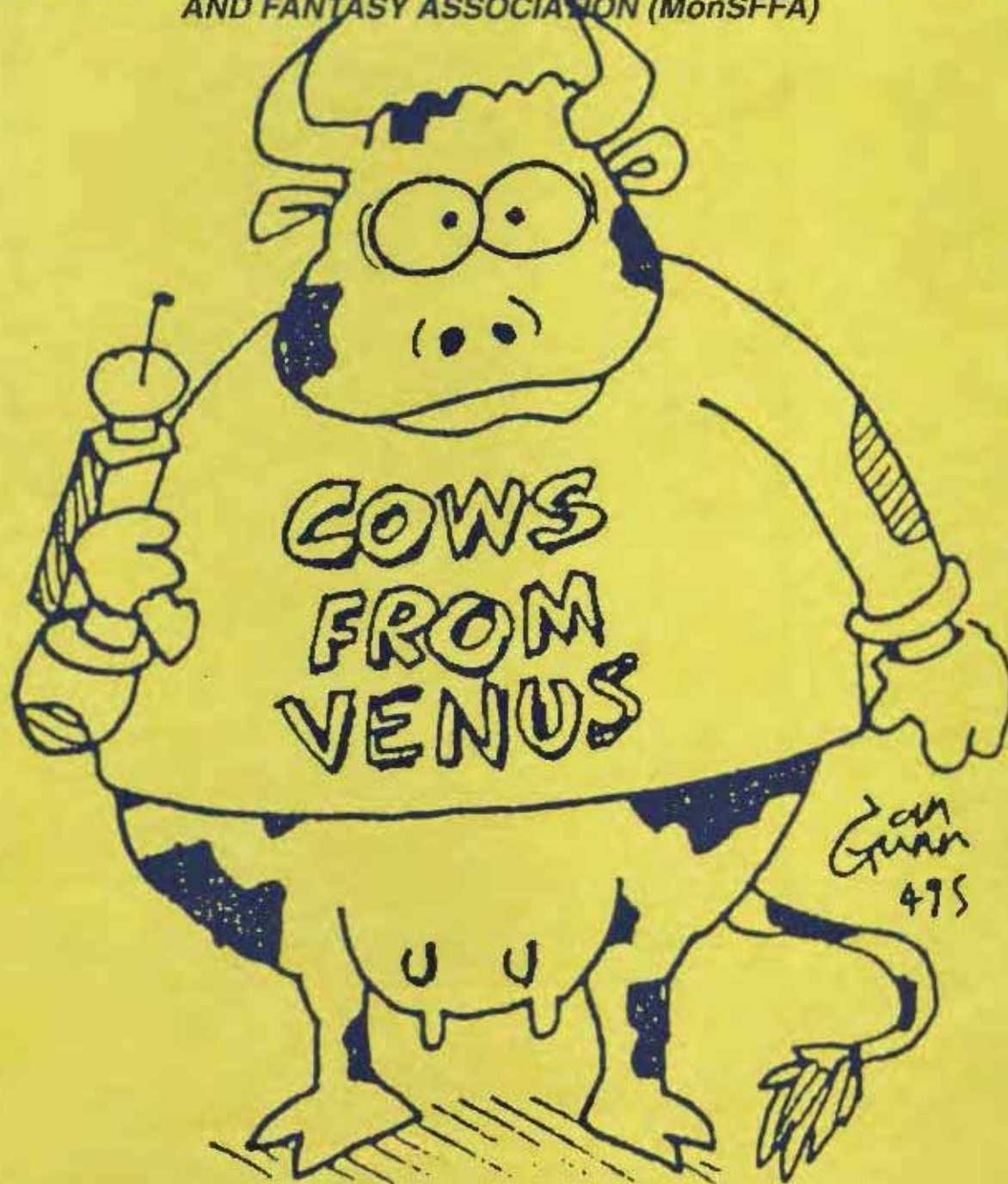


DECEMBER 1996 (VOLUME 10, NUMBER 4)

PRICE: \$

WARP 40

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTREAL SCIENCE FICTION
AND FANTASY ASSOCIATION (MonSFFA)



**MONSFFA'S
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

Lynda Pelley
President
E-mail to pellym@odyssee.net

Cathy Palmer-Lister
Vice-President

Sylvain St-Pierre
Treasurer

**MONSFFA'S
APPOINTED OFFICERS
AND ADVISORS:**

Keith Braithwaite (PR,
Membership), Sylvain
St-Pierre (Membership),
Colleen Magnussen
(Mailings), Bryan Ekers (Post
Office Box), Dominique
Durocher (Web Site), Bill
Strople (Snack Table), Kevin
Holden, Michael Masella,
David Legault, Andrew
Weitzman and Yolande
Rufiange (Advisors Without
Portfolio)

NEWSLETTER STAFF:

Keith Braithwaite
Word-Processing, Editing,
Layout

Michael Masella
Layout, Laser-Printing

Lynda Pelley
Word-Processing, Photo-Scans

Murphy
Typos, Misspellings and Other
Errors

COVER UP: This issue's cover features art by Australian fan Ian Gunn. Ian's work is regularly published in fanzines the world over and we are pleased to be able to say that *Warp* is now one of them. Ian sent us a stack of his stuff and we've selected, in addition to the cover piece, a few choice cartoons for publication in this issue. We plan to run more of Ian's work in future issues.

WARP

MonSFFA CHRISTMAS PARTY '96!
MonSFFA Invites Its Members and Friends to the Club's
Annual Christmas Party for an Evening of Seasonal
Celebrations!
Music and Dance • Food and Drink • Raffle Prizes and Pool
Saturday, December 14, 1996, 7:00PM
Park Place Bar, 1244 MacKay Street
(between Ste-Catherine and René-Lévesque)
*We will be collecting children's toys and items of non-
perishable foodstuffs, to be donated to local charity. In the
spirit of the season, please give a little something to benefit
those less fortunate.*

MonSFFA IS MOVING!...ACROSS THE STREET!

MonSFFA Members Please Take Note: Effective 1997, we will *no longer* be holding our monthly meetings at the Maritime Hotel. We are pleased to announce that the Days Inn (1005 Guy Street, just across René-Lévesque Blvd. from the Maritime) shall host MonSFFA's meetings in the new year. We will gather in the St-Francois room on the Mezzanine level (exit elevators, turn left, end of corridor). Meeting times remain unchanged. 1997 meeting dates are listed, right.

ALL MonSFFA MEETINGS HELD SUNDAY AFTERNOONS,
1:00PM TO 4:00PM (SOME MEETINGS INCLUDE MORNING
ACTIVITIES, WHICH BEGIN AT 11:00 AM), IN THE
ST-FRANCOIS ROOM OF THE DAYS INN, 1005 GUY STREET
(CORNER RENÉ LÉVESQUE), DOWNTOWN MONTREAL

1997 MonSFFA EVENTS SCHEDULE

**EVENT PROGRAMMING
(JANUARY)**

Programming subject to rescheduling and/or change

JANUARY 19 MonSFFA MEETING

1:00PM—Election of 1997 MonSFFA Executive.
1:15PM—Casting Couch: Who would *you* cast as Captain Picard or Catwoman or Agent Mulder instead of Stewart, Pfeiffer and Duchovny? Our panelists have some fun recasting the roles of their favourite sci-fi heroes and villains while making casting suggestions for movies or TV series they'd like to see produced. And as long as they're here, they'll pitch a few crossover ideas, too!
3:00PM—(Programming to be announced)

JANUARY	19
FEBRUARY	16
MARCH	16
APRIL	20
MAY	11
JUNE	15
AUGUST	17
SEPTEMBER	21
OCTOBER	19
NOVEMBER	16
X-MAS PARTY: DECEMBER 13	

Warp is published five or six times a year by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA). Address all correspondence to: *Warp*, c/o MonSFFA, P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4. A subscription to *Warp* is a benefit of membership in MonSFFA. MonSFFA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of science fiction and fantasy literature, film and television, comics, fanzines, art, music, costuming, model-making, gaming, etc. The opinions expressed in *Warp* are solely those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Warp* or MonSFFA. The use of copyrighted material in this newsletter is—yes, we know—verboten, but is not intended to infringe on any of the rights of the copyright holders. Come on, people...lighten up! This is an amateur publication intended for enjoyment only. "Fen drool where others fear to gape."—Gene Stewart

MonSFFA's Address: P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4
MonSFFA's Web Site is at: <http://www.odyssee.net/~draken/monsffa/monsffa.html>

FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Four years.

In January I will have been president of MonSFFA for four years. That's a long time for anyone to be president of a club and I'm beginning to feel a bit burned out. Lately, I haven't been able to put as much time into MonSFFA as I would have liked. My day job has required increasing amounts of overtime, and I expect I will be doing some shift work too, including evenings and weekends. I can no longer guarantee the availability that is often required of a club president. The president needs to be accessible to the members and attend most of the meetings. Since I no longer feel that I can give the club

the time it deserves, this will be my final year as president.

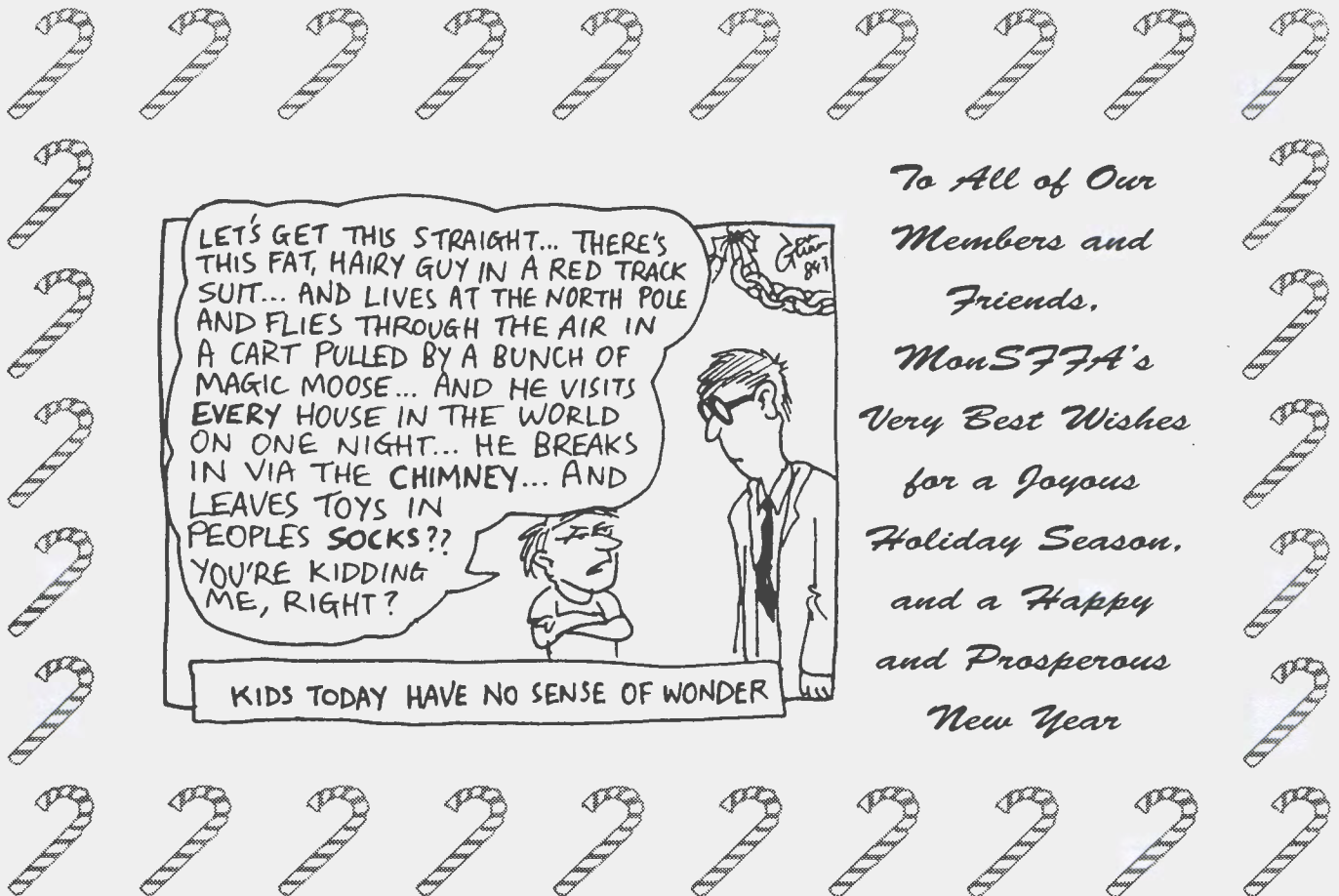
It is time for a change. MonSFFA's strength has always been diversity. New leadership will be healthy for the club and prevent it from becoming stagnant, always a danger in fandom. New leadership will bring new ideas and new life to MonSFFA.

Cathy Palmer-Lister has expressed an interest in running for president next year. Both Dave Legault and Keith Braithwaite are possibles as vice president. And Sylvain St-Pierre is prepared to continue as treasurer. If elected, I'm confident that under their guidance, MonSFFA will continue to be an exciting and worthwhile club.

I've enjoyed being president of MonSFFA these past four years and I will continue to participate in the organizational structure as a member of the Board of Advisors (BoA). I'll help out when I can, as all good club members should, and, of course, continue to contribute to the newsletter.

And hopefully, finally, I'll have time to build some of my models.

Lynda Pelley
President, MonSFFA



MonSFFA Membership Benefits

The Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA) is a Montreal-based non-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of all activities which engage and support the interests of science fiction and fantasy fans. The benefits of membership in MonSFFA include:

Membership Card

Your MonSFFA membership card identifies you as a MonSFFA member, allows you free admittance to the club's monthly events and entitles you to certain discounts at SF/F-oriented retailers participating in MonSFFA's discount program!

Monthly Events

Attend MonSFFA's regularly scheduled events, held about every month (except during the summer), and meet other SF/F fans! Share interests, exchange ideas, view current and classic SF/F movies and TV shows, enjoy guest speakers and special presentations, participate in workshops and discussion panels, get involved in various club projects, and more!

Discount Program

As a member of MonSFFA, you are in a position to save on your SF/F purchases, and your membership pays for itself within the year! If you buy an average of only \$4.00 worth of SF/F books, comics, collectibles, gaming and hobby items, etc. per week, your yearly MonSFFA membership will pay for itself in discount savings within the year! Full details of the discount program are printed in each issue of MonSFFA's newsletter.

Newsletter

You will receive a one-year subscription (six issues) to MonSFFA's newsletter, Warp! Produced by our

members for our members, Warp keeps you up to date on club activities and brings you general news from around the greater SF/F community! Warp is also a forum for you, the members—we want your book and movie reviews, opinion columns, short fiction and humour, artwork, etc! And, as a MonSFFA member, you are entitled to place (non-commercial) ads in Warp at no charge—sell your old SF book collection, announce that you're looking for gaming partners, or whatever!

As a MonSFFA member, you'll enjoy these benefits and more!

MonSFFA is administered, on behalf of all of its members, by an executive committee, who are empowered to appoint officers and advisors to assist them with the operation of the club. Executive committee members are elected annually by vote of the general membership; any member in good standing may run for office.

The fee for a one-year membership in MonSFFA is currently \$20.00.

Please address all correspondence to: MonSFFA, P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4.

MonSFFA Discount Program

Listed on this and the next page are the SF/F-oriented retailers/dealers participating in the **MonSFFA Discount Program**. *We encourage members to frequent these establishments.* A valid MonSFFA membership card must be presented in order to take advantage of the discounts offered under this program. (Note: Certain exceptions with regard to the MonSFFA Discount Program may exist at some of these establishments. Conditions subject to change.)

COMICS
CARDS




Ace Lopes

1233 Crescent
Tel.: (514) 871-1402

Empire Hotline:
345-5544

15% off on SF/F merchandise and on back issues of comics; U.S. cover price on new comic books.

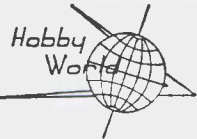


MEMBER OF BUSINESS COLLECTIBLES

Ing & RuthAnn Raycroft

P.O. Box 80005, Broadmoor P.O.
82 Athabasca Avenue, Sherwood Park, AB T8A 5T1
Tel.: 1-403-449-6936 Fax: 1-403-467-4931

10% off on all orders (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).



- HO & N MODEL TRAINS
- DOLL HOUSE MINIATURES
- RADIO CONTROL MODELS
- WOODEN PERIOD SHIPS
- ARCHITECTURAL SUPPLIES

5450 SHERBROOKE ST. WEST
MONTREAL, QC
CANADA H4A 1V9

TEL.: 514-481-5434
FAX: 514-481-5468

10% off (5% if paying by credit card) on models and role-playing games, \$10.00 minimum purchase.

MonSFFA Discount Program

1,000,000

COMIX

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- OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

3846 Jean Talon E.
Montreal, Qc., H2A 1Y4
(514) 725-1355

20% off on most merchandise.



Paul Bennett

BoX 340
Grimsby, Ont.
L3M 4H8, Canada
Tel: 905-309-0644

Importers of Fine
Sci-fi Model Kits,
Toys and Collectibles
Fax: 905-309-0640

10% off on most items (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).



Fred Albert

OAS Rocketry Division,
Suite 606, 116 Albert Street,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5G3
(613) 233-1159 · fax (613) 830-5811

10% off on all orders (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).

COMPUCENTRE

Fairview Shopping Centre
6815 Trans Canada Highway G-19
Pointe Claire, Quebec H9R 5V1
Telephone: (514) 695 3620

10% off on computer game and video game software not otherwise on special. Fairview store only, see Mike Masella.

EL PASO KOMIX



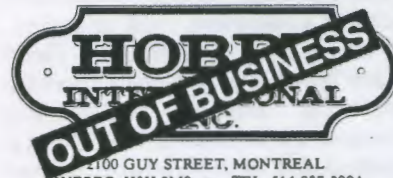
L'ENDROIT OÙ L'HOMME ARACHNÉE
LIT LES HISTOIRES DE SES
SUPER-HÉROS FAVORIS

WHERE SPIDEY READS THE
STORIES OF HIS FAVORITE
SUPER-HEROES

Ouvert 7 jours/semaine
Open 7 days a week

2432 Sauvé E., Montreal (514) 385-6714

15% off on most merchandise; does not apply to "series discounts" already offered to customers of this establishment.



2100 GUY STREET, MONTREAL
QUEBEC H3H 2M8 • TEL. 514-937-3904

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The New Frontier

Science Fiction & Space Model Kits

Send \$1.00 for our latest catalogue

P.O. Box 26076, 62-64 Robertson Rd.,
Nepean, Ontario, K2H 9R0

10% off on most items, 15% at cons and shows (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).



JOUETS

Kangourou
HOBBIES

10% off (5% if paying by credit card) on models and role playing games, \$10.00 minimum purchase. Applies to all locations.



Role Playing Games
New & Old Comics
Bags & Supplies
Retail & Wholesale
4210 Decarie
Montreal Que. H4A 3K3
489-4009

KOMICO
One Block South of Villa Maria Metro

10% off on new issues, 15% off on back orders.

cosmix



931, Décarie
St-Laurent (Québec)
H4L 3M3
(514) 744-9494

Comics, Magazines, D & D
Science-Fiction, "Posters", Etc.

10% off on most merchandise, 20% off on back issues of comic books.

MARS

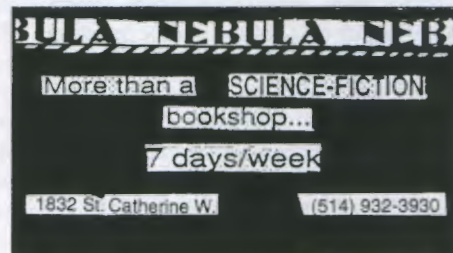
COMICS
RECORDS (IMPORTS)
COLLECTOR'S ITEMS
CARD'S

BANDES DESSINÉES
SCIENCE FICTION
CASSETTES VIDEOS
POSTERS

537 A St-Catherine W
metro McGill

844-4329

Between 10% and 15% off on most merchandise.



More than a SCIENCE-FICTION
bookshop...

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1832 St. Catherine W

(514) 932-3930

10% off on SF, video culture, adventure and comics.

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COMIX

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20% off on most merchandise.



The place to find it
all comes out here

L'endroit où
tout
B
Jeu
rom
naus

7190, St-Hubert, Montréal, Québec H2R 2N1 ☎ (514) 273-0081
METRO JEAN TALON

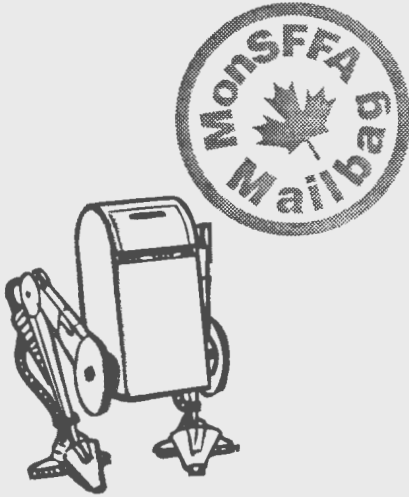
10% off on most merchandise. Does not apply to discounts already offered by this establishment.

1,000,000

COMIX

5164 Queen Mary Road
Montreal, Quebec

20% off on most merchandise.



MonSFFA and Warp welcome letters of comment and inquiry. Mail letters to: P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4. Unless otherwise instructed, we assume all letters are intended for publication. Warp reserves the right to edit letters where deemed necessary.

Dear MonSFFen,

Thanks for *Warp* 39; some comments and news:

Allarcom (whose letter was published in "MonSFFA Mailbag") did *not* get the SF TV license but CHUM here (in Toronto) did. Space: The Imagination Station should be on the air in 1999, or thereabouts.

I *did* get a copy of *Anglomaniac* (as per editor's suggestion, "MonSFFA Mailbag"). I gave it to Yvonne as a present and she laughed from beginning to end. She knows most of the Quebec political in-jokes. Any idea when Mark and Gabriel are getting the second volume ready?

The *Odyssey* Trek convention in Niagara Falls (the *Trek* con with no *Trek* guests) has felt the winds of change in media fandom. They've changed their name to just *Odyssey*, which gives them much more leeway as to who their guests can be. They've also moved from Niagara Falls to Hamilton.

The Star Trek Federation Science Exhibit opened recently at the Ontario Science Center and we ran into (Montrealer) Capucine Plourde, who had been hired to provide atmosphere with various other, local, Klinfolk. Good show. I still have to go to Star Trek: The Exhibit at the

McLaughlin Planetarium.

Paul Bennett of Galaxy Enterprises told me he and his wife travelled to Huntsville, Alabama, to attend that big, 30th anniversary *Trek* gathering (mentioned in "Sensors"). He said it was a giant fiasco with little that was promised coming off, drunken actors everywhere and additional costs cropping up here and there.

Word on the Street is a literary street festival which takes place on Queen Street and I've heard that a version of this event will be coming to Montreal in the next couple of years. It's a book lover's good time!

If Toronto *Trek* was, for some reason, to shut down, Ad Astra would probably be expected to take up some of the slack with some *Trek* programming, and it would be smart to do that, to take advantage of a vacuum. With the demise of the Montreal Science Fiction Festival, I think Con•Cept will have to do the same. Given how MonSFFA has its media beginnings, and how many in Montreal fandom could be considered both litfan and media fan, I am surprised that media fans were not represented in the con's programming and that there wasn't much for them to see or do. But it's easy to criticize and something else to say "We will be in charge of media programming, if you'd like us to help." I hope someone will patch up the hole instead of just complain about it.

Now, I'll play devil's advocate: Before Yvonne and I started Toronto *Trek*, Ad Astra offered the local *Trek* fan the chance to do some programming and provide a *Trek* presence at the con. Perhaps they felt it was just a morsel that they were being offered and instead of accepting, they demanded a full track for themselves, several rooms to do with whatever they wanted, and various other things the con could not deliver. When we said we couldn't give them as much as they wanted, they refused to do *anything* for us and complained long and loud, afterwards, about how mean those nasty book fans were!

Is there anything in the relations between Con•Cept and the local media clubs that would have caused the clubs' absence from programming?

Take Care All,

Lloyd Penney
Etobicoke, Ontario

We note your change of address, Lloyd; hope the move went well. A second Anglomaniac comic book should hit shelves in time for Christmas. Keep an eye out for Anglomaniac II: Money, Ethnicity, Superheroes!

There sure are a lot of Trek-related events going on in Toronto, these days!

We think a Word on the Street festival would be well received here in Montreal and we look forward to it.

We are not aware of any serious schisms between Con•Cept and local media clubs which would cause the two to stay away from each other. Montreal's various fannish groups, generally, get along pretty well and the kind of situation you describe vis-à-vis Ad Astra makes for an unlikely scenario here. We suspect the dearth of media programming at this year's Con•Cept came about simply as a result of poor communication between the con and the media clubs. Apathy and burn-out, perhaps, also played a role and it didn't help that Con•Cept '96 was going through programming chiefs like Londo goes through hair spray! Media fans, not surprisingly, were disappointed with what the con offered them, but they've made their constructive criticisms to the concom, who appear to be listening, and who are working at having a decent level of media programming in '97. (MonSFFA has already been contacted about our doing a few panels.) Everyone is quite willing to make it all happen; we just have to communicate with each other a little more effectively.

Take note, by the way, that Con•Cept '97 has changed dates (necessitated by a move to a new hotel); formerly scheduled for October 2-4, they are now slated for September 26-28 (see ad in this issue).

Appreciate the comments and the news, as always; keep writing us—Ed

To Whom It May Concern,

As a past member of MonSFFA, I have enjoyed your bi-monthly newsletter, *Warp*. I am sad I have not maintained my relationship with your enterprise. I am hoping to correct my past indiscretions and I hope to have some of my fiction

published in your fine fanzine.

I would like to submit a story. It is about the life of Bri-Anne Leaf, who has mysterious origins and many fantastic adventures to come. The backdrop is a combination of aboriginal (Déné and Blackfoot) spiritualism intertwined with cross universal travellers called the Kuhimir, who are seeking to establish a relationship with the Unknown, a race of the most indomitable, enigmatic aliens of them all. During her travels, Bri-Anne encounters a world of magical people called the Exoans, who assist the Kuhimir in their quest.

If you are interested in seeing more material, please contact me. And please send me a membership form, too!

Yours, Peace

Gilles Chiasson
Montreal, Quebec

We are always interested in seeing fan fiction, Gilles, especially original fan fiction. We are limited by available page space when publishing stories, but lengthy works can be serialized over several issues. (If you're getting into novel length territory, mind you, you're beyond what we can handle.) So, by all means, send us your story; we'll have a look and see what we can do.

As to your "indiscretions," we, of course, don't hold them against you and will be pleased to welcome you back into the fold.—Ed

Dear MonSFFA People,

Greetings from Australia!

From issue number 70 (December '96), Karen Pender-Gunn and I will be taking over the editorship of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club's newszine, *Ethel the Aardvark*. One of the new features we want to introduce is a series of articles from other clubs around the world that trade 'zines with us. We hope that this will emphasize the internationality of the worldwide fannish community, improve overseas relations, establish contacts, and maybe make some of our more parochial readers aware that fandom isn't just something that happens in our own back yard. With many club

members involved in the Australia in '99 WorldCon bid, this is long overdue.

So, can you help us? Can you talk one of your club's fine fan writers into producing an article about your club and its activities? Please? Ideally, the article should be somewhere between 1000 and 2000 words long. Perhaps it could cover such points as:

- 1) How big/widespread is your membership?
- 2) What sort of age groups are they?
- 3) What sort of activities do you do? Meetings? Your own cons? Workshops? Parties? Film excursions? Hamster racing?
- 4) What sort of interests do you have? Are you a social club, or a literary club, or a media club, or an anything and everything club? When was the club founded? What's its history?
- 5) How do you raise funds? Any suggestions for us?
- 6) Do you have a regular meeting place? Describe it.
- 7) How do you recruit new members?
- 8) Tell us about your clubzine and any other publications you produce.
- 9) Do you have much contact with other local clubs, or with international fandom?

In return, I'd be happy to send you a similar article (that I'll be writing real soon, now) about the MSFC, if you want to print it in your 'zine. Meanwhile, here's some artwork for you from me—feel free to use it wherever you wish.

Yours in Fandom,

Ian Gunn
Co-Editor, *Ethel the Aardvark*
Blackburn, Australia

Greeting from Up Over, eh!

First of all, congratulations to you Aussies on winning your WorldCon in '99 bid.

We recognize your name, Ian, having seen your artwork published in various of the fanzines that come our way. So, thank you for all of the terrific drawings you've made available to us, some of which we've run in this issue. We are pleased to be able to add Warp's name to the list of 'zines that have

featured your work.

The idea of the series of articles you propose is a good one, and somewhat timely in that we are putting together an overview of our club's first decade, to be published on the occasion of our 10th anniversary (September '97). Perhaps we can adapt our piece to fit your requirements and send it along to you. We'll certainly give it a whirl, and we look forward to your profile of the MSFC.

In the meantime, briefly:

MonSFFA is a multi-interest club dedicated to exploring the science fiction and fantasy genres. We began as a Star Trek club, but quickly evolved beyond Trek to encompass all things SF/F. We list between 80 and 100 members at any given time, of all ages, but most being in their 20s and 30s. We meet monthly at a downtown hotel, engaging in discussions, visual presentations and hands-on workshops which reflect our many interests. We've never raced hamsters, but we recently produced a video-film in which we did some pretty weird things with cabbages! We publish this newsletter about five times a year, covering within its pages our own activities, and the goings-on in the greater SF/F field. In 1989 we founded a mid-sized con, which continues to operate today, and ran it for a time (though no longer), and we've put on various mini-cons and other events over the years, often in cooperation with other Montreal SF/F clubs. We raise funds primarily through club membership fees, the sale of snacks and drinks at our meetings, and raffles and auctions. The recruitment of new members often takes place at invitational club meetings or at cons. Our contact with fandom beyond our city mostly involves the trading of 'zines. We swap with many Canadian and American organizations, and a few overseas groups, such as yours.—Ed



MonSFFAAndom

"ALL THE CLUB NEWS THAT FITS, WE'LL PRINT!"

NEW MEETING ROOM FOR CLUB IN '97

Effective 1997, MonSFFA will *no longer* be holding its monthly meetings at the Maritime Hotel. We were unable to reach a satisfactory deal with the Maritime (under new ownership) for the rental of function space for our meetings in 1997. Prices at the Maritime are on their way up and unacceptable restrictions with regard to the operation of our snack table at meetings were to be introduced. And so, Keith Braithwaite was dispatched to find us a new locale, which he did (and for *less* than we were paying at the Maritime!—*thanks, Keith*).

We are pleased to announce that the Days Inn (1005 Guy Street, just across René-Lévesque Blvd. from the Maritime) shall host MonSFFA's meetings in the new year. We will gather in the St-Francois room on the Mezzanine level (exit elevators, turn left, end of corridor). We look forward to our first meeting in our new meeting room.

As we bid adieu to our Maritime meeting place, we thank the weekend staff of the hotel who have, over our several years of Sunday afternoons, served us politely, accommodatingly and with enthusiasm.

1996 MonSFFA CHRISTMAS PARTY

MonSFFA is pleased to invite its members and friends to the club's annual Christmas party. We return again to the familiar Park Place Bar, 1244 MacKay Street (between Ste-Catherine and René-Lévesque). The party will get going around 7:00PM, Saturday, December 14.

We'll have plenty of seasonal snacks, the pool cues are chalked and raffle prizes this year will include an ID4 video, a reviewers copy of Levar

Burton's new SF novel, a signed Claudia Christian CD, *and more!* In the spirit of the holiday season, we will be collecting non-perishable food items and children's toys, to be donated to local charity. *Please* contribute for the benefit of those less fortunate in our community.

MonSFFA PRESIDENT STANDS DOWN

After four years of service, Lynda Pelley is departing the office of president of MonSFFA. She cites, in her "Center Seat" column this issue, a touch of burn-out and increasing demands on her time at work as her reasons for standing down. Lynda was MonSFFA's third president and the club's first female chief.

As much as time will allow, she intends to continue participating in the club at the Board-of-Advisors level and will carry on as a Warp staffer.

MonSFFA extends to Lynda on this occasion our *sincere thanks* for her years of dedication and service to the club as our president.

ELECTION

The club's election of its 1997 Executive will be held at the January 19, 1997, meeting. The vote is expected to take about 15 minutes and all club members are encouraged to participate.

MonSFFA elects annually a president, vice-president and treasurer—who together make up the club's *Executive Committee*—and charges them with the responsibility of running the club on behalf of the membership. The Executive recruits advisors and appoints officers to assist them in carrying out this responsibility.

Our current Executive is: Lynda Pelley (president), Cathy Palmer-Lister (vice-president) and Sylvain

St-Pierre (treasurer). As of this writing, we can report that Lynda will not seek another term in office. Both Cathy and Sylvain are in the running again, Cathy for president and Sylvain for his accustomed position of treasurer. Dave Legault and Keith Braithwaite are candidates for vice-president.

Any MonSFFA member in good standing who is able to responsibly and reliably carry out the duties of office may run for any one of the Executive posts. Candidates may nominate themselves or accept nomination by another member in good standing; nominations are received by the club's chief returning officer—CRO—up until shortly before the commencement of voting on election day.

All MonSFFA members in good standing are entitled to vote; members *must be present* at the designated place and time in order to exercise their right to vote—*proxy voting is not permitted*. (Members who expect to be unable to cast their ballots on the designated voting day may make arrangements through the CRO to have their votes recorded in advance.)

MonSFFA's chief returning officer for the election of the 1997 Executive Committee is Keith Braithwaite (514-692-8831). Candidates are asked to contact Keith and inform him of their intentions to run; any questions concerning the election may be directed to him, as well.

MonSFFA WEB SITE

After much discussion but limited action, Dominique Durocher has stepped in, taken the bull by the horns and begun setting up a site on the World Wide Web for the club. MonSFFA's Web site is now accessible, although it is under construction and incomplete at this time—Dominique is in the process of gathering and preparing material for

the site. When complete, the site will provide basic information about MonSFFA, feature pages devoted to club undertakings such as the *Plant 9* project and make available some of the articles and columns written for *Warp* over the years. (Resources permitting, we'd like to eventually get an on-line version of *Warp* up and running.)

MonSFFA's www address is:
<http://www.odyssee.net/~draken/monsffa/monsffa.html>

MonSFFA MEETINGS, JUNE-NOVEMBER

Space is limited this issue and we have a number of meeting reports to catch up on, so we'll keep it brief. All of these meetings drew attendances of between 30 and 40 members (and friends); all took place at the

Maritime hotel, except for the November meeting, which was moved down the street to the Nouvel Hotel because the Maritime was undergoing renovations and our Artimon I meeting room was inaccessible. Our customary snack table was in operation at each of the meetings, and our raffle prizes included SF/F books, videos, posters and collectibles. Thanks to those members who ran the snack table and raffles, and, of course, to all of our program participants, June through November

June 16

MonSFFA's Andrew Weitzman and guest speaker Steve Herman (who has worked for RPG manufacturer White Wolf) led off with a discussion of role playing games, offering opinion on the trend

to a decidedly darker tone in game scenarios, these days. The second part of the meeting dealt with making a buck in fandom. Lynda Pelley, Berny Reischl and Mark Burakoff, who have all sat behind their own dealers' tables at SF/F conventions, outlined the rewards and pitfalls of running a fannish business. As with any business, a fannish venture demands that one invest a certain amount of capital, acquire a good knowledge of the target market and, of course, put in the hours.

August 18

Following our usual mid-summer break in July, we resumed our schedule of meetings in August with a costuming workshop. The entire afternoon was devoted to the craft of SF/F costuming. Avid

Bulletin Board

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**The *PLANT 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* Video
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**Includes a short promotional teaser and
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**Cost: \$9; available while in stock at any
MonSFFA meeting.**

***Mail-order* copies are available at a cost of \$15
each, shipping and handling included. Send
orders to the MonSFFA post office box; make
cheques or money orders *payable to*
MonSFFA; remember to include your *complete*
address; allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.**

WARP

costumers Krikor Ajemian, Lynda Pelley, Liz Marcotte, Nicola Stoeckert and JJ Reischl offered their expertise on designing, making patterns for and sewing together costumes. The panel covered tried and true techniques for working with different kinds of materials and included examples of the inventive use of such unconventional materials as aluminum flashing and rubber car mats. Sylvain St-Pierre offered helpful tips on the presentation of a costume in a masquerade and Krikor and Liz gave a demonstration on how to make a dress dummy, on the cheap, using an old T-shirt, duct tape and wads of crumpled newspaper.

September 15

Sylvain St-Pierre ran a *most* entertaining game, Bug-Eye Bet, in which teams viewed brief clips from SF/F movies and TV shows, then answered questions on what they'd seen that tested their observation skills. Lots of fun! In honour of *Star Trek's* 30th anniversary, the rest of the meeting was given over to a panel discussion on *Trek*. Panelists Keith Braithwaite, Kevin Holden, Lynda Pelley and Cathy Palmer-Lister spoke of their first exposure to *Trek*, assessed the influence the original series and its successors have had on the SF genre, and gave their views on how they felt the current *Treks* stack up. Panelists and audience largely agreed that the franchise isn't what it used to be, some expressing disappointment in the latest *Trek* series, *Voyager*, which has turned many of them off of *Trek*.

October 20

Our dais this meeting—Keith Braithwaite, John Dupuis and Dave

Legault—covered the topic of time travel, one of SF's more popular motifs. The fun to be had with time paradoxes, inherent in any time travel tale, was one of the focuses of the discussion, as were the various theories of time travel presented in books and in film. A recommended reading/viewing list was compiled, which included the novels *Lest Darkness Fall* (L. Sprague de Camp), *Guns of the South* (Harry Turtledove) and *The End of Eternity* (Isaac Asimov); the short story "A Sound of Thunder" (Ray Bradbury); the films *Final Countdown*, *Time After Time* and *Back to the Future* (trilogy); and selected episodes of the *Star Trek* TV series. The meeting closed with a sci-fi origami workshop put on by Cathy Palmer-Lister and Dominique Durocher.

November 17

Keith Braithwaite hosted a game of Sci-Fi Win, Lose or Draw, in which participants must come up with the titles of SF/F movies, TV shows, names of characters, etc. guided solely by clues quickly sketched on an easel. Keith worked from a list of titles/names Dave Legault had prepared for the game in advance of the meeting. Keith was then joined, in the second half of the afternoon, by Lynda Pelley, John Dupuis and Joe Aspler for a panel discussion on the science fiction and fantasy genres. The differences between the two were outlined: SF tends to move forward, evolving, seeking change; fantasy moves backward, seeking the restoration of an old order, a return to the good old days. Panelists and audience agreed that, often, some of the most interesting and entertaining stories are to be found at that point where the two genres mix.

DISCOUNT PROGRAM UPDATE

We are informed by several club members that the Fantastique Fiction Fantaïsie store is no more. Thus, we remove the store from the list of participants in the club's Discount Program and offer our thanks to FFF for many years of patronage. We wish the FFF folks all the best in whatever future endeavour they may undertake.

In the past year, several of the retailers and dealers participating in our Discount Program have, regrettably, gone out of business, opening up a few slots in the Program. Should any MonSFFA member be aware of an SF/F-oriented retailer or dealer who might be interested in signing on to our Program, please let the Executive know.

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Have you recently moved? If so, be sure to advise MonSFFA of your new address and, if applicable, your new phone number.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

The cost of running MonSFFA rises from year to year and your membership renewals are *vital* in ensuring that this club continues to operate; please be sure to renew *on time*. Note: MonSFFA has not raised its yearly membership fee in over six years! We remain one the *best bargains* in town for the discriminating SF/F fan.



STAR WARS TRILOGY VIDEO COLLECTION

No doubt the original versions of the *Star Wars* movies will *no longer* be available once the new, digitally enhanced versions are released in '97. Purists who may prefer the original films might want to scoop up what Sylvain St-Pierre considers to be the best quality *Star Wars* video releases you can buy, before it's too late!

STAR WARS TRILOGY
VIDEO COLLECTION
reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

The re-release of the *Star Wars* trilogy on video about a year ago is supposed to be the last before the improved version of the original movie comes out early next year.

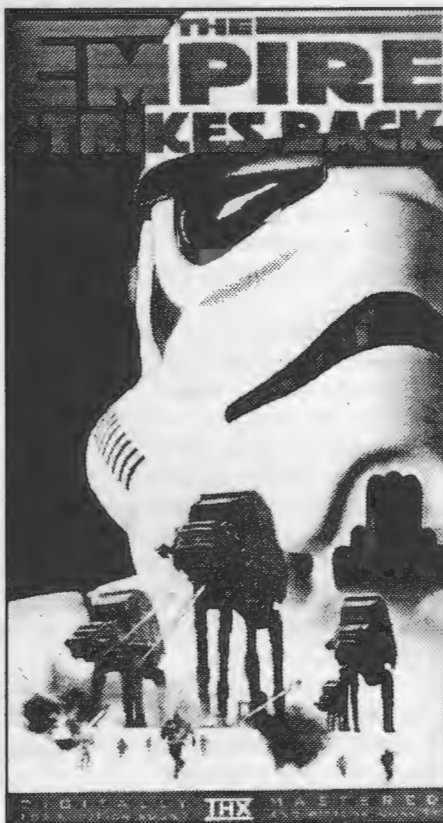
It will probably leave those who bought the movies when they first became available with mixed feelings because not only are the new tapes of a far higher technical

quality, but they are also noticeably less expensive! The set comes to about \$50, taxes included, in Quebec and the images and sound are amongst the crispest I have seen yet on video. No flickering, no strange non-special effect particles zooming across the screen, no crackling noise that is not meant to be there.

The format is *not* letterbox, but the resizing was nicely done and you don't miss much. George Lucas originally did not want the movies released on video, feeling that only the big screen could do justice to the saga. While I do agree with him on that point, this set is definitely the next best thing after the laserdisc version, and I do recommend it, if only for the interviews with Lucas himself which are included on each tape.

The recordings are copy-protected, so you *will* have to buy your own set.

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CONVENTION REVIEW

This year, Toronto's oldest surviving convention was held at a locale it has not used in 13 summers: the Days Inn Airport. I was afraid that it would look somewhat dingy after all those years of luxurious atrium hotels but, fortunately, I was proven wrong.

The location was perfect if you were coming by plane; the terminal is so close that you can literally walk to it. I suspect that the locals must have found it somewhat inconvenient, though, for it takes nearly an hour to get there from downtown.

Still, the rooms were clean, comfortable, reasonably priced, and the bathrooms were unusually large and well appointed. There was only one restaurant, but it was very good, with a menu varied enough to please everyone. Like most airport hotels, the main problem is that there is not much of anything else around, so you do need a good con to make the stay worthwhile, especially in rainy weather like we had that weekend.

The first pleasant surprise was that the convention space turned out to be, on the whole, well laid out. The Art Show and Dealers' Room were not cramped like last year, and the latter—actually two rooms across the corridor from each other—easily accessible from the outside for set-up, much to the enjoyment of the hucksters.

One small annoyance was that the lower level rooms could be reached *only* by stairs from the lobby. This is not normally a problem for me, but my legs were very stiff from overwalking just prior to the convention and I can imagine what it must have been like for people who are *really* impaired. Those in wheelchairs had to use a not-at-all convenient service elevator.

To make up for this, the content of the rooms was quite good: fine art and merchandise for a wide range of prices. I did not find a Model Room this year, but the Costume Display was back, and I never tire of that. The Anime Room had, again, a comprehensive program with a very sensible policy of rerunning, at night, the day's most popular shows that you

AD ASTRA 16

Reviewed by
Sylvain St-Pierre

might have missed or wish to see again.

The people running the Video Room seem to have caught the message that they should run rare and hard-to-find items: there was a *most excellent Godzilla* movie marathon of a kind that you don't get to see too often. There was also a Gaming Room for those who are into that kind of thing, plenty of readings and filking, several workshops, loads of room parties, and beer and whisky tasting (*hips—sshorry!*).

The Intergalactic Dating Game, an old Ad Astra favourite, was back but they had difficulty finding volunteers this year and the show lacked spice. A two-person play spoofing both *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* had a balloon Death Star blown up on stage as a climax. The room temperature went up several degrees when the participants of the Beefcake/Cheesecake event lined up. Now, what could be more fannish than to have a slice of Amaretto cheesecake lovingly fed to you by a voluptuous girl in a revealing nurse outfit or a muscular guy wearing nothing but a large fig leaf and fake tattoos?

The Masquerade had a number of interesting entries, though the presentations were somewhat uneven in quality. The general level was better than in 1995 but, for some reason, most masquerades still seem to have less participants than in earlier years. You also didn't see as many hall costumes. Has the cost of sequins gone up *that much*? I hope the taste for wild costumes will be back in force soon.

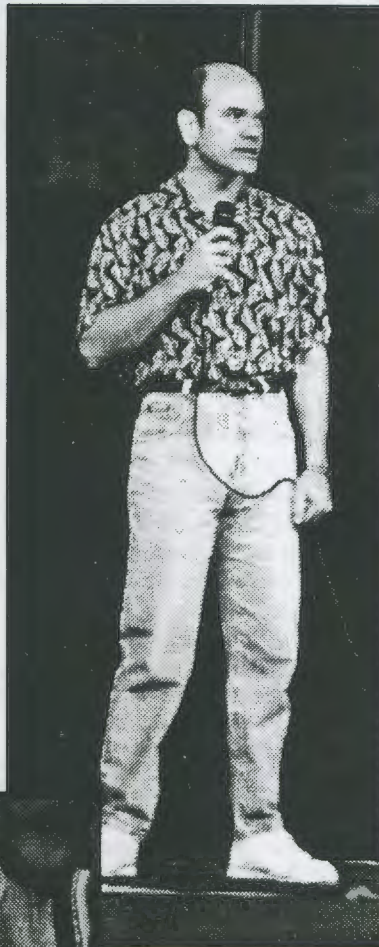
All in all, I had more fun at this Ad Astra than at last year's and still warmly recommend the convention as a good one to attend.

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FOTO FEATURE: TORONTO TREK 10

While Ad Astra serves literary interests, Toronto's other summer convention, Toronto Trek, focuses on *Star Trek* and other SF TV shows. The con celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, drawing some 2500 attendees, down from previous years but still quite healthy. The star guests, *Voyager*'s Robert Picardo (right) and *Babylon 5*'s Jerry Doyle (far right, both photos by Lynda Pelley), made for an entertaining line-up. *Babylon 5*, noted Lynda, is "taking over" at many cons, a testament to the robust popularity of the show among SF fans.

Lynda sat for professional make-up artist John Prisel, of Cyber-graphic Designs, who transformed her into a Minbari (below, photo by Chantal Brodeur). Dominique Durocher snapped Lynda, in full regalia, with other costumed *B-5* fans (bottom) and Lynda provides us with a photo of the con's winning Masquerade entries (bottom, right).



CONFESSIONS

of a Literary Snob (An Open Letter to Media SF Fans)

by John Dupuis

Forgive me, Mr. Spock, for I have sinned.

I confess: I think that the written word is a superior medium for the expression of science fictional stories and ideas than any other. The variety, depth and quality of ideas in the literature is far superior to those in television or film.

Before we go any further, let me set some ground rules. When I say I'm a literary snob, I don't mean to imply that I hate movies and TV and all those other media. Granted, I don't watch much SF TV, but I do like what I watch. I also like SF movies, I just don't get to watch very many of them, what with two small children and a non-SF loving spouse. What I want to say is that I prefer the literary brand of SF, and if people who proclaim this opinion long and loud are usually branded, at least half-jokingly, literary snobs, so be it.

And I'm calling this piece "Confessions" for a number of reasons. First of all, we literary types seem to be a dying breed so I figure I should get my obsessions off my chest while I can, kind of a last rites. Second of all, my bibliomania is a bit of a disease, sort of an unhealthy mania (just ask the above-mentioned wife). Books, books, books are everywhere in my house! I love the look and feel of beautifully made book almost as much as the stimulation its stories and ideas provide me. I regularly buy books by authors no one but me has ever heard of, both new and high-priced collectible. I confess to being a bit square and old-fashioned in my loves.

But most of all, I'm calling this my confessions because after all you

media fans read these meditations on life, the universe and everything, you're going to kill me!

Some more ground rules: I'm basically only going to talk about books versus movies and TV (or, the media). As far as comics are concerned, I can't really decide if they are literature or media, since they have elements of both, so I'll just ignore them. And all those other media and SF sub-cultures—customizable card games, role playing games, modeling, costuming, etc.? Well, I don't think they are all that relevant to my thesis, so I'll just ignore them, too. The reason they don't fit into my thesis is that I want to talk about the narrative forms of SF rather than the more collector or purely fan-oriented forms.

So now I present my case:

Fundamentally, the way stories are approached, the kinds of stories told and the way we express our love for them are very different between literature and the media.

First and foremost, TV is a producer's medium. On any given show, the final creative control lies with the producer. Given the serial nature of TV, and the fact that any given season of a show will have a surprisingly large number of writers and directors, it is the producer who ultimately shapes the show and maintains its internal consistency. The director is basically a hired hand. The writer, while getting considerably more respect than in the movie world, is also basically a hired hand. We all know Gene Roddenberry produced the original *Star Trek* but few of us know who wrote our favourite episodes. (Actually I do, but I'm weird, which is the whole

point of this article.) Movies are a director's medium. When you see a movie, you are seeing the director's vision. Producers are basically high-level supervisors, usually with some creative input. Writers, however, are the lowest of the low. Often a script can go through dozens of rewrites (with dozens of script doctors) before the director, stars, hairstylists, caterers and assorted other hangers-on are satisfied. This is especially true in the SF world, where the script is usually secondary to the kind of special effects and spectacular stunts that can be orchestrated. Everyone knows who directed a blockbuster movie, but does anyone know who wrote it? Who wrote the script for *Bladerunner*? I didn't know until I looked it up: Hampton Fancher and David Peoples.

Literature is, of course, a writer's medium. Sure there are publishers, booksellers, agents and all the rest involved, and a writer may become more interested in the kinds of movies that can be made with his story than the story itself (see Michael Crichton), but most writers don't make anywhere near enough money from their writing to have to worry about falling for that kind of temptation. They do it for love. Sure, in the past SF literature has been highly influenced by magazine editors who were able to shape the field. But the age of the editor is past; with novels dominating the scene and so many publishers involved, no one person can have a very significant influence on the state of SF. To a very large degree, when we read a science fiction story we are reading one person's vision, immersing ourselves into the past, present or

future dreamt up by this one person. Everyone knows who wrote *Red Mars* or *Stranger in a Strange Land*.

What does all this tell me? Movies and SF shows are huge, collaborative efforts, involving hundreds of people and massive resources. The vision that ends up on the screen is not usually any one person's but a compromise worked out to satisfy all the disparate elements involved in getting the thing off the ground (please see *The Player* and *Get Shorty*, both based on books, by the way). The person with the original science fictional vision, the writer, starts the process but usually has very little to do with the end product (for example, see *The City on the Edge of Forever*, Harlan Ellison's incredible account of the production of the *Star Trek* episode of the same name). That vision is what I value. To get it in its undiluted form, we have to go to the writer.

Media SF usually attempts a fairly narrow range of stories. In the SF world, *Star Trek*, *Babylon 5* and most others use the space opera/ensemble cast/political drama paradigm. There are notable exceptions: *The Outer Limits* is often quite good, especially when adapting works from established SF authors. *The X-Files* is also usually very good, but it is often not really SF, delving more into supernatural horror. Movies tend to be big budget, action adventure vehicles. Ones that don't follow that lead tend to be failures—*12 Monkeys* and *Strange Days* to name some recent examples. Even the most ardent fan would have to admit that there's a certain sameness to the offerings we get these days; the perfect example is the escalating number of clones *The X-Files* is spawning and the insane proliferation of sequels in the movie world (they're already talking about a sequel to *ID4*, hopefully to be called *Canada Day*). The highest form of flattery in the TV world is surely imitation. Contrast that to the variety we see in the literary world. No one would accuse Maureen McHugh or Kim Stanley Robinson or James Morrow or Michael Bishop or Jonathan Lethem or Samuel R. Delany of being cast from the same mould. It's even hard to imagine the same genre holding them all: sociological explorations of densely

imagined futures; hardest of hard SF terraforming of Mars; biting satire on religion and the cold war; nostalgic, evocative SF and fantasy which would appeal to fans of Ray Bradbury (and C. M. Kornbluth and Salman Rushdie); surreal combinations of hard-boiled detective and Philip K. Dick and; intense explorations of human identity and sexuality in the future. Even different cultures are explored. In the literature we see future Chinas, Russias, Latin Americas, Africas. In the media, the only model we see for the future is the good old U.S. of A.

Another big difference between the literature and the media is the size of the audience. While the size of the audience per se is a meaningless indication of quality, the consequences of it are very important. Unlike TV and movies, literature is basically one great big niche market. Look at it this way: the most successful book has a smaller audience than just about any movie. How big a flop is a movie if just 1 million people see it? How big a hit is a book if a million people buy it? We're talking *Ed Wood* versus Stephen King. The most successful SF book in any given year will probably have a smaller audience than the least successful SF TV show.

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That show will have to try to please millions of people if it is to be successful. A paperback book, on the other hand, will have to please between 50,000 and 100,000 if it is to be successful. (In Canada, a book is considered a bestseller if it sells 5000 copies; French books, about 2000.) Many small press books are published in editions of less than 1000, allowing both obscure reprint editions of classic works and new works by eclectic voices to have a spot in the marketplace. Many hundreds of different SF books are published every year as compared to a hundred or so TV episodes and movies. This kind of niche marketing means that people with very specialized tastes can be very happy with the selection offered to them. It is much easier to find an SF book to fit your tastes than it is to find a really good movie. In my case, I can't possibly keep up with the output of my favourite writers. Between that and trying to catch up on all the great SF published in the past which I haven't read...well, it could be a full time job. I must have hundreds of *unread* books at my house, just waiting for their turn.

Another thing I like about the literary side of things is that I can choose the level of intellectual content that suits my mood or inclinations at any given time. If I'm tired or taking a trip or in the first few months post-partum, or just feel like something "lite," I can get into a *Star Trek* or *X-Files* novel, no problem. (One big mistake I made: I read Kim Stanley Robinson's *Green Mars* right after my wife and I came home from the hospital with our first child—I remember liking the book tremendously but it took me a month to get through it and I can't remember a damn thing about it now. When our second was born, I read *Q-Squared* and one of those Charles L. Grant *X-Files* novels—they were good but who cares if I can't remember the plots.) On the other hand, the rest of the time I may be interested in one of Gregory Benford's hard SF novels, James Morrow's satires or Sean Stewart's fantasies. All of which are thoughtful and well written, even challenging. With media SF, I really don't have that much latitude—it's all at the same level, the TV level. Movies are shoot-em-up fantasies

and, while TV is a little better, there is a certain degree of “dumbing down” for the mass audience. The science is usually bogus, the characters, cardboard, the plots, endlessly recycled. The constraints of the visual media prevent the use of sophisticated scientific concepts, in depth characterizations or adult themes. Serious explorations of all the implications of both quantum mechanics and sexual identity will never be dealt with on TV; you have to look to the works of Greg Egan and Samuel R. Delany for that.

The flip side of intellectual content is emotional resonance. By this I mean how much a character or situation will stay with you over a long period of time. Since, almost by definition, movies and TV rarely dwell on the thoughts and inner feelings of the characters, rarely does a character from a movie or TV show haunt me long after it is over. In a book, however, since a character’s inner life can be blended with the plot, a character can have a life long after the story is over—you know how it is, you can have extended conversations with characters in your mind, going over the points of the story or your own daily concerns. The title character from Edgar Pangborn’s *Davey* is one of the most notable examples of a character that stays with you long after the book is over. I can’t recall having too many mental conversations with Wesley Crusher at the end of a *Star Trek* episode. SF movies are even worse; most practically don’t have any dialogue as it is, just one long chase scene.

Very few characters from movies or TV are presented as having any inner life at all—Spock for sure, Picard, yeah, but would anyone from the *Star Wars* universe qualify? Sure, Yoda or Ben, but if the most thoughtful characters you can find are a puppet and a ghost, you’re in trouble. Not one single Schwarzenegger or Stallone character qualifies; maybe Deckard from *Bladerunner*, but he’s based on a character from a book so even he doesn’t really count. He’s probably a replicant anyways.

Contrast this with characters from books. We usually spend a whole novel inside someone’s head. Robert Silverberg, Frederik Pohl,

Connie Willis and many others are expert at playing out the inner thoughts, hopes, ambitions and failures of their characters and making them the driving force behind their science fictional plots. The way Fred Pohl’s writing has progressed over the years into explorations of loss and alienation and the nature of the human spirit have both thrilled and haunted me.

Oddly enough, I think that the extra degree of emotional resonance you can get in a work of literature is part of the reason for the popularity of media tie-in novels. People want to know what their heroes are thinking and feeling, as well as details of their past which may show some insight into their character. Since the original medium can’t really provide this kind of information very well, a skilled writer can take advantage of the novel’s ability to do this kind of exploration, and give the fans what they want. I think this has a lot to do with the number of accomplished SF and fantasy writers turning their hands to media novels. It pays well and they are really able to provide something that is missing from the existing universe. A partial list of writers who have done these books is quite impressive: Robert Sheckley, Barbara Hambly, K.

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W. Jeter, Dave Wolverton, Timothy Zahn, Kevin J. Anderson and Barry Longyear.

And speaking of characters, the idea of media SF fans making such a big deal about actors has always puzzled me. Media, literature, whatever, the one thing we all have in common is that we love SF. The intellectual enjoyment we get from exploring the effects of science and technology on human (or non-human) societies is important to us. Exactly what insight can your average actor give on these kinds of issues? Very little, if you ask me. It’s like coin collectors hanging out with bank tellers. The province of actors is acting, and if I were interested in the process and theory of acting, I would be interested in actors. If I’m interested in the future... After all, David Duchovny isn’t really Fox Mulder but Robert Silverberg really is Robert Silverberg.

In fact, most actors in SF movies/TV shows generally show very little interest in SF itself; some, like Patrick Stewart, are on record as being somewhat hostile to SF. There are exceptions, of course, actors who seem to show a genuine interest in the genre they’re working in. Christopher Lee and Leonard Nimoy and, to a certain extent, even William Shatner (with the help of his legion of ghost writers) all spring to mind. After all, it’s just a job to them. We don’t expect the *Friends* cast to know anything about coffee or paleontology or cooking. I mean, would David Schwimmer be invited to a paleontological congress? When most actors appear at conventions, they charge a fee—these appearances are work to them. As nice and friendly and open as they may be at these events, you have to remember that even a modest fee of \$5000 means over \$700 an hour for a seven hour appearance. I’d be nice to a bunch of strangers in funny clothes for \$700 an hour, too!

As a result of my interest in the more literary aspects of the genre, I also tend to be attracted to the more literary aspects of fandom, like *The New York Review of Science Fiction* or *Locus*. The con I’d love to get a chance to go to is called *Readercon* and has nothing to do with uniting all four captains on one stage. I’m not very interested in the various

sycophantic publications you see in the media world, *Starlog* being the most disgusting excuse for a film and TV industry PR rag currently available. Some, like *SFX* or *Sci Fi Universe* or *Cinefantastique*, are a little better, but most of the magazines are a little too interested in actors' shoe sizes for my taste. *Sci Fi Universe* is a pretty good magazine but I really wonder about how much self-delusion is involved in any enterprise that has the gall to call itself "The Magazine for SF Fans with a Life" and then run a cover story on "The Hundred Best *Star Treks*." Even *SFX*, produced by the usually more intelligent Brits, has a bit too much interest in really obscure TV series for my taste. Not only that, but the recent reader's poll named three *X-Files*, a *Star Trek* and a *Star Wars* novel as among the top 20 SF novels of all time! To their credit, they also produce some of the most savagely funny reviews of films, TV and books you are ever likely to read, as well as top-notch interviews.

In summary, what I'd really like to concentrate on is what unites us all as SF fans—fans of SF in all its

forms—what we have in common. We all love the buzz we get from a beautifully presented science fictional idea. We love to have our minds expanded and enlarged while at the same time we are entertained. No matter what medium we get this from, this is what we share. Be it books or comics or movies or TV, the idea and how it is presented is all important to us. I guess the point of all this is that I think that the widest variety of ideas, the most challenging ideas, the most fun ideas are available between the covers of books.

In the modern, a media-saturated world we are overwhelmed with SFnal images from *Wired* magazine all the way to cereal boxes and comic books and fast-food promotions. We live in a future that the SF of the past never dreamed of: the Internet, AIDS, downsizing. How do we cope? We need the futures SF paints for us to help us, to make it easier to adjust and adapt to the constantly accelerating pace of change the world presents us with. The SF that will help us the most is the smartest, the most stimulating, the toughest, the

dirtiest, the grimmest, the farthest-reaching, even the funniest. Not the pablum, the soma, the Big Mac, the Sominex, the *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes VIII*, *Star Trek: The Next Classic Deep Space Voyager*, *Collector's Special Expanded Director's Edition*.

Postscript: From all the above, many of you might be getting the idea that I think media fandom is a big waste of time. The exact opposite is true. I think that all hobbies are a complete waste of time, my own of collecting books included. I've been involved with fandom of one sort or another for many years so I'm not about to throw any stones when a couple of my own walls are made of glass. I know what I'm writing about here is purely a matter of personal taste; just because I don't understand why someone enjoys a particular activity doesn't mean I don't honor their choice. I also don't understand coin and stamp collecting. So, no hard feelings, just an exchange of ideas, a healthy debate on the state of the union. I await the response: "Confessions of a TV Snob."

Bulletin Board

WANT TO BUY:

The Year's Best Science Fiction: First Annual Collection

The Year's Best Science Fiction: Second Annual Collection

The Year's Best Science Fiction: Fourth Annual Collection
(all edited by Gardner Dozois)

The Hugo Winners: Volume IV
(edited by Isaac Asimov)

Book Club editions of titles listed above are welcome

Tom Corbett, *Space Cadet*
(by Carey Rockwell)
8 volumes in series; published by Grosset & Dunlap

Tom Swift, Jr. *Adventures*
(by Victor Appleton II)
33 volumes in series; published by Grosset & Dunlap

Please phone Brian McCulloch at:

694-6199 (Home; not after 9:00PM please—young children, tired parents)
or 398-5023 (Work) or
e-mail to: brian@ums1.lan.mcgill.ca

X-FILES: A COUSIN AND A CLONE

X-Files booster Keith Braithwaite briefly looks at two new TV series, one from the creator of *The X-Files* and the other, an *X-Files* clone.

MILLENNIUM

X-Files creator Chris Carter ratchets things up a few notches, this TV season, in terms of what the public can see on the networks. The disturbing, the sinister, the sadistic and the gruesome permeate his new series, *Millennium*, the *Silence of the Lambs* or *Seven* of episodic television. This is a horror show—straight out, no holds barred! While there are vague hints of the supernatural and allusion to Nostradamian and other prophecies, the mainstay of the show is *real-life* horror; namely, society's monsters, stalkers and slayers of their fellow human beings. As one expects from Carter, writing, acting, production values are all first-rate—Lance Henriksen's (*Aliens*) craggy, world-weary face is perfectly cast as Frank Black, a psychically gifted ex-FBI agent battling what he sees as an end-of-millennium-inspired wave of evil sweeping the land. *Millennium* pushes the envelope out further still than *The X-Files*, but includes none of the latter's quirky sense of humour or penchant for self-parody as offset against the dark side. I don't know

if viewers will want to tune in, each week, to such unrelenting malevolence.

DARK SKIES

Clearly riding on *The X-Files*' coattails, *Dark Skies* focuses on the alien and conspiracy angles popularized by *The X-Files*. The show seeks to link aliens to every major event in recent American history. As such, it can be fun to watch but it doesn't succeed with nearly the intelligence, style and wit of *The X-Files*. At times, some of the events depicted in *Dark Skies* seem *too far-fetched*, even for an SF series! The problem is not in the events depicted—some *X-Files* stories are just as unbelievable—but in the quality of the writing and presentation. *Dark Skies* is simply *not* as successful at convincing me to suspend my disbelief as is *The X-Files*. I can't buy, for example, that a super-secret organization like Majestic would be as incompetent and just plain stupid as it is made out to be in *Dark Skies*. It's hard to get worked up about what the show's heroes are up against when one of their chief threats is this gaggle of inept covert operators. Cancer Man, on the other hand, is someone to worry about. And that's basically why *The X-Files* works as well as it does and *Dark Skies*, not so much.

STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT

reviewed by Carl Philips

The idea that even numbered *Trek* films are the best *Trek* films holds true with *First Contact*, the second *Next Gen* outing and eighth of the *Star Trek* movies, overall. But *First Contact* isn't just one of the best, it is *the best* (or certainly, at least second best)!

Star Patrick Stewart is in fine form, his crewmates offering solid support. The story is *Trek* at its best, featuring those most ominous of *Trek* villains, the Borg, and introducing us to their memorable queen. Coupled with the plot's high drama, *Trek*'s particular sense of humour is well in play throughout and die-hard fans will get their required dose of Federation history. Director Jonathan Frakes sticks to the essentials, keeping the action moving along at a good pace.

The TNG crew are flying solo, now, leaving the original series crew to their retirement. *First Contact* firmly cements Picard and company in place at the head of Paramount's lucrative franchise.

1996 HUGO AWARD-WINNERS

Best Novel: *The Diamond Age* (Neal Stephenson)
Best Novella: "The Death of Captain Future" (Allen Steele)
Best Novelette: "Think Like a Dinosaur" (James Patrick Kelly)
Best Short Story: "The Lincoln Train" (Maureen F. McHugh)
Best Non-Fiction Book: *Science Fiction: The Illustrated Encyclopedia* (John Clute)
Best Professional Editor: Gardner Dozois
Best Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton
Best Original Artwork: *Dinotopia: The World Beneath* (James Gurney)
Best Semi-Prozine: *Locus* (Charles N. Brown, editor)
Best Fanzine: *Ansible* (David Langford, editor)
Best Fan Writer: David Langford
Best Fan Artist: William Rotsler
Best Dramatic Presentation: "The Coming of Shadows" (*Babylon 5*)



Bulletin Board

FOR EXCHANGE OR SALE AT LOW PRICE:

STAR TREK

TNG UNIFORMS

Men's, medium size, gold (never worn)
Men's, small size, gold (with 2 rank pins)
Men's uniform patterns for all sizes

POSTERS

Next Generation crew, space background; 24 x 36 inches
Generations, Shreddies promotional with Kirk, Scotty and Chekov
Enterprise-D; 10 x 14 inches framed, special protective coating

CARDS

TNG 5th anniversary hologram cards: Vor'cha Attack Cruiser (02H),
Romulan Warbird (03H), Ferengi Marauder (04H)
DS9 series premiere: complete set of 48, with 2 spectra cards plus 2
promotional cards
Generations: set of 72 wide-angle cards

PINS

Enterprise-D, artist's miniature painting
Next Generation logo with inscription
Large pin: "Caution Force Field"

BLUEPRINTS

Enterprise D: 11 sheets, interiors and exteriors

OTHER

Judge Dredd poster: 23 x 29 inches, framed, autographed by Sylvester
Stallone and other of the film's cast
Fantasy poster: "The Unicorn Princess," 24 x 36 inches
Science poster: "The Solar System," 27 x 39 inches, beautiful images and
detailed information on each planet

For more information, call Stéphane at (514) 768-9747 between
3:00PM and 11:00PM

SENSORS

FACT, RUMOUR AND SPECULATION FROM AROUND SF/F-DOM

Information for this column came to this world from a dying planet.

STAR WARS

The enhanced version of *Star Wars* is scheduled to premiere in theaters January 31, to be followed February 21 by an enhanced version of *The Empire Strikes Back*, and on March 7, *Return of the Jedi*. Look for cleaned-up visuals, extra footage, digital FX added to existing footage, and all kinds of new merchandise designed to enhance George Lucas' wallet!

Meanwhile, the trilogy of new *Star Wars* films (prequels to the original trilogy) is currently scouting locations in places like India, Iceland, the former Soviet Union and Tunisia, the latter which doubled for the planet Tatooine in the original 1977 adventure. Reportedly, a Lucasfilm crew came across the abandoned fiberglass sets which were Ben Kenobi's house and the Mos Eisley cantina, still standing in the Tunisian desert after all these years!

The planned release of the first of these new SW movies was recently bumped ahead into 1999. And, it's now official: George Lucas will sit in the director's chair.

B-5'S FUTURE

With the end of *Babylon 5's* five-year story arc now coming into sight on the horizon, fans of the popular SF series may be wondering "What happens after the end of the show's run." Movies is what! A prequel (set around the time of the Earth-Minbari war) and a sequel are planned. Like *Star Trek*, the show hopes to make the jump to movies and carry on in cinematic form.

NEW SHOWS TOO VIOLENT

Millennium and *Poltergeist: The Legacy* have both been spotlighted as

far too violent by Canadian groups concerned with the level of violence on TV. Sponsors are being urged to boycott the shows and the CTV network has agreed to bump *Millennium* into a later-evening slot.

COMING SCI-FI ON ABC

ABC will air a TV movie version of Stephen King's *The Shining* next season. Never completely happy with director Stanley Kubrick's 1980 film treatment, King himself has scripted this latest version, which will more closely follow the book and feature a new, twist ending.

And, the network is also looking at producing a TV mini-series based on Frank Herbert's *Dune* books.

RODDENBERRY PROJECT RESURRECTED

Majel Barrett Roddenberry has dug up and dusted off an old, unrealized project by her late husband, *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry. *Battleground Earth* will

become a syndicated series, premiering Fall '97. The story is described as something of a cross between "V" and *Childhood's End*—benevolent aliens visit Earth bearing gifts (advanced technology, cures for diseases, etc.), but are they really our friends?

CLARKE, LEE PREPPING MINI-SERIES

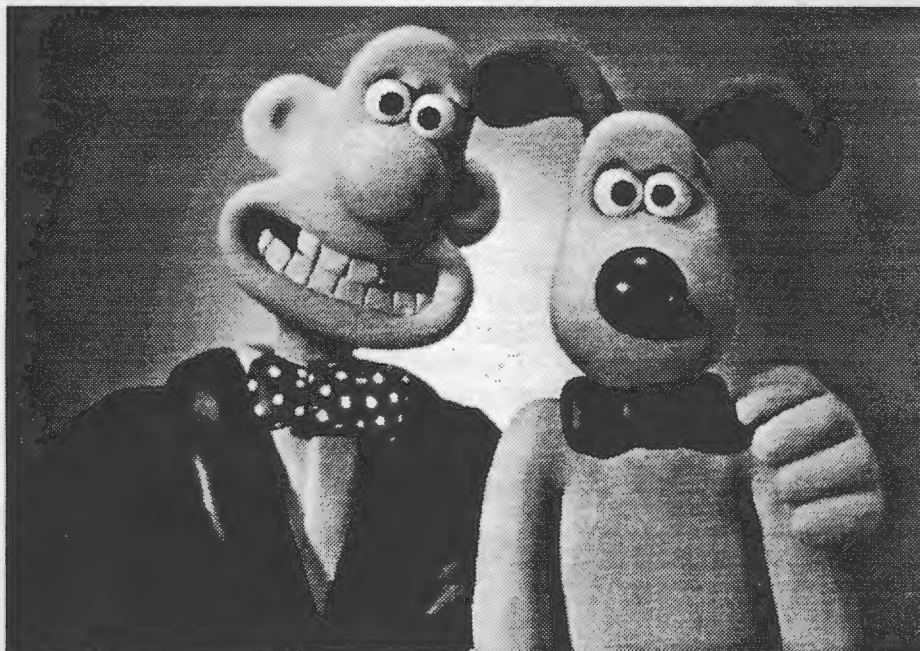
Venerable SF author Arthur C. Clarke and frequent collaborator Gentry Lee are at work developing an original TV mini-series focusing on Clarke's view of the future.

FROM MOVIES TO TV

Plans are afoot to spin-off sci-fi movies *Total Recall* and *StarGate* into television series. A *Species* series is also under consideration.

FROM TV TO MOVIES

Mel Gibson is reportedly cast as Number Six in a coming film version



Wallace (left) and Gromit: New York adventure

of the cult TV series *The Prisoner*. Patrick McGoochan, creator and star of the series, is writing and will produce the movie. He'll likely cameo, as well.

Hollywood continues to strip-mine '60s TV schedules for feature film fodder; *now* they're making a live-action *Jetsons* movie!

FROM COMICS PAGES TO A THEATER NEAR YOU!

Currently in the works: *The Fantastic Four*, *Daredevil* and Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* (with Martin Sheen).

DOCTOR WHO: FALSE RUMOUR

Fox's decision to dump future *Doctor Who* adventures after the

network's *Doctor Who* TV movie pulled in less than stellar ratings was a disappointment to the Doctor's many fans. But said fans were recently buoyed by word that the BBC had decided to pick up on the new Doctor. Alas, 'tis not so. Comments made in a TV interview by new *Who* star Paul McGann were misconstrued, leading fans to believe that the BBC was to bring the Doctor back home. Fact is, the BBC has no such plans. Disappointed again, *Who* fans nevertheless continue to hope.

WALLACE, GROMIT LOST IN N.Y.

Wallace and Gromit, stars of the hilariously entertaining short films *A Grand Day Out*, *The Wrong Trousers* and *A Close Shave*, were recently lost in New York City. The doll-sized

puppets, which award-winning British animator Nick Park brings fabulously to life via stop-motion animation, were mistakenly left in the trunk of the cab that drove Park to his hotel while he was on a visit to the Big Apple. A frantic Park put word of what had happened out to local media and was greatly relieved when his cabbie returned the pair, safe and sound, the following day.

MULDER MAKES MORE!

Apparently, *X-Files* star David Duchovny (Agent Mulder) makes *twice* the salary per episode that his co-star Gillian Anderson (Agent Scully) makes!

—"*Sensors*" was put together by Keith Braithwaite

Bulletin Board

MonSFFA CHRISTMAS PARTY '96!

MonSFFA Invites Its Members and Friends to the Club's
Annual Christmas Party for an Evening of Seasonal
Celebrations!

Music and Dance • Food and Drink • Raffle Prizes and Pool

Saturday, December 14, 1996, 7:00PM
Park Place Bar, 1244 MacKay Street
(between Ste-Catherine and René-Lévesque)

We will be collecting children's toys and items of non-perishable foodstuffs, to be donated to local charity. In the spirit of the season, please give a little something to benefit those less fortunate.

CanFandom

A Quick Look at Goings-On in Canadian Fandom

MonSFFan '96 CUFF Winner

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF), which we reported close to folding in our last issue, has managed to survive the relentless *apathy* of Canadian fandom! MonSFFA's own René Walling ended up, *at the last minute*, making the trip out to Calgary for the '96 Convention. (Each year, the CUFF foots the bill for an Eastern fan's trip west, or a Western fan's trip east, to attend Canada's national SF convention, Can-convention.)

As beneficiary of CUFF's cash this year, René now takes on the responsibility of administering the fund next year. The '97 Convention will take place in conjunction with Primedia (Toronto), marking the first time a media con plays host to the Can-convention.

MonSFFA President Steps Down

After four years at the head of Montreal's leading SF/F fan club, MonSFFA president Lynda Pelley will step down effective the end of this year. Lynda's new schedule at work will find her pulling odd-hour shifts and leave her with much less free time. As such, she does not expect to be able to make it to very many of the club's meetings and events from now on. Four years in the Center Seat has also left Lynda feeling a *little* burned out and she feels

that the time has come to pass the reigns on to someone else.

Lynda plans to remain as active in MonSFFA as her new work schedule will permit, notably as a *Warp* staffer, where she expects to best be able to utilize the limited time she'll have available for hobby interests. She will undertake to co-edit the club's 'zine with current editor, Keith Braithwaite, who as a new father, is himself finding spare time to be at a premium.

Con•Cept '97 Changes Dates

Montreal's Con•Cept SF/F convention has, in '97, opted to return to a fall date after trying the con out in the spring for a couple of years. Con•Cept '97 first advertised its dates as October 2-4, but has now moved back a week to September 26-28, this necessitated by the (expected) switch to a new hotel, the Days Inn. (See Con•Cept '97's ad in this issue.)

A WorldCon in Montreal?

John Mansfield, chair of the Winnipeg World-Con, and several other veteran fans have recently been meeting with local fandoms in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal to discuss the possibility of Canada's bidding to host another WorldCon! Some of the Winnipeg people are, apparently, ready to help any group that wants to take the plunge. The

target years suggested: 2003 or 2004.

Vancouver and Montreal, while certainly interested, both feel unprepared, at this point, to commit. Toronto has, for a while, now, been advertising a bid for 2003, but little has come of it to date.

Meanwhile, the World Fantasy Convention (a pro-heavy affair), is reported to have a very good chance of landing in Montreal in a few years!

Montreal Fandom: Fair Showing in Aurora Balloting

A healthy number of Montrealers were nominated for Aurora Awards this year and when the votes were counted, MonSFFA member Jean-Pierre Normand was amongst the winners (he copped the Artistic Achievement trophy)! Local fanzines *Warp* and *Warp Factor* managed to garner a respectable number of votes (*Warp Factor* hanging in for a second place finish!) before loosing out to *Under the Ozone Hole*, a B.C. 'zine. Four of the six nominees in the Fan Achievement (Organizational) category were Montrealers, including the winner, Boréal's Jean-Louis Trudel.

English-Montreal fandom in particular has, for years, taken little part in the Auroras, largely because the awards have been very poorly publicized in these parts, a situation which is now being rectified. As more

Montreal-area fans become familiar with the awards, no doubt local interest in the Auroras will increase.

The Auroras are Canada's national SF/F awards. They are handed out each year at the Canadian National Science Fiction Convention (Can-convention). Following are the 1996 Aurora Award winners:

Best Long-Form Work (English): *The Terminal Experiment* (Robert J. Sawyer)

Best Long-Form Work (French): *Les voyageurs malgré eux* (Élisabeth Vonarburg)

Best Short-Form Work (English): "The Perseids" (Robert Charles Wilson)

Best Short-Form Work (French): "Équinoxe" (Yves Menard)

Best Other Work (English): *Reboot*, TV series (BTL Productions)

Best Other Work (French): *Solaris*, magazine (Joël Champetier, editor)

Artistic Achievement: Jean-Pierre Normand

Fan Achievement

(Fanzine): *Under the Ozone Hole* (Karl Johanson and John Herbert, co-editors)

Fan Achievement

(Organizational): Jean-Louis Trudel (Boréal)

Fan Achievement (Other): Larry Stewart, entertainer



If you would like to join, please fill in the membership application and mail it to **MonSFFA**, along with a cheque or money order made out to **MonSFFA** for the amount of \$20.00. Feel free to write us for more information.

MonSFFA

P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc
Montreal, Quebec
Canada, H2W 2P4

Si vous voulez vous joindre au club, veuillez remplir le formulaire d'adhésion et nous le faire parvenir à l'adresse si-dessous avec un chèque ou un mandat-poste, payable à l'ordre de l'**AMonSFF**, au montant de 20,00\$. N'hésitez pas à nous écrire si vous avez besoin de plus amples renseignements.

AMonSFF

C.P. 1186, Place du Parc
Montréal (Québec)
Canada, H2W 2P4

The Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA): Membership Application

Name _____
Birthdate (optional) _____
Mailing address _____
Apt. _____ City/Town _____
Province/State _____ Postal Code _____
Telephone (home) _____
(work) _____

Interests

- ☐ Science Fiction _____
☐ Fantasy _____
☐ Horror _____
☐ Movies/TV _____
☐ Writing _____
☐ Art _____
☐ Gaming _____

Others _____

We are sometimes approached by other organizations interested in soliciting our members. Please indicate whether or not you give your permission to pass on the information contained in this application to any such organizations.

- ☐ You have my permission to pass on said information.
☐ Please do not pass on any of said information.

Formulaire d'adhésion à l'Association Montréalaise de Science-Fiction et de Fantastique (AMonSFF) :

Nom _____
Date de naissance (optionelle) _____
Adresse _____
App. _____ Ville _____
Province/État _____ Code Postal _____
Téléphone (rés.) _____
(trav.) _____

Intérêts personnels

- ☐ Science-Fiction _____
☐ Fantastique _____
☐ Horreur _____
☐ Films/TV _____
☐ Écriture _____
☐ Art _____
☐ Jeux de rôles _____

Autres _____

Il arrive que d'autres organismes nous demandent la liste de nos membres afin de les contacter. Veuillez indiquer ci-dessous si vous nous autorisez à transmettre les renseignements inscrits sur ce formulaire à ces organismes.

- ☐ Je vous autorise à transmettre ces renseignements.
☐ Veuillez ne pas transmettre ces renseignements.

CONCEPT '97

September 26, 27, 28 1997 • 26, 27, 28 septembre 1997

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1005 Guy, Mtl, Tel.: 1-800-567-0880

\$85.00 single / double \$95.00 triple / quad.

Guest of Honour

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**Lois McMaster
BUJOLD**

Art Guest of Honour

artiste invité d'honneur

**Wayne
BARLOWE**

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\$20.00 March 25th to
October 1st 1996

\$22.00 October 1st 1996 to
March 1st 1997

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

eMail: _____

Admission

\$20.00 25 mars au
1er octobre 1996

\$22.00 1er octobre 1996 au
1er mars 1997

Nom: _____

Adresse: _____

Ville: _____

Code postal: _____

Téléphone: _____

Courrier électronique: _____