doesn't obey tradition for no reason at all, and an adult who will be progressive.

[Mal says: Maybe if we are lucky Shirlene will release a picture of young master Pete, who is now with us. So far he's been quite extraordinary, in that he sleeps all of the time {Silly man, that's not a bit extraordinary for a one month old baby! -Ericka}. I saw him yesterday, and so far he's been a very quiet fellow. He'll never make a decent SFSFS board member at the rate he is going.]

I wish your club members luck if they participate in the SETI project. It seems to me that there is next to no danger of any participant mistaking evidence of extra-terrestrial intelligence signs for something occurring on Earth, since the desired activity is almost non-existent

nowadays on this planet.

[Mal says: As far as I know they are still working on this, and it will be released in April. They even had a TV show a while ago about it, which really turned out to be an infomercial for Star Trek Insurrection.]

So far I haven't seen any details on how Ben Bova thinks virtual immortality is possible for humans. The thing that bothers me is the danger that the individuals who live unimaginably long lives may not be able to sustain their intellect while their bodies remain in good condition. Life expectancy in the United States is nearly doubled since I was born, I believe, but I doubt if there has been any corresponding increase in the number of years before an elderly person begins to suffer confusion and memory failure and other problems. Brain cells die and aren't replaced by the body.

[Mal says: I've not seen any talk of this, myself. Maybe one of our SFSFS members could write something up on this, to supplement all of the rumors they were giving us from the travelling fete. It is my understanding that if you were to live forever or a very long time, this would also include licking the problem of your brain going to pot over the years.]

The news that you're using a Gestetner clone for duplication purposes is splendid. Maybe you'll make me even happier in the next year or two by switching from computer typography to typewriter. It isn't just your old Xerox machine that is subject to breakdowns. The last two times I took an apazine to the copy shop I patronized, its monster copy machine was broken down, and I wasn't able to enjoy the almost immediate service I normally get there. Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be any source of inexpensive, new stencil-based duplicators nowadays. So the individual fan doesn't find it cost-effective to purchase something like Johnny Ricoh if he produces only an occasional issue of a fanzine with a circulation of maybe one hundred copies. I investigated, once, how much I could save by buying an inexpensive copier and calculated it would take me a dozen years to save enough on publishing to wipe out the cost of the machine — in the unlikely case that I didn't need to spend a penny on repairs over all the time. So I continue to patronize a copy shop and think about the good old days when a neofan could find a used mimeograph for \$5 or \$10 and cut stencils with a manual typewriter like this one, instead of needing a thousand bucks or so for computer equipment.

[Mal says: Johnny Ricoh continues to perform very well. He's saved us a lot of money so far, especially with Tropicon. We generally apply a lot of ink to paper for that convention. Some of the last minute copying would have resulted in the copies being done after Tropicon if we had used the old machine. Since our clubhouse is just a couple of miles away from the convention center, if we ever needed to make a lot of copies a trip down there was as fast and cheaper than a copy center. We were also sure that it

(Continued on Page 23)

[Http://scifi.squawk.com/tropicon.html](http://scifi.squawk.com/tropicon.html)

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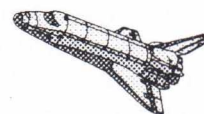
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BiMonthly Newsletter - Receive each issue of the *SFSFS Shuttle*, the monthly newsletter containing up-to-date information on meetings, club outings, local events of interest to members, and special sales notices. Members can put their talents on display and see their names in print by contributing stories, letters, artwork, con reports, poetry, book, film, and video reviews, etc.

Literary Discussion Group - Members get together to discuss books, authors, and common readings. Meetings are often based around one SF theme or author.

TROPICON - SFSFS sponsors TROPICON, the South Florida Science Fiction Convention. Members run TROPICON, learning how to plan and manage different aspects of a convention. TROPICON is currently held during winter each year. There is a separate registration fee.

Book Co-op Division - SFSFS members may order current books and other publications through the SFSFS Book Co-op. Discounts up to 30% make this benefit very worthwhile. If you spend only \$50 a year on books, you make back your membership cost. The Co-op is investigating adding music and video. If you are interested, contact the Book Div. Coordinator.

Creative Writing - The committee meets to assist members in their literary efforts. Members may uncover their creative abilities in writing as they learn writing techniques through mutual constructive criticism.

SFSFS Library - Members will have access to a club lending library with a wide variety of science fiction, fantasy, and reference literature.

Filksinging - Members may develop the fine art of setting new words to old or new tunes, creating and singing all-new musical masterpieces with a science fiction/fantasy/fannish slant.

Travelling Fete - SFSFS sponsors the Fete, our annual relaxicon. Members get together to meet and honor a Florida professional. The convention is currently held during the summer. There is a separate registration fee for the Fete.

Media Research - Meet with people to compare and contrast themes, discuss the making of movie, television, and radio programs; also learn behind-the-scenes workings of video production. Costumes, camera work, script writing, special effects, etc., are covered.

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NORTH AMERICAN DISCWORLD SOCIETY

by Joe Schaumburger

Early in 1998, I attempted to join the main Terry Pratchett group, an outfit called The Guild of Fans and Disciples, (GOFAD) whose headquarters are in England. I was horrified to discover that in order to send them a check in pounds for \$20 in US money, I would also have to pay a bank fee of \$20 more.

I decided to start up a US group to overcome this problem. Since the \$20 bank fee applied to any amount, I figured that if there were 20 of us, the bank fee would drop down to \$1 each.

GOFAD was very cooperative and gave me a plug on their web page. To my surprise, names started to flow in and we decided to form an American group, now called the North American Discworld Society (NADS) ((I didn't know that acronym meant "gonads" in the UK <g>)).

At any rate, somehow the group grew from a small group of US Terry Pratchett fans into what may well be the first continental fan club. We cover the US, Canada, and Mexico. (Actually, we haven't been able to turn up any Mexican fans yet, but have about 2 dozen Canadians.)

More recently, tired of turning away fans from Europe and Asia, we started to enroll them as members of our Klatchian Foreign Legion.

We now have over 325 members, and our rolls are increasing by about 50 or more a month. Mal asked me to tell my fellow SFSFS members about this group, in the event that there are some Discworld fans amongst us.

Membership in NADS is free, and there is also a free monthly newsletter called WOSSNAME. In addition, we have contacts via GOFAD for obtaining Terry Pratchett books at a substantial discount, plus ways to order Discworld miniatures, maps, videotapes, t-shirts, bumper stickers, computer games, and lots of other neat stuff.

There may be a convention in 1999, probably in San Diego.

If anyone in SFSFS would like to join, just write to me, Joe Schaumburger, online at anyp70a@prodigy.com or, if you don't have a computer, no problem, just write to me at: 18205 SW 94th Ave., Miami, FL 33157. We accept non-computer members, too.

(Continued from Page 20)

was done right. On past copy jobs, especially where time was important, we've been burned rather badly.]

Dime novel fandom existed a half-century ago, but I haven't heard anything about it for many years. It promoted collecting dime novels, and it helped to get facsimile reprints of the originals back into print. I suppose there are still dime novel collectors out there somewhere, but not many people are still around who can recall buying them in their original form in youth, and this must have led to even worse graying of dime novel fandom than today's problem in science-fiction fandom.

Harry Warner, Jr.

(Continued from Page 4)

astound at least me by how wonderfully it performs for us. Our monthly meetings continue to be an endless assortment of bizarre and amusing events with people usually walking away from them having learned something. Joe Siclari has started up a monthly "Fanzine Reading Evening," where we can read endless stacks of fanzines from Joe's collection and hear endless tales about the people who write them. Joe and Edie seem to know about almost everyone in those fanzines, so not only can you read their articles but they can be brought to life with interesting and often scandalous details about their personal lives. Who needs Jerry Springer when you can learn about the amazing cast of characters from *Ah Sweet Idiocy?*

No doubt I've left out a few things here and there, but that will be Carlos' job to take care of that problem. Hopefully we can drum up enough material for him.

Oh yes, I should mention that Shirlene and Pete Rawlik have given birth to young master Peter (pictured in issue #135) He is doing fine and well and will soon be reading H.P. Lovecraft like his father. Let me try once again to clear up some foginess on the readership's part:

1) Shirlene the Editor is married to Pete *Rawlik*. The two of them spawned Young Master Pete (pictured in Shuttle #135).

2) Mal is Peter *Barker*, who is the dirt eating editor (pictured on page 4 and in issue #135 to make matters worse). He is married to Ericka the proofreader. They have no children at this time and live in a villa full of books, lemurs, sock monkeys and assorted other monkeys. He used to be the Secretary, and there is a good chance you received a garbled communiqué from him at some point in your life.

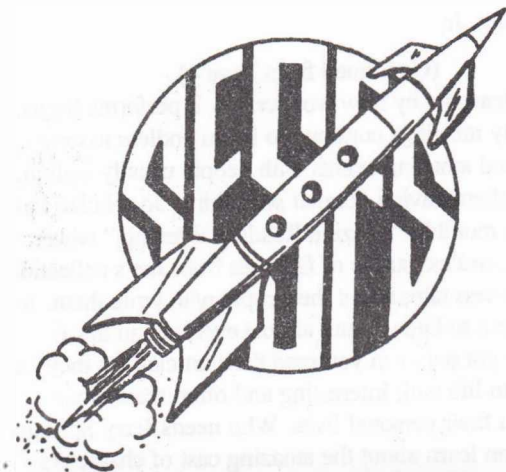
3) We all know who Joe and Edie are. They did not give birth to young master Pete, but are frequently mentioned in the Shuttle, as seen above.

4) Wild lemurs *do* exist, and they can be extremely troublesome. They are easily bribed with food, but you must give them the proper kind. If excited, they can swing from light fixtures and are prone to running up long distance bills, as they are constantly fascinated by the talking telephone clock of Madagascar.

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YOU ARE GETTING THIS BECAUSE:

- _____ YOU ARE HELD IN GREAT ESTEEM BY SFSFS.
- _____ YOU CONTRIBUTED SOMETHING.
- _____ TRADE FOR YOUR ZINE.
- _____ INSPECTED BY SOCK MONKEYS TO INSURE SARCASM.
- _____ YOU ARE LIBELED; WELL AT LEAST YOU'RE MENTIONED.
- _____ EDITORIAL WHIM.
- _____ YOU ARE A MEMBER OF SFSFS.
- _____ WE NEED MORE CONTRIBUTIONS.
- _____ MAY DISSOLVE IN WATER. DO NOT DROP IN TOILET WHILE READING.
- _____ WILD LEMURS MADE ME CHECK THIS BOX AS WELL. WHERE'S THAT BIG K?
- _____ Y2K COMPLIANT.
- _____ YES, YES, YES! I'M SORRY. I KNOW IT'S LATE.