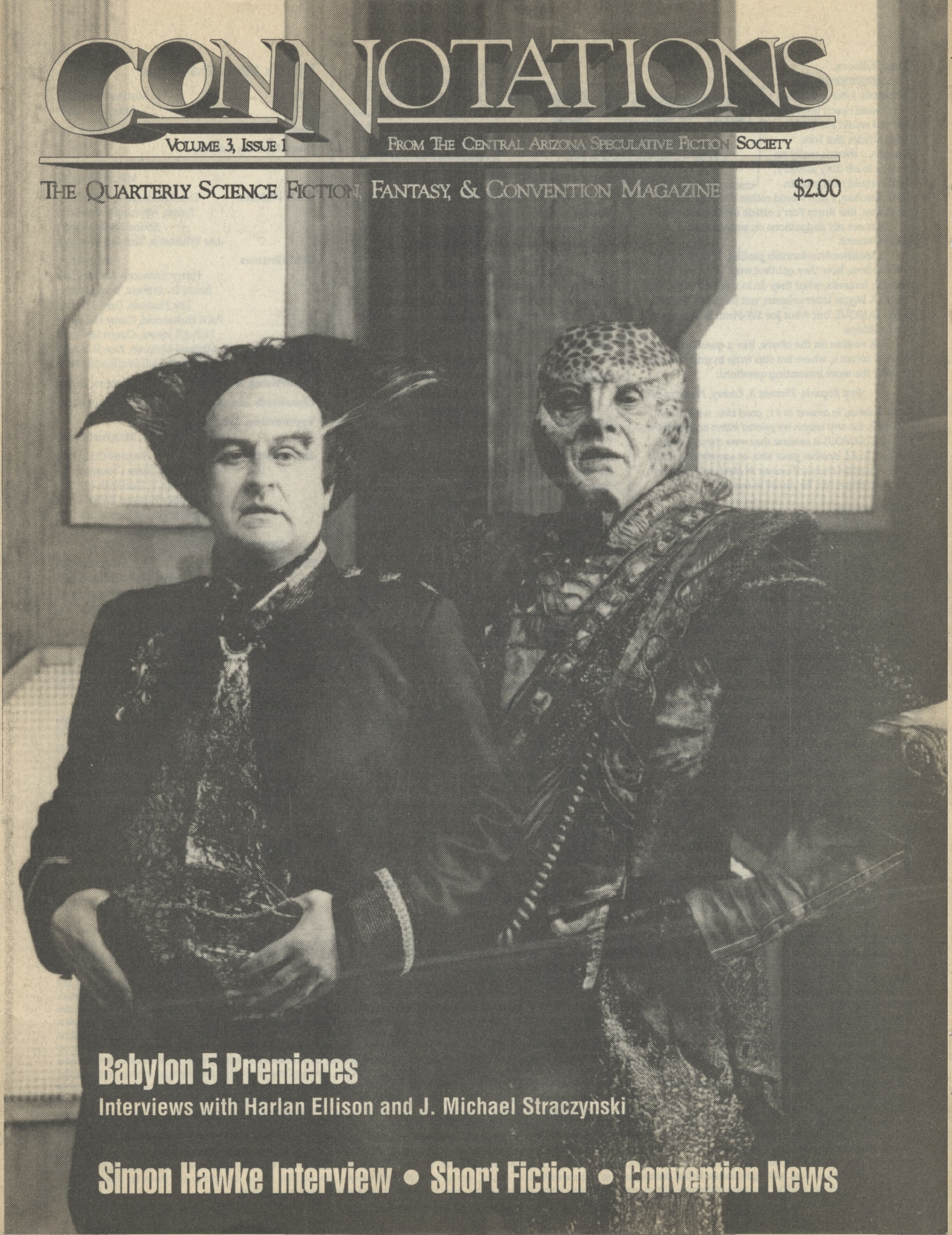
CONNOTATIONS

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

FROM THE CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY

THE QUARTERLY SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY, & CONVENTION MAGAZINE

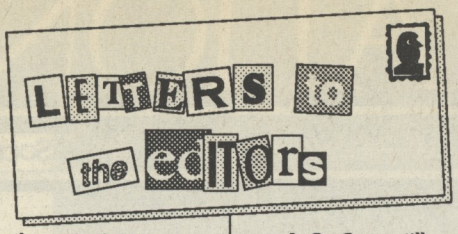
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Babylon 5 Premieres

Interviews with Harlan Ellison and J. Michael Straczynski

Simon Hawke Interview • Short Fiction • Convention News



Dear Editors,
Congratulations to *ConNotations*. I like it as it is, don't need much improvement. I would not bother with articles like Tom Tuerff's... there is really no reason to air dirty laundry, and I would not go off in that direction. I also would rather not print pap nonsense, like Bruce Farr's article on volunteering.

Here are my suggestions on some minor improvement:

1) Southwestern fannish profiles. Who is big in SW fandom, how they got that way, what are their fannish interests, what they do in mundane life, etc.

2) A bigger letter column, not just from the BIG AND FAMOUS, but what Joe SW-Phan has to say about things.

3) A version on the above, like a question/answer column, where fen can write in and you can answer the more interesting questions.

Best Regards, Thomas A. Endrey, Flushing, NY

Well, Thomas, in answer to #1, good idea, we'll get on it. To #2, the only reason we printed letters only from the BIG AND FAMOUS is because they were the only letters we got. To #3, another great idea, so somebody write us with a question and we'll answer it! (And we'll ask questions sometimes too, for you all to answer.)

ConNotations:
Your publication is professional yet fun. Easy to read, easy to look up stuff later and the news is accurate and current. We keep all our issues about a year because folks are always asking us for names of active players, addresses of clubs, the exact dates for cons in their area, books to read, movies to see, games to play. So we quote you guys often.

We've met lots of good people through the club listings, swapped a few collectibles and stories, too.

I like your discussional essays on Con problems, all too similar to the personnel and management problems Joe and I write about in our trade journal articles. If we can get our readers to think, perhaps we can get them to start working together, right?

How to make it even better would depend on where you want to go with *ConNotations*. To be the international locus of F&SF fan convention publications, work on worldwide articles n reviews n circulation would make sense. If the key word is conventions, how about detailed articles from a fan point of view on: *General Types of Cons* (what to expect, what to do/not do at each); *Complete Explanation of the Majority of Events Commonly Offered; Tips on the Best Way to Enjoy Each of the Con Events; How to Take a More Active Role in a Con Event* (what it costs, what is expected of you, what fun it is); *How to Contribute Your Share Without Fear (of missing anything)* (reprint one of your terrific Volunteering articles); *On Being Popular at Cons* (list those talents and jobs always in demand); *Cons For Specific Interests and Ages; Short surveys on specific con ideas, events, rules, etc....*

Is *ConGames* still around? If not, would con putter-onners be interested in the above articles from their own unique stand point? And do you want it said in a general audience publication?

If you ever run out of Pro interviews (which are great!) or find more pages, you could do an in-depth profile of a dedicated or otherwise amazing fan or con staffer. Inspire the rest of us with the amount of work/jobs/interests they can juggle, just because they are fans and want to share their enthusiasm.

Tom Tuerff is right: Phoenix (you guys) shine in the publications department.

Kathryn Kane, Oracle, AZ

P.S. How about a column for SF&F collectors — collectibles exchange, what's hot, what's not, why not, etc.?

Hey Kathryn, do you know collectibles? Someone else a few ishes back also requested an article. All we need is someone who knows it to send it to us! (Yes, ConGames is deceased.) Thank you for fine suggestions — hopefully we'll receive some submissions along those lines and we'll be writing them ourselves — with luck you'll be seeing them enacted in future issues!

Dear Ms. Grady,
Yes, your front-cover stuff in *ConNotations* does get read — you've asked for submissions of artwork, so here's some that may be of interest to you.

And I hope that Andre Norton's recent book, *Mark of the Cat*, will soon be reviewed in *ConNotations*; it's based upon my Cat People characters and is one of her very best books. It's the only book she ever did with an Arizona collaborator (me).

Cheers and purrs, Karen Kuykendall, Casa Grande, AZ

Hello, peoples,
Here's some pix for your 'zine, *ConNotations*. I think your magazine is quite entertaining and informative. I especially like the article "Where Do We Go From Here," last issue. Hopefully people will keep it in mind whenever they attend a con in the future. I recently attended my first convention, and want to be at more. I'll be doing my part to keep cons alive in Arizona!

Cynthia "Elfkin" Carman, Mesa, AZ

P.S. Keep up the good work!

Who's Who This Issue

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Thanks to Last Issue's Mailing Squad Kim Farr, Kim & Dave Hiatt, Scott Grady, Jeanne Hilary-Burroughs, Don Birmingham, Eileen Phillips, Lee Whiteside, Margaret Grady, Matthew Frederick

Much Appreciated Advertisers
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Discount Book, Ltd. (33)
HexaCon 3 (17)
LepreCon, Inc. (14)
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New Orleans Science Fiction & Fantasy Faire (44)
Waterloo Adventure Games (23)

Alpacan Favorite Beverage Flavor Llaman Lime

About ConNotations... *ConNotations* is the fan-published magazine of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society (CASFS), an IRS-recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Quarterly publication dates are the first of February, May, August, and November each year. Circulation is to over 10,000 readers for this issue, mainly to members of CASFS and attendees of recent Arizona sf/f conventions. This magazine is sent free of charge to anyone who has attended a CASFS- or LepreCon-sponsored science fiction convention in the last two years and to all CASFS Members. You may also subscribe to *ConNotations* — four quarterly issues are just $5 within the United States (Bulk Mail); $9 in Canada and Mexico (First Class Mail); $10 in all other countries (as Surface Mail); or $14 in Europe (as Air Mail). Other countries please inquire for Air Mail. Your subscription is extended one issue each time you submit an article, story, or artwork for publication. ¶ Articles and artwork in this publication are copyright © of their respective authors and artists unless otherwise noted. If no author or artist is given credit, the article or art is copyright © of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society. Artwork in *ConNotations* is used by permission of the artists and may not be used except with their express consent. Publication date of this issue is February 8, 1993; mailing date is February 15, 1993. **Display Advertising** *ConNotations* reaches over 10,000 science fiction, fantasy, and horror fans throughout the Southwest and nationwide. Demographics show that these fans purchase an extraordinarily large number of books, comics, and games, and see a large number of movies. Our display advertising rate card along with full demographics are available on request. Please contact Margaret Grady or Matthew Frederick at (602) 220-9785. **What is CASFS?** What really is behind putting on a convention? What are the funds raised by a convention used for? Why not attend a meeting and find out? ¶ We're the sponsor of *ConNotations*, SmerfCons, HexaCons, TusCons, CopperCons, and other conventions. We are a charitable, IRS-recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization that exists to further science fiction, fantasy and science fields in Arizona. We'd like to see you involved, too! A quick snuck-in note here: apparently some people do read this inside-cover stuff! ¶ CASFS currently meets at The Spaghetti Company, 1418 N. Central Avenue in Phoenix, AZ. The meetings of CASFS begin at 8:00pm (FST) and are held on the last Friday of each month in January through September and the second Friday in October, November, and December. Everyone is invited to attend two meetings prior to becoming a member. Membership rates are $12 per year (plus an initial $3 application fee), or slightly more if paid quarterly or semi-annually. Rates are prorated for the amount of the year remaining. For more information, call Bruce Farr at (602) 274-3014. BYOLJello. ¶ **Submissions** Writers and artists are encouraged to submit work for publication. While we are unable to pay you for your efforts, your work will be exposed to over 10,000 science fiction and fantasy fans in the Southwest and across the country. You will retain the copyright to your work for future publication. To submit your work, send it to *ConNotations*, Attn: Margaret Grady, 2040 East Cypress, Phoenix, Arizona 85006. **Letters to the Editors/Point • Counterpoint** We welcome your feedback about *ConNotations* and anything relating to science fiction, fantasy, horror, and conventions. If desired, we can withhold your name — just ask. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and size. If you have an opinion, whether you agree or disagree with us, please send your letters to *ConNotations*, Attn: Editors, 2040 East Cypress, Phoenix, AZ 85006.

Spring 1993

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NOTE:
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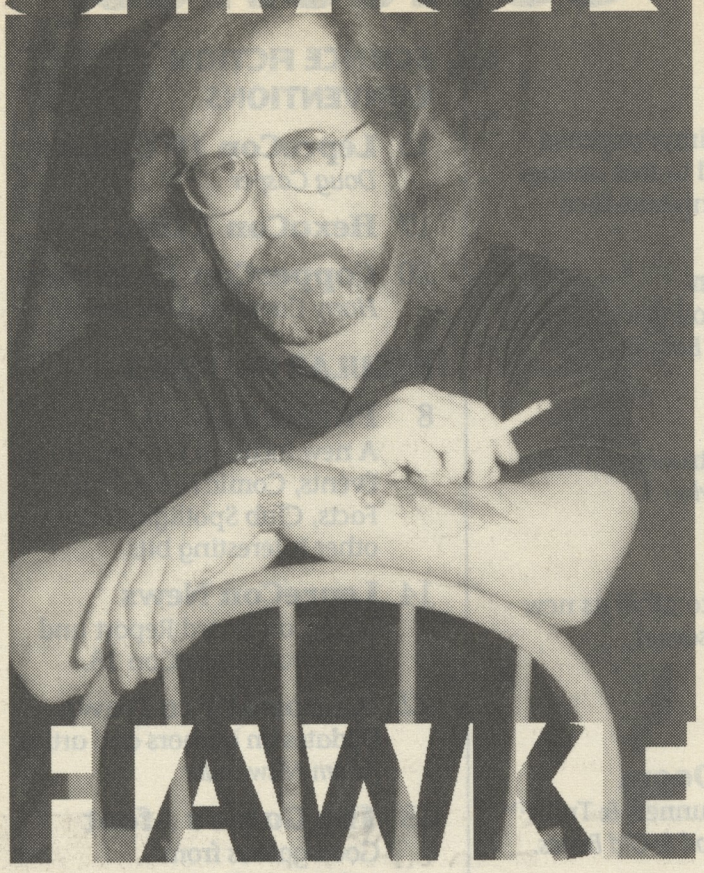
This May Be Your Last Issue!

In order to cut costs, ConNotations has instituted a new policy. Everyone who has attended an Arizona science fiction convention sponsored by CASFS, Inc. or LepreCon, Inc. **in the last two years** will receive ConNotations free-of-charge. If you have not attended, we request that you send $5 for the next four issues. Anyone can subscribe at this rate, and you're welcome to donate more to help cover our expenses — CASFS, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization — your donation is probably tax-deductible (contact your accountant for verification). **IF THERE IS A "1" OR A "*" FOLLOWING YOUR NAME ON YOUR MAILING LABEL, THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE.** Subscribe or resubscribe today. Fill out the form (or a copy of the form) on page 19 and send it along with your payment today — it's such a bargain!



Interviewed by Adam Niswander

SIMON HAWKE



Harlan declared that only a schmuck would wear a helmet and Simon retorted that only a fool wouldn't wear one, which engendered an exchange of insults so that Simon was sure he was about to be thrown out.

Photo by L.J. Boughman

I HAD SPOKEN BY PHONE with Simon Hawke on several occasions, always relative to my Pro News column for *ConNotations,* but we had never really met (except for a brief encounter at World Fantasy Convention in Tucson). Consequently, we did not recognize each other when I ran into him in the lounge at the Camelview Resort at CopperCon Twelve. Humorously enough, we had already been talking pleasantly for several minutes when I read his name tag, laughed and introduced myself.

During those previous phone contacts, I had explained that I did pro interviews for *ConNotations* and asked for one with him. Surprisingly, I encountered reluctance. Surprisingly, I say, because most authors are only too pleased to get their names and pictures out before their reading public. This is a business involving sales, after all. But Simon Hawke is anything but typical. And that was one of the first things I learned about him. He is not a publicity seeker. In fact, he would probably prefer to remain anonymous out in public. He doesn't do interviews, preferring to show up quietly at cons and speak informally with fans.

This, then, is the first official interview with Simon in almost ten years. Why did he change his mind? I'd like to claim it was my charm and persuasive ability, but it wasn't.

Unfortunately, that same anonymity Simon valued, making it possible for him to just show up and have fun, also made it possible recently for an impersonator, a scammer, a fraud, to pass himself off as Simon Hawke and threaten the author's reputation with publishers and fans. That is, of course, intolerable.

So Simon's new book will have his picture in the back and I got my interview and maybe that kind of thing won't happen again.

Now, having set the stage, let me introduce you to an interesting and talented man.

A motorcycle rider, creative writing teacher, former armed guard, bartender, rock musician, FM disc jockey and broadcasting engineer — among a host of other fascinating occupations — Simon only recently moved to Arizona. He lives in the desert southwest of Tucson in a house he designed himself with help from a friend, science writer Robert Powers. The slab was poured in June '91 and he moved in the end of August '91. He is something of a loner and "doesn't get out much." He likes attending small conventions where he can talk to fans without the hustle and bustle. He does a little entertaining at home — small parties. What he does primarily, however, is write books — lots of books. In fifteen years he has produced 50 novels. He is a self-described "workaholic." He is single/with cat.

He was born Nikolai Valentinovitch Yermakov and grew up during the McCarthy era, when having a foreign-sounding name kept him face down in the schoolyard a lot. He said it instilled in him a desire to have an American-sounding name.

His first short fiction, the novel *Journey from Flesh,* and seven other books were published under Yermakov. His sole models back then were Simon Templar (The Saint) and Errol Flynn, especially in the movie "The Sea Hawk." Take Simon, add an "E" to Hawk, and you have Simon Hawke. Eventually, he made it legal.

He was a late-comer to science fiction. He read *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert Heinlein and decided he liked the field. After running through all the Heinlein he could find, he discovered the work of Harlan Ellison and he was hooked.

His start in SF came shortly before he left his native New York and moved to LA. He arrived in Los Angeles at about the same time his first professional short story was published in *Galaxy.* He had written a second story, intending to submit that to *Galaxy* as

well, but friends suggested he contact Harlan Ellison who was then working on an anthology to be titled *Last Dangerous Visions*. Simon was reluctant to call, though Harlan was at that time listed in the LA phone book. Simon respects privacy and Ellison had impressed him as a man who liked his privacy. He put off calling.

Soon after, he was at the Change Of Hobbit Bookstore in LA and ran into author Arthur Byron Cover, who was a friend of Ellison's. Simon asked what Harlan was doing and Cover, taking him literally, answered that Ellison was in Paris working on a movie deal. Since his friends were still urging him to call, Simon decided to do it then, get it out of the way. He phoned, expecting to leave a message on a machine that would be immediately forgotten. Having made the call would placate his friends and he could get on with his writing.

His call was answered by a secretary, a real person, who carefully took his name and the reason for the call. One week later, the phone rang very early in the morning and the caller said he was Harlan Ellison. Simon thought it was a friend playing a practical joke so he said, "How the hell are you, asshole?"

After a brief silence, the voice replied, "Pretty well, how about you, shithead?"

Simon then realized it really was Harlan Ellison. He hastily explained that he thought the call had been a joke, etc., and Harlan took it pretty well. Ellison even admitted he had done bonehead things like that himself. He then went on to explain that he already had all he needed for *Last Dangerous Visions*, that it was closed, that he hoped Simon liked living in LA. They chatted briefly and seemed to hit it off and Harlan suddenly said, "I'm not promising anything, but is it a good story?"

Simon replied that if it weren't, he wouldn't be wasting Ellison's time.

Apparently, Harlan liked that. He asked, "How long is it?" Simon replied that it was 10,000 words.

Ellison then said, "Well, I'll look at it. Maybe I can find some room. Can you drop it by?"

Simon asked when it would be convenient. Harlan said, "How about now?

Simon agreed, took the directions and hung up. All he had to wear — his belongings were still enroute from the east coast — were motorcycle leathers.

As a result, he arrived at the home of Harlan Ellison on his motorcycle, dressed in full leathers and looking like a wild-eyed Jim Morrison.

When the secretary answered the door, she blanched, but told him he was expected. She said, "Come in. He's in the kitchen."

As Simon describes it, entering the house was like an assault. He said it must be seen to be believed. The first impression was visual. Gorgeous. A cornucopia of books, art, sculpture — only someone like Ellison could put it together.

The second impression was auditory. From the kitchen came the sounds of screaming. He heard a string of verbal invective that would have blistered the hide of an 18th Century naval officer. It was Harlan on the phone in an acrimonious conversation with someone regarding the leasing of office equipment or something... as opposed to about writing.

Still clutching his motorcycle helmet as he entered the kitchen, Simon found Ellison in a blue terrycloth robe, across the back of which was embroidered — in a large red flourish "DON'T BUG ME!" Without interrupting the flow of invective, Harlan indicated the kitchen table.

When the call was done, still enraged, Ellison slammed down the phone, turned and focused his energy on Simon's helmet, which now resided in the middle of the table.

Harlan declared that only a schmuck would wear a helmet and Simon retorted that only a fool wouldn't wear one, which engendered an exchange of insults so that Simon was sure he was about to be thrown out. At that point, Harlan turned to his secretary and said, "I think this one will pass muster."

Pouring both of them a glass of Perrier, Ellison sat down and asked to see the story. Simon passed it over.

Ellison read the first line, commented "Good opening line," and tossed the story over his shoulder onto the floor. Without missing a beat he then asked, "Do you play pool?"

They played pool. Simon was so bad that Ellison couldn't sink a single ball.

Continued on page 35

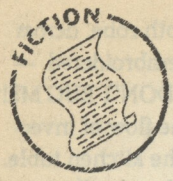
HAWKE BIBLIO

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Last Communion (as Nicholas Yermakov, Signet, 1981)
Journey from Flesh (as Nicholas Yermakov, Berkley, 1981)

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Friday the 13th (Signet, 1987, based on the screenplay by Victor Miller)
Friday the 13th: Part VI (Signet, 1986, based on the screenplay by Tom McLoughlin)
Battlestar Galactica: War of the Gods (as Nicholas Yermakov, Ace, 1982, based on the screenplay by Glen Larson)
Battlestar Galactica: The Living Legend (as Nicholas Yermakov, Ace, 1982, based on the screenplay by Glen Larson)



UNDER KHAZAN NAKED DOOM

An Excerpt from *Mage's Blood & Old Bones*

By Ken St. Andre

Fair play is not part of either Goblin or Orcish manners and customs, which is why I cheated on them first.

THE TRIAL DIDN'T GO MY WAY. Ersatz and his City Guard minions kept me bound and gagged while my fate was decided.

As a minor thief, my punishment should have been an assignment to the Arena of Khazan for 10 fights, but the Arena Master testified that the arena was oversupplied with fighters at present, and he didn't want me. My pal, Ersatz, probably paid him off to say that. I might survive the arena and win my freedom, in which case Ersatz knew his life wouldn't be worth a tarnished copper piece. The other choice for condemned prisoners had the great title of Royal Khazan Gauntlet of Criminal Justice and Retribution — a fancy way of saying the pits beneath the city where the real monsters roamed. Legend says that Lerotra'hh the Death Goddess asked her pet wizard, Khara Khang, to create some sort of testing ground for her elite guard, and that he modified and stocked the natural caverns beneath the city to accommodate her wish. She may actually use it for that, or as a vacation spot to remind her of the caverns of her misspent childhood, but for centuries the city courts have been using it for a dumping ground for nonpolitical prisoners, very few of which have ever been seen again.

After the trial a couple of gob-uruk grabbed crossbows and hustled me down endless flights of steps below the courthouse. We must have descended 500 feet below ground level. As they hauled me downstairs into darkness, I cursed Ersatz and the city of Khazan with every foul word and evil wish I could think of. My guards just laughed brutally. No doubt they had heard such sentiments before. There wasn't much light, but they saw better in the dark than in daylight.

When things began to brighten again, it was because the stonework had been replaced with natural rock, the walls of which were covered with a pale phosphorescent moss called Dungeon Light. I'd seen it before. It grows on stone wherever the air is cool and dank and there is no sunlight.

It glows faintly, about as much as a new moon. Once your eyes get used to it, it's almost as good as daylight, though one has to be real close to things to see any details. Some deep-cavern creatures actually eat the stuff.

The stairway had turned into a fairly broad cavern which led downward at a slight angle. Reaching a level spot, my two guards pulled me up short and began to assemble their crossbows. I noticed a lot of broken bones on the floor littering the tunnel ahead of me. This was beginning to look more like an execution than a chance to explore the pits.

One guard slashed my bonds and the blood began to creep back into my numbed hands. My shoulders slumped forward as the tension was released, and I gasped in relief.

"Are you just going to shoot me down?" I asked. "I thought prisoners got at least a chance to live down here in the Gauntlet."

"Yer not a prisoner, now," laughed the hideous half-goblin guard who'd released me. "Yer food fer whut lives down here. Ya kin make it easy on yerself by not strugglin' an' Bloodclaw an' I will put a bolt neatly in yer heart. Or ya kin make it fun fer us by runnin' fer yonder turnin'. If ya makes it alive, we won't follow."

"Don't I even get a weapon?" I asked. "I'd fight you for my life, either one at a time or both together."

They guffawed at the thought of giving me a weapon. Fair play is not part of either Goblin or Orcish manners and customs, which is why I cheated on them first.

"All yer gets is the rag around yer hips an' a three second headstart," laughed the one called Bloodclaw. His crossbow was already cocked and loaded, and his mate was now ratcheting back his own weapon. "Some folks don't even get that much, but 'cuz yer half-Orcish yerself, and we kinda likes ya, we're gonna give ya a chance." They both laughed harshly and the cavern filled with echoes like the barking of jackals.

"Shit!," I said, trying to sound crestfallen, playing for time, desperately trying to think of something to lessen the odds. These two guys were smaller than me, but stronger and meaner, and they had weapons and armor. I'd never be able to overpower them both. But I did have a weapon they might not have known about — my curse! I shrugged my aching shoulders back and forth and tried to shake life back into my numbed fingertips, all the while edging closer to Bloodclaw.

Casually he aimed his loaded crossbow at me as I neared him. If his finger twitched too soon that iron bolt would rip a bloody tunnel right through me.

"I'll run for it," I told them, "and hope you two are lousy shots, no offense

From Mage's Blood & Old Bones, Edited by Elizabeth Danforth & Michael A. Stackpole.
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intended," I told them. A plan was beginning to form in my mind. I was now within arm's reach of Bloodclaw.

"Ya ready yet, Dirk?" Bloodclaw asked.

"Almost," answered the other guard. "Let me jus' pick a straight quarrel, an' he kin take off. Har! Har! Har!"

"Yeah, take off fer hell!" snickered Bloodclaw, momentarily losing his concentration. I saw my chance.

Ducking left, I kicked out with my right foot, hitting him in the arms and knocking his crossbow up toward the ceiling. The bolt discharged, missing me, and clanging off a stalactite.

As I got my foot back down on the ground, I sprang in close, and grappled with the guard, shoving my face at his, while trying to pinion his arms. The gob-uruk probably thought I wanted to bite him, though his own muzzle was more made for that than mine — due to my heritage, my mouth is almost human in size and appearance — but nothing was farther from my mind. I managed to wrestle him around so that his body shielded me from his partner for a few seconds, and as we stood there with arms straining, each trying to trip and throw the other, I got my face close enough to pucker up and give him a great big sloppy kiss.

"GARRUNNNKKAAA!" he croaked, and let go of me in surprise, as he found himself instantly transformed into a giant frog. In his shock he released me, and I managed to throw him into his partner, knocking both of them down. That gave me a chance to make a clean break for it, and I dashed like a sprinter down the cavern, through the bony rubble on the floor, and towards the corner. As I got close to it, I threw a glance back over my shoulder. Bloodclaw was hopping mad, but Dirk was carefully aiming his crossbow at me, and at that moment squeezed the trigger.

I threw myself flat, or tried to. A line of fire ripped across my muscular shoulders and something slapped me on the back of the head with numbing force. I hit the stone hard while stars danced before my eyes and the inside of my skull rang like a gong, but I didn't lose consciousness, and I kept going, scrabbling on all fours till I slithered around a corner. I could feel myself bleeding from back and head, but I scrambled to my feet and staggered off down the tunnel, praying that they wouldn't come after me. I didn't stop running until the passageway suddenly split into three distinct tunnels in the rock wall before me.

Then, hearing no pursuit, I stopped to check my wounds. It's impossible to see the back of one's head, and my hair was matted with blood, but there was no arrow sticking out of me anywhere, and I concluded that I had just been grazed and would be all right. Probably the thick mat of my hair and natural hardness of my skull had helped, too.

I slumped down on the floor to catch my breath and make a plan. I knew I couldn't get out the way I came in — too many guards back there, and I couldn't stay in one spot. If the smell of blood didn't bring every predator in the caverns, then I'd starve from lack of food. One of the passageways before me had to go somewhere. I chose the one on the left, gathered my strength, and staggered off down it.

The tunnel got dark and narrow, then suddenly widened out into an oval chamber. It was a dead end, but not an empty room. Glaring light radiated from two steel sword blades jammed into the far wall. Although I have no talent for magic myself, I sensed sorcery all around me. Glowing swords embedded in cavern walls — one with a hilt of ivory, the other with an ebony grip, rather plain, double-edged short swords — this is not customary cavern decor, even in Khazan. As I came closer I could see that some runes had been cut into the rock above each weapon. Although I knew it had to be some sort of wizardly trap, I needed one of those swords. I examined the writing. I can read the Common Speech and a few words in Elvish and Dwarvish that I've picked up in various dungeons. Dwarf runes are commonly used for messages in stone because they are all straight lines, and thus easier to cut.

Near the ivory-hilted blade was the Dwarvish rune for Fool; near the black-hilted one I could see the rune for Infant.

Neither was particularly reassuring. Both words had secondary meanings, several of them, and I knew Dwarvish well enough to guess a few of them. For example, I knew that "fool" and "hero" were the same words in Dwarvish, but the intonation rises slightly when the meaning is "fool" and drops slightly for "hero." Another meaning for "infant" in Dwarvish is "helpless," as in "the helpless one." I decided that I'd rather be a fool than helpless, so I grabbed the white blade, braced my feet against the stone wall and tried to pull it out. I strained mightily until I was red in the face and gasping for air. I pulled so hard my hands turned red and my elbows hurt. I tried to wiggle it loose. Absolutely nothing happened except that I began to feel nauseous from all that effort and staggered off to catch my breath. And then it hit me, a magical charge that made every hair stand on end. My body felt like it was on fire inside my bones. A searing wave of agony swept over me, bringing a curtain of fire down on my consciousness and I blacked out.

I don't know how long I slept, but when I awoke, I no longer hurt at all. My arrow wound had vanished and I felt better than I ever remembered feeling before. It wasn't anything I could put a name to. I just felt better — stronger, smarter, more alert.



The two swords beckoned to me from across the room.

Obviously the fool's sword had healed me. What would the infant's sword do? Only one way to find out, pull it, but something stopped me — perhaps my new intelligence. The first sword stayed in the stone, and it

Continued on page 36



An Interview with Harlan Ellison

The Ellisonian Navigation

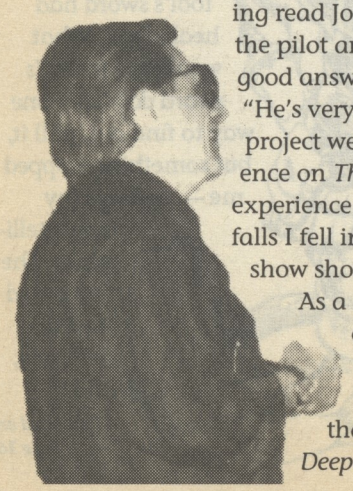
Interview and Photograph by Shane Shellenbarger

"THIS WILL BE A MANIFESTO about what we want the movie and the series to do. It's like the early stages of *Citizen Kane* where Orson Welles has the 'Declaration of Principles.' It will be, we hope, the kind of document that will be handed around, reprinted, and used by a lot of different shows to help make all science fiction on television more intelligent and less cliché ridden."

If J. Michael Straczynski's upcoming television show, *Babylon 5,* were a ship, then the chief navigator would be Harlan Ellison and the ship's charts would be his manifesto. Ellison says that the manifesto will be similar to the piece he wrote for Reginald Bretnor's 1979 edition of *Modern Science Fiction: Its Meaning and its Future* about writing fantasy for television, only more so. "It will be an updating and expansion of that in terms of the kinds of things you want writers who are going to be wanting to write a series to know," says Ellison. "It's difficult for people who are outside the genre to understand the rigors of writing fantasy and science fiction for television and it's even more difficult for those inside to understand the rigors of writing for television. What this will be is a very long essay with specifics about the kinds of things you should not write for science fiction or fantasy on television. It's going to talk about the logic of setting up situations: they have to be internally logical. Just because it's fantasy or science fiction does not mean you can get away with illogic and craziness. It's about the ethics of the program, trying to foster an interest in good, solid science instead of having explosions in space like *Star Wars.* There are a number of aspects to it and we're going to cover them all. It will probably go through two or three different versions because once I get done I'll say to Joe, 'What's missing and where do you need me to expand?' Joe will tell me and I'll do that, then we'll go through it again, and again, and again. Once we've done half-a-dozen drafts it should be ready for when the series goes."

It's like the early stages of *Citizen Kane* where Orson Welles has the 'Declaration of Principles.'

Ellison knows the shape of his manifesto, but still lacks the substance that will make *Babylon 5* unique. "Apart from having read Joe's pilot script, 'The Gathering,' I have not yet seen the pilot and Joe doesn't want me to see it until they get a good answer print with music and the works," Ellison says. "He's very cautious and before he ever got involved with this project we sat down and talked about my horrific experience on *The Starlost,* which in many ways parallels Joe's experience on *Babylon 5,* I was able to tell Joe about the pitfalls I fell into and he has managed to sidestep them. This show should go very, very well, indeed."



As a creator who has had his work stolen more than once by Hollywood producers, Ellison has an opinion about a show positioned against Straczynski's *Babylon 5.* "The thing that I find really offensive is that Paramount knew about *Babylon 5* long before *Deep Space Nine,*" Ellison says. "They were warned, 'Why put together a series that's exactly like something else that's going to be on the air when you haven't got anything on paper yet, you can go any direction you want.' You can't prove this, but there are a lot of us who feel that because they (Paramount) didn't have any original ideas they just kind of revamped Joe's idea in their own way and then months later said, 'Oh well, we're going to have to reject *Babylon 5* because we have a show very much like it of our own.' It's kind of a sad thing. In fact, they asked me to write for *Deep Space Nine.* We talked about me doing a show or two for them, even a story arc, but once Joe hired me to do the manifesto I just felt it would not be ethically correct."

Estimates concerning the series start date vary, but Ellison has his own methods and he demonstrated them. "All I know is that a number of the actors who were in the movie with term deals that put them in the series had asked for waivers to go and do shows during October, November, and December," Ellison says. "They were all granted, but when one of them asked for a waiver in January that one was refused. That indicates that they may want to be back at work by January and they don't want somebody off someplace else doing another show. Having worked in the industry, about the only time they deny waivers is when it's going to conflict with their own schedule."

With the premiere quickly approaching, science fiction fans will soon know the course that has been charted for *Babylon 5.*

[Babylon 5 will premiere February 22.]

An Interview with J. Michael Straczynski

The Making of a Legend

Conversing with J. (Joe) Michael Straczynski about the creation of Babylon 5, ethical behavior, and the passion of people.

"*Babylon 5* will be a hell of a challenge. If I can pull off what I have in my head, and there is some really weird stuff coming down the road on the show, we should make some history," creator, co-executive producer, and driving force J. Michael Straczynski, currently also a producer for *Murder, She Wrote,* past writer/story editor for *The Real Ghostbusters, Captain Power, The New Twilight Zone, Jake and the Fatman,* and past host of the speculative fiction radio show, *Mike Hodels' Hour 25.*

Babylon 5 is the story of a self-contained world. The space station is on the scale of twenty kilometers long by three kilometers across. It was built by five space-faring races as an attempt at peacekeeping after a war that nearly destroyed humanity. Babylon 1, 2, and 3 were destroyed before they were completed. Babylon 4 disappeared without a trace within a day after becoming operational. Babylon 5 may be the last hope of preventing war on a stellar scale.

Only one man knows what happened to the four space stations and he's not talking... yet. "The theory on the show is that if you ask a question, you answer that question," Straczynski states. "Issues raised in the course of a season will be dealt with in that season. Issues raised in an hour will be dealt with in that hour. You can't string along an audience forever. I loved *Twin Peaks,* but they never resolved anything. We're going to resolve things."

While he may be the man-in-the-know, Straczynski will not be all-things-to-all-people. "Besides writing, I am also co-executive producer on the show and that entails a lot of responsibility," he explains. "So, I'll write a number of the first season shows, but not all of them, not by half. If I do well, *maybe* I can write five the first season. The rest will come either from a core group of hand-picked writers or from a certain number of science fiction writers who will work for our show, who *won't* work for television otherwise. The irony is, you go through all the grief to sell those shows you want to write for and once you sell them you don't have time to write for them. But the vision is out there."

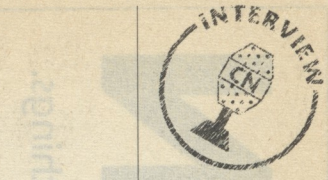
While detailing some of his goals for *B5,* Straczynski seemed disinterested in the potential profitability of the series. "Bear in mind that in the five years it took to get this thing off the ground I could have sold any number of other shows. I've had lots of opportunity to do so," he confides. "The goal is not to make money. That's going to happen. I want to tell a story. A lot of folks sell shows to become producers. I became a producer to sell this show. There's a story I want to tell in a very particular, very distinct way, and characters I want to play with. Quite frankly, I created a show *I* want to write for. I couldn't find one, so I wrote one. My first novel *(Demon Night)* was the same thing. I couldn't find a certain kind of book that I wanted to read, so I wrote one and got it published." Asking who else will be writing for the show, Straczynski revealed himself to be a gambler who hedges his bets while keeping his cards close to his chest. "I can't name the writers until the contracts are signed," he states, flatly. "All I will say is that they are the best and the brightest in the science fiction field. They have some background in television writing, a number of them wrote for the original *Star Trek,* and some of them have feature backgrounds. I think you will be quite happily surprised," Straczynski said, smiling.

Has the competition between *Deep Space Nine* and *Babylon 5* reached the level that secrecy is the watch word? "I am being quiet about the writers because it's the polite thing to do," Straczynski stated. "Until you sign a writer up to something you don't go batting their name around. We *have* assigned Harlan Ellison to write our manifesto and there are plans to have him as a consultant on the show. As we give assignments out [other] writers names will be made public. At this time I feel [anything else] would be exploitative."

Although some of the writers have worked on the original *Star Trek,* Straczynski is confident that viewers will be sufficiently impressed with *Babylon 5* that he isn't worried about unfavorable comparisons between his show and *ST:TNG or Deep Space Nine.* "The consensus among the stations and Warner Brothers was, 'Let's beat the crap out of them in the marketplace,'" he said. "Let's do a more interesting and better-looking show than what they can do. That's really the best way. If we can't compete toe-to-toe with our idea, we shouldn't be there in the first place."

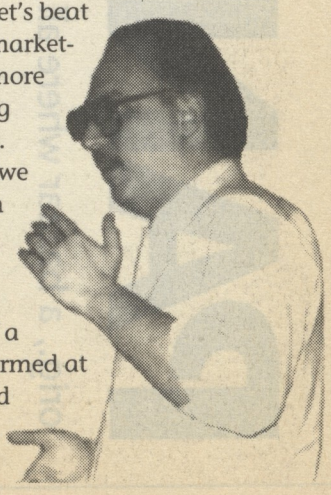
Babylon 5 has traveled a long road since the image of a gigantic space station first formed at the back of Straczynski's mind

Continued on page 35



Interview and Photograph by Shane Shellenbarger

Let's beat the crap out of them... Let's do a more interesting and better looking show than what they (*Star Trek*) can do.



PANTECHNICON

orig., a bazaar where all kinds of things were sold — in our case, just a place for all kinds of things.

Lesser Known Collaborations

Randall Whitlock

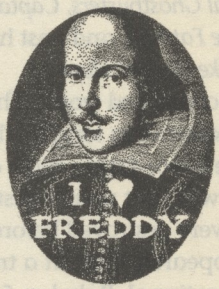
The fields of Science Fiction and Fantasy have been blessed with many talented writing teams. Collaborators such as Pohl & Cornbluth or Niven & Pournelle have made significant contributions.

There are, however, lesser known collaborations. Here are a few for your reading list.

John McEnroe & Roger Zelazny
The Tennis Courts of Chaos

Lerner, Lowe, & Frank Herbert
Briga-Dune

Bob Vila & Edgar Allan Poe
The Fall of This Old House of Usher



Carl Sagan & E.E. Smith
Contact Lensman

Chris Claremont & René Richards
The Ex-Men

William Shakespeare & Wes Kraven
A Midsummer's Nightmare on Elm Street

Louis L'Amour & Stephen King
The Quick and the Dead Zone

Edward Gibbon & Anne Rice
The Decline and Fall of the Roman Vampire

Mary Shelley, Oscar Meyer & Adolf Coors
Frank & Stein

Isaac Asimov & Ernest Hemmingway
The Naked Sun Also Rises

Jules Verne & Penny Marshall
Twenty Thousand Leagues of Their Own

Marcel Marceau & Fyodor Dostoyevsky
Mime & Punishment

William Golding & Ronald McDonald
The Lord of the Fries

Stephen Hawking & Julia Child
A Brief History of Thyme

Donald Belisario & Stephen R. Donaldson
Quantum Leper

Star Trek Writers

To fans who write *Star Trek* stories: there is a group in Massachusetts who is looking for stories to put on cassette for blind and print-handicapped fans. Please contact them if you have something to contribute!

For more info, write Janice F. St. Claire, 781 Somerville Ave. #2, Somerville, MA 02143.





Fan Facts

Jeanne Hilary-Burroughs

This issue it's time travelers, strictly... something. Their Royal Highnesses Elric and Larissa, the Crown Prince and Princess of Atenveldt, await their coronation. In March, they will ascend their thrones as King and Queen. Meanwhile, back in Mundania, SF conventioneers might remember their alternate personae, Trish Raley and Brian McCurdy, from Phoenix con ops/security.

Moving forward, in early April the Friends of the English Regency (LA area) will hold their annual assembly. Locally, the Southwest Costumers' Guild (Phoenix) invites everyone to a Victorian Garden Party on April 25th. See Upcoming Events.

Of current interest, Bruce Farr has been asked to run Programming for Winnepeg's Worldcon in '94; and I'm pleased and relieved to see that Dave Clark is still Chairman of ConFrancisco '93.

Future-wise, in Starlog's *ST:TNG* magazine #22, they interview Bruce D. Arthurs about his *Star Trek* episode "Clues."

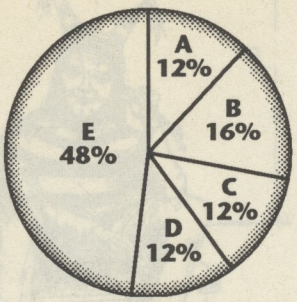
Finally, just starting their time travels are the brand new babies of Becca, Ronnie, and Wendy. Live long and prosper.

Survey Results

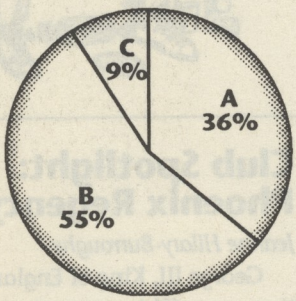
Matthew Frederick

Last issue's survey produced some interesting results and the drawing winners will be notified in the next few weeks.

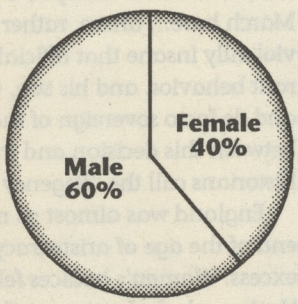
How long will you keep this issue? These results were no great surprise — most of you keep your issues for a long time. A = less than 1 month, B = 1–3 months, C = 4 months to a year, D = 1–10 years, and E = virtually forever.



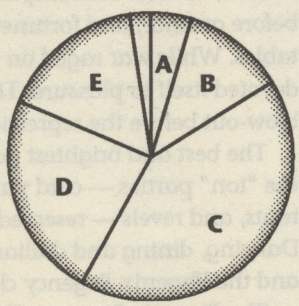
How would you rate this issue as a whole? You seemed fairly satisfied with that issue. A = Excellent, B = Good, and C = Average. The lack of "Below Average" & "Waste of Natural Resources" responses may indicate the people who didn't like it didn't bother to respond...



Your sex: Amazingly, we didn't receive a single write-in vote for this one (and we usually do receive the useless "yes" or "as often as possible" from a few of you).



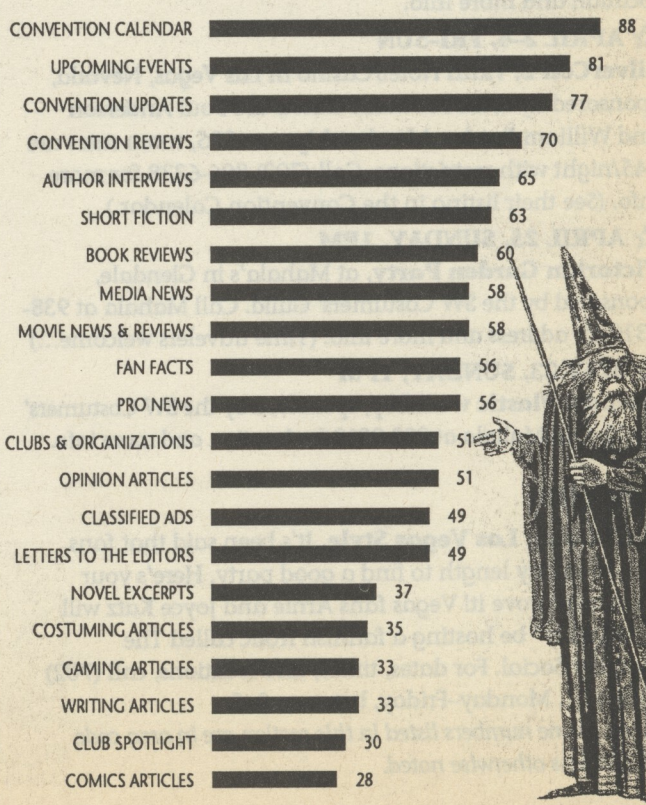
Your age: Literary fandom is probably aging, but we have a good cross-section of fans in our mailing list which probably keeps our numbers low. A = Under 18 (5%), B = 18–24 (12%), C = 25–34 (42%), D = 35–44 (23%), E = 45–54 (16%), and the little sliver is 55–64 (2%).



Which *ConNotations* features interest you? There were no great surprises here, though we didn't realize how important the convention material was to you. We'll try to concentrate on the areas that received 50% or greater interest — this may be our last issue with a novel excerpt. Costuming, Writing, and Comics all scored pretty low, but they're all specialty areas, not of general interest, so it's no shock. We'll more-or-less maintain our current mix until survey results indicate differently. Gaming may have rated low because this is our first issue with a gaming article! Let us know if these numbers don't reflect your feelings.

We asked "**Which ads do you recall seeing in this issue?**" and received good response on all of them — the back page ad scoring the highest. In each survey so for we've asked "**How many people read your issue of *ConNotations*?**" and the number varies somewhat. In the last survey it averaged 2.90 readers per copy and this time it was 1.85 — our overall average is still almost 2.50 readers per copy. Our print run is currently about 5,500 copies so we estimate approximately 13,000 readers. "**How many books do you read each year?**" has been asked in the last couple of surveys and the number is still impressive — an average of 94 books a year (almost two a week). Although only 55% of you indicated you read **comics**, it still averages 76 per year per *CN* reader — including the 45% who don't read them. Each year on the average you see about 15 **movies**, rent 17 **videotapes** and purchase 11, and spend an average of $91 each year on **games**.

Last, we asked a couple of silly questions. When you had a choice, 34% of you would like to build a scale model of Hollywood compared to an equal number who would rather eat at Der Weinerschnitzel. Only 20% wanted to speak with Natalie Wood, and a mere 12% wanted to chop wood — ah, the sedentary life! We then offered a large choice of crummy things of which you had to pick three. Number one, by far, was 200 pounds of cotton candy, followed by Timothy Dalton's prosthesis, and nude photos of Ann B. Davis. Thanks to everyone that responded!



Upcoming Events

☆ **FEB. 13–MAR. 28, WEEKENDS, 10AM–DUSK**
Fifth annual **Arizona Renaissance Festival,** Hwy #60/89, east of Apache Junction. Admission is $9.95 for adults, $4.95 for kids (or $1 off advance tickets at Fry's), and kids under five are free. Call 463-2700 for more info. (See the article on the RenFest on page 16.)

☆ **FEB. 28, SUNDAY, 1PM**
Leatherworking workshop, sponsored by the Southwest Costumers' Guild. Call Mahala at 938-9319 for location and more info.

☆ **MARCH 5–7, FRI–SUN**
Con-Dor #1, Town & Country Hotel, San Diego, California, sponsored by the Cal. Assn. for the Advancement of Speculative Media. Main Guests are Octavia Butler and J. Michael Straczynski. Memberships are $30, room rates are $69/night. Write PO Box 15771, San Diego, CA 92175 for more info. (See their listing in the Convention Calendar.)

☆ **MARCH 15–16, MON/TUES, 10–5/7PM**
Second annual **Arizona Business & Computer Exhibition,** featuring G. Harry Stine & Mike Stackpole, Civic Plaza, Phoenix. (Complimentary passes available using ad on page 24.) Call 996-2106 for more info.

☆ **MARCH 19, FRIDAY, 5–7PM**
Melanie Rawn (author of *Dragon Prince* & *Dragon Star* trilogies) autographing session at Books, Etc., 901 S. Mill, Tempe, 967-1111. (See their ad on page 29.)

☆ **MARCH 28, SUNDAY, 1PM**
Class in **how to recover an umbrella,** sponsored by the Southwest Costumers' Guild. Call Mahala at 938-9319 for location and more info.

☆ **APRIL 2–4, FRI–SUN**
SilverCon 2, Plaza Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, sponsored by SNAFFU. Main Guests are Poul Anderson and William Rotsler. Memberships are $25, room rates are $45/night with restrictions. Call (702) 896-6338 for more info. (See their listing in the Convention Calendar.)

☆ **APRIL 25, SUNDAY, 1PM**
Victorian Garden Party, at Mahala's in Glendale, sponsored by the SW Costumers' Guild. Call Mahala at 938-9319 for address and more info. (Time travelers welcome...)

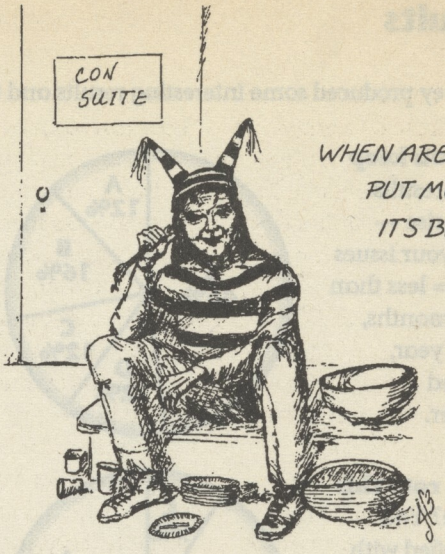
☆ **MAY 23, SUNDAY, 1PM**
Friendly Plastic workshop, sponsored by the SW Costumers' Guild. Call Mahala at 938-9319 for location and more info.

Ongoing

Socializing Las Vegas Style. It's been said that fans will go to any length to find a good party. Here's your chance to prove it! Vegas fans Arnie and Joyce Katz will "inevitably" be hosting a fannish frolic called The Monthly Social. For dates, times, and locations, call (702) 648-5677, Monday–Friday, between 9–5.

All phone numbers listed in this section are in area code 602, unless otherwise noted.

ConChinas



WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO PUT MORE FOOD OUT... IT'S BEEN 10 MINUTES!

KOSHARE (THE GLUTTON) A FREQUENT CONSUITE VISITOR

Club Spotlight: Phoenix Regency Club

Jeanne Hilary-Burroughs

George III, King of England during the American Revolution, was off his crumpet, a proper Bedlamite, mad as a March hare... ahem, rather unstable. By 1811, he was so violently insane that official notice was taken of his aberrant behavior, and his son, George IV, was made regent, and de facto sovereign of the British Empire. The period between this decision and the death of George III is what historians call the "Regency Period."

England was almost as mad as her monarch. It was the end of the age of aristocracy, an era of extremes and excess. Women's bodices fell lower than the tea in Boston Harbor, alcohol consumption rose to a level unequaled before or since, and fortunes were traded over the gaming tables. While war raged on the Continent, English society devoted itself to pleasure. This was England's last great blow-out before the repression of the Victorian Era.

The best and brightest part of the Regency Period were the "ton" parties — card parties, dinner parties, balls, routs, and revels — reserved for the privileged few. Dancing, dining and dalliance was the order of the day, and the Phoenix Regency club wants to bring it back!

The Phoenix Regency Club? Yes, indeed! We are dedicated to the food, clothing, games, manners, mores, and of course, the wonderful dances (like "Trip to Paris," "Child's Grove," and those scandalous waltzes!) of the first quarter of the 19th century.

Once a month we gather to learn and enjoy the dances, show off our latest period clothing, and plan our parties. Twice a year, we have events that recreate the fun and atmosphere of an early 1800's English party.

For more information, or to join us in the frivolity, call (602) 973-2054 or (602) 979-3814. And call soon — we are already planning our spring gala, with period dancing, period food, and period fun... period.

Comic News

Ethan Moe

The blitz is on! Yes, folks, the time has come yet again to let a new comic book company (or talent group) know just how foolish it is to advertise a talent search without having provisions for recycling entire forests of processed trees. On the inside back cover of *Wild CATS #2*, Homage Studios is looking for the best and brightest to move to San Diego and join their team. Homage Studios, for those not familiar with this group, is comprised of Jim Lee, Whilce Portacio, Scott Williams, and Marc Silvestri, all very talented artists whose collective works include *X-men, The Uncanny X-men, Ironman, Wolverine, Alpha Flight* and *WildCATS*. They are looking for people with expertise in all facets of comic book creation, so run to your nearest comic store and grab a copy. Good luck — you'll need it to find a copy!

Keeping with Image, Malibu's new company of comic greats, here's some more news. Alan Gordon and Jerry Ordway had a four issue mini-series called *Wildstar: Sky Zero* that came out in January. Filled with time travel, symbiotes (sort of living exoskeletons that don't always agree with the wearer), and down and dirty, gritty action... it looks to be very interesting. Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* has a few creative guests coming up in the near future. Alan Moore and Frank Miller are working together on issue #8 and Neil Gaiman of *Sandman* fame is writing a story for issue #9. On a different note, I would like to give a big, hearty congratulations to Los Bros Hernandez, Gilbert and Jaime, for 10 years of *Love and Rockets*. Keep up the wonderful work, guys.

DC has created new comic line, Vertigo, filled with old and new titles. The new titles include *Death: The High Cost of Living*, a three-parter by Neil Gaiman and Chris Bachalo featuring everybody's favorite character in *Sandman, Enigma* an eight issue creator-owned story by Peter Milligan and Duncan Fegredo, and *Sandman Mystery Theatre*, a monthly book by Matt Wagner and Guy Davis. The new *Sandman* title will be based on the original title, the guy with the gas mask and a penchant for using fighting crime to rid himself of horrible nightmares. Among the current titles now to be distributed in the new Vertigo line include the following: *Sandman, Hellblazer, Swamp Thing, Shade the Changing Man, Animal Man,* and *Doom Patrol.*

Marvel seems to be taking a different strategy in its new Marvel UK line. It is trying to attract new readers by using talented artists, impressive coloring, and decently written and intriguing stories. Some idea, huh? Let's hope they don't send this line along the same path as the New Universe, and the new superduper crossover with the limited series, *The Mys-Tech Wars* as the storyline's linchpin. I recommend *Dark Angel* (formerly *Hell's Angel), Warheads* (the art in the first couple of issues is expressive, but a little hard to get used to), and *Death's Head II*, which is action-packed and hilarious.

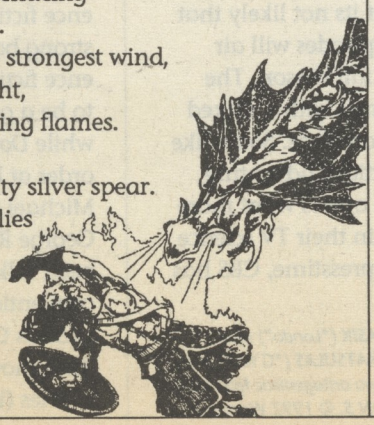


And now, to end this column, I present the Comic Book Obituary: **DC:** Superman is now dead, although it was a toss up as to how many more months of publicity they could milk out of it before the finally up and offed him. **Marvel:** The whole Cable/Stryfe/Christopher Nathan Summers plot patchwork is on its last legs and should die any issue now of overkill and emergency plot surgery too little too late. **Dark Horse:** Speaking of overkill, a new *Aliens* mini-series was out in January, *Aliens: Colonial Marines*. **Malibu:** It seems that nobody has seen fit to deal with Rob Liefeld in the proper manner as of yet. Personally, I believe he should be the first up against the wall when the revolution comes.

The Dragon

Richard James

Soaring on high, the dragon glides,
Spitting the orange-red balls on the houses below.
From the fiery shambles
Comes forth a warrior.
Like the majestic Phoenix,
Born of ash and flame.
The warrior threatens the menacing
Dragon with his silver spear.
Diving with the speed of the strongest wind,
The dragon with all his might,
Bathes the warrior in scorching flames.
With battle-trained reflexes,
The warrior lets fly his mighty silver spear.
All is quiet now, the village lies
in smothering ash.
The dragon and his
deadly foe
Lie still and cold in a
pool of crimson blood.



The Charm & Integra Press

Integra Press, located here in Phoenix, is launching a new line called Integra Speculative Fiction (ISF). It will debut at the 1993 World Fantasy Convention in Minneapolis with the novel *The Charm* by Adam Niswander.

The Charm tells the story of a 600-year-old demon inadvertantly set free by archaeologist Jack Foreman. The demon takes the form of a huge dust devil (or whirlwind) which wipes out a small town north of Phoenix, destroys the Navajo settlement in Chaco Canyon, NM, and then turns back to devastate Carefree and Cavecreek, AZ — ultimately threatening Phoenix and the Palo Verde Nuclear Plant. Native American medicine people from twelve Southwestern tribes unite to stop the demon by forming a Great Gathering.

Cover art will be by Armand Cabrera and distribution of *The Charm* will be handled by Sci-Fi Distributors of NY.

Negotiations are underway for two sequels to be titled *The Serpent Slayers* and *The Hound Hunters*. Adam Niswander has been the President of CASFS for more than three years. Good job, Adam, and good luck!

The SF TV Boon: Bandwagon or Glut?

SF Media Notes

By Lee Whiteside

With seemingly everyone jumping on the bandwagon, it's hard to tell what's worth paying attention to or what will stay on the air long enough to generate a loyal following.

AS THE POPULAR PRESS HAS BEEN TELLING US, there's a science fiction TV boon in progress. With seemingly everyone jumping on the bandwagon, it's hard to tell what's worth paying attention to or what will stay on the air long enough to generate a loyal following. We've seen shows such as *Highlander, Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, Space Rangers* and *Time Trax* debuting already, with *Babylon 5, Doorways* and a 90's revival of the 70's British series *The Tomorrow People* still to come.

Some shows, such as *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* have a built-in audience, reflected by the record setting viewership for the opening movie. Other shows, such as *Highlander* and *Time Trax,* have commitments from their producers for a full season and stand a good chance of surviving provided enough people watch. Other shows, like *Babylon 5* and *Doorways,* have pilot movies finished and are looking for a series order. Finally, there are *Space Rangers* and *The Tomorrow People* which have had a short series made and are waiting for the studio and network executives to tell them to make more.

First, let's take a brief look at each of the shows that have already gone to series in the order they made it to air.

Highlander, based on the *Highlander* movies (although how it fits in with the two movies is subject to debate), has done well enough in syndication that Rysher Distribution has given the go ahead to a second season and is planning another show with a "fantasy element" for next year. The last nine episodes of the first season were filmed in Paris and the second season is likely to have more location filming.

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine opened with the third highest ratings for a syndicated TV show ever and looks to continue the ratings success of *Star Trek: The Next Generation.* This success has prompted Paramount to announce that they plan to have *Next Generation* go one more season (its seventh) and then have the Enterprise-D crew move on to feature films.

Space Rangers went the network route, which probably means that the initial six episodes ordered by CBS are all we'll ever see. CBS has ordered additional scripts, so the show may still have a chance but its not likely that any new episodes will air before the fall season. The show has met with a mixed reaction from fans. Some like the 50's action/ adventure style while others want more substance in their TV science fiction. At presstime, CBS has put the show "on hiatus" after airing four of the six episodes.



◀ ***PETER JURASIK*** *("Londo") and* ***ANDREAS KATSULAS*** *("G'Kar") are leaders of two antagonistic federations on* ***BABYLON 5****. © 1992 Warner Bros.*

Time Trax is the first show to air from the Prime Time Entertainment Network (PTEN) and has a firm commitment from Warner Brothers (the studio behind PTEN) for a full season of 22 episodes (along with their other initial series, *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues*). In the Phoenix area, both of these shows will air on Wednesday nights on KUTP, Channel 45 (barring pre-emption from Phoenix Suns games, which will usually move them to Thursday night). Check your local listings for the station and time near you. *Time Trax's* initial movie did fairly well in the ratings for a syndicated show with no stars to draw viewers.

Being co-produced with Thames television in the U.K. and Nickleodeon in the U.S., a five part series of *The Tomorrow People* has been produced which will air starting on February 21st on Nickleodeon. The show focuses on a group of kids of varying ages with super-human abilities as the original 70's series did, but is being made for a more grown-up audience. There will probably be more shows produced, but since they are a British production, it may only be a handful of shows each year. *The Tomorrow People* is scheduled to air starting February 21st ón Nickelodeon.

Two other shows yet to air have been produced as pilot movies for possible series, and both differ from the shows discussed so far in that they have creators who are emphasizing the science fiction in their shows and have a strong background in writing for science fiction television. *Babylon 5* looks to be a good bet for a series via PTEN while *Doorways* is hoping for ABC to order at least a short run series. Both J. Michael Straczynski *(Babylon 5)* and George R.R. Martin *(Doorways)* have been talking to science fiction fans via conventions and computer networks such as GEnie to get fan support for their shows before they air. Both pilot movies (in incomplete form) were

screened for fans at conventions last year, *Doorways* at Magicon in September, *Babylon 5* at WishCon in November and both at LosCon in Los Angeles last November. Fan reaction to both shows was very favorable.

As you can see in the interview with Straczynski elsewhere in this issue, he has put a lot of time and effort into coming up with a show that he thinks science fiction fans will want to watch. As the movie airs February 22nd on PTEN stations in most cities (at 7 p.m. February 25th here in Phoenix on KUTP, Channel 45), Warner will be taking a look at the ratings and the viewer reaction to the show to see whether to order a series. According to Straczynski, a series order is highly likely, with the main question being when it will come.

With Warner Brothers and PTEN starting out a new network with one night of programming, adding another series would mean either adding a second night of programming or replacing one of the existing shows with a *Babylon 5* series. *Babylon 5* was originally considered for one of the initial PTEN series, but enough of the stations involved with the network wanted to be shown that the type of show Straczynski was promising could be done on the schedule and budget proposed. The pilot movie, "The Gathering" was completed on time and on budget and has been getting a very favorable response from those who have seen it.

Straczynski is asking that fans watch the movie and if they like what they see to let their local stations know about it. For Phoenix, you can write to KUTP Channel 45, Programming, 4630 South 33rd Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85040. Sending mail to Warner Brothers will help as well, but he asks that you let your local stations know first. At Warner, write to Dick Robertson, Vice President Domestic Television Distribution, Warner Brothers Television, 4000 Warner Boulevard, Burbank, CA 91522.

Once the show goes to series, Straczynski has mapped out notes (200 pages worth) of background details and what would happen over the course of a five-year series. He's given hints as to things that will occur, some of which is set up in the pilot movie, others will turn up as the series progresses. This doesn't mean that there won't be room for other writers to add in their own ideas, though. Plans are to keep the writing "in-house" for the first year, utilizing writers already lined up or ones he has worked with before. Starting with the second season, and not until then, he plans to look at unsolicited scripts and will make known the methods to submit them when it is time.

If you would like to write to Straczynski, he has announced a mailing address where you can reach him. Write to J. Michael Straczynski at 14431 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 260, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423.

Doorways is being produced by Columbia Television for ABC and deals with parallel universes. It was created by Hugo and Nebula award winning writer George R.R. Martin, who was involved with the CBS *Twilight Zone* for two years and was a writer/producer on the *Beauty and the Beast* TV series. A 90-minute pilot movie has been completed and six scripts have been ordered by ABC but no commitment has been made as of yet.

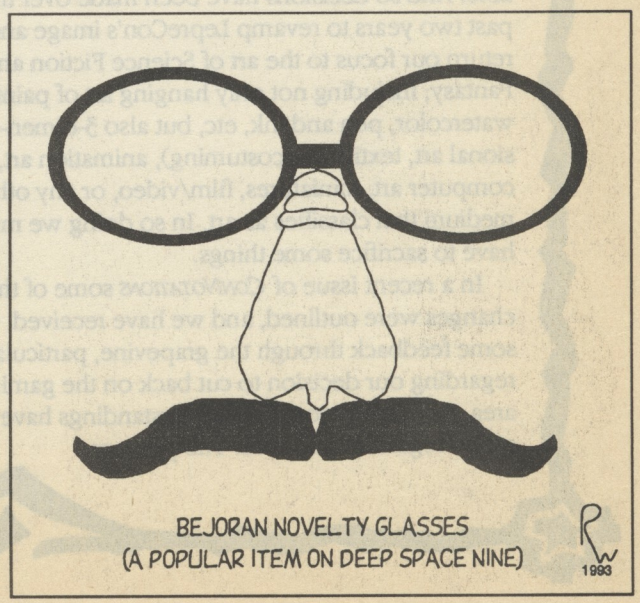
The pilot movie opens with a half-feral woman named Cat turning up in the middle of an LA freeway, destroying a tanker truck with a hand weapon. It turns out that she is a fugitive from an alternate universe where aliens had all but destroyed human civilization. Tom Mason, an emergency room doctor, and Trager, a federal intelligence agent, begin to believe her story after a hunting party from her world comes through the same "doorway" looking for her. Mason ends up joining with Cat as they search for the next "doorway" to escape from her pursuers.

With this premise, each episode could have a completely different setting, some with only minor differences from our Earth, or some with major differences. At presstime, the pilot movie has been completed and the six scripts are almost done. Martin is optimistic that ABC will pick the show up for the fall season, possibly with an order for 13 episodes. If ABC passes, there is still the possibility of shopping the show around to the other networks or going to syndication.

On the drawing boards for next season are shows such as *Seaquest*, being produced by Steven Spielberg, and a live-action series based on Superman for ABC which emphasizes the Clark Kent and Lois Lane relationship called *Clark and Lois: The New Adventures of Superman.*

Finally, as there gets to be more science fiction shows on television, the days of watching a show just because it is science fiction may be ending. Just as there have been many westerns, cop shows, and lawyer shows on TV, there may be many science fiction shows to choose from with the quality shows having the staying power.

Personally, I'm looking forward to seeing a weekly series of *Babylon 5* and I'm hoping that *Doorways* gets a fair chance (although I don't think ABC is likely to do so). On the other shows, I think *Deep Space Nine* has promise, but it needs to come up with more unique stories, which may not be easy to do with over 200 other episodes set in the *Star Trek* universe already made. *Highlander* has been improving and could develop a loyal cult following, if it hasn't already. *Time Trax* has an interesting premise, although it can easily become just another cop show with a few sci-fi gimmicks if they aren't careful. As for *Space Rangers*, it's enjoyable as long as you don't think too much about where you've seen the plotlines and clichés before.



LepreCon News

LEPRECON BOARD REPORT

by David J. Hiatt

Greetings Friends, from the board of LepreCon Inc. Having recently been elected Chairman, I thought I would take this opportunity to once more outline our goals and policies for upcoming LepreCons.

First of all, let me say that LepreCon was incorporated a number of years ago by a small group of dedicated fans who wanted to see LepreCons flourish in Phoenix. At that time it was decided that the primary focus for LepreCon would be the art of science fiction. With that in mind, the prospective chairperson each year would submit a proposal to the board as to the direction he/she wished the convention to go and the board would elect the person it felt would do the best job of putting on a fun convention — for that is the bottom line, the convention should be fun to attend.

The problem is that Phoenix has had a number of major conventions over the past number of years, and that has had an impact on expectations for the local conventions, CopperCon and LepreCon. We have been in a position of trying to provide more services, without raising con memberships to levels that keep fans away. It has gotten to be too much for the limited resources — financial and voluntary labor — that we have available. And so decisions have been made over the past two years to revamp LepreCon's image and return our focus to the art of Science Fiction and Fantasy; including not only hanging art of paint, watercolor, pen and ink, etc, but also 3-dimensional art, textile art (costuming), animation art, computer art, miniatures, film/video, or any other medium that classifies as art. In so doing we may have to sacrifice some things.

In a recent issue of *ConNotations* some of these changes were outlined, and we have received some feedback through the grapevine, particularly regarding our decision to cut back on the gaming area. Apparently some misunderstandings have arisen regarding this area. The primary considerations in making the decision regarding gaming were: 1) hotel space limitations; and 2) HexaCon gaming convention, which is two weeks away from LepreCon.

At any rate, I would like all of you to bear with us through our remodeling, and hopefully we will end up with a much better and more enjoyable convention in the future. And feel free to write to us with comments, suggestions, and criticisms. We are always open to constructive commentary.

LEPRECON 18 NOTES

by Eric Hanson

LepreCon 18 was held over the weekend of March 27–29, 1992. We had a great time at the convention, even though there were several of our friends that couldn't make it.

Normally we have been able to provide a comp membership into the next year's LepreCon for all of the volunteers who work at least 12 hours during the weekend. We do really appreciate your help — without it we could not get all the things done that we need to make the convention a success.

Unfortunately this year's LepreCon lost money. The loss is due primarily to the fact that so few people actually paid for their memberships. We always encourage people to purchase their memberships, but there are always some who refuse — they just want to party and "get away from reality" for the weekend.

Due to the fact that this year's LepreCon lost money (for the first time in many years), we can't provide complimentary memberships to LepreCon 19 for volunteers. We are sorry for any hardship this may cause to our hard-working friends.

I thank you for all of your assistance in the past, and I hope that you will continue to help us in providing the best possible convention for our future attendees. And if you see someone without a badge, or wearing someone else's, please encourage them to support the convention and buy their own.

LepreCon 19

June 4–6, 1993 at the Camelview Resort in Scottsdale, AZ

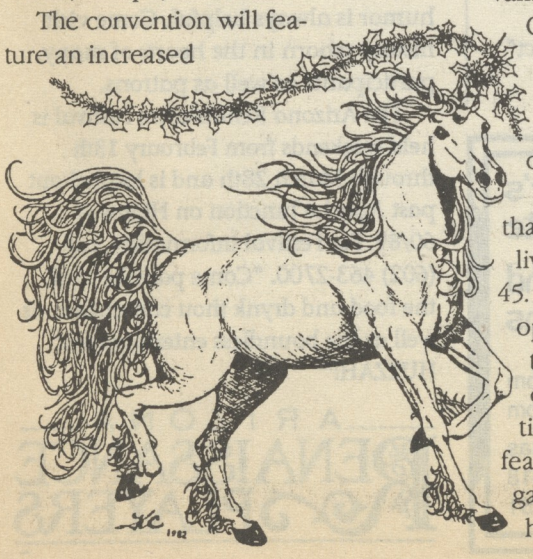
Notes from Chairman Doug Cosper

The dates for Leprecon 19 have moved from the last progress report. It will be held over the weekend of June 4-6. The Artist GoH is Fantasy artist Sue Dawe. S. P. Somtow (the king of the midnight readings) will be Author GoH. This year we will also highlight one of our up and coming local artists, Katrine Cady (whose art is featured on this page).

Leprecon 19 will be held at the Camelview Resort in Scottsdale, the site of the most recent CopperCon. Rates are $55 per night for 1 or 2 adults with additional adults costing $10 each per night. Call 1-800-852-5205 to reserve a room.

Memberships are $20 through March 14, then $25 until preregistration cutoff on May 15 and $30 at the door. Fill out the Generic Convention Registration Form on page 45 of this issue and send it along with your check to LepreCon 19, P.O. Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85282.

The convention will feature an increased emphasis on art program. The committee already has a person devoted exclusively to a track of art-oriented programming. This should provide a level of art programming never before seen at LepreCon.



Due to costs, the ConSuite will be basic munchies and something to drink, but the convention will not be trying to run a café. We are sorry about this, but the last LepreCon lost money and this is the largest single area of expense.

This convention will not have organized gaming, since HexaCon 3 will be on the heels of LepreCon. (There will be space for open gaming however.) As has been previously noted, Regency dancing will be the dance feature at Leprecon 19.

Solve a Mystery!

A vampire is killing the members of an elite order of Vampire Hunters. The vampire has made it's way to LepreCon. An elite force of special services agents have taken it upon themselves to locate and protect the remaining members of this order and to stop the vampire.

Brought to you by the people that brought you the much acclaimed live-action game run at WesterColt 45. For those of you who had the opportunity to search for the PRIZE, this one will offer a different set of challenges. If you have never participated in one of our games, never fear, no knowledge of gaming is necessary; only a desire to have fun and be entertaining.



The game will encompass a few hours both Friday and Saturday evening (when else can you hunt vampires?), and part of Saturday afternoon. The game will be taking place in and around the convention — it will not hinder your normal convention activities.

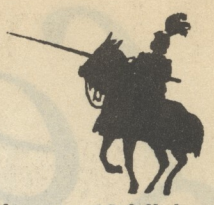
Costume Party

Break out your best costumes for the Saturday mid-night costume party at LepreCon! Southwest Costumers' Guild will be hosting an informal masquerade/party. There will be awards for best costume, best historical costume, and best science fiction costume. In addition, there will be prizes for the most sensuous woman and most sensuous man. Costumes are limited only by imagination, fannish courtesy, and local obsenity laws.

Contact Mike Willmoth about LepreCon electronically on Bix as MWillmoth, on GEnie as M.Willmoth, on CompuServe as 76170,1037, on the Internet as MWillmoth@Bix.com, or on Fidonet as Mike Willmoth at 1:114\110.



Just for the fun of it?



By Patti Hultstrand

If you are lucky enough to have a talent in singing, playing an instrument, juggling, etc., you may be allowed to receive tips from patrons and receive money or coupons from the festival.

"WHAT'S A NICE LADY LIKE YOU doing carrying a sword around?" was the question most of my fellow employees at work asked me when they saw my costume for the Arizona Renaissance Festival. The costume consisted of breeches (pants), shirt, vest, wolf belt, mid-length cape, cavalier hat, bootknife, belt-dagger and a back-strapped sword. "Yes," you could say, "thou art well protected by thy own assorted weaponry."

There is an old saying, "The clothes don't make the person — it's what's inside the person that counts." From my experience, this is not entirely true. My interpretation would be that the clothes sometimes help the person inside come out into full view.

When I am in full costume, I become that other person inside. I become that woman in control of herself, her destiny and of anyone else who gets in her way!

Another question I am asked on occasion is, "Why would anyone in their right mind wear three or more layers of clothing in the Arizona outdoors for six weekends in a row for anything other than BIG BUCKS?" You can ask anyone working out at the Festival in February and March and you'll get many different answers.

Most answers fall into two categories: the serious, and the not-so-serious-but-also-true statements:

- Historical significance
- Practice grounds for potential actors/actresses
- Love for the Renaissance era
- Interest in the "Outdoor Theater"
- Escapism/Fantasy or Role-Playing
- People interaction — learning to deal with others one-on-one
- Life-long ambition to become a "breasty wench"
- One can not play a lute in an orchestra
- There was nothing better to do with12 days of my life
- The world is my stage, and by staying in one place, eventually everyone comes by
- Always wanted to be a British actor, but wound up here
- It is cheaper to participate than pay for all the visits

Most Renaissance Players get no money or perks the first year they participate other than all the "fun" they can "inflict" upon themselves. The second year may bring you food and drink coupons, and again, 12 full days of fun.

If you are lucky enough to have a talent in singing, playing an instrument, juggling, etc., you may be allowed to receive tips from patrons and receive money or coupons from the festival. But first, your talent must be proven at the scheduled tryouts. If a stage act is what you would like to work towards, then the festival has great workout conditions to develop a skit. You can work on jokes, dialog, character ideas or more while working as a street character.

Street characters are used to mingle and interact with the crowd. The character chooses a group of patrons and uses a starting set dialogue usually a question, to give the patrons a chance to interact with the character. This format is used to bring the patrons into the historical/fantasy renaissance world.

It is this special interaction that makes the visit to the festival fun and a change of pace for so many visitors. This interaction, or improvisation, usually only lasts a few minutes, but will be remembered by the visitor for a very long time.

To have a great time out at the festival, a visitor must come somewhat prepared. They should have a slight understanding of where they are going, why the festival exists and a sense of humor is always helpful. Come visit history reborn in the hearts of many, participants as well as patrons.

The Arizona Renaissance Festival is held weekends from February 13th through March 28th and is located out past Apache Junction on Highway 60/89. For Festival information, call (602) 463-2700. "Come partake of all the food and drynk thou can muster, as well as the boundless entertainment. HUZZAH!"

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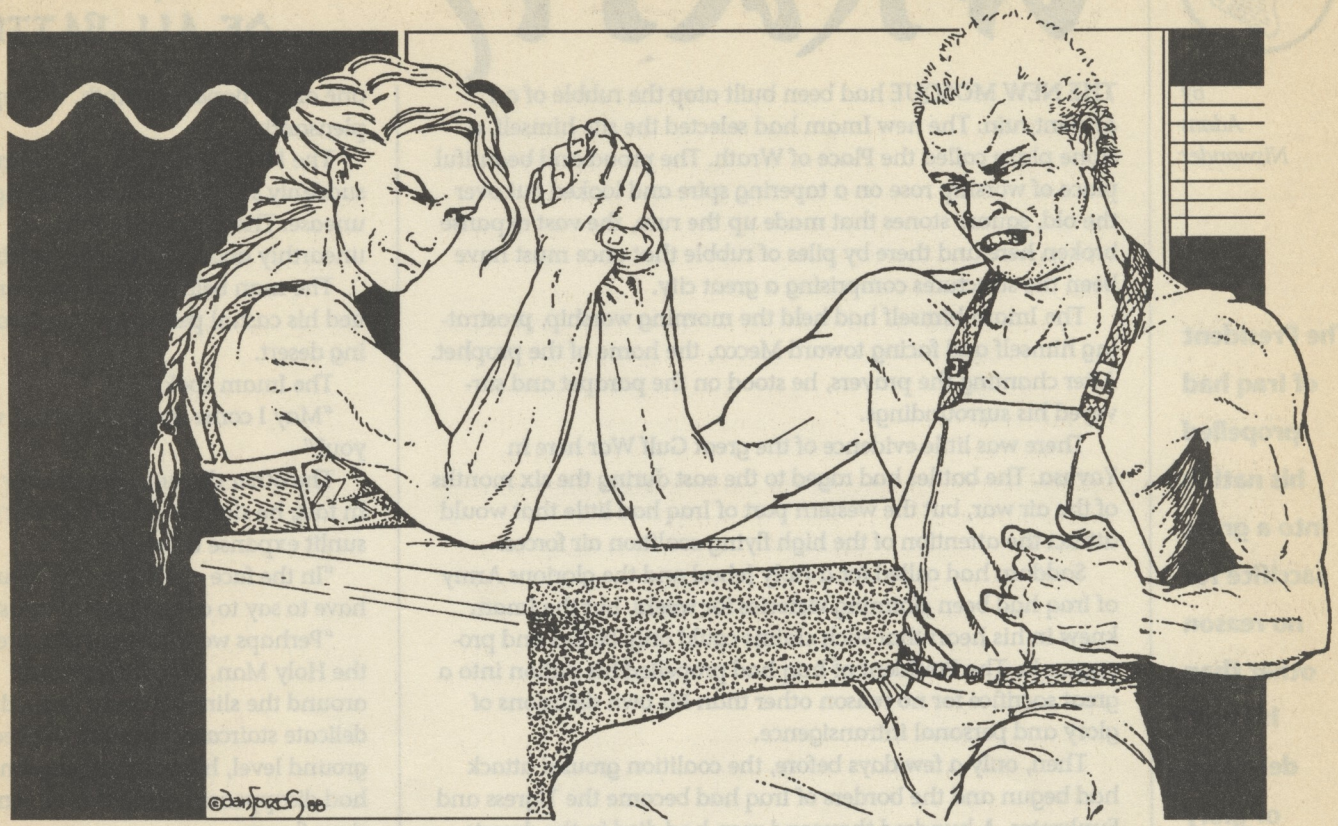
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FICTION

WRATH

An Ancient Power and the Mother of All Battles

By Adam Niswander

The President of Iraq had propelled his nation into a great sacrifice for no reason other than his own delusions of glory and personal intransigence.

THE NEW MOSQUE had been built atop the rubble of an ancient ruin. The new Imam had selected the site himself, a stone plaza called the Place of Wrath. The proud and beautiful place of worship rose on a tapering spire and looked out over the old, square stones that made up the ruin, the vast expanse broken here and there by piles of rubble that once must have been the structures comprising a great city.

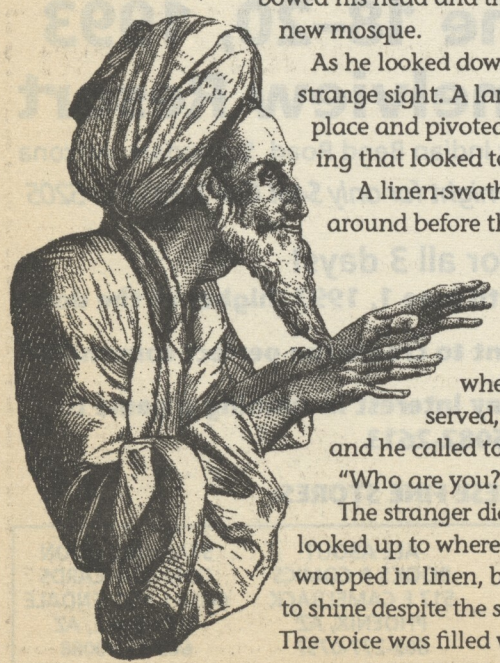
The Imam himself had held the morning worship, prostrating himself and facing toward Mecca, the home of the prophet. After chanting the prayers, he stood on the parapet and surveyed his surroundings.

There was little evidence of the great Gulf War here in Yavusa. The battles had raged to the east during the six months of the air war, but the western part of Iraq had little that would attract the attention of the high flying coalition air forces.

Saddam had called for a Holy Jehad and the glorious Army of Iraq had been claiming victories for weeks, but the Imam knew in his heart that such claims could only be lies and propaganda. The President of Iraq had propelled his nation into a great sacrifice for no reason other than his own delusions of glory and personal intransigence.

Then, only a few days before, the coalition ground attack had begun and the borders of Iraq had become the Tigress and Euphrates. A hundred thousand men had died in the deserts. The Mother of all Battles turned out to be little more than a regional mop-up. Now, the victorious infidels waited in the desert for what remained of the Iraqi military leadership to accept their terms and the cities lay in chaos.

Nothing of the war had touched the Place of Wrath for two days. Even then it had only been the annoying roar of high flying aircraft passing too far overhead to be seen. The Imam bowed his head and thanked Allah for sparing his beautiful new mosque.



As he looked down on the plaza, the Imam saw a strange sight. A large stone below had risen up from its place and pivoted to the side, exposing a round opening that looked to be at least six feet in diameter.

A linen-swathed head appeared and looked all around before the rest of the robed body followed. A tall, gaunt, mysterious man climbed out and stood atop the stone, gazing quietly into the distance.

Though he might have remained where he stood on the parapet unobserved, curiosity gave voice to the Holy Man and he called to the one below.

"Who are you?"

The stranger did not start, but turned calmly and looked up to where the Imam stood. The face, too, was wrapped in linen, but the eyes were dark fires that seemed to shine despite the sun.

The voice was filled with the sweetness of all accord. "I am one of the Bonds of Wrath," he replied pleasantly.

The Holy Man looked down and was suddenly struck by an eerie feeling of unease. There was something unearthly about the one he watched.

The man below turned and continued his casual perusal of the surrounding desert.

The Imam spoke.

"May I come down and speak with you?"

The other did not immediately reply. In fact, he sighed and gestured at the sunlit expanse before him.

"In the face of all this, what could we have to say to one another?" he asked.

"Perhaps we can discover it," replied the Holy Man. He made his way around the slim spire and down the delicate staircase. When he arrived at ground level, however, the opening had disappeared and so had the mysterious figure.

Though the Imam searched and then had his minions search, there was no trace of the one he had spoken to. It troubled him deeply.

The next morning, he climbed again to the parapet and led the morning prayers, but could not keep himself from occasionally glancing down to see if the stranger would reappear. He did not.

After the services, the Imam descended the staircase and went into the plaza. He stood near the spot he had observed was the opening and waited. He stood there for two hours. Finally, just as he was about to give up, he heard a grinding sound and saw the stone rise again, this time right at his feet.

There was something eerie about it. There were not supposed to be any military installations in this area, certainly not on the Place of Wrath, yet who but the generals could have built an underground installation so perfectly hidden from all eyes?

The linen-swathed head once again appeared and saw the holy man.

"What year is this?" asked the stranger.

"The year 1991, as the world reckons time," replied the Imam.

"And you are the Blessed One who watches over this mosque?"

The stranger climbed gracefully out of the hole and bowed slightly, courteously.

"I am the Imam Youseph," answered the holy man. "I have been given that privilege, yes."

"I have heard and felt the trembling of the ground for days now," said the stranger. "Is this the final war of which the prophets spoke?"

The Imam shrugged and bowed his head. "It may be, my son. Our leader, Saddam, has declared a holy war that the heathens and unbelievers may be destroyed."

"Ah," sighed the stranger, "then it is time." He turned and bowed to the holy man. "May I tell the others it is time?"

"Time for what?" The Imam tried to imagine what kind of weapon might be hidden beneath the plaza.

"Time to loose the bonds," replied the man. "Our task must be done."

"What was your task?" asked the Imam.

The linen-wrapped stranger stood looking into the distance. "Many years ago," he answered thoughtfully, "the Prophet Mohammed, may Allah bless His name, gave up His anger at the infidels and learned to love all men as He loved God."

When the man did not continue, the Imam spoke. "And your task?"

"Four of us were chosen," said the stranger. "It was a great honor but it meant we had to give up all worldly things." He sighed. "I had a wife, Imam, a new wife, and we had followed the Prophet together, gladly giving up the pleasures of the flesh to better serve the Great One."

"Chosen for what?" The Holy Man was truly curious.

"Chosen to guard the Wrath of the Prophet, of course," answered the stranger. "It is a terrible beast, Imam. Mohammed, bless His name, had rage welling within him for the infidel that threatened to overwhelm him. It was great thing, a miracle really, that he was able to give it up."

"His rage?"

"The Wrath of Mohammed," said the stranger. "It lies beneath us even now, chained and imprisoned, guarded by my three brothers and myself."

"Here?" asked the Holy Man. "Beneath my mosque?"

"Even here, Imam." The stranger turned for the first time and looked full into his face.

Youseph could not repress a gasp as he stepped back a pace. The visage of the creature facing him was a linen-wrapped skull.

"How long," asked the holy man, "have you been below?"

"Since the Prophet Himself ordered us there," answered the stranger.

"You mean blessed Mohammed himself?" The Imam was aghast.

"Even as we stand here now, I tell you He placed his hand on my shoulder and bade me take my place as one of the Bonds of Wrath," said the grim spectre. "We are to hold it chained below until the Holy Jehad, then the beast may be set free to wreak havoc with those who have spurned the ways of the Prophet."

"What will happen when it is loosed?" asked the Holy Man.

"Wrath will sweep across the land and seek out the worst of all the unbelievers, rending him to pieces."

"And then?" Youseph looked frightened.

"Why then it will return to whence it came," said the Bond. "It will return to Allah."

"And you?"

The skull-faced man bowed his horrible head and sighed deeply. "It has been many years, Imam," he said. "I will go at last to my reward and dance with the houris in Paradise at the feet of the Blessed One I serve."

"I see," answered the Holy Man.

Youseph turned away and looked out over the desert. He thought of all the dead, the hundred thousand of his own people, the suffering in the cities, the roar of coalition aircraft overhead. He thought of Saddam in his bunker below the streets of Baghdad, the burning oil fields of Kuwait, the polluted waters of the Gulf. He thought of his once mighty nation, now pounded by the bombs of the foreign infidels.

"Perhaps," he muttered under his breath. "Perhaps it is time."

He turned to speak to the Bond, but the figure was gone. The enormity of what he had done struck him then. "No, wait!" he cried. But it was too late.

A large section of the stones in the plaza began to sink and he heard the clanking of chains, the roaring of some large creature, the laughter of four men who had finished a task well begun.

A great red cloud — red as rage — rose from the yawning pit and began to run swiftly across the desert sands. It would seek out the greatest infidel of them all, the unbeliever who had doomed so many to death.

The Wrath of the Prophet sped swiftly across the sands toward Baghdad.

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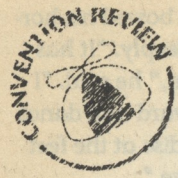
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One Man's Journey...

CopperCon 12

By Harry Cameron Andruschak

I informed them that I had thrown up from eating their scrambled eggs. No sympathy whatsoever from the front desk... Food poisoning? Well, maybe more like Georgy Bush-style stomach flu.

an excerpt from Intermediate Vector Bosons #6

10 SEPTEMBER, THURSDAY, WAS MY DAY OFF. I went through all the motions required to get ready for a vacation. Mail hold on my PO Box, obtain AAA maps, pack and check to see if I forgot something, and a short nap in the afternoon. My intention was to drive to Phoenix at night, avoiding the heat of the desert daytime, when temperatures are over 100° at this time of the year.

And so at 10pm on Thursday, I set out. It was almost full moon, and the moonlight over the desert landscape was enchanting. I was in no hurry and for best gas mileage cruised at 50 miles per hour on Interstate 10 from LA to Phoenix, with frequent rest stops to get out and admire the moon-lit landscape. It was all very beautiful. I arrived in Phoenix and stopped by a coffee shop for breakfast. Then I headed for the convention hotel, the Camelview Resort in Scottsdale, a suburb of Phoenix. I arrived about 9am. I asked the hotel if I could have a room early. No problem, and soon I was in bed for another short nap. I was impressed by the friendliness of the staff. In conversations with fans later in the day, I heard stories about strained relations between hotels and fan groups. As of this morning, I have no complaints whatsoever.

I got up about noon, registered, and walked around the hotel area. The con itself was slowly getting underway. There was a panel on Dinosaurs at 1:30pm which I attended. The con suite opened at 2pm, and I spent time in there. The Hucksters Room and Art Show opened at 2pm. I was not too impressed by the Art Show: mostly the usual amateur junk of Star Trek, dragons, unicorns, and all the rest of the clichés.

Most of the time I just relaxed in the con suite, talking with fans. At 6pm, I went to supper outside the hotel. At 7pm, we had the Usual Opening Ceremonies, with short talks from Roger Zelazny and Alan Dean Foster, the two Guests of Honor. CopperCon did not seem to have a Fan Guest of Honor and any of the other categories of Guests of Honor that have proliferated at cons throughout the years. This convention was expecting about 500 fans, down from the usual 1000 or so for previous CopperCons. This in the wake of Westercon.

After that, it was the usual Friday night of parties all over the place. I found myself helping Evangeline Walton travel from the Opening Ceremonies to the con suite. She is very old and recovering from an operation. She had a couple of friends with her, who had driven her up from Tucson. About 9pm, I helped carry her stuff to her room. After that, I returned to the con suite and almost fell asleep in a chair. OK, I know when to stop. So I was in bed at 10pm, An Old Fan And Tired.

I woke up at 7am. My usual time to wake up to go to work is 5:30am, and even on vacations I cannot sleep past 7am. The sun was up but NOT shining on the shaded heated spa. The hotel has a swimming pool and spa, but I'd avoided them yesterday since I did not have a tan and would have burned to a crisp in half an hour. No problem this early. As it turned out, nobody else was up that early in the morning, so I started the spa motors and spent a glorious half-hour in solitary enjoyment.

I returned to my room, passing nobody. Well, you can hardly expect most fans to be up at 8am on a Saturday morning. Already the heat was rising. Phoenix is very hot but very dry. So here I am in my air-conditioned room, typing away, and getting ready to go out to breakfast. The hotel had a restaurant, where I had lunch yesterday. It was an OK restaurant, just a bit overpriced like most hotel restaurants, and maybe the slow service yesterday was a fluke. Nonetheless, I intend to eat most of my meals outside the hotel, which is located in an up-scale area with several good eating places. More later.

9:30am — Well, I changed my mind and decided to have the hotel $6 breakfast. It was actually quite good, and I was able to pig out on fresh fruit. The service was prompt and useful, and I had no trouble getting a pint of skim milk as part of my breakfast, no extra cost.

Afterwards, I went around to see how the rest of the con was opening up. And since some of you reading this may be wondering if you want to attend a CopperCon, I should mention what it has to offer.

One room is devoted to Japanese Animation, 24 hours a day, with some of the films subtitled in English. I have always admired the dedication of the fans to keep such a room open from Friday noon to Sunday evening.

Also available was a video room. The con itself did not have a video room, so a fan set up one in his hotel room, which just happened to be next door to *my* hotel room. But he was very polite and considerate, and kept the volume down last night, so I had no trouble sleeping all night. He has several hundred films on tape, and is willing to screen whatever is requested. Talk about fannish dedication!

There is also a large gaming room, and games are a major part of CopperCon. Again, I am no longer active in this field, but I have a certain envy of those who can play... and play and play and play as much as 72 hours without food or sleep. At least, it seems

that way. Unlike the situation at many cons, there is no conflict between the gamers and the convention staff.

Finally, another room has been set aside for filking. This is a fannish activity I'm no longer active in, but judging from the room last night, it too has its place at this con.

All in all, I am impressed at how things have been set up and are proceeding. I stopped by registration after breakfast and was informed that they had over 450 registered, which means the con will at least break even.

Last night also saw Regency Dancing, and there will be more tonight. It is held outside, and I was too tired last night to participate. Maybe tonight. But only if the weather cools off. Phoenix can be brutal in September, and the dry heat just sucks the water out of your body. It is quite different from the Los Angeles summer weather with more humidity (and smog) that I am used to.

And given the wide range of programming, this is certainly an eclectic convention. I am glad I was able to attend this.

2pm — Starting at noon was a blood drive. I asked around and found out that blood drives are a regular event at Phoenix are cons. Alas, I am still unable to donate. I went on a trip to Africa in 1990, and the trip took me through a malarial zone. I took all precautions and medications, but the Red Cross still insists on a three-year waiting period before I can donate blood again.

13 September, Sunday Evening — After typing the above entry, I returned to the con suite for relaxation and conversation. I went out to dinner about 6pm and was back in time for the masquerade, which started at 7pm.

Alas, there were only six entries, reminding me of why I usually skip the masquerade. We had Wonder Woman, two Klingons, one yo-ho-ho-and-a-bottle-of-rum sailor, the usual near-naked girl with two bandaids and a cork *[literally — ed]*, and finally a couple of women in pseudo-medieval gowns that show some imagination and work. At intermission, some woman started singing filksongs, and at the first twang of the out-of-tune guitar I went back to the con suite.

The parties that night were well attended. I stuck to the con suite, mostly because it was alcohol-free. Several private parties had booze, and I am not sure how strictly the drinking laws were enforced. Drinking age in Arizona is 21 years. In any case, some of the parties were getting rowdy, and the music at some of the room parties was boom-box level. Around 11pm, I retired for the night.

I slept well, almost to 10am. Rather strange for me, to sleep so late, and I wasn't all that gung ho when I got up. Not feeling well enough to drive to a nearby restaurant, I decided to have the hotel buffet breakfast again. I had juice, some fruit, and was about halfway through the scrambled eggs when my stomach started heaving. I ran back to my room in time to throw up breakfast and last night's supper.

So there I was, on my back in bed, feeling quite miserable, when the phone rang. I answered, and it was the front desk informing me that they had charged my room for the breakfast. I informed them that I had thrown up from eating their scrambled eggs. No sympathy whatsoever from the front desk; they wanted only to make sure I understood they were charging me $8 for the buffet. I growled and went back to bed, feeling just god-awful. Food poisoning? Well, maybe more like Georgy Bush-style stomach flu.

So I moaned and groaned for a couple of hours, took some Tums tablets, and finally got up at 1pm. I stopped by the restaurant, and the first thing they told me was that my room had been charged for the breakfast. No sympathy, no inquiries about my health, no concern as to how I was feeling — just determined to get that $8 out of me. My opinion of the Camelview Resort plunged.

Well, for better or for worse, I was up and around again. I had long talks with old-time friends Jim and Doreen Webbert. I had another conversation with old friends Margaret Hildebrand and Bruce D. Arthurs. This pretty much took up the afternoon. Then the art show closed, and Jim Webbert went in to do the auction. The last panels ended around 2:30. The Dealers' Room closed down at 4pm, although most of the buyers had departed by that time.

I wobbled over to the con suite again, for some soda water, which I knew I could keep down. In fact, I was on the mend. About 5pm, I stopped by my room, and the phone rang. It was the front desk calling to confirm that I was staying over that night, which indeed was the case as I had informed them Friday morning. Then they wanted to know if I understood that the breakfast buffet that morning had been charged to my room. I answered yes. No more sympathy or inquiries were forthcoming, so I went out to dinner at a Greek-style restaurant for some stuffed lamb over rice. I had no trouble eating it or keeping it down, and indeed felt much better now that I had solid food in my stomach.

I returned to the con suite, where a token dead dog party was underway. At 7pm, it was closed out. I moved down the hall to the dead dog filk, the only thing left going at the con. I just sat in the background and enjoyed the songs. At about 10pm, I felt the need to go to bed, but am first typing this entry. I will be checking out early tomorrow morning and have no doubt that the first thing they will ask me is if I am aware that they have charged that damned $8 to my room.

All in all, a good con if not a great one. I'll have to try another Phoenix-area con in a few years.

14 September, Monday Evening, 9pm — Last night at the dead dog filk, when I explained my resentment at the hotel and the very nasty letter I was going to write to the manager, one of the filkers said he was part of the convention committee and asked me not to write that letter. Why? Because the Camelview was the only hotel in Scottsdale still willing to host an SF con. Another filker pointed out that the hotel had no idea I was a recovered alcoholic, 8.5 years sober, and may have assumed I was one of those party animals that boozed and drugged and rocked all night.

So this morning I was Mr. Nice Guy. Really I was. Of course, the first thing the desk clerk asked me was if I understood that my room had been billed for yesterday's breakfast. I have never seen a hotel so determined to get their money, which by the way $8.50, not $8, which did not include a tip, which I never would have given for such rotten service. I just smiled and smiled and signed the credit card slip and left. That has to be the most expensive breakfast that I never never ate.



Southwest Regional Pro News

By Adam Niswander

While we plod along in mundania, surrounded by care and challenge, able to travel to the stars only in the vehicle of imagination, some among us have soared high into the vastness and aid us in our feeble attempts to escape by providing temporary visas to the heavens.

GREETINGS DENIZENS OF EARTH AND FEN!

The time has once again arrived for my report to you on the activities of those risen above us to heights of fame and glory. While we plod along in mundania, surrounded by care and challenge, able to travel to the stars only in the vehicle of imagination, some among us have soared high into the vastness and aid us in our feeble attempts to escape by providing temporary visas to the heavens. Please have your passport ready as you approach the gate and check your baggage before boarding.

I spoke with **G. HARRY STINE** who is still working on the multimedia project called *Discover Space* for Brøderbund. He reports that the contract has been signed and the advance paid on the new edition of *The Handbook of Model Rocketry* which is due in April. Continuing with the creation of *Supersub #2* for NAL, he explains there have been some delays due to changes in the publisher's editorial staff. In addition, he has been involved in the production of the new "Delta Clipper" model rocket, a working model of a single-stage earth-to-orbit spaceship. Other than that, it seems to me he's just lazing around.

Both **ANNIS SHEPHERD** and **STEVE MARTINDALE,** members of the Adam's Bookstore Writers' Group, have sold stories to the new science fiction magazine, *Tomorrow Speculative Fiction,* edited by Algis Budrys. Annis sold "I'm A Camera, Mr. Joans" and Steve sold "A Whore With A Heart of Gold." *Tomorrow* is published by Pulphouse. Exactly when the stories will appear has not yet been determined.

DIANA GABALDON reports that *Dragonfly In Amber,* the second book in the saga of Jamie and Claire, has just entered it's third hardcover printing. The paperback of the first book, *Outlander,* has entered a second printing and there are some 400,000 copies out there. Both books have been picked up and are currently being offered by The Literary Guild and Doubleday Book Clubs. In addition, the third book — titled *Voyager* — is scheduled for release in November of 1993. The lovely Diana is attempting to choose between a number of interesting contract offers but has so far agreed to do a small, stand-alone, collection of three novellas about Jamie's parents which will be published after *Voyager* but is in fact a kind of prequel to the series.

PETE MANLY'S story "Traveling Salesman" appeared in *Life Among The Asteroids,* an anthology edited by Jerry Pournelle and John F. Carr. Most writers have day jobs. Pete is fortunate in that his day job is also writing — but non-fiction. He had an article in the December issue of *Arizona Flyways,* the aviation magazine, and continues to work on his magnum opus, the suspenseful and scintillating book, *The Schmidt-Casgrain Telescope.*

We received a press release from Tucson author **CATHERINE WELLS** announcing her space trilogy published by Del Rey. The first book is titled *The Earth Is All That Lasts.* It takes place in Arizona in an unspecified future and was written with strong ecological overtones. The second book, titled *Children of the Earth,* was released October 1st. The third, *The Earth Saver,* is due out in 1993 and will conclude the trilogy.

JENNIFER ROBERSON has reached new heights — even for a superstar. Since the option on sequels to *Lady of the Forest (*her Robin Hood novel) had run out, a number of houses got into a bidding war and Bantam won it. Jennifer is ecstatic to announce that she has signed a three book deal with Bantam for three historical novels — follow -ups to *LOTF* — for a mid-six-figure advance with 5-figure escalators for performance. She is currently working on *Glen of Sorrows,* the first of the three. In addition, she still has three books due to DAW in the Shade and Shadow series. As she puts it, she has job security for the next six years. Finally, *A Tapestry of Lions* — the eighth and final Cheysuli novel — is officially into the bookstores.

MARK O'GREEN continues to work on *Star Trek Adventures* for Interplay, a project he shares with Liz Danforth and Michael Stackpole. In addition, Mark is working on another computer game for Interplay and is the Co-Sysop in the Games Conference on National Videotex. **ELIZABETH DANFORTH** tells me the newest *Star Trek Adventure* for Interplay has been turned in. She says she is keeping plenty busy editing, drawing and painting.

SIMON HAWKE continues to work steadily. For specifics on what this Tucson resident is doing, see the interview in this issue.

MICHAEL STACKPOLE has received his magnum of champagne from Bantam for his two book deal. He has also turned in a story for a Fred Saberhagen Sword Anthology. Finally, he has turned in the outline for a story to be written for a five author anthology being put together by Roger Zelazny. This will be along the lines of a braided novel, where all five stories will weave together and interact. The subject is "what happens after the quest." I got this information from Elizabeth Danforth since Mike was in Georgia being an expert witness in a murder trial. Someone claims the accused were influenced by gaming. Since Mike is active with the Game Manufacturers' Industry Watch, he is there to set the record straight.

Finally, remember that copies of *Anthology I,* the anthology of short stories from members of the Adam's Bookstore Writers' Group, are available at the store. Until next issue, have fun, fen!

It Came From Toys 'Я' Us...

The Game's Afoot



By Don Harrington & Bill Scott

IT USED TO BE THAT ROLE-PLAYERS would only find their games in the back of the store behind the "real" war-games. (Which is probably dating me a bit.) Now, of course, they dominate the gaming stores, and are moving into the real world. Yes, fantasy gaming comes to the mass market via Toys 'R Us.

Over the last year or so, the shelves of the local toy stores have had competition to the run-of-the-mill *Scrabble* and *Operation* games. These come in the form of several simple role-playing games and one fantasy wargame. All are aimed at the 10 to adult range and have rules aimed at the low end of the spectrum. Although quality varies, here are some of the gems in the mix.

Battle Masters

Battle Masters by Milton-Bradley ($30) is a real winner! This game combines tried and true miniatures mechanics with state-of-the-art toy value. You get over 100 miniatures which are broken down into 25 "stands" or groups of figures. The sculpting is high quality (especially for plastic). The figures range from traditional medieval cavalry and infantry to goblin wolf-riders and an ogre champion (a charming fellow with a mongol helmet and a big mace.)

Rules for initiative and movement are incorporated in a simple deck of cards which allows for straight-forward mechanics that result in a continuously shifting focus of battle. Each unit has one or more cards in the deck (the number of cards available goes up as the unit's base speed increases). The deck is shuffled, and then the cards are played one at a time. Even though you know that, in the long run the battle is balanced — the luck of the draw can cause significant shifts in position for each player.

Bill and Don rate *Battle Masters* as TWO THUMBS UP. Buy it today!

HeroQuest

HeroQuest, also by Milton Bradley in conjunction with Games Workshop ($25), is a second definite hit. Opening the box gives the same feeling as opening those old toy soldier packs we all got as kids. The key word here is toy value. The box contains mummies, orcs, goblins, skeletons, chaos warriors, and other vile creatures, and of course the adventurers to challenge them. Also included are a chest, doors, table, shelves, a rack and other "dungeon dressing" and a multi-room board. The only down-side to all this is that you need to be prepared to use up an hour or so in assembly before playing. After the first time, though, games can be up and running in under 10 minutes.

Rather than being a fantasy wargame like *Battle Masters*, this is a true role-playing game. One player plays Zargon (the "Dungeon Master") and the rest choose from a cast of characters that includes a barbarian, a dwarf, an elf, and a mage. Players can cast spells, search, and fight. The combat rules are based on a special set of six-sided dice — every skull you role is a combat hit, every shield rolled is a defense. If more hits are rolled than

Continued on page 36

The figures range from traditional medieval cavalry and infantry to goblin wolf-riders and an ogre champion (a charming fellow with a mongol helmet and a big mace.)

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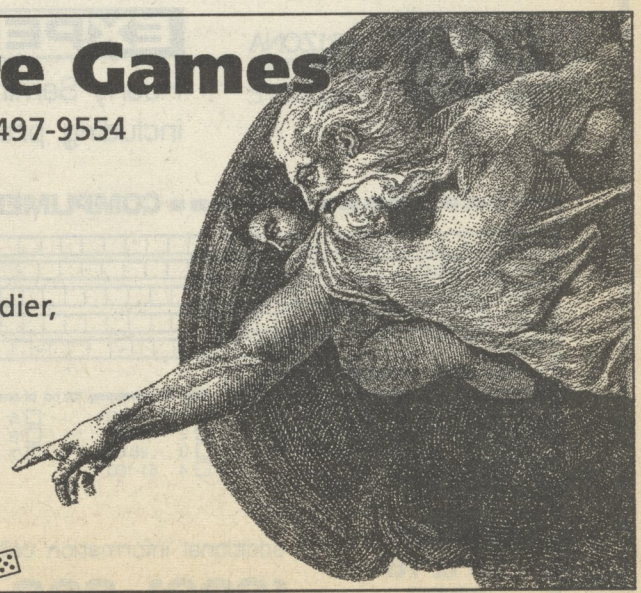
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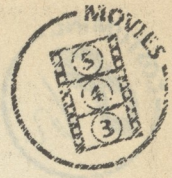
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PHOENIX CIVIC PLAZA

Movie News & Reviews

24 Frames



By Matthew Frederick

UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMORS FLY FAST and furious as genre films are again on the rise. Here are some rumors along with some truly substantiated facts...

While neither the cast nor a director have been announced, it's said that **Stan Lee** and **Roger Corman** are getting together for ***Fantastic Four: the Movie.*** Don't hold your breath — the ***Spiderman*** movie still isn't in production and rumors about it have been flying for more than a decade.

Stephen King fans may be in for a treat — ***The Stand*** is currently being filmed in Pittsburgh, Las Vegas, and Orem, Utah. It will be an 8-hour 4-part miniseries that will end up (probably) on ABC. This may actually be a treat for King fans since the Master of the Macabre has final script privilege. C. Johnson will be doing the make-up effects and local Matt Marich is headed up to Orem to create forty 15'-long nuclear warheads.

Speaking of King, ***The Dark Half,*** which has already been shot, is in Orion legal hell — Orion Pictures, as you may recall, is in very deep financial trouble.

Not strictly genre, a new ***Blues Brothers*** movie is in the works. The premise: Elwood finally gets out of prison, finds out that Jake is dead, and decides to get the band back together. What could make more sense? This seems to primarily be a tie-in with **Dan Aykroyd's** new House of Blues restaurants popping up all over the country.

Classic movie monster time: first yet another version of ***The Mummy*** has been filmed in Israel with Tony Curtis. The **Wolfman** is back (possibly titled ***Wolf***) with **Jack Nicholson, Mia Farrow,** and **Michelle Pfieffer.** Expect lots of special effects from director **Mike Nichols.** And last, **Kenneth Branagh** directs and stars in ***Frankenstein*** — it's rumored to be extremely faithful to Mary Shelley's original. Branagh has brought out nothing but great films so far (*Henry V, Dead Again, Peter's Friends*) so I particularly look forward to this one.

Arnold Schwarzenegger is back with ***The Last Action Hero,*** the story of a boy that enters the movies of his favorite action star through long fantasy sequences. Charles Dance, Anthony Quinn, F. Murray Abraham, and Mercedes Ruehl also star in this action-comedy.

The Addams Family 2, with all of the same stars, is in the works for Thanksgiving — word is the story is about the Addams' new baby and their evil nanny. *The Ooky Hand That Rocks the Cradle*? Wouldn't that be Thing?

Lots of sources talk about the ***Tales from the Crypt*** movies. Based on HBO's TV show of the same name (in turn based on EC's comic), **Richard Donner, Robert Zemeckis,** and **Walter Hill** will each direct full movies, all anthologies (similar to the *Twilight Zone* movie).

Star Trek VII looks like a reality, though it appears to avoid **Shatner's** script. Expect both the old crew and cast-members from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* to appear so that the *NextGen* stars can make their major motion picture debuts.

Would you believe a remake of ***Attack of the 50-Foot Woman*** starring **Daryl Hannah?** Try harder — it's true.

Sid & Marty Krofft are bringing us the movie version of ***Land of the Lost*** — it will explain what happened to the Marshall family (from the old series) and will include the new family from the current ABC series. It will be darker than the new show so as to appeal to the no-more-kids-stuff grown-up fans of the old series.

Jurassic Park had 15 days trimmed off its shooting schedule so **Spielberg** could begin work on a new film about Polish Jews in WWI. It's unknown whether *JP* will suffer, but one thing's for sure: the special effects are awesome.

Sylvester Stallone will star in a freezing film with special effects from the ADI effects shop (*Death Becomes Her, Alien3*). All that's been seen so far are 29 bodies in giant pucks of clear stuff.

Short Stuff: Karen Black in ***Surf Samurais from Atlantis***... Jack Palance in ***Cyborg II***... Robin Williams plays five different guys in five different historical periods in ***Being Human***... the creators of *Roadkill* bring us the Canadian production of the comic ***Yummy Fur***... another H.P. Lovecraft adaptation, this time ***The Lurking Fear*** directed by C. Courtney Joyner... Dario Argento brings us T.E.D. Klein's screenplay of ***Trauma***... Mel Brooks returns with ***Robin Hood: Men in Tights***... Brainiac is the villain in ***Superman — The New Movie***... other SF-ish upcoming titles: ***The Coneheads, Speed Racer, The Hidden II, Scanner Cop, Carnosaur,*** and many more... Universal Television will be filming a SF series here in Phoenix — more info in upcoming issues.

Coming in March

Remember Travis Walton, the Arizona logger who disappeared one day while working up on the Mogollon Rim? He claimed he'd been kidnapped by extraterrestrials and then wrote a book about it called ***Fire in the Sky.*** Later he admitted he made it all up so

Continued on page 36

Would you believe a remake of *Attack of the 50-Foot Woman* starring Daryl Hannah? Try harder — it's true.

COSTUMING

From Cowboy To Cavalier

By Randall Whitlock

Almost any pair of riding boots can be converted to a reasonable facsimile of cuffed cavalier boots in an hour or less.

ALMOST ANY PAIR OF RIDING BOOTS can be converted to a reasonable facsimile of cuffed cavalier boots in an hour or less.

The most distinctive feature of late renaissance "Cavalier" riding boots is the flared cuff around the top. Originally these cuffs were the tops of thigh-length riding boots that were rolled down below the knees for easier walking. Later they became a canvas for displaying fancy stitchings and rich laces.

Modern riding boots are not significantly different in basic construction from cavalier boots. The addition of a pair of cuffs can complete the image. Suitable boots for conversion include cowboy boots (available in any shoe or discount store), the "jack boots" that were part of many European military uniforms earlier in the 20th century, motorcycle policemen's boots, or the women's go-go boots from the 1960's that are still easy to find in thrift stores. A suitable boot should be relatively plain in color and texture. Fancy stitching or exotic leathers would be difficult to match on the cuff, and easy for a critic to recognize.

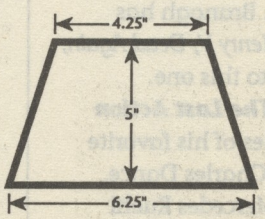
To make your boot cuffs:

1 Measure the circumference around the top of your boot. If your boot has "V" shaped cuts in the top, just ignore them. I began with close-fitting boots that measure 16 inches around the top.

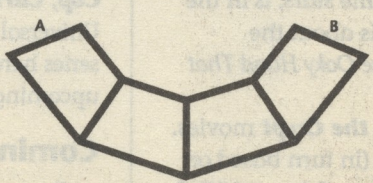
2 Divide this number by four and add a quarter inch for seam allowance. On my boots this yields (16/4) + .25 = 4.25 inches.

3 Figure the circumference of the bottoms of the cuffs by taking the circumference of the boot top times 150%. Divide this by four and add a quarter-inch seam allowance. For my boots this meant 16X150% = 24. (24/4) + .25 = 6.25 inches.

4 Draw an isosceles trapezoid five inches tall with the figure from step 2 as the top and the figure from step 3 as the base. For me this made the figure shown here.



5 Cut out four of these trapezoids. Now here's the strange part — sew them together. Trust me, it works. This should give you a pattern like this:



This will be your pattern for the cuff. Wrap the inside edge of the pattern around the top of your boot to make certain the size is right.

6 Lay the pattern on top of your cuff material. Trace around the pattern with chalk. This tracing will also serve to smooth out the corners of the pattern. Cut out the cuff along the chalk line.

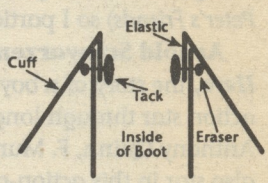
7 Fold the cuff over, right sides together, and sew the ends together so that line A matches line B. Turn the cuff right side out. You should now have a shape that looks like a cone with the point cut off. Check to make sure that the top of this truncated cone matches the circumference of the top of your boot.

8 You now have a decision to make. Do you want to make your boots cavalier for good, or do you want to make the cuffs removable? If you choose the former, the procedure is easy: simply sew through the cuffs and boot tops to attach them. For smoothness, you may wish to apply a strip of 1" grosgrain ribbon over the joint between the cuff and boot. The result should look something like this.



9 Since my boots also serve as everyday dress shoes, I elected to make my cuffs removable. To accomplish this sew a length of 1.5" wide elastic to the inside of the top edge of the cuff. This forms a cylindrical sleeve inside the cuff that slips down inside the boot and allows the cuff to rest on the top edge of the boot.

You can secure the cuff in place by poking three or four thumbtacks out through the elastic and boot. Cover the tip of the tack with a bit of pencil eraser or one of those clips used to hold tie tacks or military insignia. The cross section here shows how this works.



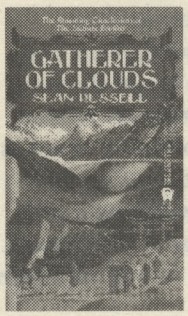
It looks ungainly, but this arrangement will hold the cuffs in place for weeks. The holes left behind when the tacks are removed are completely invisible.

This cuffing method has unlimited possibilities. You might make plain leather cuffs that match the boots, you might trim the cuffs with lace, or make fur cuffs for winter. Dagging of the cuffs would be suitable for earlier periods. Apply some imagination and you can go far with a cavalier attitude.

Book Reviews

In Our Book...

The Initiate Brother
by Sean Russell, DAW pb: 1991, 480 pp., $4.99
Gatherer of Clouds
by Sean Russell, DAW pb: 1992, 604 pp., $5.50



The *Initiate Brother* is a book about a slightly fantasized China, similar in some ways to C.J. Cherryh's *Paladin.* In this epic novel we follow Brother Shuyan, the initiate brother of the title, a Buddhist postulate. We also watch Lord Shonto and his adopted daughter, Lady Nishima, as they live in a country which has been wreaked by plague and is now threatened by intrigue and war.

Gatherer Of Clouds is the conclusion to *The Initiate Brother;* in it we see the outcome of the war that was pending at the end of the first book. We also watch Brother Shuyan's search for truth as he learns that he must follow his conscience even when his superiors disagree.

The excellent characterization, fine background and, yes, even the slight difference in cultural assumptions help the reader feel that they are truly living this adventure in a foreign culture. Despite the separation into two books this is really one epic novel. (No story this long would stay together for any length of time if it had been issued as a single paperback; remember *Shogun*?) Nor are any of the pages wasted; it is a fascinating look at a China before Buddhism had settled on an agreement about the Eightfold path.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Winds Of Fate
by Mercedes Lackey, DAW pb: 1992, 458 pp., $4.99
Winds Of Change
by Mercedes Lackey,
DAW hc: 1992, 446 pp., $20.00





These two are of the trilogy that takes up shortly after *By The Sword.* Concerned that the use of magic in Valdemar is now possible, Elspeth convinces her mother to allow her to seek a mage to train Elspeth's own talent. With Skif as a companion, Elspeth goes into Rethwellan where she becomes aware that the Companions are reporting home and have attempted to manipulate her. Angry, she sets out still further south to the Dhorisha Plains in an attempt to find the Shin'a'in. She hopes they will send her on to the Hawkbrothers; she feels that since they trained Vanyel she can find training with them.

Meanwhile we have been following the adventures of a Hawkbrother scout, Darkwind, who is struggling to protect his weakened tribe from attacks by Mornelithe, an adept from the uncleansed lands. The clan has been left vulnerable by its heartstone fracturing during a move. The fracturing killed many of the clan's adepts and left the two parts of the clan unable to communicate or rejoin.

After crossing the plain, following the map the Shin'a'in have given them, Elspeth and Skif find Darkwind. Joining forces with Darkwind, they and several other allies assist him to defeat Mornelithe in battle; unfortunately they are unable to capture or kill Mornelithe.

Winds Of Change picks up after the battle. The first portion of the book is concerned with picking up the pieces and the Heralds becoming familiar with the Hawkbrothers' ways. Someone told me they thought this portion was slow, but I was fascinated to learn more about the Tayledras and their lifestyle. Most of *Winds Of Change,* however, is devoted to fighting Mornelithe or trying to gain allies to assist in battling the ages old adept.

Mercedes Lackey continues to grow as a writer. Valdemar is taking its place with Pern and Darkover as one of the finest works in sf/fantasy. If you like either series I strongly recommend these books.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Dreambuilder
by Tom Deitz,
AvoNova pb: 1992, 471 pp., $4.99



This is the second novel in the *Soulsmith* trilogy (I reviewed the first novel *Soulsmith* in the Spring of '92 issue of *ConNotations*). Again we have a fairly straightforward story of a young man with unusual abilities intertwined with a mystic tale about a man with wonderful powers, but this time the storylines are closer and the mystic man somewhat less enigmatic.



Reviews By:
M.R. Hildebrand
Pam Allan
Bruce D. Arthurs
David J. Hiatt
Matthew Frederick

"We're talking entire civilizations being wiped out in a matter of hours; this is action on a scale rarely seen since E.E. Smith was tossing planets around."

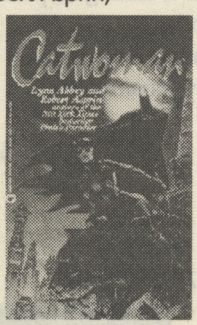
Tom Deitz' use of Celtic mythos blended with rural South is unique. His ability to keep the story going while telling us about his characters' inner feelings and exploring what it means to love and what we need to fulfill our dreams is rare and powerful.

Ron Dillon is a young man with a talent for working metal and problems with his girlfriend, Wendy; he is also having difficulty coping with his memories and abilities. Returning to Welch County after college graduation, he finds himself drawn to Brandy, an interesting woman with a very interesting building project. But when his girlfriend vanishes, leaving him feeling that something is wrong, he must try and discover what happened to her and what his real feelings about Wendy and Brandy are.

The descriptions in this book are incredibly rich and detailed, the characterizations crisp and real. This book's only weakness is that the action is slow, but personally I didn't find it that much of a problem. Recommended for people who like Robert Holdstock, Gael Baudino, Diana Paxson or Diane Duane.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Catwoman
by Lynn Abbey and Robert Asprin,
Warner Books pb: 1992, 196 pp., $4.99



Catwoman was one of the major characters in *Batman Returns,* but I felt she was the weakest. Her character origins were mystic as opposed to those of the other two characters and she seemed less defined. Not so with *Catwoman* the novel — here Catwoman's origins are quite different. Selina is a street waif who supports herself by robbing those who have large amounts of cash — the drug dealers. She exercises a minimum of four hours a day and wears a costume for much the same reasons Batman does (to increase the crook's fear and to keep from being under constant attack).

In this novel the plot hinges on the character of Tiger. Tiger hopes to become a superman through absorbing the ambiance of big cats by surrounding himself with relics (tigerskins, skulls, bones, etc.). In the meantime he is a middleman for an arms sales outfit called "The Connection." Batman is out to get "The Connection" and Catwoman is out to get Tiger. She loves big cats and feels that by buying the relics from poachers, Tiger is as guilty of killing the animals as if he shot them himself.

The book centers around Catwoman, her background, plans and feelings. Batman is a major character in it, but does not dominate. Written with the same dark brooding mood as the movies are filmed, reading *Catwoman* is much like watching a new *Batman* film and at least as enjoyable.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Bazil Broketail
by Christopher Rowley,
ROC pb: 1992, 476 pp., $5.99



The concept of an intelligent dragon, raised to fight for humans, and his groom was an interesting one. Unfortunately neither the characterization nor the background were well-handled and the plot substituted action for development.

To be fair, Mr. Rowley isn't any worse a writer than Edgar Rice Burroughs was, but I'm not in my teens any more. If you need a book for a young person, or just want something that won't stretch your horizons too far this might be for you.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Evil Triumphant: Third Book of the Fiddleback Trilogy
by Michael Stackpole,
GDW pb: 1992, 342 pp., $4.95



The first two books of The Fiddleback Trilogy, *A Gathering Of Evil* and *Evil Ascending* were reviewed in the Fall '92 issue of *ConNotations.* In this volume, Coyote must ally with Fiddleback to destroy Pygmalion without allowing his former master access to Earth. With Mike's usual panache he manages to carry this off without breaking our suspension of disbelief and with a dollop of humor.

The only problem I had with this book was with the philosophy that Mike has a character express during a punitive raid. "He did not want to acknowledge those he had killed as human beings, because they were not.... Their ideas took them beyond humanity, turning them into monsters. There was nothing to regret about killing monsters."

I disapprove of the ideas held by the Warriors of the Aryan World Alliance, the people being referred to, and their real life counterparts, perhaps even as strongly as Mike does. But I feel that the belief that people who think or believe differently than I do are monsters is exactly what made the Aryan Warriors do the awful things they did. I will add that I don't believe that people should lie down and be walked on, but if it is necessary to kill it should be remembered that the dead of both sides are human.

Over all this is an excellent action adventure novel and lots of fun.

— M.R. Hildebrand

The Nine Lives Of Catseye Gomez
by Simon Hawke,
Warner pb: 1992, 216 pp., $4.99



This isn't the first time I've come across a detective novel a là Mickey Spillane, but it is one of the better ones. In a spin-off from one of his *Wizard Of 4th Street* novels, Simon Hawke brings back Gomez the thaumagenetic feline. As Gomez adjusts to a new town and a new housemate (nobody owns Gomez), he becomes involved in the murder of one of his new neighbors.

Catseye is written as a tough guy who admires Mickey Spillane's writing and as a true feline, a difficult combination to carry off, but I felt that both Simon Hawke and Gomez came through in fine style. If you enjoy a mystery with a dash of humor or a light fantasy with a puzzle, you're in for a treat.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Strands Of Starlight
by Gael Baudino,
ROC pb: 1989, 371 pp., $4.50



This is a novel which questions the acceptance of what others tell us without examining it against the real world. The area in which this is brought out most strongly is religion, but I felt the author was trying to make the point in relation to all authority.

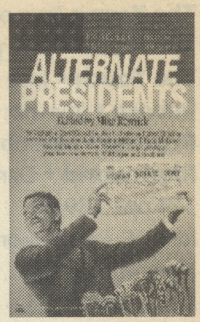
Set in a medieval European (it made me think of France) setting, the book is about Miriam, a healer who heals by laying-on-of-hands. She is a healer not by training nor by will, but because her talent gives her no choice. Turned out by her family for fear of a charge of witchcraft, Miriam can find no refuge until she is taken in by a mid-wife named Mika. Even here the church hears of her miraculous healing and she must flee again, this time to the village of Saint Brigid, the southernmost of the Free Towns. On the way she comes across an injured man whom she must heal, forced to do so by her talent; in repayment he rapes her.

The story of her character change is told intertwined with the political intrigue of the Barons and the Bishop against the Free Towns. Miriam's story is one of pain and growth. It's well-told against a rich background detailed with warmth and humor. The wonders Miriam sees and the mysticism are beautifully portrayed.

This novel could easily have been a diatribe, but the writer has taken a deeper look, and portrayed her characters as flawed but not broken. I recommend this (and Ms. Baudino's *Gossamer Axe*) to those readers who enjoy Diana Paxson, C.J. Cherryh's fantasy, Barbara Hambly or Diane Duane.

— M.R. Hildebrand

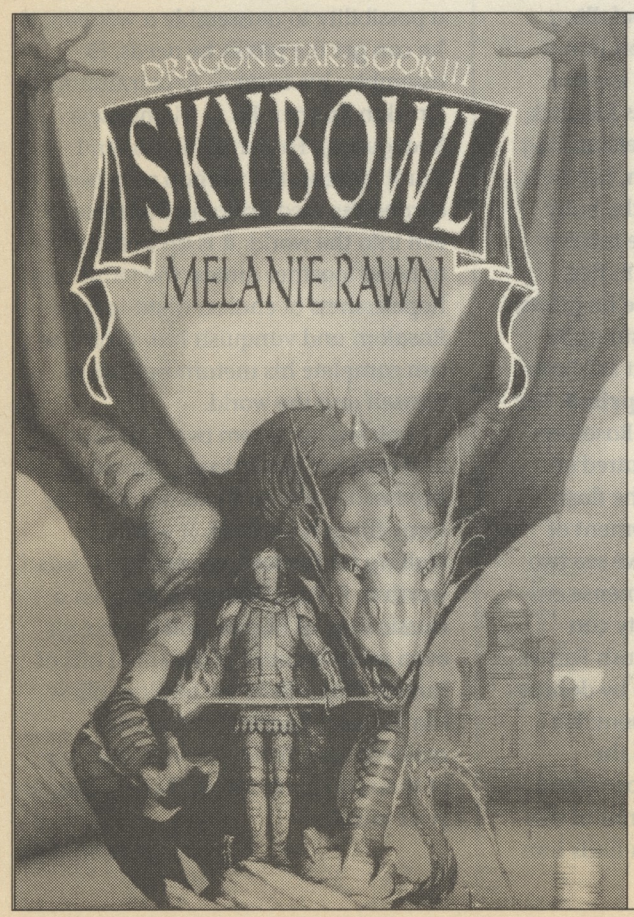
Alternate Presidents
Edited by Mike Resnick,
Tor Books pb, 466 pp., $4.99



The premise of *AP*, the challenge given to the numerous writers, was: What if Presidential elections throughout American history had concluded differently? What if Benjamin Franklin had been the first President of the US? What if Lincoln had never been elected, and had been a Union General in the Civil War? What if Huey Long had not been assassinated and instead became President? What if Gerald Ford were still president when the Iran-hostage situation arose?

Almost all the stories in *AP* feature such interesting speculations. There are a few "ho-hummers" and a "huh?" or two, yet overall, *AP* was one of the most solid and intriguing themed anthologies I've read. Almost as intriguing are the changes brought about in many of the stories which illuminate lesser-known events and periods in American history.

— Bruce D. Arthurs



Fantasy Author
Melanie Rawn

Author of the
Dragon Prince and
Dragon Star trilogies.



Autograph Session

Friday, March 19, 5–7pm

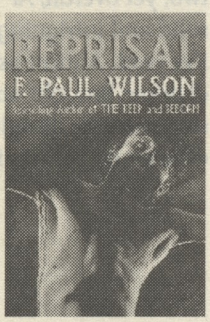
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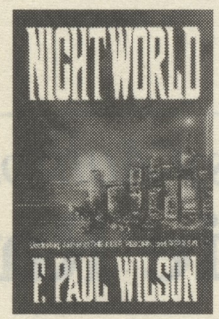
Come see our great selection of SF, Fantasy, & Mainstream

The Keep • Jove pb: 1988, $4.95
The Tomb • Jove pb: 1989, out of print
The Touch • Jove pb: 1989, $5.50
Reborn • Jove pb: 1990, $4.99
Reprisal • Jove pb: 1992, $4.99
Nightworld • Dark Harvest hc: 1992, 328 pp., $39.00

All by F. Paul Wilson







Nightworld is the latest novel by F. Paul Wilson, and is the culmination of what has become an epic sequence of books.

It began with **The Keep,** set in 1941 as two ancient enemies — Rasalom and Glaeken — faced off against the background of evil as personified by the Nazis. The "good" (Glaeken) supposedly vanquished the "bad" (Rasalom) in that clash, and he was led to believe that his fight was over.

In **The Tomb** we met Repairman Jack, a man who had dedicated his life to battling small evils one at a time, making inroads against encroaching chaos. He was thrust into the midst of a vendetta brought about by a man older than he had a right to be with the assistance of denizens from a place that should not to exist. Jack was successful in his struggle, but at a cost.

The Touch introduced Dr. Alan Bulmer, a Long Island physician who believed in the personal nature of healing, in making contact with his patients. Through a bizarre circumstance he is "gifted" with the dat-tay-vau, an ancient power which bestows upon him the ability to heal with his touch. But there is a side effect to the power which is detrimental to his own well-being.

Reborn began a three-book cycle in which we find out that the evil of *The Keep* was not irrevocably destroyed. It began with an orphan who inherits the estate of a well-known scientist who was a pioneer in genetics. It seems in 1941 he was experimenting with cloning, and had cloned his own genetic material into a viable embryo, which was then transferred into the womb of a prostitute. The embryo was carried full-term, the baby was healthy, the prostitute was paid off, and the experiment was over. Then the child was sent to the orphanage, but the scientist kept track of the boy's development.

Through some quirk of fate the essence of Rasalom, the embodiment of evil supposedly destroyed, was able to enter the body of this clone. But there he lay dormant, unable to affect the outside world. But when the clone, Jim Stephens, married and conceived a child Rasalom was able to inhabit the new embryo and that was the beginning of his reign of terror. Even from the womb he was able to begin to use his powers for evil, manipulating people around him and causing them to do things against their nature. The only one he was unable to control was Father Bill Ryan, a friend of the family.

The blame for the evils befalling Monroe, Long Island, falls on James Stephens, the clone, and he is persecuted by a group of religious fanatics. The only one with any understanding is Glaeken, now an old man, but he is unable to save James, and the baby once born arranges with the mother and James' adoptive father to flee. They remain in hiding while he grows, physically as well as in his strength.

Time passes, and we next see Rasalom manifest himself in **Reprisal.** For warped reasons of his own, Rasalom has developed an intense hatred of Father Bill Ryan. Through the flashbacks as well as the development of present-day circumstances we see two distinct examples of the immense cruelty and terror that this entity can inflict. He does his best to crush Father Ryan's spirit, to destroy him by destroying anyone that he cares about; his parents, a favorite boy from the orphanage, a girl he has grown fond of, all die horribly at the hands of this monstrous evil. But Glaeken finds him too, and even though he can do little to help he at least is able to explain what is going on. Unfortunately Rasalom sees Glaeken and realizes that his feared opponent is a wizened old man with no power.

And so we come to **Nightworld.** Rasalom has grown in strength to a point where he feels ready to reshape the world in his image. It starts with an unusual celestial event. The sun rises late and sets early. By all laws of physics it is impossible, but it happens! Then a hole opens up in Central Park, Manhattan (right in view of Glaeken's apartment window), which appears to be bottomless. At night flying things come out of the hole, thirsting for blood. As the days continue to shorten, more holes appear all over the world, panic ensues, looting and rioting begin, and in general the thin veneer of civilization starts to wash away in blood and terror.

Meanwhile Glaeken decides he must try to save the world if he can. He has had no contact with the "good" force since 1941, when his sword shattered following his battle with Rasalom. Now he is in his eighties and does not relish another battle, but he feels that there is a possibility to reassemble a weapon, if he can get the pieces he needs. He assembles his team — Repairman Jack, Dr Alan Bulmer, Ba (a Vietnamese bodyguard), Father Bill Ryan, and Carol Stevens, the woman who had carried the seed bringing this force of evil into the world. It is up to these few to band together amidst the terror and hopelessness of endless night to fight Rasalom and vanquish him before he can complete his metamorphosis of himself and the world.

I picked up *Reborn* two years ago and couldn't put it down. I grabbed *Reprisal* as soon as it was out, and the same thing happened. It was hard waiting for the last volume, but it was worth it. F. Paul Wilson has woven a classic saga of horror, and it succeeds even more because of the small bits of humor that relieve the tension, allowing the next horror to come with renewed fury. If you haven't read any of these, go for it; all you have to lose is your mind.

— David J. Hiatt

Codgerspace
by Alan Dean Foster,
Ace pb: 1992, 309 pp., $4.99

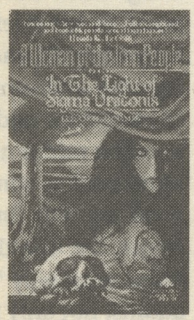


The plot of this book is fairly interesting — due to a malfunction in their manufacture, all of the AI robots are looking for nonhuman higher intelligence. When a serving robot in a Retirement Home on Earth finds a huge alien space ship buried under a lake, he leads five of the retirees to see his find. The retirees inadvertently reactivate the ship and take it into orbit, where various groups try to take it away from them.

The first half of the book is amusing, as household and industrial robots neglect or leave their jobs to follow a higher calling. Unfortunately the second half where the retirees were on board the space ship was... well, rather boring. I was disappointed since Alan Dean Foster is an excellent writer and has written successful comedy before, *Quozl* for one. I guess even a good writer can have a so-so book.

— *M.R. Hildebrand*

In the Light of Sigma Draconis
by Eleanor Arnason,
AvoNova pb, 237 pp., $4.99



A Woman of the Iron People was originally published by William Morrow as a hardcover. Now its first half is being released by AvoNova as part one of the two-part series of the same name.

For me, a poem at the beginning and an appendix on proper pronunciation at the end usually usually signifies a book I wouldn't like. I don't want to have to pronounce difficult names if I can help it. When I encounter the name L'wxheixtrivitshoopa (not an actual name in this book) I'm either disgusted or at least want to be able to create a "thought token" in my head to substitute for the word without bothering to try proper pronunciation ("that Lwx character").

The names in this book are fairly simple to pronounce, though, and the pronunciation guide primarily explains how to pronounce words using the Pinyin system of transliterating Chinese — most of the names in the book use this system of pronunciation.

The story revolves around the members of the First Interstellar Expedition, explorers from Earth that make contact with the people of Sigma Draconis II. Earth has been seriously damaged in a (apparently) nuclear conflict. Sigma Draconans look very similar to humans with the addition of otter-like fur all over and cat-like vertically-slitted eyes. Their culture is viewed by the anthropologists on board the spaceship and on on the ground as more primitive than Earth's. Their men and women live separately — the women in small villages and the men as hermits and nomads outside of the villages. After seeing their culture in action, though, their system has definite advantages.

The book focuses on an anthropologist named Lixia (Lee-sha) who joins up with a native named Nia. Nia is a Woman of the Iron People, a tribe that knows how to work iron. They cross the countryside, learning about the varied societies — it's fascinating, a definite page-turner, and an interesting blend of science fiction (particularly first-contact stuff) and fantasy. Well done — I look forward to more from Eleanor Arnason.

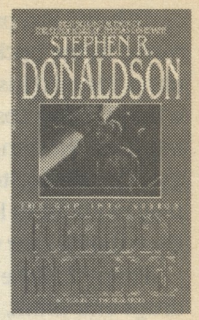
— *Matthew Frederick*

The Real Story
Bantam Spectra pb, 241 pp., $4.99
Forbidden Knowledge
Bantam Spectra pb, 455 pp., $5.99
Both by Stephen R. Donaldson



Stephen Donaldson *can* write science fiction — I didn't know it until now, since everything I've seen of his to date was better termed fantasy. These are the first two books of the Gap Cycle and, if you can stomach the first half of *The Real Story*, they're pretty good science fiction, too.

Both books follow the adventures of three people: Morn Hyland, the innocent daughter of a rich mining family; Angus Thermopyle, an inherently evil pirate; and Nick Succorso, Captain of his own starship and swaggering hero. None of the characters are exactly what they seem, however, and their adventures reveal a well thought-out galaxy of what could rival Known Space.

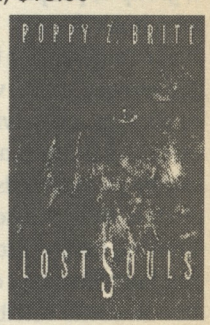


The stories are well written, but the first half (and more) of *The Real Story* contains some truly sickening sadism. Donaldson could have done a much better job of showing you the evil of Thermopyle, and setting up his relationship with Morn, without this disgusting narrative — it only made me think that there is a hidden dark side of the writer that I don't want to know.

Overall this is good space opera, and if you don't mind (or can get over) some overt sadism, these are pretty good stories — take a look.

— *Matthew Frederick*

Lost Souls
by Poppy Z. Brite
Dell Abyss hc, 320 pp., $18.00



Vampire novels abound in the bookstores right now, but this vampire story is different — it's fresh, it's hip, it's today. *Lost Souls* is Brite's first novel, Dell Abyss' first hardcover, and the first modern-vampire story I've read that I really enjoyed.

"Nothing" is a 15-year old boy — moody, thoughtful, and confused — but hardly normal, because Nothing is a vampire. He doesn't know it yet, but when he meets up with three older (*much older*) vampires named Zillah, Molochai, and Twig, he'll finally come to that realization and many more. He was adopted as a baby, parentage unknown, and raised by a well-meaning but barely adequate couple who can't understand why their son Jason is so unlike the other kids and insists on calling himself Nothing.

"Ghost" is a psychic, a sensitive, raised in the backwoods of North Carolina. He and his best friend Steve form a band called Lost Souls whose haunting tunes Nothing loves from afar. Neither Ghost nor Steve are vampires, but they're about to learn more about them than they'll ever want to know.

Poppy Z. Brite has woven a tale of drugs and drink, sex and music, youth and ancient "evil" that is impossible to put down. If you're not offended by explicit descriptions of sex, I can't recommend this book strongly enough — heck, even if you are offended, this book is damn good. You may even yearn to be a part of this frightening and tantalizing world.

— *Matthew Frederick*

Synners
by Pat Cadigan,
Bantam Spectra pb, 435 pp., $4.95



Synners is so complex, fully-realized, and full of characters that I can't do it justice in a simple review, but here are the basics.

Synners, short for synthesizers, refers to a group of people who hook directly into computers for the purpose of creating movies, music videos, entertainment of all sorts. They synthesize unique worlds of pictures and sound, virtual reality playgrounds for the mind. The story is set in the near future where hooking bodily into the computer has just been invented and the world's first true Artificial Intelligence construct has come to life. It's a tale of man's reliance on his machines, how his life is enriched and how it's disturbed by these creations of our own hands and minds.

While it's truly a cyberpunk novel, it's not as dark or as ecologically wasted as William Gibson's world. It somehow seems much more real, more immediate, and more likely to resemble our actual future. If you've ever wanted to explore cyberpunk, this is a great first book. If you're an old hand to the genre, you should still pick this up — Cadigan's world is a complete one, not to be missed.

— *Matthew Frederick*

The Broken Land
by Ian MacDonald,
Bantam Spectra tpb, 322 pp., $11.00

This novel is set on Earth, but an Earth of the far future, radically transformed by centuries of bioengineering.

A young woman, Mathembe, and her family become refugees in a religious conflict between two rival theosystems, Confessors and Proclaimers. Separated from all of her family except the head (yep, and talkative, too) of her grandfather, Mathembe undergoes privations, adventures and catastrophes, seeking not only her kin, but an understanding of the basic and shared concepts of the religions whose conflict is tearing her world apart. (MacDonald is a resident of Northern Ireland; "write what you know," indeed.)

Besides an engrossing taleteller, MacDonald is also a poet of language. *The Broken Land* is rich and vivid in style, with its settings and characters brought intensely to the mind's eye.

— *Bruce D. Arthurs*

Teklab
by William Shatner,
Ace/Putnam hc: 1991, 223 pp., $19.95

The first two in this series were fairly good action fiction; this one is bland. The basic concept is worn out and the characters, instead of developing, have become caricatures. Something else which bothered me is the number of androids in the Tek universe; practically none of the minor characters were real people. What are the real humans doing if all of the service jobs are held by androids?

The best part of this book was the action, but it wasn't enough to make it worth my time. It's too bad; there was some real promise in the first two books.

— *M.R. Hildebrand*

Daughter of the Empire
by Raymond Feist and Janny Wurts,
Spectra pb: 1988, $5.99
Servant of the Empire
by Raymond Feist and Janny Wurts,
Spectra pb: 1991, $5.99
Mistress of the Empire
by Raymond Feist and Janny Wurts,
Doubleday hc: 1992, 613 pp., $20.00

This richly detailed trilogy is set on the Tsurani side of the Riftwar Saga — a setting based on medieval Japan. They follow Mara of the Acoma as she strives to re-establish her house which was almost obliterated by treachery in one of the Midkemian battles. Forced into a world of politics, betrayal, and assassination Mara manages to survive and prosper without magics or extraordinary feats of physical prowess, an unusual case in fantasy sagas.

In *Daughter of the Empire* Mara learns of her family's death and her House's danger as she is about to take vows and enter a holy order. Only Mara's ability to see opportunity in disaster allows her to avoid the total destruction of House Acoma, a disaster without equal in western culture.

In *Servant of the Empire* Mara must continue to play "the Great Game," the political maneuvering for power among the nobles of the Tsurani court, because only power can keep her and her young son alive. As she copes with concepts from across the Rift which stretch even her ability to adapt, she must also cope with emotions she has never experienced and sacrifices greater than she has ever known when Kevin, a Midkemian slave, comes into her life.

In *Mistress of the Empire* Mara again finds that "the Great Game" has not ended, it has simply gained still larger stakes. The death of her oldest child brings Mara close to the breaking point. In her grief and anger she challenges her old enemies the Anasati and only the intervention of the Assembly of Magicians and the needless destruction of a minor allied House bring Mara back to sanity. Fearing at this point not only for the future of her House, but also the future of the Empire Mara must play "the Great Game" against not only the finest players of the court, but eventually against the Assembly of Magicians themselves.

This is an extremely well-written trilogy with few weaknesses — I found Mara's ability to adapt strategies and ideas believable, but I felt that her lack of concern for breaking tradition was too complete. I felt that both she and her advisors should have had more concern that the gods would punish them for going so far against custom.

The other major problem I had was with *Mistress* — I loved it up until

about the middle of the epilogue. Then I felt that Mara did something that was so totally out of character, it blew me out of the book. The only possible excuse the authors could have had, in my opinion, was setting up another book, but that doesn't excuse character bending this far.

But overall these are three great books, which I highly recommend.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Russian Spring
by Norman Spinrad,
Bantam Spectra pb, 643 pp., $5.99
Russian Spring extrapolates a future whose beginnings mirror current world events. It is also one of the best books of its kind we are likely to see this century. The characters are memorable, the story strong and visionary, and — its most unusual aspect — it leaves you with a sense of hope and expectation for the future. This should be on the Hugo and Nebula ballots this year if sanity reigns.

But this is not a perfect book. Spinrad's recapitulation of the paranoia of the sixties was puerile at best. The tour of French menus was superfluous, as was the concept of Jerry staying on in Paris because of the quality of Sonya's fellatio. (I found that part basically silly, but not offensive.)

Jerry Reed went into the space program with stars in his eyes. Over the years, the space program becomes nothing but a military extension of SDI. He is given an invitation to Paris where he is co-opted into the European Space program, as much by the US's bullying as by the offer itself.

While working for the Europeans he meets and marries a Russian staffer in their private economic program. Enroute we learn a bit about expatriate longings. Sonya and Jerry's children also must struggle to find their dreams despite the geopolitics. (Where, oh where is Wolfowitz when we need him?)

You don't have to read this book because you should, although it is uplifting at times. This is a novel to read because it's a GOOD book, that holds your interest, involves you deeply in the characters, and keeps you enthralled until the last period. And if you have to deal with a lump in your throat or some tears, don't be surprised.

— Pam Allan

Dragonfly In Amber
by Diana Gabaldon,
Delacorte hc, 743 pp., $21.50
This novel is a rare treat, even better than *The Outlander,* the first novel in this trilogy. Told in a frame of 1968 Scotland, it continues the story of Claire Randall's time spent in 18th century Europe. This book, however, broadens the saga's scope, as it not only follows Claire and Jamie Fraser, but gives a broad overview of European politics as it pertains to "Bonnie Prince Charlie" and his aspirations to the throne of Scotland and England. While giving us insights to some of the historical figures of the time, Ms. Gabaldon has her characters trying to stop the Jacobite rebellion of 1744 and thus prevent the massacre at Culloden.

One of the things I felt Ms. Gabaldon has done very well in *Dragonfly In Amber* is to show not only the strain of knowing what the future will bring, but the ethical dilemma of how far one should go to prevent future catastrophe. How far can you go without warping yourself into someone you can't face in a mirror?

Nor is the modern-day frame simply a convenient way to show what has been happening in Claire Randall's life. It is a story of its own, although it is clearly and carefully tied into the main story line. The way in which sidelights are thrown on previous events is a joy to read.

Don't be put off by the packaging; this trilogy is a "historical romance" about the same way a BMW is a family car. The care in research and the skill of extrapolation and writing is equal to any science fiction or fantasy. An excellent and thought-provoking read.

— M.R. Hildebrand

Chase The Morning
by Michael Scott Rohan,
Avon pb, 332 pp., $4.99
Chase The Morning is a modern fantasy that combines swashbuckling adventure with interdimensional reality, Voodoo rites, visible and invisible gods, and a main character that may well mirror the angst of the modern psyche.

Stephen is a successful but not very happy import/export agent who lives in a modern port city. After a bad day, he decides to visit the dockside for nostalgia and dinner. Instead he finds himself in an alternate reality attempting to rescue a strangely dressed young man from some very large thugs. The young man is an interdimensional pilot named Jyp. Afterwards, Stephen returns to the mundane world, ready to file the whole thing under dreams.

But he can call up the name of an alternate reality ship of 1860's vintage on his modern computer registries. That intrusion into the other universe gets him warned off by some talking wolves who practice Voodoo.

Stephen hunts until he finds a way back to the other universe. There, he and Jyp find that a voodoo monster has been smuggled into the other reality from a third universe. After Stephen and Jyp slay the monster, Stephen receives another visit in his own reality. This time the visitors steal his secretary, for sacrifice.

Stephen must ask his new friends to help him pursue the kidnappers

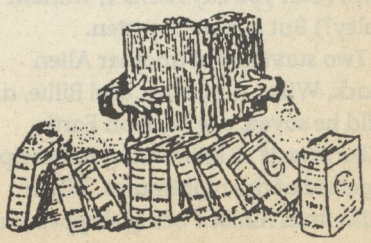
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through alternate realities to a Haiti ruled by Voodoo. Here the brave band must defeat a voodoo priest, a Bokar, and his loas (spirits).

The story is complete in itself, but leaves an opening for a sequel which I'd like to see. Not only Stephen, but the rest of the characters beg for further adventures. The interesting concepts and psychology are very enjoyable without dragging on the plot.

I'd recommend this to people who like C.J. Cherryh or Marion Zimmer Bradley's occult novels.

— *Pam Allan*

A Fire Upon The Deep
by Vernor Vinge,
Tor Books pb: 1992, 416 pp., $5.99
A high-tech, "hard" science epic (based on and arising from developments in electronic intelligence and physics and other technical subjects), *FUTD* is set far in the future, when many of the common developments of the story's time are so far advanced over our own that they are more akin to Clarkeian "magic" than our present-day technology. (Clarke's Law: "Any sufficiently advanced technology will be indistinguishable from magic.")

The core of Vinge's plot is that a malign, virus-like artificial intelligence has been accidentally brought to sentience and is wrecking havoc among the advanced civilizations of the higher Zones. (Vinge's fancy for this novel is that capability for intelligent thought increases the further out from the Galactic center; the intelligences of the Transcendent zone are virtually gods.) We're talking entire civilizations being wiped out in a matter of hours; this is action on a scale rarely seen since E.E. Smith was tossing planets around.

— *Bruce D. Arthurs*

Aliens, Book 1, Earth Hive
by Steve Perry,
Bantam Spectra pb, 278 pp., $4.99
Earth Hive is a movie script in novel form. (Can you say *Aliens 4*, without Ripley?) But it is well-written.

Two survivors of another Alien attack, Wilks, a marine, and Billie, a child he saved, are back on Earth. Wilks objects to Billie being mindwiped to get rid of the nightmares. When Wilks finds himself being shipped out to eradicate the Alien homeworld, he smuggles her on board.

The Company, bane of Ripley's existence, secretly has an alien Queen gestating in an Lab on Earth. They want a monopoly on the "weapon," so they sabotage the mission. The homeworld does get sterilized thanks to Wilks and Billie — but guess what's taken over Earth while they were gone?

Mr. Perry has written an enjoyable action adventure in the angst-filled milieu of the *Alien* series.

— *Pam Allan*

Boy's Life
by Robert R. McCammon,
Pocket pb, 580 pp., $5.99.
This novel is an attempt, largely successful, to bring forth an American version of the "magic realism" works of many Latin American writers. "Magic" is not separate from life or the land in these works, it is not something special or privileged; it is there, as much a part of everything as color or mass or texture.

The life of Cory, the young boy at the center of *Boy's Life*, is filled with events, with experiences, with living. And yet, surprisingly, Cory comes across as a normal boy, different only because he sees the wonder and majesty of the people and lives around him.

(I suspect the title of *Boy's Life* was an especially deliberate choice by McCammon: *A Boy's Life* was the original, in-production title of Steven Spielberg's film *E.T.;* McCammon's novel has much of the same flavor of that cinematic classic.)

— *Bruce D. Arthurs*

The Hollow Man
by Dan Simmons,
Bantam Spectra hc, 293 pp., $20.00
Here we meet a true telepath, Jeremy Bremen, who had found a short stretch of happy years with Gail, the only other telepath he had ever encountered, only to be plunged into the deepest despair by her death. The novel follows his odyssey, seeking... Salvation? Death? Both?

The Hollow Man is about love and death, despair and joy, about the nature of thought and reality and the connections between.

— *Bruce D. Arthurs*

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Simon Hawke

Continued from page 3

He was cursing in yiddish and Simon replied in kind — which is why, to this day, Harlan still thinks Simon is Jewish — and a fifteen year friendship was born.

"Ellison never did read the story," said Simon, laughter in his eyes. "I asked the secretary to give it back, sent it to *Galaxy*, and *Galaxy* bought it. When Harlan heard this his only comment was, "Good, now I don't have to read it."

Simon didn't like LA and financed his trip back to New York by selling a gun he had used in his job as an armed guard. He sold it to Jerry Pournelle, who — knowing Simon needed the money — paid more than it was worth. "That's a side of Pournelle no one ever hears about," he commented to me, "and people should."

"When I said goodbye to Harlan, he suggested I contact Norman Spinrad in New York's Greenwich Village. He said he thought we'd get along.

"Eventually I did call Norman and we met at the Lion's Head Pub in the village, where we had a drink and a long conversation. He invited me to accompany him to a party where there would be a bunch of publishers, hosted by Adele Leone, formerly senior editor at Jove and now head of her own literary agency. With Spinrad's help paving the way, she agreed to represent me and, within a month, had sold two novels on a proposal. I quit my job at the UN and turned full-time writer."

Simon laughed. "That was fifteen years and fifty novels ago and *Last Dangerous Visions* still hasn't been published."

Though Simon works on only one project at a time, he is presently committed to seven books. He has sold a dozen in the past two years.

"I love what I do," he said. "Essentially, I get to play for a living and I purely love doing it. I have a number of other projects on the back burner, but I don't like to talk about things until they are firmed up. As a former rock musician, I like using music analogies. I like to play different tunes, do different things.

"When TSR approached me about doing a series of books in their Dark Sun Universe, it was like saying, "Come play with us." The project will be a fun challenge where I can try my hand at pleasing readers and gamers alike. Creative challenge is what I respond to."

I asked him about the *Time Wars* series and he replied, "What I wanted to accomplish was to utilize historical scenarios and classic drama to show young readers that history is fun and the classics are worth reading. I want to motivate young readers to discover classics like Dumas."

What does Simon Hawke's future hold? "I like rural life a lot," he said. "I'm still recovering from building my house, I teach writing classes at Pima College. I would like to get the house paid off so I can buy a new toy."

What does he want to buy? "A new motorcycle," he replies with a smile. "A new rocket." (He has been riding for twenty-five years).

"In addition, I am thinking of going back for my graduate degree. I like the idea of selling-writers teaching. I get to help the students and they help me. They bring me back to basics and help sharpen my critical acumen."

I asked him if he had any message for the readership of *ConNotations* and he laughed. "I love fans. Where would I be without them? But the idea of standing in front of all those fans is frightening. I prefer small groups." He paused. "I guess I want to say thank you for reading — not just my books but reading period. The most depressing thing I have ever heard is the comment, 'I don't read.' I am especially grateful to those who put down their hard-earned money to buy my books. There are some writers — who shall remain nameless — who don't care about fans, who say 'I can write for myself.' HORSEFEATHERS! Why bother to publish? I write to entertain, to communicate, because God didn't give me a great singing voice or exceptional talent for playing the guitar. I love what I do. I have the ability to take people away. What more is there?"

J. Michael Straczynski

Continued from page 7

in 1986. He began working out the format of the show, emphasizing character development over "new-planet-of-the-week" syndrome, establishing a stable setting similar to *Hill Street Blues* and *L.A. Law*, melding that with Old World grit. "I don't want a homogeneous environment," he said. "I want guys who are going to be yelling at each other. That indicated ambassadors, diplomats, and businessmen who are in conflict with each other. I combined that with the history of Venice and Spain during the twelfth and fourteenth centuries when they were busy ports-of-call, centers-of-commerce. People came from all over the world to do business there. That became the foundation of Babylon 5."

After bouncing around Europe and Japan, *B5* rolled through Paramount before it came to rest at Warner Brothers where it's creator has had anything but rest. *B5* took over Straczynski's life. "My work always dominates my life," he explained. "This show has dominated the last five years, but it is a very pleasant domination. It is a walking dream. When I first walked on the set of the *B5* central corridor a feeling came over me unlike any I could describe to you. Basically, I have no life, but I didn't in the first place, so I'm enjoying it. It's a twenty-four-hour-a-day job, but I'm more than happy to do it."

B5's domination has caused Straczynski's productivity in other areas to slow to a trickle. "I have the next novel that I want to write outlined. It will be a thousand page-plus major work, but I just haven't had the time to work on it as much as I want to," he lamented. "My concern is that someone else will come up with the same idea and I won't get to write the book. I also had a short story come out in *Pulphouse* (the Sept/Oct issue, "Say Hello, Mister Quigley") which I think is pretty good, but beyond that everything has ground to a halt. With an airdate sometime in February and coverage across 95% of the country, you would think that the production company and crew would be bordering on burnout from the frantic pace and tremendous pressures of creating a soon-to-be-realized legend. Straczynski explains. "The one thing that is most remarkable to me is the team we've assembled. If you were to sit down and come up with a 'dream team' list of people from production, set design, construction, make-up, wardrobe, etc, this would be that list. Academy award-winner John Stears, our physical-effects guy, has worked on the *James Bond* films, *Star Wars*, and *Outland*. He heard about the show and came to us because he wanted to work on it. John commented that he had not seen this kind of team and this level of quality since *Dr. No*. That is correct and quite extraordinary." Straczynski continued. "We have guys who are sleeping on the floor of the sound stage, the effects lab, and the prosthetics lab. They didn't want to go home. We're not behind schedule, they just want to sit there, get done, make it better, and create more."

According to Straczynski, that kind of dedication is pervasive though out the *Babylon 5* cast and crew. "The level of commitment and work that they are putting into the show is extraordinary. I've never seen its like before. To me, that is the most amazing thing about the show. The passion and the enthusiasm that's been generated is so positive. It's *very* infectious. Andreas Katsulas, who plays Ambassador G'Kar, has found that the prosthetic mask he wears has freed him and he is bouncing off the walls as the character. That enthusiasm really helps to infect the rest of the cast. They are *all* like that. It's very nice."

Under Khazan

Continued from page 5

changed me. The second sword probably wouldn't come out either, and it might change me also. Or it might kill me. Wizards are notorious tricksters. Every time they give you something nice, they're setting you up for something nasty — at least that had been my experience with near-gods like Gristlegrim. Why should Khara Khang be any different? It was a hard decision, but I turned around and walked away from those two swords.

And soon came back to the main tunnel with three passages. This time I tried the one on the far right. It was very dim, but not totally dark. It wound and twisted through the bowels of the earth for a long way, and the farther I followed it, the worse it began to smell. I had just about decided to give up, turn around, and go back when something dropped on me from above. I felt or heard something, because I managed to jerk to one side, and the dirty green talons of its huge foot just missed my head. It came around fast with powerful ape-like arms groping for me. The fingernails were like short daggers, and it's breath was like rotten meat, causing my stomach to heave.

I recognized the creature now — a cave troll, a small one, not much larger than me, although probably much more powerful.

Its beady red eyes glared at me in the dimness, and low bestial growls rumbled unceasingly from its muscular throat.

A shaggy pelt of coarse black hair topped the back of its head, covered the shoulders, ran down the spine, and thickened all around the loins to form a sort of natural loin-cloth.

It carried neither weapons nor tools of any sort, and though it vaguely resembled a man, it didn't seem to have any greater intelligence than any hungry beast.

And like a hungry beast, the next thing that the damn brute did was bite me on the biceps as I tried to grapple with it. I bellowed like a ruptured bull, reached over with my other hand and sank my fingers into its deep-set eyes, and gouged. I didn't blind it, but managed to jerk its head back with enough force to break off one of its fangs in my muscle. Still howling with pain and rage, I backhanded the troll with a fist to the jaw that rocked its head back, and then I ducked beneath its counterblow. It smashed its hand into the rock wall, and I heard bones crunch in the impact. I also saw a fist-sized hole appear in the rock wall. It let out a howl of agony, and forgot about me for a second, which was just long enough for me to kick it in the groin with every bit of my new strength and power. Green turned greener. As it doubled up in agony, I came to my feet, grabbed its shaggy shoulders, and jammed its head into the stony wall. The rock cracked, but so did the head, and the troll was unconscious, maybe dead. I looked around for something to club it to death with, but there was nothing in the cave but mossy, slimy rock.

I kicked it in the head a few times, but that hurt my foot more than it was hurting its bony head, so as my pain and fear subsided, I left it in a pool of its own blood and bone chips, and walked quickly on down the tunnel. As I walked I pulled the broken tooth out of my arm, and threw it away with a muttered curse. The hole in my arm didn't bleed very much, and the pain was already subsiding.

There were a few very narrow side passages, but I decided not to follow them. Much to my surprise the main passage ended after a mile or so in a real brass-bound, wooden door filling the end of the corridor. I shoved it open cautiously, and saw a huge grotto. Down the middle of it ran a stream which fell into a small pool lined with reeds and rushes.

Many hundreds of feet overhead, a little patch of blue sky let some daylight into the cavern world.

I clambered down from my ledge and cautiously made my way along the stream bank toward the pool. I wanted a drink of cool water, and to wash the troll smell off my aching body.

In the water I noticed minnows and tadpoles, and other small water life, and I knew I had found a place where a person might exist without starving.

As I knelt beside the pool, a crude spear passed above my shoulder and clicked off a rock into the water. Thinking rapidly, I reached out and grabbed the spear before it could float out of reach, then turned to confront my attacker.

A human girl was charging toward me with another rough spear in her hands. Her face contorted in an expression half fear, half ferocity, and as she got close she thrust viciously for my gut, hoping to disembowel me, but with the spear I had picked up I turned her thrust to one side. She spun a sidekick at my knee as she disengaged the weapon. I turned my thigh into it, and my leg nearly buckled with the impact.

The blow was much stronger than I would expect from a girl of her size. I had to end this fast. This woman might be able to beat me in an extended fight. In desperation I let both hands slide down to the butt of my spear, and then swung it like a club in a roundhouse motion. That caught her by surprise. The stone-bladed spearhead hit her on the side of the skull just above her ear and knocked her down, her weapon falling from her hand. She hit the cavern floor, momentarily stunned, but a moment was all I needed to step quickly in beside her and point the spear directly at her face.

But, I did not thrust it home and slay her. She was entirely too beautiful to murder, even in the heat of battle.

"Go ahead, kill me!" she shouted. "I am no Orc-slave!" Her eyes blazed with a fury quite incomprehensible to me.

Game's Afoot

Continued from page 23

defense, then damage is done to the target. A wide variety of monsters and traps awaits the party; Zargon receives a starting group of ten adventures, each one different and requiring a different set-up on the game board.

This is one of the strengths of *HeroQuest.* Each adventure is different. Milton Bradley has released 4 additional adventure packs, including new quests, new miniatures, and additional map pieces. Thus, the game is always growing and changing.

The best thing about the game is that it's simple enough to play with your kids, but still fun if a group of adults get together.

Bill and Don rate this game TWO THUMBS UP! Buy it and tell Milton Bradley that we sent you.

24 Frames

Continued from page 25

he could win big bucks from the *National Enquirer*. Now there's a movie about it with **James Garner,** D.B. Sweeney, and Henry Thomas.

Mike Myers (*Wayne's World* and Schprockets) writes and stars in ***I Married an Axe Murderer.*** Nancy Travis, Anthony LaPaglia, and Amanda Plummer also star in this film about a man who can only find satisfaction with an ax-wielding woman.

Robert Townsend and **Bill Cosby** star in the Townsend-directed ***The Meteor Man,*** the story of a teacher who becomes a superhero after being struck by a meteor. The heavy rap soundtrack will probably keep me away from the theatre.

As for reviews, no genre movies were released in the month before press time, so I'll just say that *Lorenzo's Oil, The Scent of a Woman,* and *Peter's Friends* were all good and *The Temp* wasn't. I'm looking forward to *Matinee* (released by the time you read this) with John Goodman as a William Castle-like movie producer (Castle created such classics as *The Tingler, The House on Haunted Hill,* and *Rosemary's Baby*). If you like B-movies check out the next issue of *ConNotations* with an all-new column about them called Videophile.

Readers Respond

Point • Counterpoint



Can It Be?

Apparently Tom Tuerff and Margaret Grady both hit some hot spots with last issue's Point•Counterpoint. Contrary to one writer's note that we only publish "celebrity" letters, letters have been few and far between — we've published virtually every letter we received. There may have been some confusion, since last issue we only printed letters from Michael Whelan and Bjo Trimble — but those were the only letters we got! Here are some responses to last issue's comments on "What's Wrong — and What's Right — with Phoenix Conventions." It seems that much of this applies to conventions worldwide...

Read The Publications, Ned

On Tom Tuerff's comment on WesterColt .45's Masquerade: Tom, the conversation you referred to in your point #2 on lack of user-friendliness did not reflect my position adequately. I was misquoted on the "well, that's their problem. Besides, this gives me more time to do what I have to do" comment. I tried to explain to you that the information on rules — specifically entry cut off dates and times — was published in several Progress Reports, and in *ConNotations Vol 1, Issue 3. ConNotations Vol. 2, Issue 1* listed my name and asked contestants to write with questions. (Obviously you are familiar with *ConNotations* as a source of information on future conventions.) There was also a special mailing to all Costume Guilds dated April 6, 1992, and an ad in the Costume Con 10 Program Book.

Usually when I'm planning a costume (or just thinking about one) for a larger con, I'll write to the contact address and ask for information. I received numerous requests from prospective contestants and provided both standard texts and personal responses to all those who inquired. By 7:30 pm Thursday, I was locked in my room setting up running order and readying the appropriate paperwork, making last minute den arrangements, locating possible "problem" groups based on their special requests/size/fabrication/or complexity of costumes, meeting with key staff and briefing them on problems, etc.

The masquerade was not my sole contribution to the costuming program at WesterColt .45: I was a panelist on costuming panels; moderated and modeled for the Live Model Workshop for Artists; and acted as ConComs' liaison to the Costumers Suite, Guild West, and the Greater Bay Area Costumers Guild. Contrary to your implication, I was not kicking back and partying. Concerning your comment "that there was no way that she could keep this deadline. Too many people would come in on Friday and complain." Well Tom, no one came by to register or complain on Friday morning. The one person who did not get her entry in by the Thursday evening deadline showed up at the contestant meeting in a pleasant mood, apologized for being late and explained her situation.

She had all her information in hand and I was able to easily fit her into the running order. The Thursday evening deadline made this sort of accommodation possible. The deadline was set to allow for proper setup time (which included paperwork, physical setup, briefing of volunteers and other staff members, coordinating with Union crew and facilities liaisons, plus a contestants meeting devoted to their questions and needs). If this limit had not been set, starting one hour late would have been nothing compared to the midnight start we would have seen (this would have put the Union crew on triple-time pay). The "easy" paperwork took a good 4 or 5 hours to complete, and it all had to be done prior to the first crew sign in at 4:30 pm.

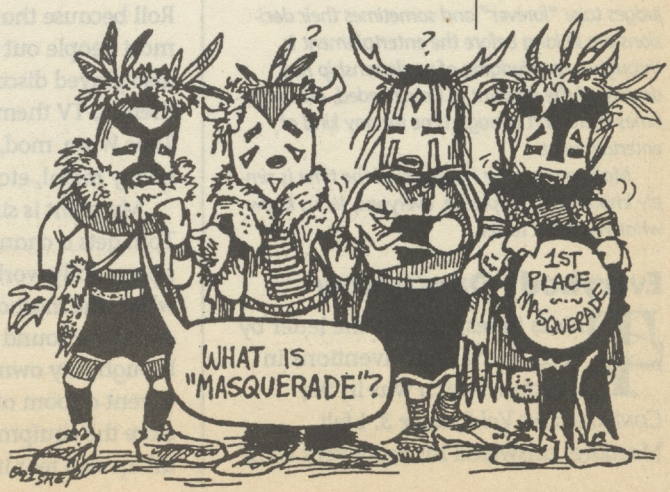
I know from your article that you have tried the volunteer & committee "thing" in areas other than costuming. Perhaps you should confine your criticism to those areas you have experienced from the committee side. From my experience I can tell you that the contestant end is totally different from the technical end. I suggest you put your attitude where your mouth is and RUN a masquerade or two, or at least read the *Masquerade Handbook: The Art of Running the Mid-sized Masquerade;* then we can talk further at a more professional level.

Gail Wolfenden-Steib
Director, WesterColt .45 Masquerade

P.S. to the audience: I apologize for the lack of the half-time show. The storyteller I booked was a no-show, in spite of multiple confirmations.

Continued on next page...

...and still others that said, believe it or not, "Joe Bethancourt sucks," and "who the HELL is Anne McCaffrey?"



That's Entertainment...

After reading Tom's plea for half-time entertainment at masquerades in the latest *ConNotations*, I decided you might be interested in some ideas my friends and I have been kicking around.

We are mostly belly dancers, and some of us are into interpretive dance. We have all had ideas for sf/f performances, and not of the stupid Orion slave girl-type, either. For example, one of my friends has always wanted to perform a fierce sword-dance in Klingon garb.

Unfortunately, frequent con-goers have told us that it's no use suggesting ourselves as performers because the "con-elite" have no interest in anything new. I don't know if that's true, having met only one of them (Gail Wolfenden-Steib of the masquerade, and that was four years ago).

I don't think there will be a masquerade for LepreCon, but if you're going to help plan CopperCon or any other cons next year, remember us! We'll be there anyway!

Caryn Martinez

[Matthew] Thanks for your offer — I'll make sure it's passed along to the person who runs CopperCon's masquerade. Half-time entertainment at the masquerade has always been tricky — the idea has been to keep people in the audience until the awards have been decided upon and given out. It's also been an opportunity to exhibit some talent — the kinds of entertainers we've had have run the gamut including interpretive dance (Vlad the Impaler), music (Joe Bethancourt, Dr. Jane Robinson), a game show (fan Double Dare, which included a wading pool full of unset lime jello), parades of hall costumes, belly dancing, almost a storyteller (see Gail's letter above), and more. The problem? Somebody complained about every one of them. Sometimes the judges take "forever" and sometimes their decisions are in long before the entertainment is through — pre-judging of workmanship has decreased the amount of time needed, and sometimes there isn't enough time for any kind of entertainment.

Making everyone happy all of the time is simply impossible, but please, everyone, let us know what you'd like to see.

Everybody Dance Now

This is in response to the letter by Tom Tuerff on conventions in Arizona, which was in the *ConNotations Vol 2, Issue 3*. I felt Margaret answered his reply very well, but she neglected one point that I have been saying all along. The way I see it, there is a fine line between what you can and CAN'T complain about. People are trying their best to put on the con — no matter what gripes they have between each other, they work around the barricades and also try to enjoy the convention themselves. But here's what happens: someone doesn't like something, so they complain and whine.

Let me give you some examples. I used to D.J. the dances. When I took over the dances, I turned them from a mediocre event to an event people expected and looked forward to. I started a new tradition of doing the *Time Warp* at midnight, arranged lasers and fog machines at no expense to the Con or con-goer. But someone has to say "You're playing stupid music. Play this or that instead," or "You're playing too loudly, turn it down," or "Those lasers are dangerous if they hit someone in the eye." What these people fail to realize is while they are saying this, someone right before them said everything opposite like "Wow, this is great music," or "I don't like the music that guy just said to play, play this instead," or "Turn it up!"

Now, being a somewhat experienced committee person, I acted in anticipation most of these comments. I had the dance halls specifically designed (except for WesterCon's) so that they were large enough that people who like it loud could dance closer to the speakers, people who liked it moderately loud could dance dance 100 feet away and people who wanted to talk and have the music in the background could do so behind a 3/4 wall. The music was 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's... with a large lean on Rock 'n' Roll because that's what brought the most people out to the dance floor. But I also played disco, blues, rap, SciFi themes, TV themes, *The Hokey Pokey*, *The Time Warp*, mod, punk, new wave, heavy metal, etc, etc.

My point is simply this, and I hope Tom gets a chance to read this letter — I personally worked on the dances for what was most of the con as well as doing the sound for the masquerade. I brought my own equipment and HAD to rent a room at the hotel so I could store the equipment there and hook it all up and tear it all down on Friday and Saturday nights. At one point, I risked damage to my equipment when a drunk con-goer almost spilled his beer all over it. What do I get in return for spending money on a hotel room (when I could really just drive home and come back the next day, hauling my personal stereo equipment and record collection back and forth to wherever in the valley the con may be), arranging the rental, picking-up and dropping-off of the speakers, and taking 3 days unpaid off work? When I'm through and I think everyone had a good time, I get to hear TOM complain about it. Well, Tom, it's because of the ungrateful people like you that I'm not going to do it anymore. I'm a volunteer and a committee person. I have volunteers who always ask to help, I rarely ask them. As far as I'm concerned, I will never do another dance for a convention because the few con-goers who don't appreciate it happen to be the same con-goers who voice their opinions and write letters. What we need are the people who enjoyed it (and I know there are a LOT) to write in and tell THAT to the con.

I'm not just talking about the modern dance — that just happens to be my field. I have to believe that every department head had a tougher job than I did, and probably did even more than I did, and will listen to the complaints and continue to do it again next con. I salute you. I can't stand people who whine. Input and suggestions are always welcome, but what makes Tom thinks he speaks for ALL con goers? I know several people, Tom, that walked up to me and said "This was the greatest dance ever!" and others who said "Volunteering for security is pretty cool," and still others that said, believe it or not, "Joe Bethancourt sucks," and "who the HELL is Anne McCaffrey?"



Those aren't my opinions — that's what I heard from con-goers. So, tell me, Tom, what do YOU say to someone who says those things? Do you think I am making this up? What do you say when someone says "Gee, Tom, you have kinda the right idea..."? Or better yet, what if you took all that time to write that letter and no one else ever read it? Make you feel like you wasted

your time? That's how it makes a committee person feel when they do their best and have inconsiderate, self-centered con-goers complain about everything. Try being a committee person sometime Tom and you'll learn you can't please all the con-goers and you can't please all the other committee members. You have to set a goal in your mind of what you think is going to be great at a con and do it. Chances are, a lot of people will say "great job." Chances are there will also be a couple of letters in the mail telling you that you don't know what you're doing and have no business doing it. If you're like me, you'd respond "If I did all of that work and this guy is griping like I owe him something, I've got news for him — I just won't do it any more and then let's see what he's got to say."

I won't do the dance any more because of complainers like you who don't know what it was like to not have a dance. Now you'll learn and have one less thing to complain about next year. There's a fine line between creative criticism and insulting someone. Think about that next time you have something to say.

As for the rest of the committee, I think you guys do a great job in every aspect and should I have any suggestions, I'll drop you a line to see what you think. Thanks for the cons. I enjoy every bit of them because you volunteers and committee people were there. Without you there would be no con, and even a bad con is better than a good day at work.

Carey Holzman

[Matthew] I, for one, would like to earnestly thank you Carey for the great job you've done with all the dances you've run — I will miss them. Sure, I thought the music was too loud sometimes, and I really don't like anything resembling heavy metal, but most of the time I dragged my butt out there and danced to a couple of songs — heck, you even played my requests now and then! You all may have noticed we had no modern dance at CopperCon 12? Write in and tell us if that's OK...

Oh, And Margie...

This is directed at Margie Grady, in answer to her "Counter-Point." By and large, I agreed with individual items in both "Point" and "CounterPoint," however, I felt I had to address a few things:

Conventions Elsewhere. I hate to break it to you, Margie, but we — the average, con-going, money-spending members — are seeing things from the outside in. And from the outside in, Phoenix conventions sure need SOMETHING. Of course, those out-of-state conventions have their snafus... but they don't show them up the way Phoenix cons seem to.

Phoenix's ConSuites. For some reason, Phoenix seems to be of the notion that a ConSuite shouldn't be open to the paying members of the convention, and when it is, it's grudgingly stocked with stale popcorn, Doritos, and maybe even some M&Ms. Ooooo. I would like to know where this came from — every other convention I go to (and these days, I go to a lot of out-of-state conventions) has big, roomy consuites (often two, one for smokers, one for non-smokers), with beer and soda on tap (sometimes Coke AND Pepsi), with real meals rolled in every so often and ALWAYS fresh, desirable edibles, plenty of chairs and tables for sitting around and chatting. In Orlando this past Labor Day they were serving fried chicken on Saturday afternoon.

Money. Sure, some conventions budget poorly and run into the red. However, how can you say that when, year after year, ComicCon charges the lowest at-the-door rates of ANY major convention and STILL manages to serve up a whopping great consuite AND have guests like Francis Ford Coppola, the Disney artists (with previews of upcoming features, no less), Chris Claremont, Jack Kirby, not to mention some of the greatest names in sf/f known (including, this last year, Stan Lee), as well as fantastic programming, clear, easy-to-read program guides, gigantic dealer's room and fantastic art show. And let's not forget ChiCon, last year's WorldCon in Chicago — not only did they give me one of the finest conventions that I have ever been to, which included a great consuite, terrific room parties, a fantastic hotel with courteous staff and extremely reasonable room rates, fantastic panels, one of the most beautiful art shows I've ever seen, and literally miles of "freebie" tables with plenty of space to display your own fliers and well-placed, well-marked bulletin boards, they also (ready for this?) refunded every single member of that convention $10 on their membership because they had money left over. And all three of those conventions took place at times and in places where the temperature and humidity was absolutely dreadful — in Orlando it was in the 90's with at least an 80% humidity the entire time (just after Hurricane Andrew). ComicCon this last year took place in August right after El Niña had passed over — and yes, they had some strikes against them because of this and not opening the Convention Center until precisely 9am... but for all that, literally THOUSANDS of people went, from all over the country. Phoenix hasn't commanded that kind of membership since the '87 NASFiC or before.

Local sights: All right, if we live here we're less likely to care about local sights. But maybe some people haven't seen them because they don't know, or haven't had the time. God knows that natives tend to "do the town" less than a tourist would — go ahead and make that list of the local sights. Phoenix may not have all that many historical sights left, but there are a few — the Heard Museum, for example, is one of the most acclaimed museums in the Southwest, and it's only a few blocks north of Downtown. And how many other cities have an actual Pueblo right under the freeway (Pueblo Grande, just of Hwy 51 at Washington)? Publish the lists not just IF you expect people from out-of-town. Publish it in HOPES that they will come. There's no reason why LepreCon shouldn't be as lively now as it was back in '84 — finding a hotel that understands and appreciates SF cons is a big step in that direction.

Hotels. I cannot for the life of me figure out why there is such a blind spot towards conventions in the hotels of Phoenix — in Orlando, the Con Hotel was the PEABODY, for God's sake. THE five-star hotel of the deep south. And they loved the conventioneers and they were by far the nicest and most accommodating hotel staff I've ever had the pleasure of dealing with. If we are to succeed in making Phoenix cons good again, we MUST erase this stain that's been put on SF fandom in Arizona. If we can't restore the Hyatt's faith in us, then we have to try other hotels, not in

Downtown. There are dozens of beautiful hotels in the Phoenix area and I bet they would love to get a convention in during our off-season (which is when most conventions are held). The Camelview Resort, for example, was a stroke of genius. It's beautiful up there. A fancy hotel in a nice place with reasonable rates will bring people in — a Con is one of those excuses to spend a weekend in a fancy hotel. And if we can't get Phoenix, why not try Tempe? Tempe's downtown has shopping, restaurants, interesting sights, the college — and the Tempe Sheraton Resort is right there (where our company holds our conventions) — they've been very helpful to us.

You mention over and over the development of HexaCon — that would be a good thing... IF people came to it. My company ran an organized gaming tournament there and we barely broke even. At GenCon, a Milwaukee gaming convention, we brought in over three hundred accounts. And I do know for a fact that there were out-of-staters at HexaCon, at least from California. Advertising could double or triple that — listen to Tom. He's right. Advertising could help a whole lot, not only for HexaCon, but for ALL Phoenix cons.

As for finding stars that won't "charge an arm or a leg," many famous people who haven't worked in years will come to a convention for little more than the price of plane fare — hell, it's a chance to be seen again, and they can write it off on their income tax as a business expense, anyway. Old sixties TV stars will come to a media convention at a moment's notice — I was at a sixties TV con where they asked Rose Marie (the Dick Van Dyke show) the day before if she'd like to come. She did. And she was terrific, with less than 24 hours notice. Of course, that was a California con, but you get the idea.

Joe Bethancourt. Having him around is one of the best things about Phoenix conventions these days. Unfortunately, scheduling his SINGLE concert for early Friday afternoon wasn't at all fair to those of us who have regular jobs. If he's willing, schedule two or three shows, or at least have him do the half-time show at the masquerade. It was the only thing missing from this last WesterColt's show (which was excellent, by the way, one of the best I've seen here or elsewhere in a long time).

Well, I rambled on a good deal longer than I meant to. But I got out what I wanted to say and what's been bothering me for a while. I hope all these things are at least thought about, because I would LIKE very much for Phoenix's reputation among con goers to improve. I would love it if I started enjoying going to local cons again. It'd sure save me some money.

R. Michael McKuen

P.S.: Yeah, I read the inside front page.

[Matthew & Margaret] Michael, We'd like to clarify some points we think you're missing. We appreciate the fact that you've raised them, though, because that means a lot of folks reading this are probably of the same opinion, and we're thrilled to have an opportunity to clear up some misconceptions.

Let's start with the ConSuite, always a source of grumbling. No part of the convention receives more complaints, no matter what we seem to do. We almost always have two rooms (one smoking, one non-smoking) though they may not be as large as we'd like. How important is the ConSuite compared to other convention activities? What kind of room does it warrant? As to the beverages, we have pop on tap for most of the cons, though it's been RC products of late because they cost about 2/3 of the Coke or Pepsi price and the "Good Guys at Kalil" are extremely helpful and great to work with. Would you not go to a con because we served RC and 7-Up? Let us know! We don't serve beer because the State of Arizona has a nifty little liability law — and insurance to cover such liability is now more than a little cost prohibitive. Everyone would have to pay <u>at least</u> $10 more just to cover the extra insurance.

As far as the food itself is concerned, most of the <u>local</u> ConSuites have served real food, including sandwiches, Chinese food, sushi, hot dogs, caviar, and much more. We certainly don't serve it all day, every day, but it's there at most conventions. The last hotel we were at wouldn't allow us to serve it, though, in order to promote restaurant business — that's the breaks when Phoenix fandom has acquired a bad name locally (we are on the way to repairing it) and doesn't have a lot of hotels to choose from. We can't serve fried chicken dinners like a Worldcon primarily because we don't charge $100+ at the door! If you don't mind paying increased rates, we could serve more food (assuming it's okay with the hotel). Let us know!

As to the general state of munchies during the con, it's not so much a lack of having the right food on site, but a matter of having people to keep it fresh. Volunteers are in short supply (more on that later) and the ConSuite is the most difficult to fill committee position — everyone's help is appreciated. And as to "stale" munchies, there's a dilemma there. If we put out very little food, most of it gets eaten but everyone complains that there was too little, or not enough variety. If we put out a lot of food, it quickly gets stale. There is a delicate balance to maintain: anticipating traffic flow, determining appropriate quantities of food, and coordinating volunteers, food prep, grocery runs, and clean-up times... oh yeah, and who's going to do the dishes? Once you've run a ConSuite, you get a much greater respect for the efforts required in running the simplest of ConSuites.

As to money in general, do you know why ComicCon charges the lowest at-the-door rates of any major convention? They charge every vendor in the "Dealers' Room" several hundred dollars for their tables. Their parties and food are sponsored (read "paid for") by comic book companies in trade for advertising/signs. And the fact that every big name in comics is there is the direct result of the fact that ComicCon is a TRADE SHOW. Every big name is computers goes to their trade show, COMDEX; every name in consumer electronics goes to CES; every big name in book publishing (including most of the "hot" authors) goes to the ABA. Why? Because that's the annual show for their trade. A small local convention doesn't even rate on that scale.

What? The WORLDCON was big? And it had lots of great things? Did they charge $30 at-the-door and get a crowd of 600? No, they charged over $100 at-the-door and got a crowd of thousands (that doesn't mean, however, that if we charged $100 we would get those numbers)! How can you possibly expect to get the same kind of convention for $30? We guarantee you that if we charged $110, we'd happily refund $10 and give you one hell of a convention. That assumes, of course, that more than just you showed up. WorldCon, NASFiC, Westercon, and a few others charge a lot more than $30, but they are big-name-cons that attract big crowds. A local convention like ours can't afford to do that. When we pick guests, we have to take into consideration their geographical proximity to see if we can afford their travel expenses. When we pick a hotel, we have to choose one that charges little-or-nothing for their convention space. Local conventions and huge regional conventions can't be compared easily because the budgets are vastly different.

Money is also a factor in publishing info about the local sights. WesterColt .45, the 1992 Westercon held here in Phoenix, published a whole booklet on local restaurants, museums, and places to visit in the area. But we were able to charge $60 at-the-door because it was a Westercon. Yes, out-of-state people do attend our local conventions, but we don't have enough money in the budget to do that kind of thing. We can, however, publish a blurb in the program book that says "go the the con's info desk for information on local sights" and have a chunk of info there. Would that help? Let us know!

[Matthew] I've addressed the issue of hotels before (in CN Vol 2 Iss 2) but I'll summarize here. There aren't "dozens of beautiful hotels in the Phoenix area" who would "love to get a convention in during our off-season." I know this for a fact, as Margaret and I hunted hotels down for

CopperCon (where we settled on the Camelview). Ask Doug Cosper, Chairman of LepreCon, if hotels are easy to find. Or ask Don Harrington, Chairman of HexaCon. Or anyone who's Chaired a convention in Phoenix in the last few years. I have a complete list of every hotel in the Phoenix area that is large enough to hold one of our cons (requires 10,000 sq. ft. minimum) and only a few are in our price range. Places like The Princess, The Phoenician, The Registry, the various Pointes, Gainey Ranch, and others in that range are out of the question because they charge as much for function space as our gross revenue. And you'd have to pay over $100 for a hotel room each night. Yes, MagiCon was held in the five-star Peabody, but they have the money to pay for that. We hold our conventions in the hotels' off-season because that's the only time we can afford them. We would love to have a winter convention here (with the incredible weather as a great attractor) but hotel function space rates triple and quadruple during the high season.

We've tried the Tempe Sheraton (Mission Palms), but they almost never have a large enough chunk of space available. Overall the hotel has plenty of space, but there are virtually always meetings, weddings, and other small conventions going on there that eat-up the space. I would LOVE to hold a con there — the proximity to Arizona State University would increase attendance, and the proximity of all those restaurants makes me giddy, but they simply haven't had the space. If they ever do, and their room rates and function space rates are reasonable, I'll be the first in line at the con registration door.

I think you're comparing apples to orang-utans when you compare HexaCon to GENCON. GENCON and Origins are the world's largest *gaming conventions. They've been around for decades; HexaCon will hold its 3rd convention in June. Milwaukee is about the size of Phoenix, but they've got Chicago — the 3rd largest city in the country — two hours away; our closest large-population areas are Los Angeles (eight hours away) and Las Vegas (six hours away). HexaCon will never be as big as GENCON, but it will get bigger. Give us a chance, and continue your support.*

[Matthew & Margaret] As to stars that won't charge an arm and a leg, we've invited them and they've come. Tom Tuerff helped us find guests for PhringeCon 3 in June of '91, and if you attended the con, you'd know they were interesting and it was a great con. However, a mere 400 people showed up (even though it was heavily publicized in the papers, on TV, in movie theatres, through flyers, and more). The convention lost money — so much that we're really shy of holding media conventions now. "Little more than the price of plane fare" is how much we give our guests — that, and enough for a couple of nights at the hotel. No big name media stars will come for that amount of money — largely because commercial "conventions" like Creation will pay them a big chunk of change for their one-hour appearance. We now know from experience, people will not come to a media con without big name stars.

Lastly: Yes, Joe Bethancourt is good. He's always welcome to perform. Others like to perform though, too — see "That's Entertainment" above.

Tom Responds

Gail, I am told by one of the contestants that you had plenty of help backstage during the masquerade. Where were these people when you were working on the running order, the paperwork, etc.? If you were as busy as you say, then why didn't this work get delegated to someone you trusted?

Also, I did work on one of the big Masquerades a few years ago as emcee. I helped do the paperwork. I made sure that I had seen every act and knew what they were going to do, in case of an unforeseen emergency, like the lousy light man you had. *[In order to use Symphony Hall, WesterColt .45 had to use the union employees — thus lousy light men couldn't be avoided — Ed.]*

The point is, I was glad to help with the paperwork, the running order, etc. It was tough, but it was all completed in the space of one day. Granted, we weren't at the Civic Plaza, but staging a masquerade contest is pretty old hat. If there were unusual lighting effects, smoke machines, hydraulic lifts, or something bizarre like that, I could see where getting all the time you need is important. But I didn't see anything on that stage that couldn't be carried over, put on, displayed and taken off.

Oh, and if, as you say, no one signed up for the masquerade on Friday, what possessed you to abandon your original Thursday night deadline?

Now, in response to the general public's reaction:

Boy, this article really opened up a can of worms! In the two weeks after the article came out, I got letters and calls from people I don't know, falling in to one of two camps:

1) People in the group I referred to as the Con Elite, whose general opinion was that I don't know what I'm talking about; and

2) Lots of fans, who said the article was a long time coming, it's what they'd always wanted to say, and at least two people who said I was being too nice.

Clearly, there is a gap here between the people who run things and the people who go. All the hard work that you are putting into the convention is going unappreciated and unnoticed by a good portion of the paying attendees. I think it's time to find out why. Maybe a survey is in order. If the results say that 90% of the conventioneers go to cons to meet authors, go to panels and see movies, etc., then you can determine which of those things will get people in the front door. On the other hand, if the survey says that 90% of you reading this go to cons to get free food in the ConSuite, play with computers and get laid, then at least they'll know who they're talking to. They may not be able to supply everything, but at least they'll know what you want.

I would be more than willing to work on this survey, if *ConNotations* wants me to. And to those of you who have been saying, "Okay, Tuerff, put up or shut up," I would be more than happy to volunteer to run any part or all of a convention — when time allows. I'm approaching one year as a free-lance producer and doing pretty well, but not well enough to do anything but work.

(You can change this situation by going to your bosses, wherever you work and persuade them that they really need a TV commercial, industrial film, etc. and you know just the guy to do it. The busier I am, the more time I'll have — advertising works that way.)

Tom Tuerff

[Margaret] I definitely agree there is a difference in perspective between convention workers and attendees! A volunteer or committee person has an emotional investment, and will tend to see the positive aspects of a con out of self-preservation.

I used to not work conventions, but after a few years, cons started to get boring (and this was 10 years ago!) At LepreCon 8, I noticed the Chairperson looked like she needed a helper, so I offered. It gave me a new purpose, and something to fill slow-time. I started working Registration and a few other volunteer-level positions, then asked to run a few different committee positions. This gave me opportunities to try my own kind of improvements and exercise my creativity (and my restraint). Before long, I was running my own conventions. (I say that, but I didn't do it alone. I had lots of wonderful help!)

I also received "endless" criticism for just about everything I did or didn't do. Unfortunately, it is impossible to please everybody. A survey is nice — I don't think a comprehensive one has been done since just before CopperCon 5. It is difficult to create one that's reasonably tallied, but we're gonna make one for next issue... so gather your ideas, Tom. (And since we happen to have those CopperCon surveys of yesteryear, we will

compare the results for all of you — be sure to send your survey back to us and be counted!)

And, Tom, it's easy to say you're too busy. We know — our survival depends on how we run our own business too. What's not easy is to devote a couple of hundred hours preparing an event, particularly when it's inevitable that people will complain.

Someone who regularly works a convention either shifts focus toward seeing more of the positive side, or discontinues efforts. Sometimes seeing the good becomes denying the bad, and that leaves people feeling unheard. And when a reliable and capable staffer gaffiates (leaves fandom), conventions really suffer the loss.

I think constructive criticism is the art to be developed here — saying/writing what you feel without being insensitive to other people's efforts and feelings can still get you heard, and probably be more effective in the long run.

Meet The Elite

My thoughts on the "Con Elite" stem from first-hand experience — I hope they provide some insight into what may be a subject too long in the dark.

I have to assume by the context of Tom's use of "Con Elite" that he's referring to the people who regularly help run conventions, the convention Committees, and particularly those who often serve as Chair. I'd like to start by explaining to everyone how these people are picked locally.

The Chair (asexual version of Chairman) is the primary person responsible for the way each convention is run. In CASFS (the organization that sponsors CopperCon, HexaCon, the last Westercon, the last PhringeCon, and other conventions), the Chair for any particular convention is elected by the active CASFS members — people who have paid their $12/year dues and have attended at least three of the last six monthly meetings. Any member of CASFS is eligible for the position, but only a few are interested. In LepreCon, Inc. (the group that sponsors LepreCons), the Chair is elected by the LepreCon, Inc. Board of Directors. Membership in LepreCon, Inc. is open to the general public (contact LepreCon, Inc. for specific membership requirements). They, too, have a limited supply of people interested in running a convention.

What does it take to be a Chair? The three most important things are probably good organizational skills, an open ear, and strong diplomatic ability. A general understanding of what happens at a convention and attendance of the several most recent cons are important, too, but the first three are probably more valuable than anything else.

The Chair can't possibly do everything required to put on a convention — the Convention Committee (or ConCom) are persons picked by the Chair to oversee particular areas of the convention. Example departments include Programming (in charge of the panels and programs offered at the convention), Logistics (in charge of making sure everything gets moved around before, during, and after the con), Dealers' Room, Art Show, Security, Masquerade, Gaming, Japanese Animation, and many more. The larger the convention, the larger the organization required to support it.

Each Chair has to pick his or her Committee based on each person's capability, responsibility, experience, and relationship with the Chair. When I picked my Committee for CopperCon 12, I tried to balance these things out. I could have picked only people who had run these departments before — it would have been much easier to judge whether or not the person was capable, responsible, and experienced. It was within my power to pick an entire Committee of inexperienced people as well, but that would have required so much work on my part that I would probably have had to stop working my day job for a full month or more — I would have had to spend so much time making certain everyone was on track and knew what to do next that I'm sure I'd be in Intensive Care to this day.

I chose a Committee composed of about 25% very experienced people (those who have run an area many times before), 50% somewhat experienced people (those who have run an area a couple of times before), and 25% slightly experienced people (those who have only worked as volunteers, as staff, or were completely inexperienced). This way some new blood was introduced to Committee-level responsibility without me having to constantly watch over everyone's shoulders.

I also chose my Committee based on capability and responsibility — those whom I had seen in action at conventions (and outside of conventions) before started at the top of my list because they were known quantities. If a person was grossly negligent or displayed a distinct lack of wisdom (IMHO*) before, they started at the bottom of my list.

I also took into consideration each person's relationship with me. Someone who was great at running a particular function in the past but with whom I had a strong philosophical difference would start at the bottom of my list as well. It's not just philosophical differences, either — if I just didn't get along with the person very well, it would have been foolish for me to try to work with them hand-in-hand on a project for which I would be ultimately responsible.

I propose that the term Con Elite is both accurate and inaccurate. The people who run conventions locally are elected by members of the sponsoring organizations — not just anyone can be a Chair, only those who are elected. I guess that kind of makes it an elite position, but anyone who meets the minimal requirements (membership in the sponsoring organization) is eligible, so that dis-empowers the word "elite" to a great extent.

If you decided that you would like to be a U.S. Senator and all you did was make sure your name was on the ballot, do you think you'd have any chance of being elected? You would probably have to work at it, starting out at a lower-level position like State Representative, getting your name out to the people who will be casting their votes, doing community service projects, studying the issues of the day, and more. If you would like to Chair a convention or work in a Committee position, you will have to work at it, too. Start by volunteering in various areas of the convention, gaining experience and knowledge (hit points). Tell the person running the area that you'd like to be on their staff if they do this again. With more experience under your belt, tell the Chair of the next convention that you'd like to work in a committee position and learn even more. And then throw your hat into the ring at the next election for Chair — who knows, maybe you'll be elected!

That's exactly how I did it.

Matthew Frederick

* IMHO = In My Humble Opinion

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

SF/F oriented organizations are welcome to send info for a listing to ConNotations — Club Listings at 2040 E. Cypress, Phoenix, AZ 85006, or call us at (602) 220-9785. (If you find an address or phone number which no longer works, please let us know. Thanks!)

WHEN CONTACTING A CLUB, PLEASE SEND AN SASE (SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE) FOR RETURN REPLY!

N E W O N T H E L I S T !

AERIAL MIRAGE JUGGLING CLUB
International Juggling Association affiliate club meets 7–10pm Wednesday evenings at Encanto Park. No dues, everyone welcome. All levels skill exchange in many areas of object manipulation. Devils' Club meets Fridays 4pm north of the Hayden Library on the ASU campus. For more info, call (602) 267-8255, or write 4950 E. Brill Street, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

BEASTCONNECTION (LAS VEGAS)
The Las Vegas area *Beauty & the Beast* fan club, which is responsible for the TunnelCons (the international con for "Beastdom"). Meetings are on the 1st Monday of every month (except for Monday holidays) at 7pm at the Nevada Power Building on Sahara Ave. (at Jones Blvd.). For info send a SASE to BeastConnection, PO Box 81557, Las Vegas, NV 89150-0557, or call Betty Neiswender at (702) 878-6192 (ans. mach.). Come and help us to "Keep the Dream Alive!"

CENTRAL ARIZONA SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY, INC. (CASFS)
The non-profit corporation that puts on CopperCon conventions, SmerfCons, HexaCons, Westercon 45, and publishes *ConNotations*. Best described as SF/F generalists with a strong bent towards literary SF/F. Meets at 8pm on the last Friday of each month in January thru September and the second Friday in October, November and December at Spaghetti Company at 1418 N. Central Avenue in Phoenix, AZ. Write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613 or call Bruce Farr at (602) 274-3014 or Doug Cosper at (602) 245-1440 for more information.

THE DARK ONES
(Därk-wunz) n. 1. An organization formed for the expression and exploration of various cultural themes including, but not limited to, the Dark Ages and the Renaissance through forms of art including, but not limited to, painting, drawing, writing, photography, spoken word, and acts of characterization. 2. a member of this organization. 3. Information available from Shadowstalker (Jeff Jennings) at (602) 978-9314.

EARTHLINK SCI-FI CLUB
SF generalists with some focus on comics and environmental issues. Meets at various conventions and occasions. Publishes a quarterly newsletter called *Cosmic Wavelengths*. For information contact them at 8508 E. San Lorenzo, Scottsdale, AZ 85258, or call Nohl Rosen at (602) 991-8847.

THE EMPIRE OF CHIVALRY & STEEL INC.
A non-profit medieval recreation and historical group based in Arizona. They have experts in the fighting arts as well as the creative arts, all of which will be on hand to assist you as you enter into the current middle ages. For more information, contact Bart Smith (Phoenix) 602-937-6995 or Leonard Bird (Tucson) 602-742-2432.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

FANTASTIC FICTION CLUB OF UNLV
The oldest existing fan organization in Las Vegas, this group is responsible for *Neon Galaxy*, the SF journal for the southwest (published on a semesterly schedule). Meetings are held during the Fall & Spring semesters. For info send a SASE to Paul Andricopoulos/UNLV Fant. Fict., c/o UNLV Student Govt., UNLV, 4505 S. Maryland Py, Las Vegas, NV 89154, or call Paul at (702) 739-6559.

FINNEGIN'S ISLE
A club set around *Finnegin's Isle*, to discuss and misunderstand the Cargo Cult and the mystery around *Finnegin's Wake*. Meets every other Thursday night. Have also started a Robert Anton Wilson study group, meeting each Sunday night. For more information write: 2080 E. Greenway, Tempe, AZ 85282.

N E W O N T H E L I S T !

KLINGON ASSAULT GROUP
Western Fleet (Pacific time zone) is looking for a few good Klingons for their ships. Club does community service, wears Klingon fashions to conventions, and networks pen pals, as well as local activities. National monthly newsletter is $7. For more information, send a legal-size SASE to Klingon Assault Group — QelDaS, PO Box 9406, Santa Rosa, CA 95405.

LEPRECON, INC.
One of the two Phoenix area corporations that put on yearly conventions. Best described as SF/F generalists with a main thrust into SF/F art. Quarterly meetings are held on the second Saturday of February, May, August and November. For more information, write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285 or call David Hiatt at (602) 820-1093.

LOS ANGELES SCIENCE FANTASY SOCIETY (LASFS) Los Angeles based SF club. Meetings are at 8:00pm every Thursday at the clubhouse, may not be open other times. For information write LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601.

THE MAGRATHEA BBS
Discuss your favorite SF books, TV shows, and movies electronically on the Magrathea BBS at (602) 833-9216. Available for online reading and downloading are episode guides and information files for SF TV shows. 300/1200/2400/4800/9600 baud, 24 hours a day.

MECHFORCE NORTH AMERICA
The best Mechwarriors all belong to Mechforce North America, the only Battletech players' organization sanctioned by FASA. Get quarterly newsletters, new Battletech products, and much, much more. For more information, write Mechforce North America, 2101 W. Broadway #305, Columbia, MO 65205-6018 or call (314) 445-AWOL.

MYTHADVENTURES FAN CLUB
THE authorized fan organization of Robert Asprin's *MythAdventure* series has moved headquarters from California to Scottsdale! Members receive the quarterly newsletter *MythInformation*, as well as other goodies. For more info, send a SASE to MAFC, PO Box 13836, Scottsdale, AZ 85267-3836, or call (602) 951-1407.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

NATIONAL FANTASY FAN FEDERATION (N3F)
Correspondence and fanzine-oriented national SF club; no meetings. Publishes *The National Fantasy Fan (TNFF)*, the club zine, and *Tightbeam*, the letterzine, bimonthly. Club apa (*N'APA*), round robins, story contests, several bureaus & activities. Approx 300 members. Dues are $12 per year. For more information write: Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606.

THE PHOENIX FANTASY FILM SOCIETY
Film society for classic SF/F film. Membership is $25 lifetime dues. PFFS also rents projectors, films, and video tapes. Contact PFFS, Box 30423, Phoenix, AZ 85067.

PHOENIX JAPANIMATION SOCIETY
Local chapter of Japanimation/general animation oriented fans — meets monthly. Membership is free, though optional monthly newsletter is $5/year or $.50 per month. Call Tom Perry at (602) 996-2196 or write PO Box 5189, Glendale, AZ 85312.

THE PHOENIX REGENCY CLUB
Dancing, dining, and dalliance! A chance to recreate the fun and frivolity of the Georgian, Regency, and Victorian eras. Meets on the second Saturday of each month at 5130 W. Creedance, Glendale, AZ. For more info, call (602) 973-2054.

RAW GAMES
(Role-players & Wargamers, Inc.) is the Valley's oldest role-playing and wargaming club. Currently meeting at Carrow's Restaurant at 7th Street & Monte Vista in Phoenix every Sunday from 3pm–9pm (except during conventions and other special events). Open to new members — call (602) 849-9515.

SHADOW KEEP BBS
RPG Discussions and Gamer info center! Separate boards to discuss AD&D, comics, *Champions*, *BattleTech*, books, movies, SF, current affairs, conventions and much more!! No fees!! All we expect is that you contribute to the discussions. Shadow Keep Bulletin Board Service at (602) 993-4995. All you need is a computer and a modem! 24 hrs a day, 300/1200/2400 baud. All computers welcome!

SHUTTLE VESUVIUS (LAS VEGAS)
New chapter of "Star Fleet" in Las Vegas which meets on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at the Sunrise Library (located in Sunrise Manor). For more info, send a SASE to Maureen & Dayne Lake, 4801 E. Sahara Ave. #125, Las Vegas, NV 89104, or call (702) 641-6269.

SOUTHERN NEVADA AREA FANTASY AND FICTION UNION ("SNAFFU" – LAS VEGAS)
A non-profit general SF&F club in Las Vegas, creators of fanzine *Situation Normal??* and sponsors of SilverCon. Write SNAFFU, Attn: Aileen Forman, PO Box 95941, Las Vegas, NV 89193-5941.

THE SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM
In the Kingdom of Atenveldt doth lie the Principality of the Sun (Arizona); within fair Principality can be found four primary Baronies: Atenveldt, Mons Tonitrus, Sun Dragon and Tir Ysgithr. For information on any of these, or for general information on thy past tomorrows, thou mayest contact: Mistress Rhianwen o Enfys DisBerod (Linda Peck); Principality Seneschal, 902 S. Eli Drive, Tucson, AZ 85710,

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For more information write: NOSF3 '93; P.O. Box 791089; New Orleans, LA 70179-1089

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

(602) 747-1512 until 10pm; or in Phoenix, Mistress Helen Jennet (Pam Foley) 1345 E. Palm Ln, Phoenix, AZ 85006, (602) 495-1760.

SOUTHWEST COSTUMERS' GUILD
A Phoenix-area branch chapter of the International Costumers' Guild, based in Maryland. Dedicated to exploring, teaching, researching and enjoying all aspects of costuming. Dues are $14 per year (which includes $7.00 International dues). For more information contact Mahala Sweebe at (602) 938-9319 (leave msg) or write c/o PO Box 39504, Phoenix, AZ 85069.

STARBASE TUCSON
Star Trek readers/writers who correspond, critique, collaborate and occasionally publish in pro publications. Interests also include *Sime/Gen, Quantum Leap, Dr. Who, Companion, BattleStar Galactica* and *Stingray*. Write to: Kathryn Kane, PO Box 449, Oracle, AZ 85623.

NEW ON THE LIST!

S.T.A.R. SAN DIEGO
The largest SF society in the San Diego area. Initially a *Star Trek* club, S.T.A.R. has grown and widened its perspective to include interests in fantasy, gaming, costuming, writing, films, animation, computers, and much more. Meetings are on the 3rd Saturday of each month, and are free (one-time $1 voting membership available). S.T.A.R. has about 100 active members and is over 20 years old. For more information, call (619) 286-0377, or write S.T.A.R., PO Box 15373, San Diego, CA 92175.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

T.A.R.D.I.S.
(The Arizona Regional Doctor [Who] Interest Society) *Dr. Who* fan club of Phoenix, in addition to an interest in *Star Trek, Blake's 7*, and a varied SF interest. Memberships are $15.00 and include a monthly newsletter, business cards & a TARDIS key. Meets every two weeks at various locations around the valley. Contact Belle at T.A.R.D.I.S., Box 63191, Phoenix, AZ 85082, or call (602) 864-8848 (eves) or 255-5131 x149 during weekdays to leave a message.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

UNITED FEDERATION OF PHOENIX
The Phoenix area *Star Trek* club. Meets every two weeks at various locations around the Phoenix area. For information, write PO Box 37224, Phoenix, AZ 85069 or call Jim Strait at (602) 242-9203.

UNITED WHOVIANS OF TUCSON
A well-informed and very active *Dr. Who* club. $12 yearly membership includes four issues of their fanzine, written by semi pro's and other dedicated fans. For more information contact Tracy A. Murray, 7242 E. Calle Cuernavaca, Tucson, AZ 85701, or call (602) 722-6812.

GENERIC CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Badge Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Country: _____ Phone: _____

Enclosed is $_____ for ____ memberships in the upcoming _____ convention. (See Convention Calendar for appropriate mailing address.)

Please send me more info on: ☐ Masquerade ☐ Art Show ☐ Dealers' Room

☐ Volunteering ☐ Other: _____

SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY

Convention Calendar

Compiled by Margaret Grady

CONVENTION CALENDAR

ConNotations makes no representations of these conventions other than simply providing a listing service. All conventions may be listed here free by sending the information about your convention to us. Send the convention info to ConNotations — Convention Calendar, 2040 E. Cypress, Phoenix, AZ 85006.

WHEN CONTACTING A CONVENTION, PLEASE SEND AN SASE (SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE) FOR RETURN REPLY!

CON-DOR
Mar. 5–7, 1993 • General SF/F con with guests of honor Octavia Butler (Hugo & Nebula award winner) and J. Michael Straczynski (creator of *Babylon 5*). Town & Country Hotel (619-291-7131), with room rates of $69 (s/d). Membership rates are $30 at-the-door. For more info write PO Box 15771, San Diego, CA 92175, or call (619) 286-0377.

SILVERCON 2
Apr. 2–4, 1993 • General SF/F con with guests of honor Poul Anderson, Julia Ecklar, William Rotsler, Dr. Jane Robinson, and Cynthia McQuillin at Jackie Gaughin's Plaza Hotel/Casino (800-634-6575), with room rates of $45 s/d (you must book for Fri. arrival and Sunday departure). Membership rates are $25 at-the-door. For more info write PO Box 95941, Las Vegas, NV 89193-5941, or call Woody Bernardi at (702) 227-9335.

STAR FEST '93
Apr. 23–25, 1993 • Media con with guests of honor John de Lancie ("Q"), and Majel Barrett-Roddenberry ("Lwaxana Troi") of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* in Denver, CO. For more info call (800) 733-8735.

LEPRECON 19
June 4–6, 1993 • Art-oriented SF/F con with guests of honor artist Sue Dawe, author S.P. Somtow, and local artist Katrine Kady at the Camelview Resort in Scottsdale (800-852-5205), with room rates of $55 (s/d). Membership rates are $20 until March 14, $25 until May 15, then $30 at-the-door. For more info write PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285, or call Doug Cosper at (602) 245-1440. (See page 15)

HEXACON 3
June 18–20, 1993 • Gaming con at the Camelview Resort in Scottsdale (800-852-5205), with room rates of $45 (s/d). Membership rates are $10 until June 1, then $15 at-the-door. For more info write PO Box 62613, Phoenix, AZ 85082-2613, or call Gregg Fischer at (602) 497-9554. (See page 17)

CONVENTION CALENDAR

NEW ORLEANS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FESTIVAL
June 18–20, 1993 • General interest con with GoH Robert Silverberg, Artist GoH Bob Eggleton, & Toastmaster Walter Jon Williams. At the Clarion Hotel in New Orleans, LA (800-824-3359), with room rates of $65 s/d. $75 t/q. Membership rates are $18 until 3/31/93, $20 til 5/31/93, then $25 at-the-door. For more info write NOSF3 '93, PO Box 791089, New Orleans, LA 70179-1089. (See page 44)

WESTERCON '93
July 2–5, 1993 • Westercon 46, Bellevue, WA, with Guests of Honor: Greg Bear, George Barr; George Alec Effinger as Toastmaster; F.M. & Elinor Busby and Wally Weber as Fan Guests of Honor. Attending memberships are more than $40 now, and supporting memberships are probably still $20. For more info contact the convention at PO Box 24292, Seattle, WA 98124.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

CONFRANCISCO
Sept. 2–6, 1993 • Worldcon at the Parc 55 and the ANA hotels in San Francisco, and the Moscone Convention Center. Note — change in hotel and expanded dates! Honored Guests are: Larry Niven, Tom Digby, Alicia Austin, jan howard finder, Guy Gavriel Kay as Master of Ceremonies, and Mark Twain as the special Dead Guest of Honor. Attending memberships are $110 thru 3/31, then $125 thru 7/16, and supporting memberships are $25. For more info write 712 Bancroft Rd #1993, Walnut Creek, CA 94598, or call (510) 945-1993. Inquires may also be made via CompuServe Electronic Mail to user id 72377,3623.

NEXT ISSUE **More interviews, short fiction, and convention news, plus a new column on genre video, "The Videophile."**

1994 WORLD HORROR CONVENTION

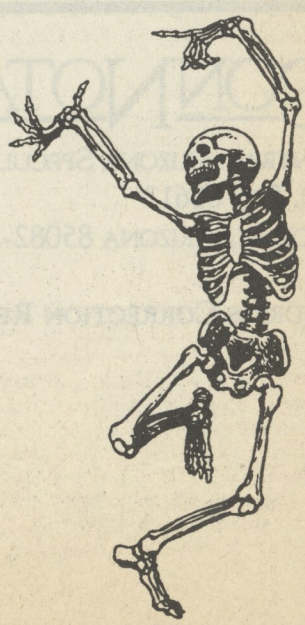
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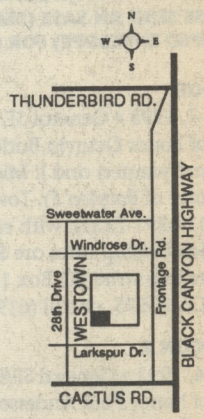
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