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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society  
Club Notice - 04/27/90 -- Vol. 8, No. 43

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.  
LZ meetings are in LZ 2R-158. MT meetings are in the cafeteria.

\_D\_A\_T\_E                   \_T\_O\_P\_I\_C

05/09 LZ: Incarnations of Immortality Series, by Piers Anthony  
(Mythology as Science)  
05/30 LZ: L. RON HUBBARD PRESENTS WRITERS OF THE FUTURE #5 (New authors)

\_D\_A\_T\_E                   \_E\_X\_T\_E\_R\_N\_A\_L\_M\_E\_E\_T\_I\_N\_G\_S/\_C\_O\_N\_V\_E\_N\_T\_I\_O\_N\_S/\_E\_T\_C.

05/12 Science Fiction Association of Bergen County: Joe De Vito (artist  
with a slide show of his work) (changed from previous guest)  
(phone 201-933-2724 for details) (Saturday)  
05/19 NJSFS New Jersey Science Fiction Society: Saul Jaffe (editor of  
SF-LOVERS DIGEST (phone 201-432-5965 for details) (Saturday)

HO Chair: John Jetzt HO 1E-525 834-1563 hocpa!jetzt  
LZ Chair: Rob Mitchell LZ 1B-306 576-6106 mtuxo!jrrt  
MT Chair: Mark Leeper MT 3D-441 957-5619 mtgzx!leeper  
HO Librarian: Tim Schroeder HO 3D-225A 949-5866 homxa!tps  
LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen LZ 3L-312 576-3346 lzfme!lfl  
MT Librarian: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 957-2070 mtgzy!ecl  
Factotum: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 957-2070 mtgzy!ecl  
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1. I recently saw something I never thought I would ever see on television or could ever see anywhere. It was an ad and as far as I am concerned it summed up in two sentences the entire fate of the world, no easy feat. It is a justification for every cynical, nihilistic thought I think I have ever had. Years ago, George Carlin satirized television with the lines, "Giant cracks are forming in the earth; rocks are falling from the sky. Details at eleven." I admit at the time that it sounded far-fetched that the

world would be coming to an end and some television station would just go right on oblivious.

Well, actually, I was right. Things aren't that bad. They're worse. The media would commercialize it. These people must have

THE MT VOID

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experts on how to take disaster and turn it into money. While I have chuckled at Howard Ruff's book's title, H\_o\_w\_t\_o\_P\_r\_o\_s\_p\_e\_r\_i\_n\_t\_h\_e\_C\_o\_m\_i\_n\_g\_B\_a\_d\_T\_i\_m\_e\_s; these guys are really taking it a step farther and figuring how they can grow rich for the world coming to an end. And with that build-up, let me tell you the ad copy. Now I know if you have not heard it yourself you are not going to believe me, but ask your friends and neighbors. There must be someone else out there who has heard this ad. It is for an Earth Day benefit being put on by Billy Joel and the ad goes:

"The Earth is dying. Can Billy Joel  
save it?"

What we have here is the fate of the Earth reduced to cheap television melodrama. It's sort of "Let's all watch and see if Billy Joel can save the planet" like "Let's all watch and see if B.J. can escape from the Bear." Of course, every darn week B.J. escapes from the Bear so maybe Billy Joel can save the planet. All he needs is the same writers. Right.

Mark Leeper  
MT 3D-441 957-5619  
...mtgzx!leeper

A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die out, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.

-- Max Planck

## THE COOK, THE THIEF, HIS WIFE & HER LOVER

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

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Capsule review: HBO is hiring established directors to do segments of its "Tales from the Crypt" series. Peter Greenaway didn't wait to be asked. He lovingly made a two-hour horror comic story with some hilarious detail. Somehow it is being treated as an art film. A unique film that certainly will not be for all audiences.  
Rating: +2.

Peter Greenaway's most famous film to this point was T\_h\_e D\_r\_a\_u\_g\_h\_t\_s\_m\_a\_n's C\_o\_n\_t\_r\_a\_c\_t. On the surface that was a mystery set at a country estate. Its subtext was that beneath the affected surface of the upper class there is mischief and dirt. The style was, however, very affected and uninvolved and bloodless. To be frank, I could not wait for the film to end. In T\_h\_e C\_o\_o\_k, T\_h\_e T\_h\_i\_e\_f, H\_i\_s W\_i\_f\_e & H\_e\_r L\_o\_v\_e\_r, Greenaway seems once again to have it in for the upper classes (or at least for the nouveau riche) who dine at a very fine French restaurant

(as well as for the people who put up letters on theater marquees). But this time around the cold and uninvolved style is gone. Really gone. The film starts like a Monty Python sketch that goes on a bit too long, then it fades to John Waters, then Herschel Gordon Lewis, and when it is all over we find we have been watching an intricately mounted E.~C.~Comic and a story that could have been taken from the pages of V\_a\_u\_l\_t\_o\_f\_H\_o\_r\_r\_o\_r\_T\_a\_l\_e\_s\_f\_r\_o\_m\_t\_h\_e\_C\_r\_y\_p\_t. I laughed my way through the film, was delighted by every ghoulish turn, but I have to say that I cannot recommend this film to most of the people I know. I do not remember when I have seen a film that more people walked out on.

What we have here is one week behind the scenes at The Restaurant From Hell. Actually, the restaurant is "La Hollandaise"--soon to be known as "Spica and Boarst's." Richard Boarst is a superb Cordon-Bleu-class French chef whose restaurant was taken over by gangster Albert Spica. Spica does not live by halfway measures. He is extremely violent, exceptionally loud and rude, and supremely vulgar. Night after night he holds forth at his restaurant, piling vulgarity on vulgarity and often savaging his customers. We are led to assume that the cuisine must be very, very good for anyone to be willing to sit in the same restaurant as Spica. The gangster repeatedly brutalizes his wife Georgina, whom he virtually holds prisoner. Georgina, however, is able to sneak away from Spica occasionally to rendezvous with a rather studious, quiet customer, Michael, with whom she makes passionate love.

Greenaway, who wrote as well as directed, has written what could well have been a stage play. There are only a very limited number of sets, and the sets are designed for use of color and for effect rather than for accuracy. First we see the parking lot infested with a

Cook/Thief/Wife/Lover

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veritable army of stray dogs. The kitchen is a hilarious revelation of what goes on behind the scenes at a fancy restaurant. What goes on in the kitchen is unbelievable. The transition from this kitchen that you would not feed a dog from to the ultra-posh dining room stuns the viewer. And so it goes, from one room to the next.

Michael Gambon plays Spica and must speak two-thirds of the lines in the film. He never shuts up and he never says anything you want to hear. Gambon was good in the BBC drama T\_h\_e\_S\_i\_n\_g\_i\_n\_g\_D\_e\_t\_e\_c\_t\_i\_v\_e but his Albert Spica will easily eclipse that role. Helen Mirren is usually

good and this is probably a role that will get more attention than her (perhaps better) films such as T\_h\_e\_L\_o\_n\_g\_G\_o\_o\_d\_F\_r\_i\_d\_a\_y.

T\_h\_e\_C\_o\_o\_k, T\_h\_e\_T\_h\_i\_e\_f, H\_i\_s\_W\_i\_f\_e& H\_e\_r\_L\_o\_v\_e\_r is not really an art film but a ghoulish horror comic book with art film trappings. If you see it, I cannot promise you will like it, but I can promise you that you have not seen any other film like it. I give it a +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

HYPERION by Dan Simmons  
Bantam Spectra, 1990 (1989c), ISBN 0-553-28368-5, \$4.95.  
THE FALL OF HYPERION by Dan Simmons  
Doubleday Foundation, 1990, ISBN 0-385-24950-0, \$19.95.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
Copyright 1990 Evelyn C. Leeper

What we have here is a glorious failure.

You may notice that I have labeled this "a book review," not "two book reviews" as you might have expected. That is because, physical reality notwithstanding, this is a single book. I cannot imagine any reason, other than greed, for not publishing it as a single volume. Yes, I know publishers claim that they can't publish a book of a thousand pages because 1) no one will buy it, and 2) it is physically difficult to produce. Yet New American Library has published the 1000-page D\_o\_n\_Q\_u\_i\_x\_o\_t\_e and the 1400-page L\_e\_s\_M\_i\_s\_e\_r\_a\_b\_l\_e\_s, people do purchase them, and they haven't fallen apart, even after repeated readings. The final death blow to this argument, of course, is that Doubleday is producing a book club edition with both "novels" in a single volume! Rumor has it that book stores don't like thick books because they can't display as many in the same volume. Life's tough.

Issuing this novel as two volumes is doubly annoying because the second half is so long and drawn-out that I found myself saying, "Why didn't Simmons just add another hundred or so pages onto the first half and wrap the story up there?" (I am not the only person to make this observation.) Because it came out as a separate volume it had to be about the same length as the first half and this means padding, padding, and more padding.

The first half (to begin at the beginning, as they say) has been compared to Chaucer's C\_a\_n\_t\_e\_r\_b\_u\_r\_y\_T\_a\_l\_e\_s in that it is a group of pilgrims telling stories. But there is a basic difference. In T\_h\_e\_C\_a\_n\_t\_e\_r\_b\_u\_r\_y\_T\_a\_l\_e\_s, the stories are about other people; in H\_y\_p\_e\_r\_i\_o\_n they are about the story-tellers themselves. And in this area, Simmons does very well, managing to have each story s\_o\_u\_n\_d as if the teller were telling it: the story told by the priest sounds the way a priest would talk, the story told by the soldier sounds the way a soldier would talk, etc. In addition, each story is interesting in itself. Each story is also almost novel-length in itself; any one of them, with an ending added on, could have been published as a stand-alone novel. (Why do I even suggest this?! Next we'll have H\_y\_p\_e\_r\_i\_o\_n:T\_h\_e\_S\_p\_e\_c\_i\_a\_l\_E\_d\_i\_t\_i\_o\_n, redivided and sold as six novels!)

The basic story begins with seven pilgrims traveling to the "Time Tombs," odd structures on the planet Hyperion which are traveling backwards in time and somehow connected with the Shrike. The Shrike is a monster that appears to be a humanoid made up of a large collection of

knives and razor blades, leading a friend of mine to describe H\_y\_p\_e\_r\_i\_o\_n (the first half) as "Freddy Krueger on Mars." It turns out (in the second half) that there is a very good reason for the Shrike and its presence, and that this is more than just a desire to put in a slasher monster, but many people may be so turned off by the concept in the first half that they will not buy the second half and find out (never mind reading a thousand pages).

In order to figure out what the Shrike is and the secret of the Time Tombs, the pilgrims tell their stories of how they are connected with Hyperion. Of these stories, I found the most interesting to be Sol Weintraub's (the philosopher's) story, full of questions about God and the nature of sacrifice. Sol's daughter Rachel has been caught in a "backwash" at the Time Tombs and is now living backwards. This is difficult to make consistent (Philip Dick didn't quite succeed in C\_o\_u\_n\_t\_e\_r-c\_l\_o\_c\_k\_W\_o\_r\_l\_d either), and Simmons makes a few slips. To solve the problems of day-to-day living, Rachel's memory regresses only during sleep, so at least conversations can flow forward. But when towards the end Sol notices that Rachel's hair is getting shorter and thinning out, I found myself wondering, "But what about all those other years she was regressing? Wasn't her hair (and for that matter, her fingernails) getting shorter then?" And somehow the whole rationale Simmons had built up seemed to collapse.

While the first half is the pilgrims' stories, the second half is a single story (though told from many points of view), full of space battles, politics, philosophy, poetry, and anything else Simmons had handy--as I said, it's heavily padded. Without giving too much away, I have to say that the religion expounded in the second half seems too trinitarian to me, given its origins. (You'll probably have to read the book to understand what I mean.) The padding becomes particularly evident in Sol and Rachel's story. Sol is convinced that the Time Tombs hold the answer to Rachel's problem, and therefore they must reach them before Rachel regresses to her "birth." So we hear him think, "Now Rachel is one day old." A few chapters later, he thinks, "Now Rachel is eight hours old." Then a few chapters more, "Now Rachel is two hours old." Then, "Now Rachel is one hour old." Then, "Now Rachel is thirty minutes old." And so on and so on. Like Zeno's arrow, we seem to be forever approaching the moment of Rachel's birth without actually having any chance of getting there.

is

Simmons does have the ability to write in many different styles. (His \_ P\_ h\_ a\_ s\_ e\_ s\_ o\_ f\_ G\_ r\_ a\_ v\_ i\_ t\_ y, a much better work in my opinion than this, written very differently than any of the pilgrims' stories here.) And he has a sly sense of humor. The interstellar society that exists in \_ H\_ y\_ p\_ e\_ r\_ i\_ o\_ n is the result of the Hegira--humanity's outpouring from Earth when it was destroyed. Throughout the novel, Simmons speaks of "pre-Hegira" and "post-Hegira" events, and so it is only a few lines later that you realize his reference to "pre-Hegira Muslims" on page 199 is a sort of historical pun.

Hyperion

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Simmons also seems to have a real understanding of how electronic bulletin boards work in his description of the All Thing, a communications network joining all of the Hegemony (also page 199 of \_ H\_ y\_ p\_ e\_ r\_ i\_ o\_ n):

Days and nights would pass with me monitoring the Senate on farcaster cable or tapped into the All Thing. Someone once estimated that the All Thing deals with about a hundred active pieces of Hegemony legislation per day, and during my months spent screwed into the sensorium I missed none of them. My voice and name became well known on the debate channels. No bill was too small, no issue too simple or too complex for my input. The simple act of voting every few minutes gave me a false sense of having \_ a\_ c\_ c\_ o\_ m\_ p\_ l\_ i\_ s\_ h\_ e\_ d something. I finally gave up the political obsession only after I realized that accessing the All Thing regularly meant either staying home or turning into a walking zombie. A person constantly busy accessing on his implants makes a pitiful sight in public and it didn't take Helenda's decision to make me realize that if I stayed home I would turn into an All Thing sponge like so many millions of other slugs around the Web.

If Simmons himself has made an awkward structure for his novel, the publisher has gilded the lily by managing to leave page 305 out entirely from both the hardcover and trade paperback editions of \_ T\_ h\_ e\_ F\_ a\_ l\_ l\_ o\_ f



\_ H\_ y\_ p\_ e\_ r\_ i\_ o\_ n, and instead to provide \_ t\_ w\_ o copies of page 306! Naturally, a major plot element is revealed on the missing page (or would be revealed, were it there), so after reading eight hundred pages over a period of a year, the reader is \_ s\_ t\_ i\_ l\_ l left in the dark. And don't try blaming this on computers: back when a publisher set a book for publishing in the traditional way, s/he double-checked the films before sending them to the printer. S/he should still do this, computers notwithstanding. I think it's evident that this was not done in this case.

This book is an example of a work in which the whole is less than the sum of the parts. This leads to an odd paradox: the first half has been nominated for a Hugo and may well win, though had the whole book been nominated, it might not have. It is only in the second half that the story becomes tedious. As far as its competition, one of the other nominees is volume three of a six (or seven) volume series of which the first two were both nominated for Hugos but didn't win, and another is volume two of a three-volume (at least) series of which the first one was nominated for a Hugo but didn't win. (Do you detect a pattern here? Norman Spinrad, in his column in the June 1990 \_ I\_ s\_ a\_ a\_ c\_ A\_ s\_ i\_ m\_ o\_ v' \_ s, has a lot to say about "seriesism," and much of it applies here.) In this sort of field, it wouldn't surprise me at all to see the first half of a book win a Hugo.

THE PUNJAT'S RUBY by Marian J. A. Jackson  
Pinnacle, 1990, ISBN 1-55817-338-2, \$3.50.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
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Abigail Patience Danforth has read Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and decides to become the world's first \_ f\_ e\_ m\_ a\_ l\_ e consulting detective. Of course, in Victorian England this is a bit of a problem, women's rights being what they were (or weren't), and things are not much better when she returns to her home in New York City. She does conveniently (for the author, anyway) manage to get thrust into the middle of a theft and murder, though, and soon the game is afoot.

Danforth appears to be the latest in a series of Victorian female detectives designed to appeal to modern female sensibilities, with their struggle for acceptance and respect, their 1980's (1990's?) attitudes, etc. (Elizabeth Peters's Amelia Peabody is another.) Unfortunately, this book goes a bit overboard, with Danforth frequently (and unconvincingly) disguising herself as a man, complete with moustache, and everyone else acting in a stereotypical manner, and constantly patronizing her. Amelia Peabody had someone who understood her! The negative portrayal of Asians in the book, while perhaps accurate to the Victorian novels that it is copying, seems out of place in a work written now. One might argue that a pastiche should copy all the attitudes of the original, but then we wouldn't have the liberated female lead in the first place.

Of some interest to Sherlockians (Doyle is a minor character) and fans of female detectives, but not highly recommended.

SLAVES OF THE VOLCANO GOD by Craig Shaw Gardner  
Ace, 1989, ISBN 0-441-76977-2, \$3.95.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Roger Gordon is leading a very boring existence in our world. Suddenly his girlfriend is kidnapped by a couple of thugs who disappear in a puff of smoke. With the aid of his handy Captain Crusader Decoder Ring (which just happens to be the key to the universe, or one of the thousands, at any rate), he follows them, only to find himself in the movies. No, I don't mean he ends up an actor in Hollywood; I mean he finds himself in the universe of the movies (the "Cineverse" as Gardner calls it). Most of the story is spent in a bad Western--Roger doesn't get to the South Seas island until almost the end of the book.

What is the Cineverse like? Well, for one thing we find out why cowboys always carry guitars. You see, if they had to ride in the normal fashion to the outlaw's hideout, it would take days and days, but with the guitar, they just sing a song and when they finish the last chorus, presto! the hideout comes into view. You also discover some of the pitfalls the movies gloss over. You know how the bad guy's sidekicks have names such as "Tex" and "Dakota." Well, when the gang gets too large, the late-comers apparently end up with names such as "Idaho" and "District of Columbia." (For some reason, Gardner avoids bringing a sidekick named "Georgia" on-stage for the usual bad jokes. Given the rest of the book, it's difficult to attribute this to a sense of subtlety and refinement.) You learn under what conditions a six-shooter can have more than six bullets (whenever it is necessary to the plot) and when a gun will misfire (whenever it is necessary to the plot).

This book is, of course, totally ridiculous. It also has a wonderfully tacky cover by Walter Velez--perfectly in keeping with the spirit of the book. And, again in keeping with the spirit of the old movie series and serials, it is book one of a series (book two, B\_r\_i\_d\_e\_o\_f  
t\_h\_e\_S\_l\_i\_m\_e\_M\_o\_n\_s\_t\_e\_r, has just come out, and book three,  
R\_e\_v\_e\_n\_g\_e\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e  
F\_l\_u\_f\_f\_y\_B\_u\_n\_n\_i\_e\_s, is threatened, I mean promised, soon). But if you're an old movie fan, this is a golden opportunity to find out what the secret rules of moviedom really are.

BRIDE OF THE SLIME MONSTER by Craig Shaw Gardner  
Ace, 1990, ISBN 0-441-07950-4, \$3.95.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
Copyright 1990 Evelyn C. Leeper

This is the second book in the "Cineverse Cycle," Gardner's look at what might happen if someone from our universe suddenly found himself living in a movie world--literally. In the first volume (S l a v e s o f t h e V o l c a n o G o d, reviewed earlier) Roger Gordon found himself traveling between the worlds of western movies, pirate movies, and South Sea island movies, all with the aid of his Captain Crusader Decoder Ring.

B r i d e o f t h e S l i m e M o n s t e r takes place mostly in the world of beach-

party movies, and since I have never been a big fan of beach party movies, and find them even more ridiculous than formula westerns, I found this book less interesting than the first. In addition, since

this is the middle of the trilogy (R e v e n g e o f t h e F l u f f y

B u n n i e s,

promised soon, is billed as the conclusion, though one suspects if the first three are successful, more will follow--that is one of the laws of the "Biblioverse"), it suffers from providing neither the background nor the conclusion of the story.

In short, I can't recommend this if you haven't read the first one or don't intend to read the last one. And since the last one isn't out yet, I can't give an overall recommendation. Stayed tuned for the next exciting chapter in:

"Review of the Cineverse Cycle!"

Readercon 3  
Con report by Evelyn C. Leeper  
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(Part 2)

I\_m\_a\_g\_i\_n\_i\_n\_g\_t\_h\_e\_T\_r\_u\_l\_y\_A\_l\_i\_e\_n  
T\_h\_a\_t's\_I\_n\_c\_o\_m\_p\_r\_e\_h\_e\_n\_s\_i\_b\_l\_e:  
Alexander Jablovkov (moderator), Jeffrey A. Carver,  
James Patrick Kelly, Paul Park, Steven Popkes  
Saturday, 4:00 PM

Jablovkov opened this panel by saying that authors who tried to write about the truly alien had a difficult task, because they had to write about people "even weirder than the people they meet on the subway."

Kelly talked about how he uses stylistic tricks to try to make the aliens "different." For example, in his latest book, one race uses no contractions in its speech (shades of Data!) and another uses only words derived from Anglo-Saxon, which he also expressed as having no Latin or Greek roots, but the two are not truly identical. Put another way, what he said was not quite kosher, if you catch my drift. Kelly also recommended Julian Jaynes's  
C\_o\_n\_s\_c\_i\_o\_u\_s\_n\_e\_s\_s\_a\_n\_d\_t\_h\_e  
B\_r\_e\_a\_k\_d\_o\_w\_n\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_B\_i\_c\_a\_m\_e\_r\_a\_l  
M\_i\_n\_d.\*

Popkes felt that the key to writing alien aliens was to realize that they had their own agenda. Where humans put food and shelter high

on what they want, aliens might have a different set of priorities (but it better make sense from an evolutionary and survival point of view, in my opinion, or readers will not be convinced). Kelly thought it would be helpful if there were a "periodic chart of emotions" so that you could describe alien emotions better ("fear-2-dread-unhappiness-4"?).

By the end of the panel, the conclusion seemed to be that you could not make the truly alien comprehensible or it would not be alien. On the other hand, it is much more acceptable to give aliens problems than to show humans with problems. A book depicting racism in aliens will be understood (one hopes) to be a parallel for racism in our world, and will be easier to get published and be read by a lot more people.

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\* An interesting note here: I did not get the title quite correct in my notes, but could not find it in B\_o\_o\_k\_s\_i\_n\_P\_r\_i\_n\_t to fix it. Then, less than 12 hours later, I ran across it in one of the introductions in Harry Turtledove's new collection. Synchronicity!

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E\_d\_i\_t\_i\_n\_g Z\_e\_n\_a\_n\_d\_t\_h\_e\_A\_r\_t\_o\_f\_A\_n\_t\_h\_o\_l\_o\_g\_y  
David G. Hartwell (moderator), Kathryn Cramer, Jack Dann,  
Jeanne Van Buren Dann, Terri Windling  
Saturday, 5:00 PM

Naturally the first editor mentioned was Martin H. Greenburg, the most prolific editor currently working in the genre (or just about any genre, come to think of it). The panelists claimed only one other person had ever achieved his entire reputation in the science fiction field as an anthology editor. The only catch was they did not say who this was. Mark and I were sure they meant Groff Conklin, but what they were saying did not sound like they were talking about Conklin, so finally we asked just who they did mean. "Roger Elwood." "What about Groff Conklin." "Oh, no, he made his reputation [somewhere else--I

forget where they said]." I still think Groff Conklin fit their description--after all Elwood and Greenburg have both done other things as well.

Anyway, Roger Elwood apparently sold two hundred anthology contracts in eighteen months, buying up the complete short fiction output of several prolific authors. Before Elwood came along, anthologies were rare, and generally high-quality. Readers had come to expect they would be worth buying and reading. The enormous number of mediocre anthologies Elwood produced resulted in readers becoming extremely skeptical of anthologies. So for a long time anthologies were anathema--they are only now recovering.

Cramer claimed that in a discussion of how good a job Greenburg was doing she said that even if he did nothing else, the mathematics say that he could not possibly be spending enough time on each anthology to be doing a good job. To me, this is not a convincing argument. You need to look at the finished product. If it is bad, then even if he spent six years on it alone, it is bad. And if it is good, claiming that it could not possibly be because he did not spend enough time on it is ridiculous. ("I don't care what pictures you took, Mr. Wright; man cannot fly in a heavier-than-air machine.")

The panel claimed that Greenburg's method, at least for anthologies co-edited with Isaac Asimov, is that his researchers pick 120,000 words on a topic. Then Asimov selects 100,000 words of this. Greenburg (or his staff) then tracks down the necessary permissions, etc. Sometimes these are unobtainable, so some stories can still get dropped. Then Asimov writes a short introduction to each story and presto! a new anthology.

Actually, of course, the term "new" anthology is ambiguous. In order to avoid confusion between anthologies of never-before-published stories and anthologies that have never been published before in that form, though the individual stories have appeared previously, science fiction calls the former "original anthologies" and the latter "reprint anthologies." (And single-author "anthologies" are called

"collections.") Reprint anthologies are much easier to do--the stories are already written. For original anthologies, the editor has to keep

"hocking the author's chineks," as Jack Dann said (badgering the author). I n t h e F i e l d o f F i r e, which he and Jeanne Van Buren Dann co-edited, was conceived by accident at a Boskone when Jeanne casually said something to Beth Meacham's husband about doing an anthology of Vietnam War stories. (Beth Meacham is an editor at Tor Books.) It took about a year of hard work to put together--very different from the amount of effort that goes into the average Greenburg reprint anthology. And even so, I believe that some of the stories in I n t h e F i e l d o f F i r e were reprints.

Anthologies such as the various Y e a r' s B e s t are done on a less intensive schedule. Rather than having to read a hundred stories on a single topic in a short period of time, the editor has the "luxury" of reading a range of stories over the entire year.

When the panel was asked what they thought of shared-world anthologies, Terri Windling responded that they could be enjoyable and show an author's ability to work in a very structured framework, but that she did not go to them for literature. Since she is the originator/editor of the "Bordertown" shared-world series, her opinion carries some weight, I should think. (I asked later if I n t h e F i e l d s o f F i r e was a shared-world anthology, since it had many of the same characteristics. The panel did not think so, but I do not think they could explain exactly why not. Maybe they just did not have time.)

Someone mentioned the Australian anthology E x p r e s s w a y, based on a painting around which various authors wrote stories. This reminded me of Hal Clement's novel O c e a n o n T o p, also inspired by a painting. This seems like a very promising idea--as someone pointed out, for a change this lets the a r t i s t have free rein and the authors have to write to fit the picture.

Since we had eaten so much at lunch we skipped dinner and sat around waiting for the evening's events to begin. The Green Room was closed (luckily I had time to go in and change into my more formal attire for the awards ceremony before they locked it). We tried dropping into the con suite, but it was empty. So we sat around on the couches outside the main room and read--we did have books! At 8:00 PM, Eric came into the main room and announced that since the restaurant where John Crowley went to dinner was very slow in serving, the question-and-answer period would be moved to Sunday, and everything else would be a half-hour late. At 9:00 PM, Crowley arrived, very apologetic, and read an excerpt from L o v e a n d S l e e p, the unfinished sequel to A e g y p t.



R\_e\_a\_d\_e\_r\_c\_o\_n\_S\_m\_a\_l\_l\_P\_r\_e\_s\_s  
A\_w\_a\_r\_d\_s

Co-ordinators: Robert Colby, Eric Van

Judges: Thomas M. Disch, John Shirley, Kathryn Cramer,  
Paul Chadwick, Jerry Kaufman, Greg Ketter, Evelyn Leeper  
Saturday, 10:00 PM

In November 1989 I was asked to be one of the seven judges for the Readercon Small Press Awards. (The other six were Thomas M. Disch, John Shirley, Kathryn Cramer, Paul Chadwick, Jerry Kaufman, and Greg Ketter.) As a result, I found myself reading seven novels, three chapbooks, six original collections, five reprint collections, three original anthologies, one reprint anthology, sixteen non-fiction works, six miscellaneous works, and 66 volumes of 29 different magazines from the "small press"--113 items in all. (A full report on what I discovered will probably appear shortly in O\_t\_h\_e\_r\_R\_e\_a\_l\_m\_s.)

John Shirley and Jerry Kaufman were unable to attend Readercon 3, but the other five of us were all there to present the awards. Kathryn Cramer, apparently styling herself after Vanna White or whoever the current bimbo is, wore a bright green swimsuit. Her job in the ceremonies was to present the envelopes containing the winners' names to the actual presenters. Now maybe I'm just an old fuddy-duddy, but to me this sort of thing cheapens the awards. (I would note here that several of the men I was with said that they were not particularly thrilled with Cramer in a high-legged swimsuit, so it is not just me.)

And the winners were:

- Novel -- No Award

- Short Work -- A\_D\_o\_z\_e\_n\_T\_o\_u\_g\_h\_J\_o\_b\_s, Howard Waldrop (Mark V. Ziesing)

- Single-Author Collection -- R\_i\_c\_h\_a\_r\_d\_M\_a\_t\_h\_e\_s\_o\_n:  
C\_o\_l\_l\_e\_c\_t\_e\_d\_S\_t\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s,  
Richard Matheson (Scream/Press)

- Anthology -- W\_h\_a\_t\_D\_i\_d\_M\_i\_s\_s\_D\_a\_r\_r\_i\_n\_g\_t\_o\_n  
S\_e\_e?:\_A\_n\_A\_n\_t\_h\_o\_l\_o\_g\_y\_o\_f  
F\_e\_m\_i\_n\_i\_s\_t\_S\_u\_p\_e\_r\_n\_a\_t\_u\_r\_a\_l  
F\_i\_c\_t\_i\_o\_n, Jessica Amanda Salmonson, ed.  
(Feminist Press)

- Non-Fiction -- The Dark-Haired Girl, Philip K. Dick (Mark V. Ziesing)
- Reference/Bibliography -- No Award
- Reprint -- The Anubis Gates, Tim Powers (Mark V. Ziesing)
- Jacket Illustration -- J. K. Potter, The Anubis Gates (Mark V. Ziesing)
- Interior Illustration -- Mark Ferrari & Tom Sullivan, S Peters on's Field Guideto Creatures of the Dreamlands (Chaosium)

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- Value in Bookcraft -- Rich ard Mathes on:  
Collected Stories, Richard Matheson (Scream/Press)
- Magazines (Fiction) -- Interzone, David Pringle, ed. (Interzone)
- Magazines (Criticism) -- Science Fiction Eye, Stephen P. Brown & Daniel J. Steffan, eds. (Science Fiction Eye)
- Magazines (Design) -- Science Fiction Eye, Stephen P. Brown & Daniel J. Steffan, eds. (Science Fiction Eye)

As you may have noticed, Mark V. Ziesing got a lot of awards. (I think he had nine certificates by the end of the evening, some for him and some for the various authors and artists.) In general, I was pleased with the choices. The "No Award" categories deserve some additional comment. In the novel category, there was a three-way tie for first place, with one of the three being "No Award." Clearly, this sort of result really means that there is no clear award, though it does not mean, as is often the case, that nothing was worthy of recognition.

At 10:30 PM the infamous Kirk Poland Bad Prose Competition took

place. Kate and Pete wanted to stay for this, so we looked for something else to do. There was nothing else to do. Even the con suite was closed. To keep harping on bad prose is bad enough, but to make this the featured jewel of the convention, against which there is no opposition programming, seems totally contrary to the spirit of Readercon. (End of soapbox.)

At 12:30 AM or so, the Kirk Poland ended and given the late hour, people decided \_ n\_ o\_ t to stay for the film. Yes, Readercon was showing a film! In this case, they justified it by saying that their policy allowed showing documentaries written by their guests of honor; this year is was \_ W\_ o\_ r\_ l\_ d\_ o\_ f\_ T\_ o\_ m\_ o\_ r\_ r\_ o\_ w, a documentary about the 1939 World's

Fair. (Mark and I had already seen a sixty-minute version of it.) This "policy" sounds as if it was made up on the spot. While this may not mean that Readercon is on the slippery slope to media fandom, this gradual erosion (rock 'n' roll the first year, now films, next year maybe an art show) needs to be carefully watched. (This is semi-humorous, but only semi.)

We did not get lost driving to Pete's house this year, but we did cheat and use walkie-talkies.

Sunday morning we arrived about 10:30 AM and hung out in the Dealers' Room for a while. We also had a long debate in the con suite about the Kirk Poland Competition. The main argument people give in favor of it seems to be, "But everyone enjoys it so much!" Then we sat outside where we talked to various passersby. Laurie Mann stopped by and asked how I was enjoying Readercon. I said it was so depressing--no one had congratulated me on my Hugo nomination! She and I agreed that we probably should have brought the full list of nominees to be posted

on the bulletin board since it seemed that most people had not heard them yet. (Well, they had been on Usenet for a week and a half, so we just sort of assumed \_ e\_ v\_ e\_ r\_ y\_ o\_ n\_ e knew.)

— S\_ F\_ a\_ n\_ d\_ F\_ a\_ n\_ d\_ o\_ m  
T\_ h\_ e\_ D\_ o\_ g\_ T\_ h\_ a\_ t\_ W\_ a\_ g\_ s\_ t\_ h\_ e\_ T\_ a\_ l\_ e\_ s:  
Fred Lerner (moderator), Greg Cox, Janice M. Eisen,  
Scott E. Green, Evelyn Leeper

Sunday, 12:00 PM

This should have been subtitled "The Peripatetic Panel." The sign outside the assigned room redirected us to another room. It turned out that room was scheduled for a reading, so we were then sent to a third room. Here Eric said that we should start in the third room and after a half-hour move into the \_ f \_ i \_ r \_ s \_ t room, which would then be free, because the third room was needed for something else. At this point, we put our collective feet down and said we were not going to start in one room and then move--we wanted a room that we could keep for the entire time. After about five minutes, we got our original room and stayed there the whole hour.

We started by going around the room and introducing ourselves. After I had introduced myself, Laurie said, "Tell them what happened to you last week!" I felt a little strange saying that I had been nominated, but luckily Mark announced it for me.

Teresa Nielsen-Hayden described herself as having tested "skiffy-positive" and claimed this was a "textually transmitted disease."

Fred Lerner then appointed himself moderator, which was okay, except for his tendency to say things merely to be provocative without thinking if they could withstand even the smallest attack. He started by asking people to define fandom, and this consumed most of the hour. Scott Green claimed that fans are wannabe writers, and also insisted he was not a fan. When we discovered he actually bet on boxing matches, many of us then agreed that he was not a fan after all. After all, as someone said, fans are usually participants, not spectators. (Or as someone said, "I came, I talked, I fought.")

regarding the wannabe writers, someone observed that "fanzines are not prozines with training wheels" and that fans should not consider that their experience in fanzines improves their qualifications for prozines."

It was observed (by Fred?) that "fandom is an organism with an infinitely short attention span and an infinitely long memory." Lerner also defined fans as including all those who "publicly consort with known fans."

There was much comparison with other sorts of fandom (crossword puzzle fandom, railroad fandom, etc.). Fred said that he distinguished between "fandom" and "Fandom," the latter being strictly connected to

science fiction. Later he said that science fiction deals with everything, and I pointed out that by transitivity (or maybe it's associativity) that meant that "fandom" was the same as "Fandom."

I gave a variation of Damon Knight's definition of science fiction: "Fandom is what I point to when I say it." This is obviously more descriptive than proscriptive, but few people argued with it.

People tried approaching this from the point of view of "fannish sensibilities." Whereas most people in social situations make small talk, in fandom people talk about "facts." This is often carried to the extreme that you can have a very long and detailed conversation with someone and never know their name, their occupation, or anything else about them except their opinion on what color the ancient Greeks painted their houses. Someone said that a fannish gathering consisted of people reciting facts to each other. The ultimate fannish activity ever observed was Terry Carr and Ted White sitting in a bar and reciting addresses (not names!) of fans to each other and reminiscing about them.

Fans also collect things--everything, and obsessively.

No true conclusions were reached, though "Smoffing 101" and "Trufans Versus Fans: An Advanced Panel" were suggested for future conventions.

After the panel, most of us continued talking by the couches outside the room for another hour about fans and fandom. Teresa Nielsen-Hayden said that when she first saw my name listed as a Hugo nominee for fan writer, she thought, "But she only writes things electronically." Then she said she thought about it and decided that it was okay after all. And certainly I would think it should be. But is it?

When I got home I looked up the qualifications for eligibility. The definition for a fan writer for the Hugos this year is: "Any person whose writing appeared in semiprozines or fanzines during 1989." It would appear that people might claim that electronic fanac (fannish activity) would not be enough to qualify me. However, since I did appear in L a n' s L a n t e r n, I definitely am eligible, although what I was nominated for was probably not what appeared in L a n' s L a n t e r n. Of course, my appearances in the M T V O I D would also make me eligible. Since that particular fanzine is circulated pretty much just within AT&T, it is unlikely anyone used it as a basis, but even without appearances in "external" fanzines, I could claim eligibility. And this does not even involve deciding whether SF-LOVERS DIGEST is a fanzine!

As I said (at great and boring length in my Boskone con report), the whole issue of electronic fandom is a real can of worms that the World Science Fiction Convention will have to deal with eventually. For

now, they can avoid the issue somewhat by giving SF-LOVERS DIGEST a "special" Hugo, but maybe this is just postponing the inevitable.

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Her comments got me to thinking, though. She apparently gets my convention reports (Hi, Teresa!) and gets them electronically, but I do not have her on my mailing list. So people must be forwarding them around. That is okay, but I am curious who \_ i \_ s getting and reading them. So if you got this from someone other than me, please drop an e-note to me at ecl@mtgzy.att.com and let me know. Thanks!

After the overflow discussion wound down, I talked to someone about Arisia. Apparently it was successful, although the film program was somewhat spotty, and the book presence was minimal.

I dropped by the Dealers' Room and talked to a few people there. Jerry Boyajian was sitting behind Mark Ziesing's table and said he had been pressed into service for the "Comics Discussion Group." I talked to Greg Ketter about the Small Press Awards and some of the problems. Greg feels that seven judges is too many just because of the logistics. It is a large financial drain on small presses to send out seven complimentary copies of a book that may have had a press run of only a few hundred, yet unless they send them out they have little chance of winning. Also, with reference books (and others) priced at \$50 and above, it is a problem to ask a publisher to send out several hundred dollars' worth of books. Charnel House did not send out any copies of their \$150 \_ T \_ h \_ e \_ S \_ t \_ r \_ e \_ s \_ s \_ o \_ f \_ H \_ e \_ r \_ R \_ e \_ g \_ a \_ r \_ d and also did not get a lot of votes-

--judges tend not to vote on what they do not see. I commented that having fewer judges might make the awards too susceptible to favoritism and cliquism. Greg said that one suggestion made by the committee was to ask for one copy of each eligible book and have the judges route them. Even with Readercon picking up the shipping tab, this is just not workable. I do not have time to re-package books--more to the point, I do not have time to drive to someplace to ship them when I have finished repackaging them. And when the final ballot rolls around, I would want to be able to go back and compare the finalists again. (This was especially valuable for the jacket illustration category, where I laid all seven books out and could rank-order them fairly quickly. Without the books in front of me, forget it!) If all the judges were in the same geographical area, \_ m \_ a \_ y \_ b \_ e it could be done by having all the books

available at one place and people could examine them there (the NESFA clubhouse or the back room at the Science Fiction Shop, for example), but even this sounds like a disaster in the making. I am sure the Readercon committee would appreciate any ideas you have along these lines.

(to be concluded)