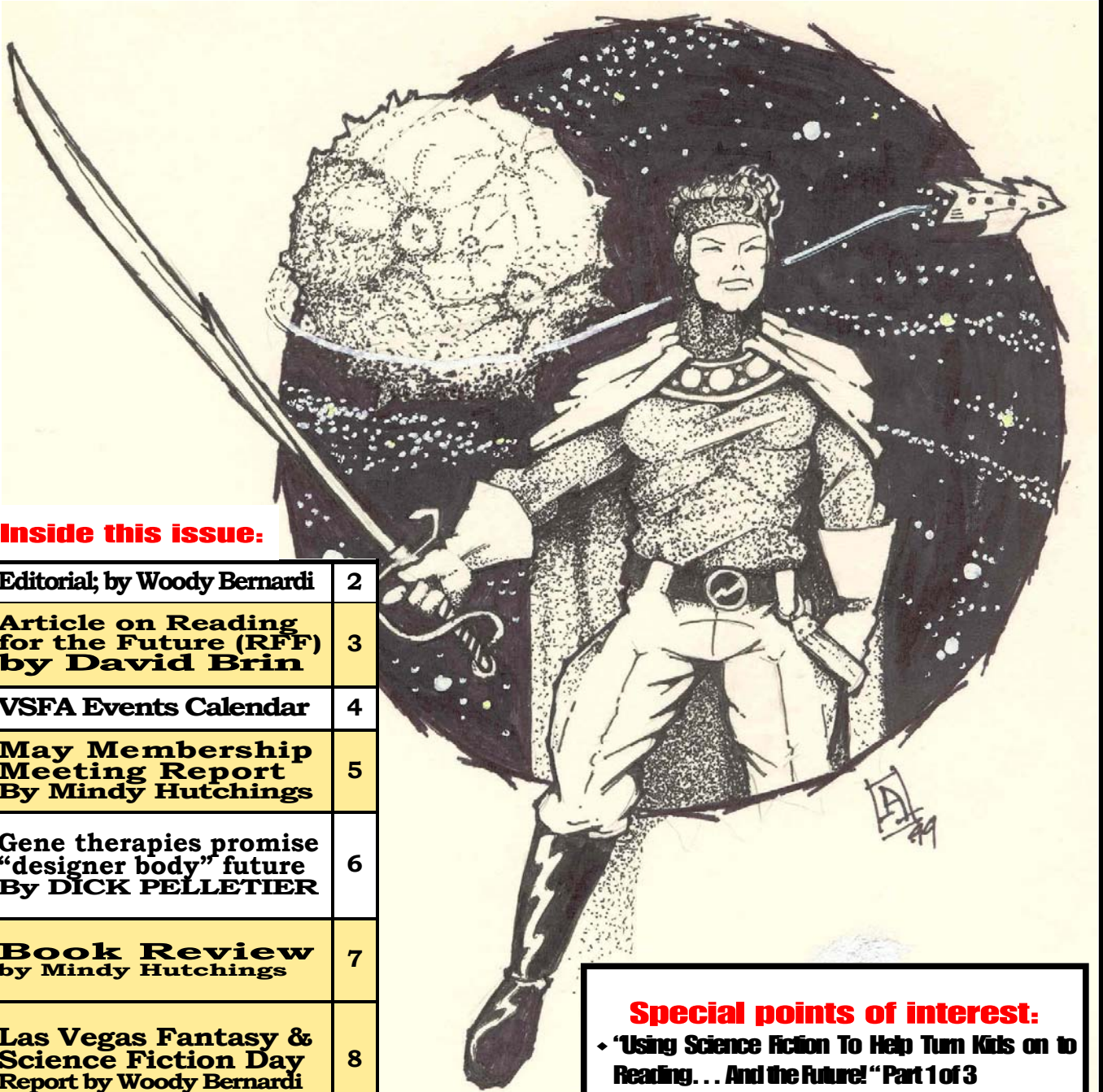


Vegas Science Fiction Association (VSFA)

The VSFA Valley Voyager (V³)

Vol. I No. 1

June 2005



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Special points of interest:

- ♦ "Using Science Fiction To Help Turn Kids on to Reading... And the Future!" Part 1 of 3
By David Brin
- ♦ "Gene therapies promise 'designer body' future"
By DICK PELLETIER
- ♦ "United Vegas Fandom" celebrates Las Vegas' Centennial with "50 Years of Las Vegas Fandom"
By Woody Bernardi

Welcome to the inaugural issue of VSFA Valley Voyager (V3). Thanks to Joshua Andrews for volunteering to do all the work (i.e., chasing people down for their contributions—I think we’ve managed to get rid of all the bodies without too much suspicion—and doing all the layout, etc...) so I wouldn’t have to.

When Joshua volunteered to do VSFA’s new clubzine, I encouraged him wholeheartedly. As I told Arnie & Joyce Katz, it’s one less thing I have to do. Later I graciously offered to write the editorial; this way I could get the best of both worlds: on the one hand I don’t have to do all the work of laying out the publication, and on the other hand I get to reap the ego boo (or the blame, it’s all in how you look at it) of having my name appear on the byline for the editorial.

So, Joshua did chase down all of the contributions to this issue. But when his personal life took a rather unexpected turn and he was unable to complete the first issue, I decided to step in and complete it.

The Vegas Science Fiction Association (VSFA) decided to produce our own clubzine for the sole purpose of having our own “Organ” to use as we see fit.

We’ll use it as a recruiting tool for our club and also as a propagand---er, um an informational---yea that’s it—an informational tool for our Active and Inactive members alike. Virtually anyone who wishes a copy of V3 could simply ask, if they don’t get it automatically. We’ll make some print copies, but since it’s a PDF, we’ll be able to merely email a copy to anyone who sends an email to VegaSFAssociation@yahoo.com and/or view the PDF at www.VegaCon.com.

Also, any contributions and/or LoCs should also be sent to the above email address with “VSFA Valley Voyager contribution or LoC” in the Subject.

However, since V3 will only come out monthly (give or take), Vegas Fandom weekly (VFW), edited by Arnie Katz will still be the best and most efficient way to get

Editorial

By Woody Bernardi



news as it happens in Las Vegas Fandom—including VSFA.

In this issue we have Part 1 of an article by David Brin; entitled: “**Using Science Fiction To Help Turn Kids on to Reading... And the Future!**”, the VSFA Calendar of events, a report of the May VSFA meeting, by Mindy Hutchings, a reprinted column by Dick Pelletier entitled: “**Gene therapies promise “designer body” future**”, a Book Review by Mindy Hutchings and a report on the first Las Vegas Fantasy & SF one-day con, held back in April. This was Las Vegas Fandom’s Tour de Force. A report appeared previously in Issue #25 of VFW.

PLEASE NOTE: as this zine not come out more often than once a month—give or take—any updates to the VSFA Calendar can be viewed at www.VegaCon.com and/or by checking out VFW, which comes out once a week—sometimes more often.

David Brin is a scientist, public speaker, and author. Several of his novels have been New York Times Bestsellers, winning multiple Hugo, Nebula and other awards. His 1989 ecological thriller, **Earth**, foreshadowed global warming, cyber warfare and near-future trends such as the World Wide Web. A 1998 movie, directed by Kevin Costner, was loosely based on **The Postman**. His fifteen novels have been translated into more than twenty languages.

Mindy Hutchings is the Secretary of the Board of Directors (BoD) for VSFA; Dick Pelletier is a member of the Las Vegas Futurists Salon and has attended several of the more recent events in Las Vegas Fandom. He writes regular columns in news publications within the Las Vegas area and he loves to share his articles about near future advances in technology, and thus our lives, with anyone who’ll read his words.

**So without further ado I give you.....
VSFA Valley Voyager (V3)**

VSFA Valley Voyager is a publication of the Vegas SF Association (VSFA), Volume 1, Number 1, Edited by Woody Bernardi, with invaluable editorial assistance from Mindy Hutchings. All Letters of Comment (LoCs), Submissions and ANY other correspondence regarding this newszine should be emailed to VegaSFAssociation@yahoo.com. Please write: “VSFA Valley Voyager” or “V3” in the Subject Line. The Calendar of events for VSFA is subject to change and the Calendar located at www.VegaCon.com should be consulted for any changes or additions. All copyrighted © materials are used with permission of the author and/or artist and revert back automatically.

Using Science Fiction To Help Turn Kids on to Reading... And the Future!

by David Brin

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Part 1 of 3

Consider the ages from twelve to fifteen, when a person's sense of wonder can bloom or wither, starved by ennui or seared by fashionable cynicism. Often it's some small thing that can make a difference: an inspiring teacher or role model, a team effort or memorable adventure.

Sometimes even the right book or film can ignite a fire that lasts a lifetime—you never know. For many of us, it was futuristic or speculative literature that helped cast our minds far beyond family, city, or oppressive peers...not to mention the limitations that others seemed bent on imposing, shackling our dreams. Whether in stories that spanned outer space, adventures in cyberspace, or thoughtful ruminations about the mental life of dolphins, we discovered that the universe is larger than the local Mall. More dangerous than a computer game, yet more filled with possibilities.

Once the sole province of nerdy young men, science fiction has become a central part of our culture's myth-making engine, engaging girls, women, and adults of all ages. Yet the breadth of SF and its ultimate importance can be difficult for a non-aficionado to grasp. After all, isn't it just spaceships, lasers, and childish stuff?

Well, no it isn't. As with any branch of human storytelling, science fiction offers a spectrum of quality and depth, ranging from shallow **Star Wars** romps to the dark, serious explorations of George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, and Mary Shelley. A key element is fascination with change and how human beings respond when challenged by it. In other words, there is no genre more relevant to this rapidly transforming world we live in, where citizens are called upon to contemplate issues that would have boggled their grandparents: environmental degradation, the extinction and creation of new species, cloning, artificial intelligence, instant access

to all archived knowledge, and the looming prospect a coming generation (perhaps the very next one) may have to wrestle with the implications of physical immortality.

Heady stuff! And you'd never imagine that any of it was under serious contemplation, if your idea of "sci-fi" came from shoddy movies! But these and a myriad of other subjects are probed at the literary end of science fiction. In fact, some of the kids in our classrooms are wrestling with concepts at the very cutting edge—embedded in tales they devour between colorful paper covers.

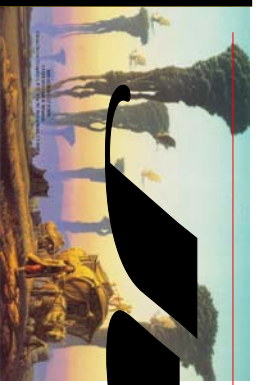
Books that explore the edges of tolerance, like those of Octavia Butler and Alice Sheldon. Books that ponder biological destiny, penned by Greg Bear and Joan Slonczewski, or the physical sciences, by Robert Forward and Gregory Benford.

Books designed by Julie Czerneda and Hal Clement to revolve around teaching themes. And those by Heinlein, Clarke, and Bradbury that instruct almost invisibly, because the authors were teachers at heart.

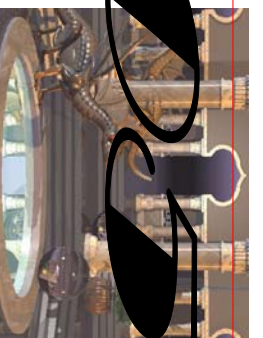
Shouldn't you be aware of this? Moreover, if high-end science fiction provokes wonder, thought, and a sense of vigorous involvement with the world, can it be worth adding your arsenal of tricks and tools, ready to offer that hard-to-reach kid? Especially as an alternative to the violent fare in video games and the wretched pabulum that is on TV? What can be more relevant to bright teens, in their rapid-pulsed flux, than a literature that explores ideas and the possible consequences of change?



NEXT ISSUE—Part 2 of 3: ...a short list of ways to help teachers, librarians and others bridge the gap between simpleminded sci-fi images that are so popular in movies these days, and real literary Science Fiction where ideas flow and readers engage in truly exploratory adventures of the mind.



JULY 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>For more info on movie outings, VSFA Meetings/Events: Call Woody at 327-3154</p>	<p>For more events planned by VSFA check out our Yahoo! Group: www.VegaCon.com</p>		1	2	3	4
5	<p>6 7pm-845pm—Monday Meeting Public Library, 1401 E. Flamingo 845pm-? After meeting at Blueberry Hill Restaurant</p>	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 Batman Returns Opens call 327-3154 for movie outing	18
<p>19 VSFA Monthly Social Tap House Bar & Grille 5589 W Charleston BL Founding Fathers of SF Fandom</p>	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 War of the Worlds Opens call 327-3154 for movie outing	30	July 1	2
3	<p>4th of July BBQ at Woody's Barnette's, 6400 Cosmo Lane / (702) 327-3154 For directions and/or info</p>	5	6	7	8	9

VSFA May Membership Meeting Report – 05-02-05

By Mindy Hutchings

The idea was a good one. “Let’s break up the meeting into a business section and a discussion section,” I said. The suggestion was in response to a complaint relayed to me through a third party that some had left VSFA because they were disappointed about all the business matters taking up all the meeting time. The rest of the Board of Directors liked the idea, and it was decided to implement the new program at the May Monthly Meeting. There would be time for open discussion of any topic brought to the table by any one of those who were present.

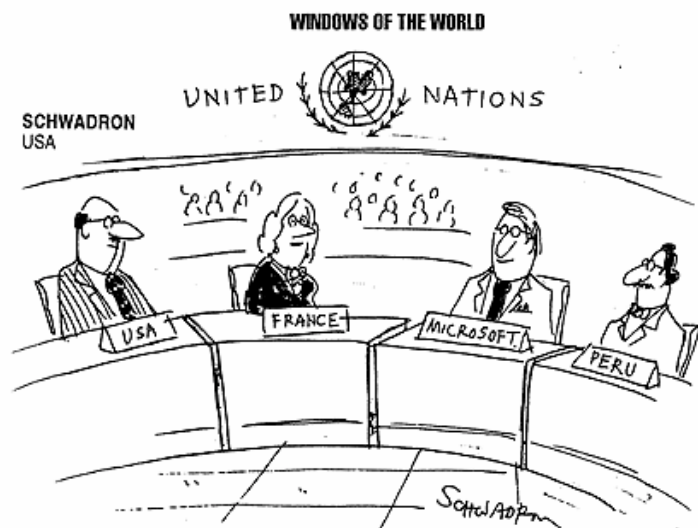
The agenda was created: business meeting from 7 to 7:45 pm and member meeting from 7:45 to 8:45 pm. The members assembled: May 2, 2005, at the Clark County Library on Flamingo Road. The meeting began, and.....business and discussion were freely mingled. There goes a good plan. However, I must admit, all the business was covered *and* we had fun. Isn’t that all that counts in the end?

Synopsis:

1. Registration of the officers of the group has been accomplished.
2. New members of the Board of Directors were formally acknowledged.
3. Group voting requirements were reviewed.
4. VSFA logo and web design were discussed.
5. Reports on: RFF, VSFA Constitution/bylaws, and 1-Day Event
6. Various calendar items: June Sunday Social, movie outings, and TV show viewings. The possibility for an SF film festival in the future was brought up (sponsored by VSFA). Plans for VSFA Monthly Meetings that fall on a holiday were introduced.
7. Gentle teasing, ribald remarks, and SF discussion were worked in.

Come join us! Our meetings are held the first Monday of every month at the Clark County Library on Flamingo Road starting at 7 pm. Just go to the Reader Services area and ask for the science fiction meeting or just follow the left-hand wall until you come to the Meeting Room. *All sections of every meeting are open to the public.* There is always an after-meeting where those who are interested retire to the Blueberry Hill restaurant next door to the library for good conversation and good food. Come early or come late, just join in!

Mindy Hutchings
Secretary, VSFA BoD
lady_shayir@yahoo.com



Gene therapies promise “designer body” future

By DICK PELLETIER

“DNA scientists are moving ever closer to the day when genetically engineering people will become possible,” begins narrator Jeff Goldblum during a recent *DNA* series on PBS. W. French Anderson, known as the father of gene therapy, predicts genetic engineering will revolutionize the practice of medicine over the next 15 years. “Once we decipher all the genes and understand what they do,” he says, “we will replace genes that are deficient or weak. For example, if people have a tendency to develop a certain kind of cancer, we’ll supply them with a gene that protects them from that cancer.”

Most health problems that afflict us today; diabetes, heart disease, obesity; some mental disorders, are the result of a clash between genes we developed early on as a species and today’s modern environment. Our ancestors lived when food was scarce. They were always searching for hard-to-come-by calories and would store them in their body for future use.

Today we have too much food, but our genes keep telling us to eat; we never seem to have enough. Changing a few genes could help us eat only when necessary, and could even instill selective tastes for healthier foods. Imagine if you never felt hungry unless your body required nutrition, and you craved fresh vegetables and other healthy foods; and despised sugary, fat

“junk” foods. Say goodbye to obesity, diabetes and other ills caused by bad diets.

We could do the same with sunlight and vitamin D. Many suffer because they live on the wrong part of the planet. Early humans in the African savanna had dark skin to block excessive radiation. Those further from the equator had light skin which allowed more radiation to penetrate the skin and produce vitamin D, which helps prevent cancer, osteoporosis and other disorders. Genetic engineering could alter our bodies to better fit where we live.

Most scientists are aware that genetic engineering will require much debate and public approval before it can fully advance, but many believe the benefits of improving health and preventing unwanted death will drive this wonder science forward. New gene therapies could enable us to:

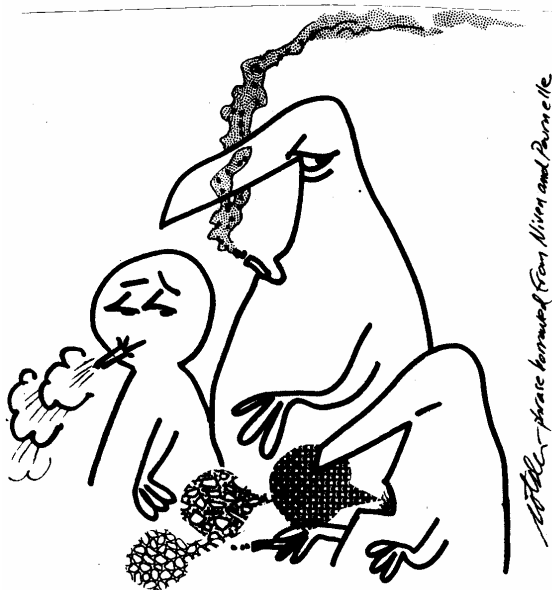
- Increase intelligence by altering neurons.
- Change taste buds to enjoy healthy foods; dislike unhealthy ones.
- Program cells to create longer, healthier, more productive lives.
- Instill desires to improve interpersonal relationships.
- Sharpen senses for better eyesight, hearing, and touch.

Genetic engineering would allow us to alter our bodies to better fit our environment and society. Cal Tech President and Nobel Laureate David Baltimore says, “Eventually gene therapies will become commonplace. This amazing technology will help us decide who we want to be as conscious beings.”

Walter Gilbert, another Nobel Laureate predicts by 2020, gene therapies and stem cell research will enable us to grow every organ in the body, creating a “human body shop;” and by applying Moore’s Law, increasing technology each year without raising costs, gene therapies in the future will be affordable to everyone.

Will this future happen? Many believe momentum created by today’s research is already driving this “designer body” future towards reality. The question is not *will* this future happen, but *when*. Go “magical future!”

Dick Pelletier writes science and technology articles for VSFA Valley Voyager. You may contact him at future-talk@cox.net



EVOLUTION IN ACTION

I decided to review *The Year of Our War* (by Steph Swainston) because this book has generated nearly universal acclaim, even to the point of supposedly being up for some sort of award (as announced by one post on one web site, the veracity of which I couldn't confirm).

In my view, this book is simultaneously the most wonderful, yet the most horrible book I have ever read (and I read a lot). Ge generally, a lot can be forgiven if the author has something new to say or a new idea. But that brings us to the oft-repeated maxim: Just because it's different doesn't make it good.

The best example of this incredible dichotomy (wonderful vs. horrible) is the social structure created by the author. It is a fascinating blend of Awians (humanoid with vestigial wings), Zasc'ai (humans, no wings), Rhydanne (humanoid but wild, no wings), and Eszai (Immortals: an emperor and his Circle in the Castle). Now, remember that while this is a pretty succinct description, it wasn't until almost the end of the book that I could put it all together.

The author then topped this whole thing off with a very confusing name structure. Each of the Immortals has three names: the name of the position (Messenger, Archer, Sailor, etc.), the name that goes with the position (Comet, Lightning, Shearwater, and so on), and the personal name (Jant, Micawater, Mist; you get the idea?). Again, it took far too long to figure this out. Believe me, it isn't as easy as I just made it look. The names are used fairly interchangeably without explanation. It should also be noted that the first (very brief) explanation of the naming occurs on page 128!

Another complaint: The

Book Review
by Mindy Hutchings
The Year of Our War
by Steph Swainston

reader should be given a fairly full physical description early on. I shouldn't be learning that the main character wears makeup more than a 100 pages into the story (His makeup ran?! When was I told he wears makeup?! Oh, here: "Hello, Jant," she said. "Great makeup" on page 84); and those were the only two mentions of his makeup. Why even put it in?!

Which brings me to another major flaw in this book. It was very difficult to create a mental image of the characters and the action, which is a very important part of the reading experience; at least in my own mind it is. The characters mostly felt like cartoons: broad outlines, little substance. All in all, I had trouble developing empathy for the main character. It's hard to feel something for a whining drug abuser who suddenly becomes altruistic. I must admit that I did almost feel a connection, yet it was all somehow still so far from where the reader needed to be.

[spoiler in this paragraph]

The most fully developed part was supposed to be the most chaotic! The world of the "Shift" was fascinating in its rich chaos. Initially it appeared that it was only a mental construct of the aforementioned drug abuser. Slowly we learn it is something else, and eventually the two realities intersect.

Overall, reading this book was a frustrating experience. It varied between extreme puzzlement (what the hell is a Darkling?!) and wonder at the magic of words: "He decided to send her red roses, and the floral carnage was such that roses have been

rare in Awia since."

"Felicitia and I weren't keeping each other alive; we were keeping each other half-dead."

"This is one-hundred-percent impossium fur. Invisible marsupials. It took tons of them to make this suit." He offered me a brawny arm. I stretched out a hand, aware of Felicitia giggling, and stopped a centimeter from Delamere's skin, my hand sinking into warm invisible fur. "That's amazing," I breathed. "Cheers, [he said]. They're bastards to hunt, though. Have to walk around until you fall over them."

One last quibble, relatively minor: hated the title. I don't feel it describes the book very well at all. My suggestion: *The Year of My Shift*. [spoiler alert] The title is supposed to describe the fact that there was internal conflict within the Circle of Immortals, and war was going to tear them apart to the detriment of not only to themselves but to all beings in their world. The title also suggests that the main character feels some affiliation with the group, yet throughout the entire novel he continually goes against the grain, living from fix to fix of his drug of choice. Between fixes he does keep up appearances and do his job. Therefore, he's the only one that has all the pieces to finish the puzzle and save the world. But it's not until page 327 (of 384) that he begins to dry out, only because he couldn't get any more drug. With a clear head, he saves the day.

In the end, I can only say that I loved it....and hated it.

For other reviews (far more positive than mine), see:

<http://www.concatenation.org/frev/year.html>

<http://www.emcit.com/emcit103.shtml#War>

“United Vegas Fandom” celebrates Las Vegas’ Centennial with “50 Years of Las Vegas Fandom” **Las Vegas’ Fantasy & Science Fiction Day**

By Woody Bernardi

The Vegas Science Fiction Association (VSFA), the Las Vegrants, and the Southern Nevada Area Fantasy Fiction Union (SNAFFU) hosted the first annual convention (Con) of local professional authors and Fans of Science Fiction (SF) Saturday, April 30, 2005. All of the program participants and most of the attendees reside in Southern Nevada.

The Las Vegas Fantasy & Science Fiction (F&SF) Day was a smashing success. There were an estimated 50 people in attendance overall. While at least two sessions had some 32 attendees, most sessions averaged 25 audience members. Included among these attendees were three professional artists, all of whom live in the Las Vegas area. There were about 12 of our regular locals—those who can be found at most events planned within the Las Vegas Fan Community (LV Fandom)—and the balance of the attendees were newcomers. Among those in attendance were four members of the LesBiGayTrans SF Club of Las Vegas.

The one-day Con was complete with authors, fans, an information table, a club table, and a giveaway table. We also had fanzines, both for display and giveaway, SF paperbacks for giveaway, even a media DVD presentation. There were seven professional authors in attendance.

Steven Brust headed up our all-star cast along with J. Neil Schulman, Elizabeth Bear, J. Kent Hastings, and James Hudnall. Several well-known Fans—known both in LV Fandom and World Fandom—were on hand to augment the varied programming. Linda Bushyager, Arnie Katz, and Joyce Worley-Katz; all three also have professional writing credits. Dick Pelletier of the Las Vegas Futurists Salon took part in our panel entitled “Plausible Futures”. David Gordon, Woody Bernardi, and Teresa Cochran—three prominent local Fans—were also on hand to round off the panel participants.

Steven Brust, who has been publishing for more than 20 years, with more than 20 novels, and five short stories (with his short stories appearing in five different anthologies), to his credit. Brust was nominated for the Nebula in 1999. He is primarily a Fantasy author with at least one SF novel (*Cowboy Feng’s Space Bar & Grille*). His most recent publication (*Sethra Lavode*, fifth in the Khaavren Romances series) was published in hardback in 2004 and was published in paperback in March 2005. David Gordon did a fabulous job conducting an interview-style panel with Brust providing the answers to questions from Gordon and the audience.

J. Neil Schulman has several SF novels published including two Prometheus Award winning novels, (*Alongside Night* and *The Rainbow Cadenza* which has a gay protagonist), short fiction, nonfiction and screen writings, including the CBS *Twilight Zone* episode “Profile in Silver.” Schulman has another novel featuring a wayward radio talk show host being called to Heaven and promptly sent back to Earth on a mission from God (*Escape from Heaven*). Schulman discussed this novel in a panel entitled “Print meets Media.” This novel has also been released as a graphic novel and has been converted to a movie script that is currently in pre-production. He showed a DVD with animated, storyboard-like scenes for the upcoming live action motion picture based on *Escape from Heaven*.

Elizabeth Bear’s first novel, *Hammered*, was published in January 2005 by Bantam Spectra. Her second novel, *Scardown*, is due from Bantam Spectra in July 2005. Both books can be found at www.Amazon.com. She is currently working on the third book in this trilogy. In addition, Bear has had scores of short stories printed in various magazines over the past several years.

J. Kent Hastings’ first novel is *Anarquia*, coauthored with Brad Linaweaver and was published in November 2004 by Sense of Wonder Press. This book is available at www.Amazon.com. Hastings also has had a number of nonfiction articles published in various publications over the past decade. He and Linaweaver are working on the sequel to *Anarquia* entitled *The Paris Wall*. Linaweaver (who was unable to attend the con) was represented quite well by Hastings who talked extensively about their collaboration on *Anarquia* and the sequel. Linaweaver has also coauthored three novels in the classic *Battlestar Galactica* Universe with Richard Hatch (Apollo from the original *Battlestar Galactica* TV series).

James Hudnall is a graphic novelist who has been writing and publishing for 20 years. Hudnall studied computer science and started writing comics in 1985. He wrote for Marvel (*Strikeforce: Morituri* and *Alpha Flight*) and DC Comics (*Superman*). He is the writer of the creator-owned *Espers* and *Harsh Realm*. *Harsh Realm* was adapted for television by producer Chris Carter.

Linda Bushyager has had three books published, the first two are out of print but *Pacifica*, published by Wild Side Press in 2003, is still in print and available at www.Amazon.com. Bushyager, however, focused primarily on her opinions regarding the depictions of gambling meccas in general and Las Vegas in particular in various Fantasy and SF genre films and TV productions. She is a professional gambler who now resides in Las Vegas.

Arnie is a former editor of *Amazing Stories*, a magazine of F&SF stories, and both were co-creators of *Electronic Gaming Magazine (EG)*. Arnie also authored a book, with Laurie Yates, available at www.Amazon.com (*Inside Electronic Game Design*). Joyce Worley wrote a book, with Laurie Yates, shown with limited availability at www.Amazon.com (*Simtown: The Official Activity Book*) Joyce Worley-Katz was also the co Chair of StLouiscon, the 1969 World Science Fiction Convention. This along with Joyce Worley and Arnie Katz’ very extensive credentials throughout Fandom stood them in good stead to participate in the “Fans to Pros” Panel with Steven Brust.

We also had a panel entitled "50 years of Las Vegas Fandom," a nod to the Las Vegas Centennial celebration. Arnie Katz, Joyce Worley-Katz, Woody Bernardi, and Teresa Cochran spoke about the history of organized science fiction activities which date back contiguously to the Spring of 1987. The Fantastic Fiction Club of UNLV (FFCU) was formed at that time, while both SNAFFU and VSFA were established in 1991.

Only SNAFFU has survived continuously since its inception, making it the oldest and longest-running SF club in the history of Las Vegas. SNAFFU meets twice monthly; on the 2nd Friday of every month they are at Borders Books at Sahara and Decatur and on the 4th Friday of every month they are at Borders Books at Stephanie and Sunset—Green Valley, Henderson—both meetings begin at 8pm. Go to www.SNAFFU.org for more information about these meetings and other events planned by this group.

The FFCU died out after about four years of increasingly sporadic activity, while VSFA was established to host the first fan-run general SF Con for Las Vegas—VegasCon 1991—and subsequently was disbanded.

VSFA was revived two years ago and continues to have two monthly meetings/gatherings. The first Monday of every month at 7:45pm is the Membership meeting at the Clark County Library located at 1401 E. Flamingo Road. Also, once a month VSFA hosts the VSFA Sunday Social at the Tap House Bar & Grille located at 5589 West Charleston Boulevard. This is usually held on the third Sunday of each month. The June VSFA Social will be held on Father's Day (June 19) and we will be discussing the "Founding Fathers of Fandom". This list includes the likes of Damon Knight, Ray Palmer and Forest J. Ackerman.

The May VSFA Social featured an F&SF artwork display, featuring artwork from three Fantasy artists, all of who reside in the Las Vegas area. We had some 25 people in attendance and several of us contributed F&SF related works of art from our private collections. Go to www.VegaCon.com and check out our calendar, or if you don't wish to join our Yahoo! Group; just send an email to VegaSFAssociation@yahoo.com, for more information on VSFA meetings and other events.

Also mentioned, at the LV F&SF one-day con, was the LesBiGayTrans SF Club of Las Vegas. This group meets on the 4th Monday of every month at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center (The Center) located inside Commercial Center on East Sahara Ave (2 blocks West of Maryland Pkwy). This club meets at 7:30pm and they can be reached at GayScienceFiction@yahoo.com for more information regarding meetings and other events planned by this group.

There were three much shorter-lived clubs in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Not much is known about the very small group that gathered on at least one occasion in the 1950s. Also in 1952 a very popular Irish Fan, named Walt Willis, visited Las Vegas.

During his trip to the U. S., that year, on the historic first "Fan Fund" trip across the Atlantic, Willis paid a visit to Las Vegas. From this "Fan Fund" which sprang up almost spontaneously, owing to Willis' meteoric rise in popularity among both American and British Fans, came the Trans Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF). TAFF still exists today and has made it possible for Fans in the British Isles to meet American Fans, whom they otherwise might never have met in person. TAFF alternates each year, an election is held on alternating sides of the Atlantic and one Fan is chosen by their peers to represent them on the other side of the Atlantic. A similar fund, the "Down Under Fan Fund (DUFF)", was later created to and provides an exchange program for Fans from Australia to visit North America and American/Canadian Fans to visit Australia.

During the early part of the 1960s Dwaine Kaiser began a short-lived club, which included among its members Len Peterson. Dwaine and his family moved to Orange County, California, after he graduated from high school within a few years of establishing this club, and it apparently died as a result of his move. Len Peterson, a member of Kaiser's 1960s club, was the owner of Page After Page Comic Bookstore. He did business from his East Charleston location for over a decade during the 1980s and early 1990s. Len was also a fan artist; according to Dwaine, at least two other members of his club went on to become professional comic book artists. There was also a short-lived club established at UNLV during the first part of the 1970s, but this group also died out without much fanfare.

SNAFFU (www.SNAFFU.org) the Las Vegrants, and VSFA (www.VegaCon.com) all contributed, not just talent to the Steering Committee that orchestrated the one-day event, but also materials for both display and distribution. There was also a contingent from the LesBiGayTrans SF Club of Las Vegas on hand to represent the Gay Community at what was clearly a joining of a cross section of Fans from throughout the Las Vegas area. Included among those were Woody Bernardi and Terry Wilsey.

There was a club table for SNAFFU from which they gave away free SF books and bottled water, as well as information regarding their club meetings. The Vegrants contributed samples of fanzine publications edited, produced, and published by their members. Giveaway copies of Vegas Fandom Weekly (VFW), edited by Arnie Katz, were available compliments of J. Kent Hastings. VSFA provided the sign-in table, flyers announcing future events planned by VSFA, and bookmarks for distribution. The giveaway table, which offered copies of articles on future technology that have been published in several local weekly news publications and authored by Dick Pelletier, was setup. Both SNAFFU and VSFA provided free bookmarks advertising their club meetings and contact information for each club.

The Steering Committee was comprised of Woody Bernardi, committee chairperson; Arnie Katz, publications director; Joyce Worley-Katz; Michael Bernstein; Roxanne Gibbs; and Darmon Thornton. On behalf of "United Vegas Fandom," I wish to thank all the members of the Steering Committee as well as all those who supported this event by attending and participating.

**Vegas Science Fiction
Association (VSFA)**

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We're on the web at:
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