

WesterColt .45
Programming & Scheduling
Participant Invitation

February 3, 1992

Dear Convention Participant,

This letter is an invitation to participate in the program of activities planned for WesterColt .45! WesterColt .45 is the name of the 45th annual Western Regional Science Fiction & Fantasy Convention (WesterCon). It is being held this year in Phoenix, Arizona, from Thursday July 2nd through Sunday July 5th at the downtown Omni Adams Hotel (formerly the Sheraton).

The Guests-of-Honor for WesterColt .45 are:

Jennifer Roberson, for Author GOH;
Rick Sternbach, for Artist GOH;
Wilson "Bob" Tucker, for Toastmaster; and
Pat Mueller, for Fan GOH.

Many of you may know that Jennifer is a local celebrity who writes fantasy and romance novels. Rick is Senior Illustrator for Star Trek: The Next Generation and comes to us from California. Tucker is an old-time author and fan from Illinois, and Pat is an active editor and fan from Texas.

Enclosed with this letter is a questionnaire concerning your interest (and availability) in participating at WesterColt .45. Please fill out the questionnaire indicating whether or not you would be interested and available to participate, what days and times you would be available for programming, and any other information we should know in order to properly schedule you on the program.

Also included is a tentative list of programming ideas we have come up with already. Please feel free to add to, or modify, this list if there's something special you would like to see and/or do. Select those items in which you feel knowledgeable enough to participate. You may indicate priority of preference by placing an H for high, M for medium or L for low on the ___ just left of the program item titles; if you have another system which you'd rather use, then by all means use it on these items and describe it somewhere on the enclosed list. If you are unable to participate in our convention, then skip this part of the questionnaire.

For WesterColt .45 our complimentary membership policy is as follows:

- 1) Complimentary memberships shall be offered to participants who select the PRO status category on the first portion of the questionnaire, AND;
- 2) Volunteer to participate in at least TWO program items of SELECTED topics; Meet-The-Pros and the like are generally not selected by participants, but assigned as general programming

functions available to all participants and are not mandatory to attend, so they wouldn't count towards the two required.

The selection of professional status will be up to the individual participant based on the honor system, but WesterColt .45 reserves the right to determine whether a participant does or does not qualify as PRO and, thus, for a complimentary membership. In other words, please be honest. For example, if you are a tailor by profession, then you may classify yourself as a professional costumer. However, if you make a living as a waiter/waitress, then please don't expect us to consider you a professional filker/musician. If you are a member of the Science Fiction Writers Association (SFWA), then indicate this on your completed questionnaire.

This questionnaire packet is designed to be returned to me, postage paid, merely by removing this cover letter (for your records), removing the outer mailer sheet, reversing it so that my address is on the outside and restapling it together. If you plan to participate, then you might want to make a photocopy of your completed questionnaire for future reference. Once I receive your questionnaire I will process it and mail back a response indicating that you've been processed and what status you've been given (i.e. PRO, FAN, etc.) as a participant. Bring that response with you to the convention as it will serve as proof that you were given that status and that you qualify to receive a complimentary membership if you've been given PRO status.

Once you have returned the questionnaire and indicated an interest in participating and attending you will shortly receive a packet containing general information related to the convention, i.e. hotel information, air travel info, directions by car, and so on. If there's any other information which you require at this time, then please contact me using the options below or request it on your completed questionnaire.

Thanks for your time and I hope to hear from you soon.

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WESTERCOLT .45 QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill out this section whether you have any interest or not in participating. Please continue with the Program Ideas following this page if you plan on participating and attending.

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____
 STATE/PROV _____ ZIP CODE _____ COUNTRY _____
 TELEPHONE _____ BEST TIME TO CALL _____
 EMAIL SERVICE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Please check one of the following:

- ☐ Yes, I am interested in participating at WesterColt .45 and plan to attend.
☐ Yes, I am interested in participating, but will be unable to attend.
☐ No, I am not interested in participating, but would like to attend; please send me more information.
☐ No, I am not interested in participating and won't be attending.

Since I am interested in participating and attending WesterColt .45 I consider myself:

PRO in the area(s) of: _____
 FAN in the area(s) of: _____
 OTHER _____ in: _____

Please provide a short biography for use by our programming staff:

Times available for programming; please check each day and all times preferred:

____ Thursday July 2nd from: N/A 10:00am - 1:00pm, ____ 1:00pm - 4:00pm, ____ 4:00pm - 7:00pm, ____ 7:00pm +
 ____ Friday July 3rd from: ____ 10:00am - 1:00pm, ____ 1:00pm - 4:00pm, ____ 4:00pm - 7:00pm, ____ 7:00pm +
 ____ Saturday July 4th from: ____ 10:00am - 1:00pm, ____ 1:00pm - 4:00pm, ____ 4:00pm - 7:00pm, ____ 7:00pm +
 ____ Sunday July 5th from: ____ 10:00am - 1:00pm, ____ 1:00pm - 4:00pm, ____ 4:00pm - 7:00pm, N/A 7:00pm +

How many program items would you like to participate in? Minimum ____, Maximum ____, Prefer ____

COSTUMING - COSTUMING - COSTUMING - COSTUMING - COSTUMING

— Costuming 101 (Novice)

Who, what and where of basic costuming. Hints on how to get started, ideas for inexpensive first costumes and people/organizations to contact. Discussion group with experienced costumers. Slides of first costumes ideal. Discussion should include science fiction convention masquerades, local and national Costumers' Guild info, hall costuming; best, first and cheapest.

— Costuming 201 (Journeyman)

More advanced ideas and sources for the more experienced costumers. Discussion group with slides of more elaborate costumes. This is where you start spending money on your creations... and really start spending time.

— Graduate Costuming (Master)

These people live only to costume. Come listen to their ideas and unusual sources for their creations (and how they manage to also eat, work and pay the bills while costuming). Discussion group with slides of master costumes.

— Hall Costuming

The perfect first costume and something fun to do for the more experienced costumer. Discussion group with slides of hall costumes.

— Stage Presentation 101

So, you got a nice costume? A work of art? The end all to be all? But, you have no idea how to present it on stage or how to become the character you are. Experienced costumers strut their stuff. Discussion group with video and live examples of basic beginning stage presentation. Simple, easy-to-do ideas and hints presented to inexperienced costumers on how to present a variety of costumes. Audience could throw out types of characters to the panel and the panel could demonstrate to the audience.

— Stage Presentation 201

This is where the special effects come into play. Master costumers show some of their winning presentations. Discussion group with video examples of winning presentations. We would like to see lots and lots of video clips for this panel.

— Structural Integrity Of Costumes

Integrity of the underwire... the corset, hoopskirt, bustle, etc. A guided tour to costume underwear. Discussion group with slides/video of costume supports.

— Props, Effects and Etiquette

Swords, hats, handkerchiefs, etc. that give your costume the complete look. Discussion group with video, slides and examples.

— Costumes From Hell And Other Disasters

Costumes that did and didn't make it to stage. Discussion group with slide/video and live examples. We anticipate this to be an audience discussion group where they share their experiences of costume disasters and what they did about it.

— Costuming For Children

How to get them to hold still long enough for a brief fitting and what do you do when they start crying on stage. Discussion group with slides/video and examples.

Demo: — Buckram and Wire Techniques: Hat making using flat patterns, buckram and wire. For historical and fantasy applications. Demo and examples.
— Glue, Staple and Tape: Attaching things to other things for costuming. Demo and examples.

— Basic Figure Drawing: How to draw simple ideas out for costume purposes. Demo and examples.

— Stage Makeup: How to's from base makeup to appliances. What's available and where do you find it? Demo and examples.

— Masquerade Judging

What made them pick THAT costume? Discussion panel with slides/video.

Discussion group of different styles of judging - craftsmanship vs. stage presentation vs. overall.

COMICS - COMICS - COMICS - COMICS - COMICS

— Realism In Comics

How much is too much? Or is it an oncoming trend? A talk with editors and writers about realism.

Comics As Investments

How to collect, preserve and spot valuable comics for profit.

Comicbook Gimmicks

Comics with holograms, trading cards, different covers, etc. Will these be valuable collectors items or flash-in-the-pan (no pun intended) gimmicks. Talk to collectors, editors and artists.

Graphic Novels

A different kind of literature or just book-size comics. Talk to creators, editors and publishers.

Comic Auction (Special Event)

Have a retailer run an auction of various comics submitted by buyers. From \$0.50 to \$5000.00 in value.

Comic History Display (Special Event)

Have some collectors put together a display of rare, old or unique comics in the dealers room or nearby.

Violence And Horror In Comics

Many comics have become very bloody and violent. Is this a new trend or could it bring about a 1950's witch hunt?

Translating Other Mediums To Comics

From Dark Shadows to Back To The Future and Lost In Space. How well do these TV shows and movies translate into comics?

"Real" Animated vs. "Cartoon" Superheroes

The entire gamut - from Superman and Spiderman to Mighty Mouse and Atom Ant. Why do some seem more believable?

What's Wrong With Comic Book Art?

Why do people look down on comics as a medium? Are comics art?

Latest Trends In Comic Heroes

Marvel and many others are taking their heroes back to the streets fighting gangs. An examination why...

What Makes A Superhero Super?

An examination of how superheroes get their powers and why.

Superhero Anatomy (Special Event)

A Marvel/DC artist shows how to draw the anatomy of a superhero.

Comic Publishers: How Are They Doing?

An examination of the comic industry as a whole, who's on top, who's on the bottom and who is expected to go out of business this year.

Market Expansion Or Sellout

The new trend in comics - Baseball, Barbie and Biography comics. Is it a good idea or just rank commercialism?

Fan-Created Comics

Starving creators arise! A quick and fun way to break into comics - make your own!

How Do They Actually MAKE Comics?

Talk to an inker, letterer and colorist about the nagging details on how they color, print and produce comics.

Comics As A Career

So you want to sell/create/be involved with comics? Talk to a store owner, artist, publisher and distributor about working with comics.

Self-Publishing: How to do it

Talk to several comics creators who have published and marketed their own comics.

Comic Art 101

Find out how professional artists actually DO comics. What do editors look for? Tips and hazards.

- Adult Comics
Learn which are the good ones amongst the trash... And how far is TOO far. Where do creators get their ideas?
- Evolution Of The Comic Art Style
What are the latest modes and styles in comics today? Where is it going?
- Comicbook Science Fiction
Did any of the wild things in gold and silver age comics ever come to pass? From Dick Tracy's wristwatch to flying cars and death rays. An examination.
- Storywriting For Comics
How to plot and design comic stories for publication. Learn how to submit a manuscript for consideration.
- Bodily Functions In Comics
What else, besides fighting and running, happen in comics? Where are the bathrooms? What things have been done already?
- The Japanese Invasion
Should we buy American? What are the differences and the lure of Manga to many fans? Why do people buy comics then can't even read?
- Comics On The Big Screen
An examination of how comic characters have translated to the big (and little) screen. How did they do? Where did they go wrong? Superman, Batman, The Punisher, The Flash and Superboy.
- Whatever Happened To Funny Comics?
The surprising lack of humor comics in the marketplace. An examination of why and a look at some of the funny comics in the last 40 years.
- Saturday Morning Cartoons
Are they as bad as they look, or do we remember our childhood favorites through rose-colored TV's? What happened to them?
- American Animation Festival (Special Event)
If possible, find some of the great current and old TV animated cartoons and show them some afternoon.
- Comic Ratings
Movies and records are rated. Should comics have a voluntary or mandatory ratings system?
- The British Invasion
The Beatles led the British Invasion of the U.S. in the mid-1960s and writers such as Alan Moore and Neil Gaiman are leading another invasion today. Is there something distinctively "British" about their techniques or sensibilities? How does it differ from the work of American creators?
- The Editor's Role In Comics
Exactly how does the editor fit into the creative process at a comic book publishing company? How does the role of editors differ from one comics publisher to another? How does the comics editor's role differ from the role of a book or magazine editor?
- Are Super-Heroes Fascists?
A guy puts on a mask and costume to hide his real identity and ventures forth to take the law into his own hands. Are we talking about Batman or a Ku Klux Klan member? Is it healthy to root for a costumed vigilante?
- Religion And Comics
Most Americans say they believe in a Christian god, but very few comics characters go to church. Religious leaders usually are portrayed as cynical and manipulative, at best, and downright evil, at worst. Why is this? What market concerns are at work in the regard?
- Families In Comics
Why do so few heroes and heroines have spouses and families? Are the two inherently contradictory? Can a hero have a normal family life?
- For Mature Readers
Why are certain comics labeled "for adults only?" Are such labels self-censorship or a legitimate, reasonable response to social pressures? How do different companies make the decision to label a title?
- Best-Seller By Formula

Can an editor sit down with a writer and artist and use a formula to create a top-selling comic? You know, combine disaffected teens, useful mutations, oriental mysticism and you get ...? Or is it impossible to accurately forecast whether a title will be successful in the marketplace?

— Beyond Marvel And DC - How Have Independent Publishers Affected The Comics Industry? When the first independent companies began publishing comics in the early 1980s, they promised great things: more diversity, better treatment of creators, etc. Has the promise been fulfilled?

— Are Secret Identities Obsolete? How About Costumes?

Can a mask and costume disguise a person today, with our new, high-tech ways of identifying people? If not, then are secret identities infeasible? Or are they still necessary on some mythic level?

— New Looks For Old Characters

One of the more popular recent trends is resurrecting old characters with new looks more suitable for modern times. DC seems to have led the way; even Superman was given an altered origin, one updated for the late 20th century. Is this a healthy trend? Would it be better from a creative perspective to create new characters rather than recycle old ones?

— Can Science Fiction Ideas Be Portrayed In Comics?

Sure, comics can feature flying saucers and aliens and space wars, but can they depict less-obvious aspects of SF - the subtle relationship between human and machine, the struggle for identity in an alienated society, the lonely beauty of space?

— Can Comic Books Be Serious Literature?

After all, an issue of DC's Sandman won the most recent World Fantasy award for best short story. First, we'll have to define "serious literature" - what limits do we set on this term? Then, we'll see if super-heroes can fit the definition. Among the obvious titles for consideration are Sandman, Watchmen and Love And Rockets. What are some others? For that matter, should comics aspire to be considered literature?

— The Physics Of Superpowers

By now, we all know that if Superman leaped a tall building with a single bound he'd crash through the sidewalk. But, do super-hero powers have a certain logic to them, whether scientific or not? Are some super-hero's powers physically possible?

— Risen From The Dead - The Rebirth Of Horror Comics

Horror comics are hot, as happens every 10 or 15 years in comics. Titles such as Sandman and Hellblazers are critically acclaimed and sell well, too. Why has this happened now? What does it say about contemporary society? How do today's horror comics differ from those of the early to mid-'70s or the EC titles of the '50s?

— When A Picture's Worth A Hundred Words: Comic Panels Make The Script Come Alive

Generic comic art-and-script panel. Panelists: any comic artist or script writer.

HORROR - HORROR - HORROR - HORROR - HORROR

— Antecedents Of Fright: The Gothic Heritage

An examination of the gothic/horror novels and stories of the late 18th and 19th centuries. From The Monk to Dracula.

— Cross-Pollination: The Use Of Horror In Fantasy And Science Fiction

The effective use of horror themes and elements in fantasy and SF. When do fantasy and science fiction become horror?

— The Scariest Novel I've Never Written

The ultimate plot/monster that would scare the snot out of both author and reader. What can't/won't you put into print?

— Horror 'N' Rock 'N' Roll

Horror themes have been and are prevalent in heavy-metal and punk rock. Why there seems to be a natural affinity.

— Sexism In Horror - Is It Unavoidable?

Woman as victim; woman as predator. Is horror fiction sexist, misogynistic, or is it simply expressing societal programming?

— The Traditional Monster In Horror Literature

The changing faces of vampires, mummies, zombies and werewolves from then until now. Has today's market outgrown them or are they still useful?

— Archetypes And Mythology In Horror Fiction

An examination of the myths and legends that form the basis for the horrors that still scare us today. Are new ones being created?

— Vampires: Myth vs. Creation

The vampire in ethnic myth and folklore vs. the vampire created by films, novels and television. Would Vlad Tepes recognize Count Dracula?

— Late-Night/Midnight Horror Readings

FILK - FILK - FILK - FILK - FILK

— Filk Concert On Saturday Afternoon

— Sociology Of Filk

Talking about how filk fits into organized fandom and its relationship with other facets of fandom.

— Filk Myths And Legends

Retelling of memorable musical (?) moments.

— What Distinguishes A Filk Song From Everything Else?

Interactive discussion on why certain songs are heard at a filk, while others, perhaps just as worthy, are not and why.

WRITING/LITERATURE - WRITING/LITERATURE - WRITING/LITERATURE

— Shoptalk

How active networking can alter writing careers by keeping authors up-to-date on industry doings, including editorial likes/dislikes, contracts, etc.

— Writers Workshop

Local pros and workshop members discuss what did/didn't work for them, with suggestions for other workshops.

— ACCESS: What is it?

An introduction to a new online BBS/real-time game system based in the (Phoenix) valley, with major international links. Ground floor designers/Sysops include Roberson, O'Green, Stackpole and Danforth. New competition for GEnie and CompuServe!

— Perspective

How success does/doesn't alter writers' approaches, time responsibilities, plotting, etc.

— Author's Eye-view

Are editors/publishers really monsters out to rape authors? Positive/negative experiences and how an author deals with both.

— Beating Or Joining The System

Would-be authors complain about how difficult it is to break in. Published authors discuss problems within the system. Examples of how some beat the system, while others found ways of working from within.

— The Real Story To Being An Author

Forthright author(s) willing to frankly discuss such things as sales figures, advances, raises, big/small deals, etc. This can be an eye opener for wanna-be's who can't ask for numbers, but need to know them. Author(s) should be willing to discuss royalty statements.

— We've Been There

Featured panelists would be the real-life people who work/have worked in high risk and real-life situations. Authors always get facts wrong. This panel would feature combat/non-combat pilots, stuntmen, former Army Ranger, medical personnel, to introduce the audience to the truth.

— Animal Behavior

Features animal behaviorist and other experienced animal people to discuss true behavior in animals, which usually is not well portrayed in fiction.

— After The After-Glow

What happens once the quest is completed? What happens to an aging hero? A look at the neglected part of fictional heroes/heroiness.

— Author Etiquette

Do's/Don'ts in publicizing your work, especially at bookstores.

- What's Hot And What's Not?
Booksellers panel on hot- and cold-selling books.
- Killing Off Characters
How does an author reconcile him/herself to killing off favorite/important characters? How do the fans respond? How do you make the death meaningful, not just button-pushing?
- Pro Networking
Let pros "stock and prepackage" their panels.
- Who're You With?
Series of publisher-specific panels featuring authors from those houses to discuss what like is like with so-and-so. DAW authors discuss DAW, Bantam authors discuss Bantam, etc.
- The Mud, The Blood And The Beer
Panel on the mud, guts and gore involved in horses, trail drives, etc. Discussion on realities of western life.
- Was Star Wars A Western In Disguise?
Has the western lifestyle influenced fantasy/science fiction?
- The Future Of Publishing
With the dawn of electronic publishing, CD-ROM and electronic manuscripts, how have things changed and what's next.
- Benefit Literacy Auction
We would like to hold an auction to benefit literacy programs to promote reading. Items donated by pros. Author GOH (Jennifer Roberson) offers to auction an in-depth critique of manuscript, plus her homemade beef jerky (in keeping with western theme of con).
- Discussion Groups
Limited, but regularly scheduled, discussion groups featuring a pro and 6-8 fans away from the rest of the crowd. Token charge to cover costs of food: nachos, chips & salsa, chocolate buffalo chips, pickled eggs, milk & cookies, soda, coffee, tea. Must be well-publicized BEFORE the con, so people may sign up in advance; also allow sign-ups at-con. NOT LIMITED TO AUTHORS ONLY; ALL OTHER PROS WELCOME, TOO. Please indicate interest so that we may publicize your name ahead of time.
- Local Networks/Workshops: The "Care And Feeding" Of A Group
Helping people connect within their areas.
- Mock Jail At Meet-the-Pros
If you're not in cowboy clothes, then you get thrown in jail and must ransom your way out. Can pay to have the "possee" arrest people throughout the con. Proceeds go to local charities to benefit literacy.
- You Can't Judge A Book By Its Cover: When Authors And Artists Don't Speak
Sometimes a book's cover art bears no relationship to the action of the book within. Why does this happen? Panelists: any book author or cover artist.

FILM/TV/ANIMATION - FILM/TV/ANIMATION - FILM/TV/ANIMATION

- The BEM, Now And Then
The portrait of aliens - the proverbial Bug-Eyed Monster - in science fiction movies seems to change in tone and substance, depending on when the movie was made. For example, SF films of the 1950's were preoccupied with the perceived threat of communism, so aliens in films such as Invasion Of The Body Snatchers were powerful, implacable and opposed to individualism. By the late '70s and early '80s, aliens were occasionally portrayed as being friendly. Witness Close Encounters Of The Third Kind and Brother From Another Planet. How does the present affect the way film-makers portray the future?
- Sympathy For The Devil
How to portray villains effectively in movies. Does a villain have to have motivations and qualities that make him/her sympathetic in some way, or does absolute evil work? Why does it often seem as if the villains are more interesting than the heroes?
- The Changing Face Of Horror Movies
In some ways, horror movies have changed dramatically from 1930s Universal productions such as Frankenstein and Dracula to splatter-fests such as the Freddie and Friday the 13th series. For one thing, the violence is much more graphic these days. In other ways, though, there has been continuity from

the '30s to the '90s. Villains remain relentless and seemingly all-powerful in most horror flicks. How have things changed? What will the future of horror movies be like?

Forbidden Pleasures - Horror And The Erotic Imagination

The erotic has always been an integral part, whether intended or implied, of horror films, especially those concerning vampires. The 1931 Dracula is an early example of this phenomenon, even though its eroticism often seems unintentional. What is the connection between fear and sex? Why does it give us pleasure to be threatened by powerful, merciless creatures?

Shock Or Suspense - The Psychology Of Fear

Alfred Hitchcock was a master of suspense. He would let viewers know that a bomb was ticking away under a restaurant table and make us squirm as we wonder whether it will be discovered and disarmed in time. Other film-makers prefer to shock viewers with surprises that make us squeal and jump in our chairs. Is one method preferable to the other? What is the essence of fear, anyway?

Dumb, Dumb, Dumb - Foolish Behavior In Horror Movies

The alley is dark and deserted, but the heroine walks down it anyway and another plot complication is launched. Has a horror movie ever been made in which the characters behave logically at all times? Do the plots of horror movies depend too heavily on foolish behavior? Could such movies be made without that type of behavior?

Artistic Freedom And Government Funding

Given the ongoing controversy about the National Endowment for the Arts, this is particularly relevant. Does government have an obligation to foster the arts? Should it discriminate in its funding? Should it use any standards in determining which projects gain funding? If so, whose standards? Should an artist with a government grant limit him/herself to non-controversial topics?

Kinder, Gentler 'Toons

When the firecracker went off in Daffy Duck's face, did it warp our young minds? Some social critics maintain that the proliferation of violence on TV and in movies has helped to make our society more violent. If so, does this extend to animated shows aimed at children? Will today's kids be kinder and gentler because contemporary American cartoons are more tame than those made 20 or more years ago? Or can kids - and adults! - differentiate between Tiny 'Toons and the nightly news?

The Rebirth Of The Disney Animated Feature

Disney is still synonymous with animation, but for a long time that reputation rested on films made 40 and more years ago. In recent years, though, Disney seems to have recaptured its touch of producing films that are both entertaining for filmgoers of all ages and gorgeous from a technical standpoint. What makes The Little Mermaid and Beauty And The Beast so satisfying? Is there a common thread between these films and past titles such as Snow White?

What Makes A Cult Film A Cult Film?

Why do some films live on, while others die merciful deaths?

Guilty Pleasures

Things you like even though you know you shouldn't. Let's make it clear - we're talking about books, movies, TV shows and things like that here and nothing else. Do you sneak away to Steven Seagal movies when your friends are watching Henry V? Do you prefer Three's Company reruns to Twin Peaks? Is there any reason to feel guilty about this?

Paper Into Celluloid, And Vice Versa

What type of novels work as movies? For that matter, what types of movies work well in other media, such as comics? Examples: Dune is a masterful novel, but the film was terrible. Battlestar Galactica was considered a lousy SF TV show, but a pretty good comic book. Are there certain qualities about each artform that preclude a truly satisfying adaptation into another form?

British Television Series

The Prisoner, The Avengers, Upstairs/Downstairs, Doctor Who, Fawlty Towers. When the British do television right, it is a wonderful thing. What makes such shows so darn good?

Trek Classic - Today

Star Trek, the television show, is a quarter century old. How well has it aged? Do the characters look like broad-brushed caricatures? Are the concerns outdated? Or do the lessons of those original episodes still ring true today?

Klingons As Commies

The role of the Klingons has varied with the years in Star Trek, from vicious enemy battling the good guys for territory to hapless fallen foe seeking help to uneasy ally. Sound familiar? How - and why - has the portrait of the Klingons changed since 1966?

Kirk And Picard - Studies In Leadership

Kirk always goes down to the planet, gets in a fight and kisses the girl. Picard usually stays on the bridge, almost never throws a punch and doesn't do a lot of necking, either. How are the Enterprise's two captains different? What qualities do they share? Does Kirk reflect the '60s as Picard reflects the '80s/'90s? Who would you want in command if you were part of the Enterprise crew?

It's Dead, Jim... Or Is It?

Star Trek VI apparently was the last gasp of Trek Classic. Is this a good thing, what with the actors getting older and older and the quality of the movies uneven? Is there room for a Star Trek movie featuring characters who act their age? Or, given the series' action-adventure tradition, would Trek fans not buy it?

Star Wars: The Next Generation - Does Anybody Still Care?

The first Star Wars film was released 15 years ago, starting a phenomenon that took the SF world by storm. Today, Star Wars seems as dead as Logan's Run, cult-wise. And now we have a latest in a series of reports that George Lucas is going to make more movies using the Star Wars universe. Did Lucas blow it by not sticking to his original plan of releasing a film every three years? Has Star Wars been left behind?

SFX - What You See, Etc.

Special effects have been used to enhance movies since the birth of narrative film. What are the latest advances in the field? How does a film-maker strike a proper balance between effects and characterization without letting either overwhelm the other?

How Movies/TV And Prose Differ From A Writer's Perspective

Certainly, writing a film script is different from writing a novel. Visuals are all-important in film, for example. But HOW do the forms differ? What sensibilities does each form require? And does the screenwriter have to be more fatalistic than the novelist, since a film ultimately is such a collaborative effort?

Time-Travel Films

Plenty of memorable SF films involving time travel have been made, including Terminator, Star Trek IV, Somewhere In Time, Time After Time and The Time Machine. But, have any of these films been of that seamless quality necessary to allow viewers to accept the storyline? Or do they all contain gaping plot holes that sink them as far as SF purists are concerned? Has the perfect time-travel film been made yet?

Television And Myth

Just as the ancient Greeks grew up listening to tales of Jupiter, Apollo and the other gods, we thrilled to the adventures of Beaver Cleaver, Gilligan and Captain Kirk. Is TV our contemporary mythmaker? If so, what type of mythology is TV teaching us?

Treasures And Trash - Science Fiction On Television

Science fiction-oriented TV shows often are blasted critically for poor writing, acting and effects. Is this a bad rap? Panelists give their personal perspectives about TV SF including what they consider to be examples of good and bad shows.

Classic Science Fiction Films

From the 1930s' monster stories through '50s' paranoia through current-day SFX spectacles, Hollywood has made a lot of excellent science fiction movies (and plenty of bad ones, too!). What are some of the classics that people SHOULD see? Why has the marriage between film and SF been so enduring?

Video Gold - Overlooked SF/Fantasy Films

Everybody knows about Star Wars, 2001: A Space Odyssey, Close Encounters Of A Third Kind and (certainly) Star Trek movies, but there are other SF/Fantasy films equally entertaining and thought-provoking. These include The Brother From Another Planet and the original Cat People. Fortunately, discerning film-goers can find such titles on video if they know what to look for. Panelists discuss their favorite SF/Fantasy video gold.

From Fairbanks To Costner - Robin Hood On The Silver Screen

Robin Hood has been a particular favorite of film-makers from the silent era to the present. What have been the best film/TV versions of Robin Hood? The worst? How have different versions reflected the times in which they were made?

Cyberpunk Films

Science fiction fans are familiar with the cyberpunk phenomenon in prose, as it was let by Gibson and Sterling, et al, in the 1980s. But, cyberpunk also made it onto the silver screen in the form of Bladerunner (which actually predates Neuromancer), Total Recall and others. How has cyberpunk fared in film compared to prose? What is the relationship between the two versions?

Computers As Characters

HAL, the computer from 2001: A Space Odyssey and 2010, is probably the best-known example of computers that are characters in science fiction movies. But, computers have played key roles in films ranging from Colossus and The Forbin Project to Star Trek episodes. What is the allure of having such a character? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

— Originals And Remakes - Is It Better The Second Time Around?

Many SF films have been remade in recent years, including Invasion Of The Body Snatchers, The Thing and Invaders From Mars. Have the remakes added anything to the originals, besides color, better effects and graphic violence? How are the plotlines altered to fit modern sensibilities? Are any of the remakes actually improvements on the originals?

— Once Is Not Enough - Sequels

SF films obviously are not immune to the phenomenon of sequelitis. Are sequels a legitimate artform in and of themselves, as they give filmgoers a second (and third, and fourth, etc.) chance to revisit beloved characters? Or should the creative energy and money be devoted to new efforts? How often are sequels actually superior to the original?

— "To Be Continued" - The Movie Serial

Once upon a time, kids would flock to theatres every Saturday afternoon for a movie program that included the newest chapter in the latest movie serial. Each chapter would end in a seemingly inescapable cliffhanger peril that would be continued in next week's chapter. These serials were repetitive by their very nature, with generally poor acting and production values. But, they had an energy and childlike quality that shines through even today and inspired film-makers such as Lucas and Spielberg. What makes the serials magic?

— Great SF Film-Makers - An Appreciation

Panelists first draw up a list of the great SF film-makers (e.g., Spielberg? Lucas? Cameron? Pal? Irwin Allen?) and then, along with the audience, discuss the qualities that made these film-makers great and the differences between their work in SF and other genres.

— Computer Animation - The State Of The Art

A demonstration using computer and big-screen TV if we get the right people.

— What's Next For The Next Generation?

There are a lot of reports and rumors swirling around Star Trek: The Next Generation. What's the straight scoop? Possible spin-offs? Panelists: ST:TNG employees and others closely involved.

GAMING - GAMING - GAMING - GAMING - GAMING

— The New Avalon Institute Of Science: A BattleTech Designers' Forum

Some of the authors/creators of BattleTech speak out on the universe they have helped to create. Panelists: Anyone who has ever written for BattleTech.

— The Pros And Cons Of "Monty Haul": When is a million gold pieces too much?

Many gamemasters tend to be very liberal with rewarding game characters; this can have interesting effects on long-term gaming; others aren't this way at all. Why? Panelists: Any.

— But It Won't Fit In Your Backpack!

Resource management within a role-playing environment. Creative problem solving and resource management are just two areas that get plenty of attention while role-playing. Panelists: Any.

— The Joys Of Spacejacking: Why Many Good SF RPG Ship Crews Go Bad In Deep Space

After following within the gamemaster's plans for awhile, many groups of players go astray. What makes them decide to do this? Panelists: Any.

— The Nintendo "Conspiracy": Is It A Real Or Perceived Threat?

Are the Japanese systematically attempting to lower the reading skills of American children by selling them arcade games? Panelists: Any confident pro.

— Gamemastering 101: How To Become A Master At Being A Gamemaster

Helpful hints for neophytes who want to put the "master" back into gamemaster. Panelists: Any.

— Game Design/Writing For Fun And Profit: How To Get Started In This Industry

How to get in print in the gaming industry. Panelists: Any.

— Out Of The Vault: A Wargame Collectors' Forum

Wargame collectors discuss their collections, how they came about and the market value of used games. Panelists: Any wargame collector.

— Twelve Tables, No Waiting: Making More Room For Gamers At Conventions

The popularity of gaming during conventions seems to be on the rise; convention organizers are taking notice. Panelists: Appropriate ConCom.

— Newest Game Releases: What Are The Latest Games To Hit The Market?

Info on what's hot from the big game companies. Panelists: Anyone from a big game company.

— Refighting World War II In Real Time: Why Rule 101.643 Never Gets Used

Some wargames are exercises in endurance. The age-old question of realism vs. playability is re-examined. Panelists: Any.

— RPG 2000: A Look At The Future Of Role-Playing

As the commercial role-playing industry approaches the quarter-century mark, new trends are developing. Panelists: Anyone from a big game company or freelancers.

— Eyes Before Ease, Except After Sees: How "Gooney" Can GUIs Get?

Graphic User Interfaces (GUIs) and computer graphics are constantly improving. What's the next step? Panelists: Any computer/game design techies

— Dragons Don't Have Blue Noses: The Fine Art Of Painting Gaming Miniatures

Miniature painting experts show off their wares and discuss tools and techniques. Panelists: Any miniature painters.

— When The (Gaming) Gods Roll Dice, Part I: Creating "Authentic" Game Worlds

There is often a lot of hard research in designing a believable science fiction or fantasy world. Panelists: Any world builders from gaming and/or SF/F literature.

— When The (Gaming) Gods Roll Dice, Part II: Creating "Authentic" Game Cultures

There is often a lot of hard research in designing a believable science fiction or fantasy culture. Panelists: Any culture builders from gaming and/or SF/F literature.

— Fantasy vs. Fundamentalism

A noted expert debunks the relationship between cult ritual and the world's most popular fantasy role-playing game. Panelists: Mike Stackpole, any others familiar enough with the whole picture, any experts at cult ritual(?).

SCIENCE - SCIENCE - SCIENCE - SCIENCE - SCIENCE

— Mock Shuttle Launch

We intend to hold a mock launch using video equipment and the like. We can probably use some help in pulling this off. Any experienced person please apply.

— How To Get Into Space In One Easy Step

The Delta Clipper & SSTO. Can we make a buck off Space? Who will develop this? May include coil guns, laser launchers, nukes, skyhooks and levitation. Panelists: G. Harry Stine and others familiar with the above.

— Once You're On Orbit, Now What?

Space manufacturing & living accommodations, Moon bases, exploring Mars, asteroid mining, etc. Interplanetary economics.

— How To Get To The Next Star

Discussion on various ways to reach our neighboring stars. Panelists: Michael McCollum and any others familiar enough with the subject.

— Strange Machines

Energy Wheels, the Heironomous Machine, neurophones, dowsing, etc. Panelists: G. Harry Stine, Pete Manly, Mike Stackpole, any others with expertise.

— Technology Of The Future

What SF authors think is coming (brainstorming session). Exponential progress -- what is the power of the exponent and is it increasing or decreasing? Vinge's Singularity. Panelists: Rick Cook, G. Harry Stine, Pete Manly, Mike Stackpole, any others with expertise.

— Trends In Support Of R&D

Big gov't isn't supporting new large programs (Apollo, VLA, etc). Who will take their place? Who pays for new knowledge? Who owns it? Which programs are "productive", "appropriate" and "correct"? Panelists: G. Harry Stine, Pete Manly, Rick Cook, any others with expertise.

- War Toys: The Legacy Of Desert Storm
Includes the spacecraft which participated in Desert Storm. Panelists: Mark O'Green, Pete Manly, Mike Stackpole, G. Harry Stine.
- Robots -- Where Are The Tin Men?
- Energy For The Future
Solar? Fusion? Crystals?
- Interfacing People With A Hi-Tech Society -- Is Humanity Obsolete?
Increasingly we serve the machines which were supposed to serve us.
- Stupidly Applied Science & Technology
Scientists who don't understand how technology is applied/misapplied and projects which are "managed" to death.
- Optimism & Pessimism In Science & Engineering
The basic scientist must be an optimist to take on new frontiers but the applications engineer must be a pessimist in order to design out the disasters before the technology is let loose on the public. Do these attitudes affect the technology we end up with? Science confronts the humanities. Differentiate science and technology.
- Dinosaurs: First You See 'em...
Did they expire due to climate change? A catastrophic event? High taxes? Cholesterol?
- Nanotechnology
Is this subject big enough for a whole panel?
- Artificial Intelligence Chaos
Why can't we ever get this panel organized?
- Pseudotechiepeak
The art of sounding scientific when the speaker doesn't know a paramecium from an allosaurus. Ballonium, GL-70 (chalk) and New, Improved Brighteners in every product. A discussion of non-scientific babble from Scientology to social sciences & scientific creationism. (Note: This shouldn't become a bashing session.) The use of convincing taxonomy (jargon & nomenclature) in SF.
- UFOs In The '90s
What's the latest information on this phenomenon? This should be a serious look and not slamming the subject.
- The Science Education Bandwagon Bugged Down
Warning: We don't want this to become a whining & hand-wringing session. Look for some positive, proven programs which overcome the problems.
Panelists: G. Harry Stine, Rick Cook
- Where Are The Breakthroughs In Medicine?
Twenty five years ago we were promised Marvellous Things. Comparing "figure of merit" advances in the medical industry with other techie areas, medicine hasn't even advanced as much as the relatively stagnant automobile industry (compared to the computer, energy, optics or aerospace industries). Only costs have soared.
- The Mystique Of The Scientist
Mammas, don't let your babies grow up to be scientists!
- Cosmology issues
Dark matter, big bang vs steady state; will there be a Big Collapse? The Great Attractor; just how many dimensions can you handle? Anthropocentric views and the ever-popular Black Holes.
- The Linguistics Of Contact
How to deal with space aliens, dolphins and your neighbor who speaks only Pakastani. (ST:TNG had a good episode on this subject where the alien race was basically friendly, but spoke in metaphors based upon their own history.)
- Adaptive Technology For The Physically Challenged
Everybody looks the same in the on-line world. What new gadgets are emerging to help those folks with physical limitations? Will this lead to direct control and uploading/downloading from the brain? Is Hypertext the answer?

— Virtual Reality & Cyberspace

From the first Link Trainer to TRON, the holodeck and beyond.

— Government, Computers, Privacy, Civil Liberties & Censorship

Are we in greater danger from gov't or private assaults? Credit reports, junk mailers/callers, employer & insurance information data banks. What happens when someone in New Jersey is arrested with the same name as yours? Will that central computer database know the difference? Technological countermeasures such as the junk call blocker. Designer computer viruses (attacks junk mailer data base to delete my name).

— Skeptics And Pseudoscience

What are we trying to say here? Panelists: Mike Stackpole and any others

— Green Science: Politics, Pseudoscience Or The Real Thing?

Separating signal from noise in fuzzy issues affecting the environment. Low frequency power lines, ozone layer, greenhouse vs ice age. Interpreting the meaning of micrograms vs nanograms of pollutants; when is an endangered species really endangered?

— A Choice Of Catastrophies

Greenhouse effect, ice age, nuclear holocaust, ozone layer, asteroid impacts. What else can happen?

— Russian Science

Will we have more access to the highly touted technology of the former Soviet Union? Is Col. Khadafi (of Libya) hiring the nuclear scientists? Can we buy MIR (Soviet Space Station) or Buran (their version of the Space Shuttle)?

— The Science And Technology Of Interpersonal Interfacing In A Multivarying Or Null Gravitational Environment

Late night panel. Lab demonstration in the pool is optional.

SOCIAL/POLITICAL - SOCIAL/POLITICAL - SOCIAL/POLITICAL

— The Commonwealth Of Independent States (CIS)

Will this conglomeration of former soviet republics be able to stick together? Can it last? Are they going about it in the best manner? Discussion on better ways they could have handled things.

— When Will The Next Desert Storm Occur? Where And With Whom?

Discussion on the current potential hotspots throughout the world and how involved will the United States or the United Nations become. Muslim fundamentalism seems to be the latest bogeyman; could they merely be filling a void left behind with the "collapse of communism?"

— China: Island Of Communism

Obviously, communism hasn't totally collapsed since China's leaders still subscribe to this philosophy with an iron grip (as seen at Tienamen Square). Will they last or are they slipping? Could the U.S. become embroiled in a conflict over their "internal matters?" Armageddon 2415 AD...

ART - ART - ART - ART - ART

— Art Auctions -- What Does It Take To Win?

Skill, talent, large funding available? Discussion on successful methods.

— Where Do You Market Your Creations?

Best approach, worst approach. Where do you start?

— Earning A Living Through Your Artistic Endeavors

What does it take to go from creating artistic products for fun to making a living? How do you collect your money once they have the piece of art? Minimize being taken to the proverbial cleaners.

— The World You See -- How Do You Show A Fantasy Or Future World As A Believable Place?

What can you put into such a world and get away with? How far is too far out?

— Illustration Of Ancient Myths Or The Far, Far Future

Do the pictures have to be based on what we now live with to be believable? How much does modern familiarity play in our illustrations of the past or future?

— Art As An Investment

Originals or "limited edition" prints. Do they hold their "value"? Are prints worth the effort or an affordable alternative to originals? Will those prints be worth anything down the road?

— Prints As A Disposable Part Of The Art World

What if this week's "limited edition" at 18" x 20" of 500 copies becomes next weeks post card or 8" x 10" 'limited edition' rehash? Has this happened to you?

— Comics As An Art Form

Comic characters vs characateurs of living people. Where do artists get their ideas and inspirations?

— Drawing And Designing To Fulfill Yourself Vs. For A Client

Differences and similarities. Is there satisfaction in portraying someone elses ideas? It can certainly pay the bills...

— Animation And Computer Graphics -- Art Or Marketing Tool?

There has been lots of controversy over this subject. Discussion on current industry perception and how consumers feel about "investing" in this "form."

— Computer Animation -- Expensive Home Hobby Or Art Form?

Some tinker with brush and palette, some with computers and some with both. Discussion on perception from those tinker.

— Pictures Vs Words

Which has more power or offers better communication? Does it matter which subject you intend to convey? Desktop publishing is sometimes a combination of the two; is this a good example of the best of both worlds?

— Fantasy Art -- Escape To Another Dimension

Who says mushrooms don't fly? Dragons anyone?

— What Is The Best Environment For The Art You Just Purchased?

How much will it cost to protect it? Frame it and hang it on the wall or keep it safe in the closet or drawer?

— Now You're An Artist! What's The Next Step?

Do you want to do it for a living? If so, then where do you look for work? How do you survive? Maybe keep your old job while dabbling on the side?

— Will Your Art Pay The Bills?

Who sets your fees? How much an hour will you really earn? Is the reward factor enough to keep you going through the tough times?

— Dealing With Criticism And Rejection

Artists discuss ways to handle publishers or consumers who seem to enjoy criticizing your work and not let it get in your creative way.

— Calligraphy -- Art Form Or Sign Painter's Skill?

History, demos and questions.

— The Artist As A Critic

Are artists their own worst critics or best agents?

— Balancing Creativity And Practicality

What to do about business techniques, schedules, deadlines, record keeping and so on...

— Computer Aided Design/Manufacturing/Art

How the fast moving world of technology is affecting the art world.

— What Makes A Good Portfolio?

Pictures, prints, originals, contracts?

— Artists, Editors And Art Directors - Close Encounters Of The Third Kind

Why are these three types so alien to each other? Do they have any similarities? Discussion on ways to deal with the alien mentalities.

— Computer Animation And Illustration As A Career

Home hobby or career possibility? How to get started and best ways to market yourself.

___ The Computer -- Design Tool, Electronic Paintbrush Or Mere Toy?

Can anyone use the software available to become an artist, or should a traditional foundation preclude serious use?

___ You Created It, But Is It Yours?

As an artist what are your legal rights and responsibilities? What if you already work for someone? Different states have different laws regulating these matters. Discussion on perceived (moral) vs legal views.

___ Art And The IRS

What records and documentation would an artist need to keep? Consider estate planning and avoid the De Grazia solution.

___ Translating Ideas From One Medium To Another

How to go from a 3D world to a 2D canvas successfully.

___ Comics -- Art Form Or Medium For Social Commentary?

We all grew up with newspaper comics. Some were funnier than others, but that perception changed as we got older. Discussion on history and relevance to modern perception.

___ Art Show Walk-thru And Critique

___ Photography -- Art Form In Itself?

Is photography just another tool for the artist, or perhaps an alternate art form? Many artists use photography for capturing the images or dealing with information for use at a later time. Photographers, however, can create quite a thought-provoking photo using people or things in a particular setting. How does the creative photo compare with the creative painting?

___ Anatomy And Art

How to best avoid the optical errors in shadow and perspective.

___ Jewelry -- Art Vs Adornment

Form follows function: Beads, gold, silver, faceted stones. How to create the designs that best display the treasures.

Jewelry: ___ Casting Techniques And Safeguards; ___ Developing Waxes For Casting

___ Japanimation As An Artform

Japanese have long been admired for their art and beauty in art. Have they utilized animation as an alternate medium successfully, or is it merely entertainment?

___ Furry Animals

Science fiction, fantasy, or cartoon creatures? Entertainment, art or both?

___ Science Fiction Art

How does it differ in other countries?? Do east coast U.S. artists create the same or different style artwork as those on the west coast? Moscow vs U.S.; space and fantasy

___ Slide Shows

Depending on artists attending.

___ Demos:

___ colored pencils; ___ calligraphy; ___ etching -- i.e. on glass;
___ etching -- i.e. on stone, slate, or carving plastics or precious stones, amber, and such
___ airbrush; ___ acrylics; ___ water color; ___ pen & ink; ___ scratch board;
___ clay or sculpy; ___ tapestry, embroidery (hand or machine)

___ ASFA Vs Space Artists Association

How are the two organizations different? Do they overlap? Do they help artists?

___ Art Differences In Film/TV

How is creating art for a movie or TV similar or different to book covers or more traditional media? Panelists: Rick Sternbach and any others

with experience.

FAN - FAN - FAN - FAN - FAN

Fan History Slide Show

Panelists: Any pro/amateur/fan around long enough to remember the good old days.

Interviews

Panelists: Guests-of-Honor, Pros, Fans recognized by many groups.

ACTIVITIES - ACTIVITIES - ACTIVITIES - ACTIVITIES - ACTIVITIES

Pre-Con: Paintgun Game

Pros vs. fans? These games are organized by professionals who supply equipment, insurance, etc. This would be a popular event! Some pros are already interested. If you think you might want to participate, then mark this idea and we'll send you more information if there's enough interest.

WesterColt .45

Participant Questionnaire

Initial Participant Response

February 1992

Attn: Programming & Scheduling

Mike Willmoth
WesterColt .45
Pgming & Scheduling
P.O. Box 8068
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85252



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WesterColt .45

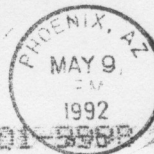
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Phoenix, Arizona

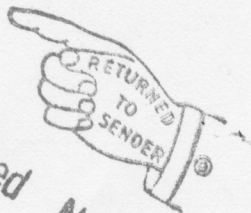
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