



Roll Call

Newsletter Editor

Geoff Bovey
"Where are my submissions!?"

Typesetter

Captain A. J. Stocker
"I hate it when that happens."

President

Keith G. Braithwaite
"Smurf Nazis must die!"

Vice-President

Michael L. Masella
"Just one more game of Tetris, please?"

Treasurer

Emile Richard
"In order to print my quote, we'll need 0.25 new members."

Recruiting Officer

Alan Keiping
"No, Geoff, I don't have it yet."

General Activities Officer

Colleen Magnussen
"Vikings rule!"

Special Activities Officer

position unfilled
"Out to lunch"

Public Relations Officer

Kevin Holden
"So who screwed up this time?"

Mailing Manager

Trudie Mason
"Who removed the 'munchies' credit?"

Correspondence Secretary

Bryan Ekers
"Hey, 'a billion tons of death' was my line!"

Advisors

Ignazio Battaglini
 Crystal Rothwell
 Maureen Whitelaw
*"*snore* *zzzzz*"*

Cover up: This month's cover is a pen and ink sketch of Spiderman by Marvel Comics' artist, Todd McFarlane. An interview with Mr. McFarlane was conducted by MonSFFA recently in Montreal and is featured herein.

MonSFFA Membership Benefits

The **Montreal Science-Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA)** is a non-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of science fiction and fantasy in literature, films and television, art, music, costuming, model-making, comics and fanzines, and gaming.

Based in the greater Montreal area, MonSFFA is open to all interested life-forms. The membership fee is currently \$20.00 per year. Elections for executives are annual, and any paid member may volunteer for a position.

Membership entitles you to the following: (1) A MonSFFA membership card; which allows you free admittance to all MonSFFA general meetings, and entitles you to a minimum 10% discount at sf/f oriented stores in the greater Montreal area; and (2) a subscription to MonSFFA's newsletter, *Warp*.

MonSFFA is regularly approaching stores and asking them to participate in its discount program. The following stores have agreed verbally to implement our program: (1) Ozz Comics, (2) Mars Comics, (3) 1 000 000 Comics, (4) Komico, (5) Librairie Astro, (6) Hobby International, Inc., and (7) all Kangaroo Hobby stores. Further, a legal agreement with Compucentre Fairview and El Paso Comix has been reached. See these establishments for specifics. MonSFFA encourages its members to patronize these businesses.

The signing of an agreement between MonSFFA and the rest of these businesses regarding our discount program is currently being attended to. Subsequent newsletters will report any new information concerning this and any other membership benefits.

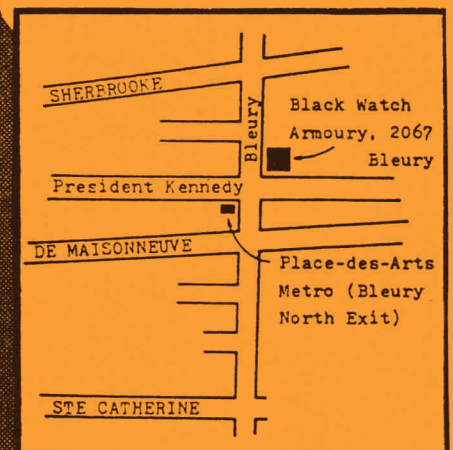
Address all correspondence to:

MonSFFA
 P.O. Box 2413
 Dorval, Quebec
 H9S 5N4.

Next Meeting:
 Sunday, May 7,
 1-5PM at the
 Black Watch
 Armoury.

Theme...
BATMAN!

Members: Free
 Non-Members: \$2.00





MonSFFA Mailbag

Dear Mr. Braithwaite,

I am writing you concerning your club magazine, *Warp*. I borrowed copies of *Warp 1* and *2* of 1989 from a MonSFFA member, as I am interested in joining a Montreal-based science fiction club. There is a strong need for the serious discussion of science fiction themes.

I was sorely disappointed in *Warp*. Your publication seems bereft of any awareness of science fiction outside movies and television. The visual media contribute negligibly to science fiction, as you surely know, yet there is nothing in your two recent issues concerning the printed word. (*Star Trek* novels do not count.) What about discussion of those writers who have truly shaped science fiction as we know it? What about Stanislaw Lem, Philip K. Dick, Zemyatin, and Ursula K. LeGuin?

The tone of the newsletter is extraordinarily adolescent. The writing is occasionally so convoluted and self-referential as to be incomprehensible. The fiction exhibits pubescent male values (rough and ready men facing certain death with a smile on their faces). AIDS jokes are not considered funny by anyone.

I am particularly incensed by your treatment of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. You seem to have taken upon yourselves to dictate to the world the value of the program. Your reviewer, Kevin Holden, makes a series of mostly inaccurate comments about *Next Generation* in his article in *Warp 2*.

He cites excessive reruns as a major failing of the series. True, the situation is aggravating. However, he seems to have forgotten that almost all television series had five weeks of repeats this season, because of the Writers' Guild strike of last summer. *Next Generation* has not shown a rerun since that interruption.

Mr. Holden gives us a synopsis of the episode "Silent as a Whisper", deriding the "boring and effortless adventure" for its lack of structure. Mr. Holden is not interested in drama. His description of the storyline leaves out the most important details of the plot; specifically, that the mediator is deaf.

When the mediator's interpreters are killed, he is forced to confront—for the first time in his life—the true nature of his handicap. It is only through the efforts of Mr. Data and Deanna Troi that he is brought out of his withdrawal, and attempts to complete his mission. The story speaks volumes about the courage of the man's spirit.

Mr. Holden missed this completely, and seems not to understand

the dramatic, poetic structure of the storyline. His comments leave us asking how he could censure what is probably the best *Star Trek* episode ever telecast.

He seems to have forgotten that *Star Trek* was always at its best as a dramatic series. Think back. The strongest episodes of the old series were about people; one or two individuals caught in a trying situation. This is the same kind of gripping drama that "Silent as a Whisper" employed. Shaking the characters out of their chairs during battle is artificial. The only credible stories are those that engage the viewer's emotions.

Mr. Holden's primitive vocabulary ("skragged") and his plea for "more phasers" demonstrate his wishes for the direction of the series. "Snuffing out Tasha Yar was a good beginning, but why stop when you're on a roll? You don't have to kill them all, just let us see 'em sweat." He apparently would love to return to the science fiction of the 1940's and '50's, when all that women were good for was getting captured and fondled by monsters.

He reinforces the pubescent attitude of the magazine: he does not like women, the handicapped bore him, and serious drama is for wimps. "It would not be betraying the peaceful directives of the characters to put them in a scrap more often," he says. He seems to be saying that those directives should only be given lip service, that they should be merely a cover for some really good shoot 'em up action.

His right-wing tendencies repudiate all of *Star Trek's* morals and values. *Star Trek* is more than a basis for wargamers. The attitudes of your magazine are a disservice to those who love science fiction, and who believe in the vision *Star Trek* gives us.

Next Generation is sensitive and occasionally moving. It is the best televised science fiction today. However, it is important to recognize that *Star Trek* is only an insignificant portion of the world's science fiction. You cannot continue to swallow the mindless commercial pap that Hollywood feeds you.

I know that this letter will not see print, as there is little place for it in your publication. This is unfortunate, as I would be interested to know if any of my admittedly harsh words are understood. In the meantime, I still wait for people who take science fiction seriously.

Regretfully

Jim Royal
Chateaugay, P.Q.

Although Mr. Royal's letter was addressed to me, an uncomfortable amount of it was taken up by an unfair and unwarranted personal attack on Mr. Holden, who requested of me that I allow him to respond. I did, and find said response in keeping with my own feelings on the subject. —K. Braithwaite

Mr. Royal,

Firstly, I am surprised you see fit to degrade MonSFFA's newsletter after seeing only two issues. *Warp* is assembled by a small group of people who work very hard and are justifiably proud of what they produce. It is neither a professional magazine, nor literary digest; it is simply a newsletter. The references it makes are designed for club members and members of other sf/f clubs.

The tone of the newsletter reflects whoever contributes to it. If it does not suit you, by all means, join MonSFFA and contribute whatever you wish. You will find us most receptive.

Secondly, my critique of ST:TNG echoes the many other critiques written in journals reviewing the series. I am certainly not the only person to think the series has flaws. You seem to think that *Star Trek* is sacred and that any criticism is improper. I find it rather hypocritical of you to condemn us as "adolescent" for reviewing the extremely popular, best-selling *Trek* novels, then turn around and spend two pages defending *Star Trek* and attacking me personally for having criticized the show. Your reasoning is contradictory. You seem unable to separate the review from reviewer and have launched into a direct attack against me. Your comments about me are completely unjustified and offensive. To condemn my critique is one thing, but to condemn me is quite another.

Finally, the reason *Warp* has allowed your statement in this newsletter is to demonstrate that *Warp* is prepared to accept any constructive criticism and consider any suggestions offered to it. If anyone finds fault with *Warp* or has ideas for improvements, by all means, send them in. But, Mr. Royal, to condemn and insult me personally merely because I criticized ST:TNG, is inappropriate, immature and serves only to lessen your credibility. Helpful suggestions we can use; childish insults, you can keep to yourself.

Kevin Holden

Letters to the club and/or the newsletter become the property of MonSFFA/*Warp* and are assumed intended for publication, in whole or in part, and may therefore be used for these purposes.

Letter from da Editor

Over the course of the several months that we have been publishing *Warp*, we have been very lucky in the sense that *Warp* has cost MonSFFA's treasury very little to produce. This is now coming to an end. The gracious individual (who, for professional reasons, shall remain nameless) who has provided for *Warp*'s printing needs at below-minimum cost in the luxury of his executive office is retiring after 30+ years of service in administration and sales. The Board of Advisors (BOA™) and the staff at *Warp* congratulate him. However, it is important to point out that our new printing will be, unofficially, costing us an extra 0.5 cent per side. Believe it or not (*Using more quotes again?—Typesetter.*) (*Stop it, Mike!—Ed.*), this will double current printing cost.

The question then is: How will this affect *Warp*'s length and content? Firstly, after discussing the matter with my art director (Keith Braithwaite) and the treasurer (Emile Richard), I made a decision to cut down *Warp*'s size to 20 pages per issue (not counting *Warp 6* and *Warp 11*, both traditionally larger editions). This move was necessary for, if you will note previous issues, we have always printed 22 or more pages. The second decision, concerning content, is not one I have made yet, but rather is one I must make from issue to issue. I can no longer guarantee, as I have been able to in the past, the publication of writers' submissions in the issue of *Warp* currently being produced. Instead, I must now be more choosy, and, in so doing, I urge all those submitting articles outside the regular columns in *Warp* to understand if their work does not appear in a current issue; *Warp*'s more limited space will inevitably force some submissions to wait out a few issues.

In any event, I continue to urge readers to submit articles, especially in the area of sf&f literature since we have seen very few articles, until this issue, dealing with that topic, and we hope you, our readers, continue to enjoy *Warp* in spite of its slightly reduced length. See y'all, now. (*Y'all come back now, ya hear?—Typesetter.*) (*I said stop it!—Ed.*)



Geoff Bovey,
Newsletter Editor

President's Letter

Science Fictions fans are viewed as "weirdoes" by many non-fans, but even *within* the ranks of fandom, certain fans are looked down upon by others ("Oh, s/he's just a "Trekkie".). Gamers are labelled as bizarre, obsessed with the fantasy worlds in which they play. The literature crowd look down on the media crowd, and the media crowd think the literature crowd are snobs. All of these impressions are based upon stereotypes, and we all know that we cannot make sweeping judgments about anyone based on so little information (information that's usually inaccurate, anyway). There are just too many factors which come into play. We need time to find out more about that someone.

Take the time to look beyond the stereotypes and you may find the nerds to be surprisingly familiar. Each individual *is* an individual, and each has his/her own strong and weak points, just like you. I'm not saying that you'll never run into a real asshole in your travels—you probably will. But it's been my experience that in most cases, that "asshole" has something positive to offer, something relevant to contribute, if only given a little leeway. After a while, that person may not seem like such an asshole; he may even seem not all that dissimilar to you.

We have seen the "nerds", and the "nerds" are us.



Keith Braithwaite,
President.

MonSFFA Discount Program



One of the *benefits* of being a member of the **Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA)** is that you are entitled to **receive** certain **discounts** on merchandise you purchase at the establishments shown on this page.

These businesses have very kindly agreed to help support and to encourage **MonSFFA** by implementing our **Discount Program**, and we, in return, *encourage our members to frequent these stores.*

The discounts offered by each store are listed below their business card. Exceptions *may* exist; ask the specific dealer for details.

*You must present a valid **MonSFFA** membership card in order to take advantage of these discounts.*

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MonSFFAndom

Comics and Collectibles Show

The Montreal Comics and Collectibles Show, held at the Ramada Inn on Côte-de-Liesse on March 5, proved to be a flop for MonSFFA (but every cloud has a silver lining). Our booth—featuring videos, posters, photos, newsletters, and, of course, our friendly recruitment crew—was situated in the same, small room used for the autograph sessions, so although we had many people passing through, most were intent on getting an autograph, not on checking out our club. Bottom line: we sold a few back issues of the newsletter, and that's it! No new members were signed up, but we did hand out a good number of flyers, so maybe those will pay off in the weeks ahead. Our silver lining was that we managed to secure a piece of artwork (this issue's cover) and an interview from the show's guest of honour, Spiderman artist Todd McFarlane. (The interview appears later in this issue.) Many thanks to Mr. McFarlane, and to our recruitment crew: Al Keiping, Geoff Bovey, Iggy Battaglini, Crystal Rothwell, Maureen Whitelaw, Kevin Holden, Bryan Ekers, Andrew Nugent, and Emile Richard.

Post Show Party

After the C&C Show, the recruitment crew met other MonSFFA members back at the Armoury for a low-key winding-down party. About 25 people showed up for drinks and a relaxing evening of conversation. The Nigels shot a little pool; and a couple of members played video games as well. Thanks to Rick Hummel for arranging for the room.

April General Meeting

Our April 2 General Meeting saw the successful implementation of the Special Interest Group (SIG) program (the program was put forward by the General and Special Activities Officers and is designed to get more members directly involved in the planning and running of general meetings). The theme of the meeting was *Star Wars*, and a number of members, forming our first SIG, delivered a wide variety of related material. After the usual club announcements, Andrew Campbell got things started with a short talk on *Star Wars*, including several interesting and amusing anecdotes. Larry Maislin's *Star Wars* collectibles proved to be very popular, with many members sitting down to talk to him at length about them. Bery Reischl brought in *Star Wars* books, comics, blueprints, a couple of models, and a soundtrack album. Lynda Pelley displayed a plastic model of the *Millennium Falcon*, and a scratchbuilt model of the *Death Star*, made from bits of wood, screen, etc. Claude Marcotte had photos of her speeder bike models. (Note: In *Warp 3's* "MonSFFAndom", we miscredited the builder of those bikes, which were on display at the February General Meeting, as Lynda Pelley; they were, in fact, built by Claude. Sorry!) Ken Carroll showed off a model of the *Slave 1*, and a collection of kit-bashed models of armed satellites which he labelled "Ronald's Rayguns". (I guess that's in keeping with a "Star Wars" theme!) Ken also supplied a video of the best battle scenes from the three *Star Wars* movies. Other *Star Wars* items on display: An *Empire Strikes Back* poster (Crystal Rothwell), more comics (Sylvie Beaulieu), and (don't ask!) a *Star Wars* arcade game control handle (Iggy Battaglini)!



L to R: Al, Geoff, and Crystal at our booth at C&C Show.



L to R: Nigel, Nigel, Nigel, and Nigel.



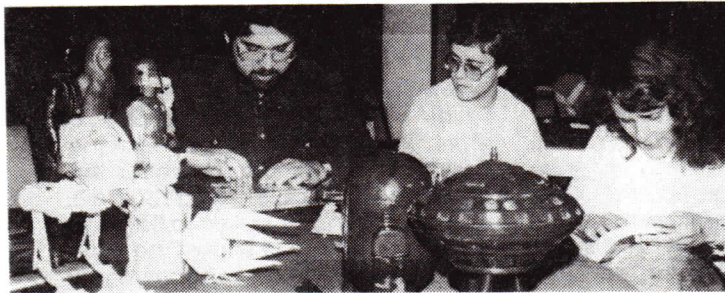
V.P. Mike Masella tackles video game at post show party.



April General Meeting



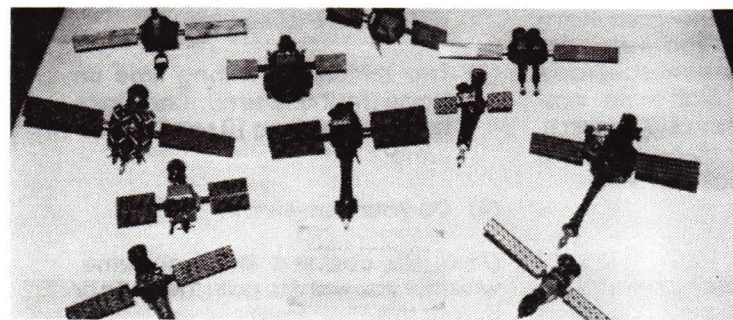
Some of Berny Reischl's STAR WARS stuff.



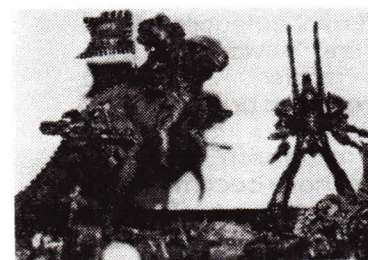
Larry Maislin (left) with his STAR WARS collectibles.



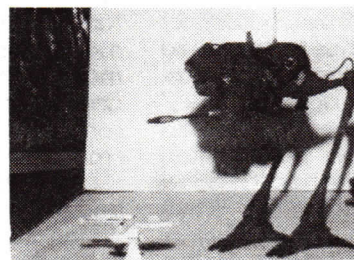
Lynda Pelley's DEATH STAR and MILLENNIUM FALCON.



"Ronald's Rayguns"



Gaming miniatures by John Zmrotchek.



Models by Mark Burakoff.

A couple of members (not part of the *Star Wars* SIG) brought in stuff also: Mark Burakoff displayed a few of his models, including a *Star Wars*-like bipedal walker; and John Zmrotchek showcased an impressive collection of gaming miniatures.

Thanks to all the SIG members, to SIG coordinator James Poon, and to Mark and John. Our next General Meeting is set for May 7, and the theme will be *Batman*. Also, a special presentation on gaming will be given, with the emphasis on introducing gaming to the uninitiated.

Convention

At MonSFFA's April General Meeting, con chairman John Matthias announced that the MonSFFA convention (Con•cept) will be held (pending confirmation, which is expected shortly) on November 12, 1989, at the Maritime Hotel, located at the corner of Guy and Dorchester/René Lévesque streets. Con•cept will now be looking for manpower, from the ranks of MonSFFA, to help out with the con. Fund-raising activities are being planned to raise seed money, and one fund-raiser is already underway: the sale of tickets towards a door prize at MonSFFA's General Meetings. At this April meeting, over \$70.00 was raised. The prize was the *Star Trek Starship Combat Simulator* (donated by OZZ Comics), and won by Catherine McCabe. Thanks to all those who supported the con by buying a ticket. In keeping with the *Batman* theme of the May General Meeting, Con•cept is offering a model kit of the TV series' Batmobile as the prize. For information concerning Con•cept, write to: Con•cept, P.O. Box 61, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 2M9.

The Con•cept con-com wishes to thank

OZZ Comics, Cards, and Collectibles, Inc.

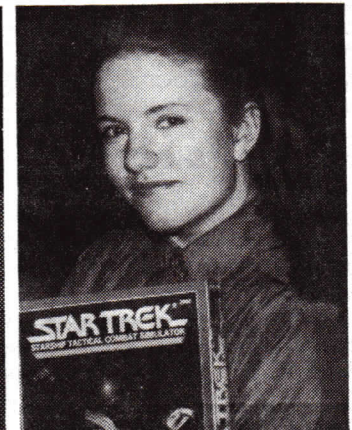
for their donation of the door prize awarded at MonSFFA's April General Meeting

BOA

The Board of Advisors sadly bids farewell to long-time board member James P. Poon. James, a co-founder of the club (then known as MonSTA), has been a BOA member since the club's inception and has contributed greatly to the club. He steps down now from his position as Special Activities Officer (SAO) citing other commitments placing limits on his time as his reason for leaving. His input will be sorely missed. "batH Daqawlu'taH."



James P. Poon



Catherine McCabe with door prize won at April meeting.

Welcome to your first Convention

by Joseph Aspler

In future issues of *Warp*, I'll provide a **Fannish** glossary, and the all-important Rostler's Rules for Masquerades—our editors willing, of course. In this article, I'll introduce what a convention is, what you can do, and what to watch for.

The biggest is the World Science Fiction Convention—Worldcon. Officially, the only difference between Worldcon and other conventions is the Hugo ceremony. That, plus about 5000 people.

Conventions can be **big**: Worldcon is the biggest all-volunteer convention in North America. Due to the complexity involved in reserving thousands of hotel rooms and tens of thousands of square feet of function space, Worldcons are now set three years in advance. Even a regional convention with only a few hundred people requires major commitments in time and effort.

What are the major features of any convention? In no particular order:

(I) THE DEALERS' ROOM (AKA THE HUCKSTERS' ROOM)

Depending on their personal interests, some people think a dealers' room should have only books, or only comics, or only T-shirts, or only chain-mail bikinis, etc. The ideal dealers' room has a bit of everything. The Worldcon dealers' room has a **lot** of everything. Dealers' rooms are a major source for my book collection, along with my T-shirts, buttons, and posters. Other dealers might include people selling models, videos, and weapons (mock and real—but beware of your convention's weapons policy), magazine and book publishers, and even some of the big-name artists. (Joking aside, the chainmail bikini people really exist, and also produce some very attractive pieces such as headbands, vests, and so on). Spend and enjoy!

(II) THE ART SHOW

Something for everyone. Depending on convention policy, the art show often contains both work for sale and work only on display. Sales are by auction: after registering with the art show, you enter a written bid. If you have the highest written bid, you've won. Past a certain number of written bids (spaces on the form), the piece goes to a traditional voice

auction. The actual pieces might include sf and fantasy art (cover illustrations, interior illustrations, or works from the artist's imagination), and other works like sculptures, mobiles, and so on.

Frequently, the displays are divided into Pro and Amateur artist. "Amateur" in this case means the traditional sense—the person who does it for love rather than for a living, since many of the "amateur" artists could easily be professionals.

The price range is tremendous. You can bid \$5.00 for a simple pencil sketch, or you can bid 6 month's pay for a Michael Whelan original. One feature of many recent conventions is the print table, where artists sell numbered, limited edition prints of their work. My Michael Whelan works are just that—prints costing \$35.00 and up; not originals priced at some ungodly figure.

Many of the lesser-known artists, and those who have not won ten Hugos, will sell even original paintings in the low \$100's range. Generally, you buy only to display and enjoy the piece: reproduction rights usually stay with the artist or with the original book/magazine publisher. And if you don't want to buy, the art show is still there for your enjoyment.

(III) MASQUERADES AND COSTUMING

Responsible for much of the reputation of conventions, both good and bad. In the early days of conventions, you showed off your costume at a masquerade ball. The balls have pretty much disappeared. Instead of the ball, we have the masquerade presentation, with elaborate costumes, presentations, and awards, while the simpler party-type wear is now known as the hall costume.

Hall costumes:

Hall costumes are comfortable, everyday wear. In *Warp 2*, I included a photo of a *Star Trek* costume. It was **not** made of gold braid stapled to a velour sweatshirt: it looked authentic! The best hall costumes today could easily have won in the official masquerade 10-15 years ago.

That *Star Trek* costume would have been a terrible presentation costume, so the wearer had the good sense not to go on stage in it. Why? Because you can't wear *Star Trek* or other media-type costumes in the official masquerade unless your pres-

entation is incredibly original—which usually means incredibly funny. I have a picture from the 1983 Worldcon of 3 Princess Leias standing in a row. Each went on stage thinking *she* was the real thing—but the judges yawned. The same goes for the picture that someone else took of a late 1960's convention with 4 or 5 Mr. Spocks posed together.

A good example is the presentation at the 1988 Worldcon masquerade in New Orleans, "A Salute to the Sixties", starring Spock and the Spockettes. The actual construction of the costumes was terrible. However, the schtick, with Spock singing a very bad, very funny song about Bilbo Baggins, just about stole the show (*The song was a Billboard hit for Leonard Nimoy in the late '60's. Ed.*). That's what I mean about not going on stage as Mr. Spock unless you're better or funnier than all the others.

The Masquerade:

The high point of many conventions. Design, work, and presentation can all be incredibly elaborate. However, they don't have to be, as long as you do your homework. That is, know what you are supposed to be doing, and do it right. (What is right? Watch this space. My personal summary of experienced costumers' guidelines is):

- (1) **Don't bore or insult your audience.**
- (2) **Do unto your audience as you would have done unto you.**
- (3) **Two minutes is a long time on stage (try it and see!). Don't take two minutes for a 10 second costume!**
- (4) **Do your homework!**

(Also, **No costume is no costume**, whether you want to go in the nude or in your street clothes).

Most conventions judge costumes in different categories. Common ones are "novice", "journeyman", and "master". Film, comic, and other costumes based on some sort of illustration are judged in the "media" or "re-creation" category.

Costumes have become organized over the last few years. The International Guild is based in Columbia, Maryland. The only Canadian branch so far is in Toronto. Costumers have

their own annual convention, the CostumeCons. The 1989 CostumeCon is in Albany, New York, the weekend of May 26. It's only a 4 hour drive.

(IV) GUESTS OF HONOUR

The GOH is normally a professional writer who takes part in panels and autograph sessions, gives a speech or two, etc. Many conventions (especially the bigger ones) frequently have a fan GOH and an artist GOH as well. Media conventions, of course, have media guests of honour. If you think you can get near the GOH at Worldcon, forget it. On the other hand, I've had conversations with various guests at small conventions, such as the Maplecons in Ottawa. Many people point this out as an advantage of a small convention over a big one.

(V) FILM/VIDEO PROGRAMME

Most conventions have at least one film room going at a time; sometimes two or three. At a smaller convention, you might have video rooms instead. These can be a great place to catch up on old classics and new releases, as well as the short films that you would never see in the theatres. It's been a while since I've been to Boskone, but when I was last there, two of their features were the Saturday night silent film classic (with live organ accompaniment), and the after-midnight turkey.

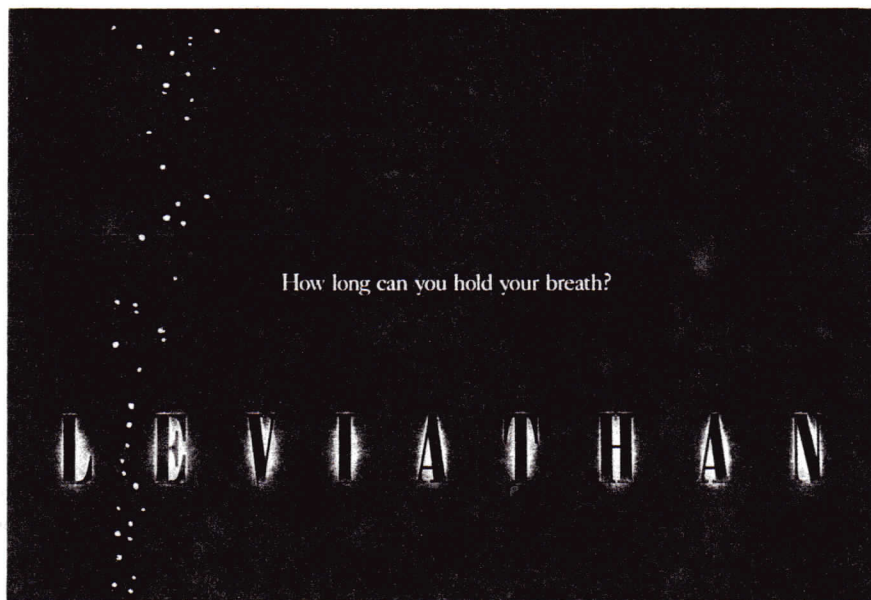
What is a turkey? There is a certain class of film so ineptly made that it becomes entertaining. Classic titles to watch out for: *Robot Monsters From Outer Space*, *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*, and the eternal stinker *Plan Nine From Outer Space*.

(VI) PANELS, PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, ETC.

This depends on the interests of your GOH, your other guests, your fellow attendees, and **you**. You can have artists's slide shows, scientific presentations, and discussions of future or alien societies. You can get on a panel yourself and talk about your favourite author, genre, costuming style, or whatever. Volunteer or be volunteered!

(VII) ELEVATORS AT LARGE CONVENTIONS

A great way to meet people, especially when all 5000 attendees want to use the only 6 elevators in a 40 floor hotel, at the same time. Take my word for it: get a room on a lower floor and use the stairs.



A review by Geoff Bovey

The deep-sea horror flick *Leviathan* is the latest in a series of films taking place in the big blue. Unfortunately, moviegoers will undoubtedly be disappointed, although to a lesser degree than with the recent *Deepstar 6*, with this poor effort.

The story begins with an eight-member geological team on a mission at the bottom of the sea. During a routine rock-gathering expedition, two of the divers accidentally stumble upon the sunken Russian ship *Leviathan*. They bring back some buried booty that includes a flask of vodka containing the virus that turns most of the crew into huge *Alien*-like blood suckers. It turns out that the Russian ship was sunk by its own people (in an effort to "save us all" as one character puts it) after a genetic-alteration experiment apparently goes wrong. (Or does it? Whether or not the death of the ship's crew was part of the original experiment is a question left for us to answer.) The virus that initiates the genetic-alteration process is unleashed to wreak mayhem on the crew and the sea-station.

All criticisms aside, director Cosmatos manages to maintain an element of suspense for the first half of the film. The thunderous sound of storm waves pounding against the station and the quiet, dark, slow pace of the action in the water help raise the viewer's anticipation for the inevi-

table disaster. However, the fear and suspense become secondary to the gore when the virus unleashes itself upon the crew. The story itself is a blatant rip-off from *The Thing* and *Alien*, but lacks the tense paranoia, the psychological word-play, and the thrill of those indisputably superior films.

The dialogue is probably the weakest part of the film, with cliches running amuck and verbal expression on a level only Rambo would understand. Fortunately, the actors turn in a fairly commendable effort to turn their overly stereotypical characters into at least partially likable people. Particular mention should go to Richard Crenna (*The Rambo* flicks, TV's *Centennial*) who looks oddly out-of-place in *Leviathan*, as the crew's doctor. Peter Weller (*The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai*, *RoboCop*) is the least convincing, ironically, as the expedition's reluctant leader and the film's hero.

On the whole, the film was kept on an entertaining level by the fast action, but the poor script and special effects (FX by Stan Winston, who also did *Aliens*; note the choppy editing at the end to hide the creature's poor design) make this film far from being worth the price of admission. Better-than-average acting and fine water-scene footage cannot save this film from drowning under a billion tons of death. On a scale of 1 to 10, I give this a 5. Wait for the video release.

Science News

The following articles appeared in the Montreal Gazette

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, CA (AP)—The U.S. shuttle *Discovery* landed safely on the Californian desert of Edwards Air Force Base on March 19, before a crowd of 450 000 people, nearly twice as many as expected to turn out for the landing. The triumphant landing of the 28th shuttle mission capped a five-day flight that included experiments on the impact of weightlessness on embryo development and on healing and injury, and included the launching of a \$100-million shuttle communications satellite, the last needed for a system allowing near-constant communications between shuttles and ground controllers. The shuttle crew also shot miles of film with a Canadian-developed 70mm IMAX camera for a future film on environmental damage to the Earth. Coming to an IMAX theatre near you...

CINCINNATI (Scripps Howard News Service)—The staff at the Cincinnati Zoo is buzzing with excitement over the birth of a rare desert cat of India through an implant in a common house cat. Zoo officials said a black and white domestic cat gave birth to a male Indian desert cat through the use of in-vitro fertilization, a reproductive technique frequently used on humans. It was the first successful interspecies birth of cats, a project of the zoo's Centre for Reproduction of Endangered Wildlife, where endangered species are bred in captivity in the hope of some day releasing them back into the wild.

ROCKY HILL, NJ (AP)—The Space Studies Institute, located in an old rocket engine plant in Rocky Hill, New Jersey, is currently drawing the blueprints for space communities built from moon rock and powered by huge solar satellites. Vice-president Gregg Maryniak and Princeton U. Prof. emeritus Gerard O'Neill envision, as an alternative to the rapid overuse of Earth's vital resources, totally self-sufficient space cities built with all the agricultural, atmospheric, and gravitational comforts of Earth. They would rely on solar satellites made from moon rock that beam sunlight to the cities for energy. Nevertheless, NASA officials say the Institute's projects, though possible, probably won't be reality for 20 to 40 years.

MONTREAL (Southam News)—The year is 2037. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the International Space University, more than 1000 of its graduates have gathered in Earth Orbit. Some have come from as far away as Mars. The year is 1989. Todd Hawley of Boston, co-founder of the space university, is predicting the above scenario with a perfectly straight face.

"It sounds like science fiction," he says, "but it isn't. It's very exciting."

Hawley, 27, has a lot to be excited about these days. Last summer's inaugural session of ISU, the world's only university dedicated solely to the study of outer space, was a resounding success.

More than 100 of the brightest students from around the world attended the nine-week session at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. They came from 21 countries, including Canada, Japan, France, India, Sri Lanka, Kenya, West Germany, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Soviet Union.

The students took classes in eight disciplines covering everything from space architecture to satellite applications to space law and treaties.

They worked side by side on the program's main project—a blueprint for a lunar base where humans could

live on the moon.

The result was a 1500-page document that will be made available to governments, companies and universities around the world.

Now Hawley is looking forward to next summer's session at Université Louis Pasteur in Strasbourg, France, and is confident a permanent campus offering year-round courses will be established by 1992.

Even more countries are expected to participate in Strasbourg. The teaching staff, which last summer was mostly North American, will see increased involvement from the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

"I don't know of any comparable endeavour in any field," says Prof. Rod Tennyson of the Institute for Aerospace Studies at the University of Toronto.

"This is a unifying concept; we're breaking down international barriers. It's going to work better than the United Nations, although not at the same level, of course."

Hawley is equally optimistic: "The nations who participate in ISU aren't fighting over anything. They're working toward the same goals."

Students selected to attend ISU receive \$10 000 US in corporate and government funds to cover housing, meals and tuition fees.

Last year, the non-profit university had a budget of more than \$1 million and managed to end up with a surplus of \$66 000—a "very unusual" achievement for a new and unprecedented undertaking, Hawley says.

Eight Canadians were chosen for the inaugural session, including Montrealer Stephane Lessard of McGill's Institute of Air and Space Law.

He describes his experience as rewarding—and not only academically.

"The more interesting thing for me was the people who were there," says Lessard, 24.

"We all made a lot of friends and we all keep in contact now. There was a very special feeling among all the graduates.

"I plan to visit some of them, in the Soviet Union, for example."

A specialist on space law, Lessard tackled such issues as criminal and civil liability on the moon.

"What we were saying is that in 10, 15 or maybe even 50 years we may need lunar law. That brought a lot of smiles to the faces of the other students, let me tell you. But still you have to think about it."

Thirty-five Canadian students are vying for about eight positions this time around, according to Prof. Nicholas Matte of the selection committee.

"I'm afraid many of them are too good," Matte says. "I will have a problem in choosing."

The classes at ISU—over 240 hours of lectures and 280 hours of design project work—are given in English, so students must have a working knowledge of the language, plus at least one other.

According to ISU literature, other criteria include "excellence in their academic specialization, a propensity for leadership, a commitment to space development and exploration, work experience in the space industry and a demonstrated desire to gain international understanding."

It has not yet been decided where the university's permanent campus will be located in 1992.

But to ensure that ISU is not perceived as an American institution, Hawley says the campus will probably be set up outside North America.

For the not-so-immediate future, Hawley envisions several satellite campuses throughout the world—and one in orbit.

Meanwhile, Canada will “almost surely” play host to the 1991 summer session, according to Matte.

Classes may be split between Montreal and Toronto, he says.

And he adds that the importance of ISU should not be underestimated.

“Very soon there will be transport to outer space via shuttles—tourism and so forth.

“These are not dreams any longer.”



Hard Times on Planet Earth

A TV review by Alain Pepin

Wednesday evening (March 7.—Ed.), I looked through the TV Guide for some action adventure. Ha, ha, ha! What happens most often now is that I end up watching either a PBS scientific or nature program, or a videotape of a late night series such as *War of the Worlds* or *Doctor Who*. Imagine my surprise as I noticed what was being offered tonight! Finally something that is neither a fashion show, morality tale, nor Vietnam nightmare.

Hard Times on Planet Earth stars Martin Kove as an alien warrior sentenced to live on Earth as a human until he mends his Klingon-like attitude. His parole officer is an entity by the name of “Control”, which guides him through his ordeal but is ordered not to interfere when he gets into trouble. The pilot episode reveals a refreshing mixture of action adventure (50%), science fiction (25%), and comedy (25%). The action was colourful, in bright, crisp settings—almost cartoon-like. It was fun to watch, not too serious—no gloom ‘n’ doom or dark ‘n’ dismal philosophical cracks about the human race. I know that the theme of assimilating human behaviour has been explored time and time again, but this new development is worth following and I’d give this mid-season replacement a try. Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on CBS (WCAX-TV, Channel 3 in the Montreal area).

by:

T
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K

rudie Mason

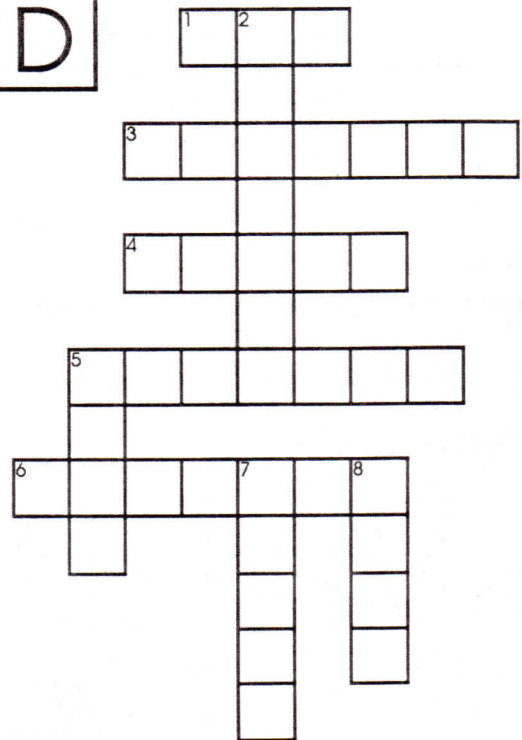
C R O S S W O R D

DOWN

- 2. Rank indicated by 4 rows of stripes
- 5. One who steals Spock’s brain
- 7. McCoy’s Father
- 8. Kang’s wife

ACROSS

- 1. Kirk’s brother
- 3. Humanoid females of Sigma Draconis VI
- 4. Father of Vulcan philosophy
- 5. Father of Klingon thought
- 6. Uhura’s true self



Answers will appear in the next issue of Warp.

Editorial

This column is open to any sentient being who has an opinion on anything at all to do with sf/f and fandom. Note that the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of MonSFFA, or this newsletter. Please submit your editorials to Warp c/o MonSFFA.

SEEN, but not HEARD

Not too long ago in this particular galaxy, man was losing a skill once deemed important. It was known as "Arithmetic." This skill, intrinsic in my early years of academia, provoked me to mentally multiply, divide, add and subtract combinations of numbers.

These days, we no longer need to rattle our brains with such mind-bending tasks, when a handy calculator can perform them with ease for us. Since numbers and I don't get along very well, the calculator is a tremendously useful tool for me.

I, for one, have always been an advocate of technological advancement. Even this article is part of that advancement because it was typed on my computer at home and sent to Mike Masella (*Who is this Masella guy, anyway?—Typesetter.*) by telephone through a device known as a "modem." But presently, we are facing another crisis that will put yet another skill in jeopardy—READING!

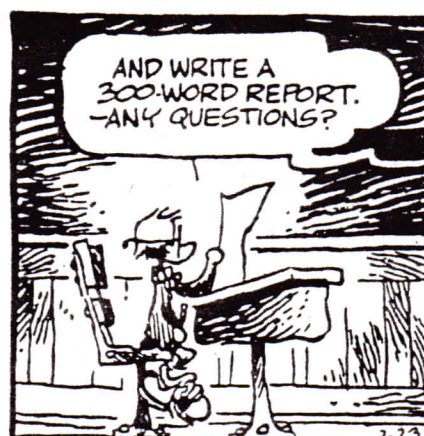
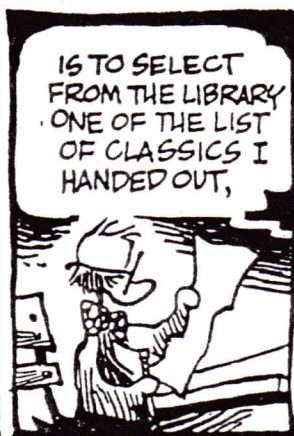
The culprit this time is the video medium. We are now living in the age of the video generation, and the world of literature is suffering because of it. Why spend days reading a novel, when you can just go to your corner store or local video rental outlet and pick up a video you can watch in only a couple of hours? Because of such conveniences as renting a video, instead of purchasing, we have become spoiled with wanting things instantly, and wanting things done for us in a relatively short period of time. This is probably why the calculator was invented.

It would indeed be a sad thought, if we ever became a less-read society. I say this because literature possesses a unique quality that will never be found in any video medium. That quality is something I like to refer to as "shared imagination," or "interactive imagination." The shared imagination allows an author to share his imaginary experience in a created literary work. The reader, on the other hand, plays a vital role in this concept of uniqueness by responding with imagination of his own that interacts with the work. It is the reader that involves himself by mentally assuming the roles of the characters in a story, as well as mentally picturing the environment brought forth by the author. Unlike the video medium, which takes out all the subtlety of imagination by presenting a story through sight and sound, a book is a personal experience because it is based on one's own individual means of interpretation. That truly can't be said about anything the video medium has to offer.

Thus far, I have met a great number of people who know absolutely none of the works created by Isaac Asimov, Ursula Leguin, Harlan Ellison, J.R.R. Tolkien, or even David Eddings, yet they somehow have expert knowledge of the works of George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, and Gene Roddenberry. My only hope is that these people may one day see beyond their own eyes and grasp the amazing infinity of imagination that is trapped in their own minds.

James P. Poon

Shoe



By Jeff MacNelly



Book Review

2001: A Space Odyssey (Arthur C. Clarke)

I am relatively new to the subject of sf, therefore I choose to discuss Arthur Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* because for one to appreciate this genre of literature, one must begin with some of the classic works. I am particularly fascinated with the types of sf that deal with the plausibly unanswerable—life's big questions that have several believable answers.

Space Odyssey is a superbly written novel. It fascinates the reader without bombarding him/her with a barrage of technical terms that requires a manual to comprehend. Although it was written over 20 years ago, when space travel was a relatively new idea, Clarke has succeeded in predicting man's future in space travel. The concept of hibernating passengers travelling to new destinations in space is undoubtedly the next step in mankind's space technology. The possibility of computer-operated ships is also an accurate prediction since most of the American space shuttles are equipped with IBM computers.

One of the main ideas which comes to mind when discussing *Space Odyssey* is the ominous computer HAL 9000. Clarke attempts to clarify HAL's insanity in part two of the *Odyssey* series entitled *2010*. But speculation is open to all. HAL was basically programmed to accomplish his mission at all costs, even if the crew were accidentally killed. However, his programming also included absolute honesty. When Mission Control commanded him to withhold information about the true nature of the mission from Dave Bowman and Frank Poole, this contradicted his previous programming. Thus, a dual personality developed in HAL. He was unable to fulfill his duties because his orders contradicted each other. When one thinks about this dilemma, one realizes this problem has occurred before. How many times have you been faced with a task that outrages your sense of morality and yet it is essential that this task be completed? Possibly Clarke is attempting to demonstrate how man contradicts himself when discussing the aspects of right and wrong. But lest we forget this is only fiction.

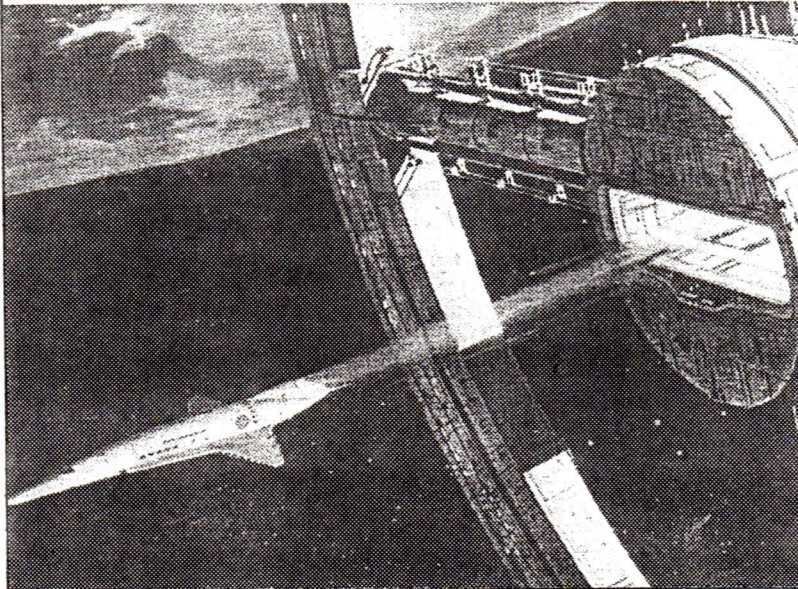
The novel leaves many unanswered questions, such as the fate of Bowman and why he became the Star-Child. This mystery will only further enhance your desire to continue on to the next book. Although this novel was later developed into a film, directed by Stanley Kubrick and nominated for an Academy Award, I would not recommend the movie unless you have read the book. The film contains beautiful classical music but the story progresses at a snail's pace. *Space Odyssey* is the type of novel a reader can enjoy over and over again and I do hope you will take the time to either read or reread this classic piece of sf literature.

reviewed by Crystal Rothwell

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2001 a space odyssey

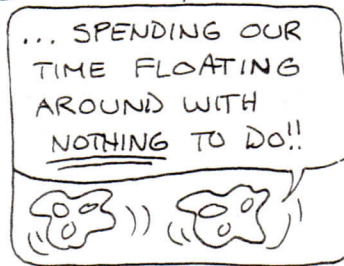
A NOVEL BY **ARTHUR C. CLARKE**
 BASED ON THE SCREENPLAY OF THE **MGM** FILM BY
 STANLEY KUBRICK and **ARTHUR C. CLARKE**



2001 a space odyssey
 is the history-making motion picture
 produced and directed by Stanley Kubrick.
 In Cinerama®

PRIMORDIAL SOUP by KGB

1989



Comic News

Ad Astra adds talent

The Marvel science fiction project *Ad Astra* has added more names to the list of prominent sf talent contributing to the book. According to editor Kurt Busiek, writers for the series include Joe Clifford Faust, Barry M. Maizberg, G. Harry Stine, Lawrence Watt-Evans, F. Paul Wilson, S. N. Lewitt, Charles deLint, L. Neil Smith, and Lawrence M. Janifer. Artists already announced are Thomas Vaughn Grummett and Steve Yellwell. The cover of the first issue will be done by Hugo-award winning science fiction and fantasy artist Frank Kelly Freas, whose cover work includes many paperbacks, and *Astounding* and *Analog* magazine covers of the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's.

Love and Rockets

Love and Rockets #30 will include a double-length "Locas" story and a long "Poison River" tale of Luba's youth. The 52-page extravaganza issue will also include a variety of extra material by Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez. Look for the anniversary package to hit comic shops in late April or

early May.

Alf/ Wolverine Deal Cancelled

The Alf/ Wolverine crossover planned for *Alf Spring Special* #1 has been cancelled. While everyone at Marvel was excited about the project, no one could create a story that lived up to the premise and would be approved by those who license the Alf character to Marvel. The Spring Special will come out nonetheless—but the Wolverine crossover will not be in it as was originally planned.

The Sleeze Brothers

Marvel Comics expects their new project, *The Sleeze Brothers*, to be a success, in spite of the book's dubious name. The stories take place in the future where people live in a world of wonder—and filthy poverty and squalor. The series will have some of the grittiness and cynical humour typical of such British series as *DR & Quinch* and *Judge Dredd*. *The Sleeze Brothers* will be published in the deluxe format used for such titles as *Marshal Law*, and will be produced by John Carnwell, Andy Lanning, and Dave Hine.

Classified Ads

Anyone interested in Star Trek starship combat gaming, call Norm at 487-2284.

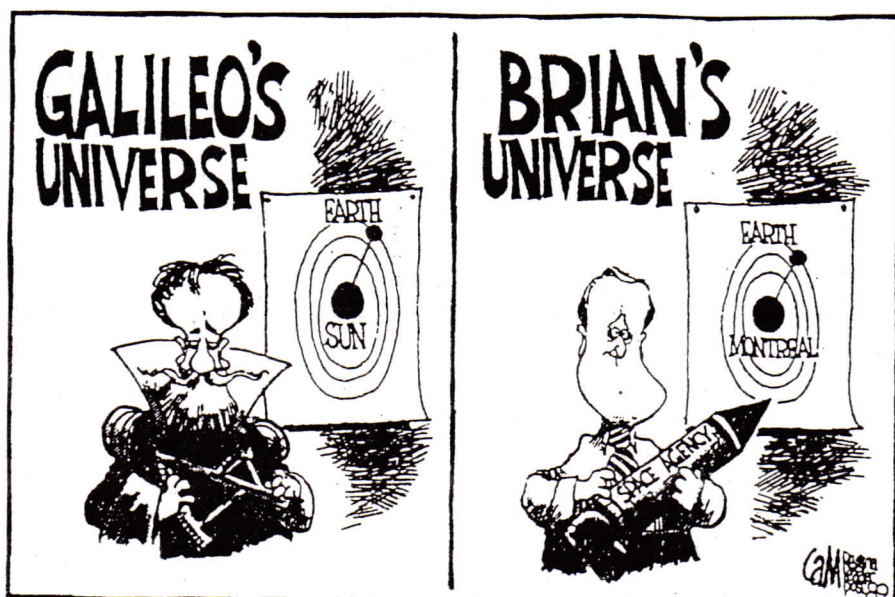
For sale or trade: Various model kits, Robotech figures, comic books. Steven K. 733-9690.

Get the Macintosh that made this and many other *Warp* newsletters! Page-Maker! Illustrator '88! And much, much more! Call Mike at 631-8624, evenings! Don't delay, operators are standing by!

Looking for videocassette copies of *Otherworld TV* series. Only seven episodes aired on CBS, Spring '85. Call Geoff at 695-7982.

Movie posters, magazines, comics, posters, books, science fiction & other miscellaneous material. For more info., please call M. Whitelaw at 767-8975 or 933-6691. Evenings only.

Classified Ads are free to all MonSFFA members, \$1.00 per ad (30 words, max.) for non-members. Forward ads to MonSFFA c/o Classified Ads.



Cam, Regina Leader Post

Interview with Todd McFarlane

Interview by Dave Smith, Al Keiping, and Crystal Rothwell



(The following interview was transcribed from Crystal's notes and is not to be taken as verbatim.)

On March 5, 1989, MonSFFA set up a recruitment table at the Comics Show located at the Ramada Inn. Although business was slow, the day was not a total loss. After what probably seemed like an eternity of signing autographs, popular Marvel Comics artist Todd McFarlane (*Spiderman*) graciously consented to a short MonSFFA interview at the end of his hectic afternoon.

Warp: How long have you been drawing?

McFarlane: I made my first painting when I was five. The picture was a crude drawing of a baseball pitcher...it ended up on a wall in Angel Stadium...I don't think it's there anymore, but it was an amazing feeling to have my first picture put on display. From then on, I drew houses and farms and very soon after I started drawing cartoons. I latched on to comics when I was 17, when the first comic book I bought was *Amazing Spidey* (1967).

Warp: Which character do you like to draw the most?

McFarlane: Batman definitely! I like capes...there are so many things you

can hide in a cape. Someday, when I have the time, I would like to do a *Batman* cover in black...but for now, I will be doing a *Batman & Spiderman* crossover with a large, black cape joining the two characters.

Warp: Do you have a favourite female you like to draw?

McFarlane: Actually, I don't have a "favourite" female character. To be honest...drawing females is the biggest problem I have. I can draw the faces very well, but I just don't get the female body.

Warp: Who are some of the other comics artists you admire?

McFarlane: I am a big fan of Mark Sylvestry...I like the way he over-emphasizes the bulky physique of characters like the Hulk...this is something I try to do myself. It makes the characters appear larger than life. I also admire the dedication and diligence of people like George Perez and John Byrne...(Frank) Miller & Art Adams. They are lucky because they have the freedom to do as they please...if they don't feel like drawing one day, they don't have to.

Warp: Do you keep in close contact with Marvel Comics?

McFarlane: I talk to them 2 or 3 times a week...sometimes just to say hello. I don't have a contract with Marvel, I basically work on commission. I own the physical artwork...the original drawings, but they own the reproduction rights to my work. I couldn't xerox my work and sell it but I can sell

the originals.

Warp: I see a lot of Ditko in your work. Why?

McFarlane: I like Ditko...the stuff has a sense of newness to it...it became the standard type of colouring book a while back. I perceive what Ditko does and then I do it. It gives me inspiration—my perception of it. I don't use what is on a page. Instead, I use what I remember of the image that interests me...memories are much better than looking at a drawing directly. Memories make the drawing appear better than what it was.

Warp: How do you feel about the *Justice League International*?

McFarlane: It's a little funky...I enjoy it. It doesn't mean it will succeed...it goes to show that people like the gritty stuff...like the gloom in *X-Men*. I don't read it, but I do hear a lot about it from other people.

Warp: You are one of the hottest comics artists right now. How do you feel about that?

McFarlane: Yeah, yeah... whatever (He definitely said that.—Ed.)

Warp: How do you feel about the value of comics?

McFarlane: It breaks my heart to see people pay that much for my less-than-good work. Basically, people are only buying my older work because of my name. Buy my most recent work to get something good. People like my style now, not from before. Wasting money for the old stuff will only disappoint my fans.



Todd McFarlane (right) was so busy signing autographs (How busy was he?—Typesetter.), that he didn't even have time to look up for our camera!



Earthshattering Trumors



INDY III

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

✓ The third, and last, Indy adventure opens Wednesday, May 24th, in theatres across Canada. Co-executive producer, Frank Marshall, says that *Indy III* will harken back to the original *Raiders* in style—action, adventure, and humour. The most expensive of the three *Indy* movies, it reunites director Steven Spielberg and producer George Lucas for the first time since *Raiders*. Plot details have been kept very secret, but we do know that it is set in 1938, and Indy again confronts the Nazis (up to 5000 Nazi officers in one scene), and escapes them by death-defying means over land, sea, and air.

Star Trek Stuff

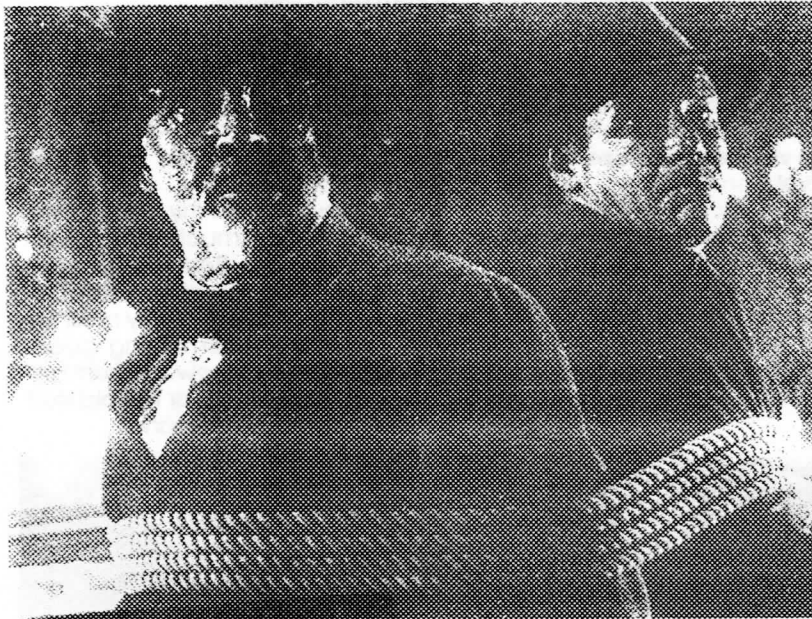
✓ *Trek V: The Final Frontier* opens across Canada on Friday, June 9th.

✓ Unconfirmed rumours continue to circulate to the effect that Gene Roddenberry has been "asked" to step down as Executive Producer of *ST:TNG*. According to these reports, Paramount, reacting to complaints from writers and producers of the show concerning Roddenberry's unwillingness to collaborate, have suggested to Roddenberry that the show may be cancelled lest he comply. As Roddenberry has an iron-clad contract, he would still remain with *The Next Generation*, but in a consulting role. Despite these rumours, many fans of the show remain loyal to the "Great Bird of the Galaxy".

✓ The last episode of *ST:TNG*'s second season is entitled *Q Who*, and features the return of John de Lancie as Q.

✓ Another reason to hate Toronto: Alert *ST:TNG* viewers will have noticed a shot of Toronto City Hall within a montage of alien destinations flashed by the "portal" in a recent episode (untitled when broadcast, it's the one about the computer virus which affects the *Enterprise* and a Romulan battlecruiser). In that show, Picard speculates that the portal's creators escaped destruction by using it to travel to other worlds. They are now, quite likely, manipulating real-estate prices in T-Zero!

✓ William Shatner finally got to really go into space—well, his voice did anyway! During NASA's last shuttle mission, the *Discovery* crew greeted the ground controllers with a special morning message prepared for them by Shatner (NASA usually wakes the astronauts with music or a spoken message, but this time, the astronauts beat them to it). The taped message said: "Good morning, Houston!... Stardate 1989. This is Captain James T. Kirk of the Starship *Enterprise* on temporary assignment to the space shuttle *Discovery*.... The *Discovery* crew is alert and awaiting your morning orders for its five day mission, to perform new experiments, to seek



Connery, Ford in INDY III



TREK V

out new information, to boldly go where no astronauts have gone before."

Holy Sequels, Batman!

✓ In the *Batman* movie, the Joker is supposed to meet his end, falling from a bell tower, after a climactic fight with Batman, but somebody had second thoughts. It now appears that the Joker may survive! Two endings have been shot for *Batman*, and a studio battle rages over which one will ultimately be used. Should the Joker survive, it's not clear when he'll appear again. The sequel to the as yet unreleased *Batman* movie is already well underway. Shooting on *Batman II* began just after Easter. It seems that *Batman's I* and *II* are being lensed back to back, as was done with the first two *Superman* films. A major star is being sought to play the Riddler, who will be *Batman II's* villain du jour. (The original story pit the Caped Crusader against the combined gangs of the Riddler, Catwoman, and the Penguin, but this was axed by the producers, who felt that the Penguin cut too comical a figure and wasn't really very villainous.) An earlier *Warp* rumor had Billy Dee Williams (Harvey Dent in *Batman I*) slated to play Two-Face in *Batman II*, but we now know he'll again play Dent in *Batman II* and Two-Face in *Batman III*. Yes, a third *Batman* film is planned, should the first one do well, and Williams is signed to appear in all three. Meanwhile, last minute jitters abound as the release date of *Batman I* approaches: the studio is apparently worried about fan reaction to Michael Keaton as the lead. Director Tim Burton defends his casting choice, however: "The character is a split personality who has some interesting problems. It's not about how square his jaw is!"



Keaton, Nicholson in *BATMAN*

King Buries himself in Sematary project

✓ *Pet Sematary*, opening Friday, April 21st, is the first King novel adapted for the screen by the author himself. Unhappy with the previous film versions of his work, King undertook not only the writing of *Pet Sematary's* screenplay, but was also a substantial creative and financial partner in the production. Filmed in Maine, *Pet Sematary* stars Denise (Tasha Yar) Crosby, Dale Midkiff, and Fred (Herman Munster) Gwynne. Mary Lambert directs.



Stephen King with *PET SEMATARY* director Mary Lambert.

And the Winners are...

✓ *Dead Ringers* was named Movie of the Year at the Genie Awards, and its director, David Cronenberg, was honoured as Best Director. The film's star, Jeremy Irons, was voted Best Actor. At the Oscar ceremonies, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* won for Best Visual Effects, and *Beetlejuice* took Best Make-up.

Odds and Ends

- ✓ Genie Award winning director David Cronenberg will step in front of the camera soon, to play the part of a doctor who moonlights as a serial killer in the movie *Night Breed*. Noted horror writer Clive Barker will direct, from a script adapted from his own novel.
- ✓ Terry (Baron Munchausen) Gilliam was recently seen on a TV talk show sporting a *Watchmen* T-shirt. He has, reportedly, expressed an interest in directing the *Watchmen* movie.
- ✓ Health lobbies are telling James Bond to butt out! It seems that a certain tobacco company has paid Bond producers to prominently feature their product in several scenes of *License to Kill*. Doctors say that's a no-no!

Gaming

by Michael Masella

This month heralded the arrival of TSR's long-awaited Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, 2nd edition. Although the second edition is finished, it will only arrive in parts. The first to be released is the Player Handbook (subsequent releases will include the Dungeon Master Guide, and at least three "Monster Modules").

Some of the changes made to the Player's Handbook (PH) include art, layout, as well as rules changes. These changes give the PH a much needed overhaul (a second printing of the first edition PH was not that impressive). Certainly, the addition of colour to the interior makes this manual that much more enjoyable to read and use.

But the most important aspect of the 2nd edition is the reorganization of the way one makes a character. For example: The first 8 chapters talk about how this is done. Then, chapters 9 through 11 explain to the player how combat is carried out (including 'to-hit' tables, spell charts, etc.). One of the good things that was done is the relocation of the spell tables and descriptions at the end of the book, thus facilitating look-up time (the first edition had the spells listed somewhere in the middle of the book, which entailed unnecessary flipping about til you found how much damage your *Bigby's Clenched Fist* did.).

But, the really important addition to this manual, was the inclusion of examples of how a particular rule is applied. These examples make it easier for the novice player to learn the game without having to rely upon an experienced gamer to teach him the ropes. This is usually presented in the form of a simulated role-playing session, in order that the rule may be put into context.

Another useful feature in this manual (and presumably the future ones as well), is the use of optional rules. These rules are clearly marked by being printed in a light blue box. Thus, those players who wish to keep their gaming sessions short 'n' simple can merely pass by these sections without having to sift their way through the text to find what is optional and what isn't.

What this new product isn't is a totally new set of rules. This book has some new features, but it essentially remains the same in terms of content. Granted, some new spells have been added, and some of the player classes have been changed or removed entirely (yes, the rumours are true. There are no more assassins), but the only real change is the way the rules are organized. This is not to say that this is bad, for this is what the people at TSR set out to do. But to say that this is an entirely new game would be false.

For those who have played Basic (and Expert, etc.) D&D for so long to avoid the "red-tape" rules of AD&D, this may be the time to make the switch to AD&D.

AD&D 2nd edition is not big news, it's just better.

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