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Can't Card,
Can't Copy, Can
Fast Forward

JohnCon'

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Theory

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Once A Hero
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Can't Copy; Can't Card; Can Fast Forward

WSFA Meeting Feb 7th, 1997 at the Gillilands'

The meeting was called to order at 9: 15. Everyone was reminded that the March meetings will be switched with first Friday at the Ginters and third Friday at the Gillilands. The cause of this was blamed on the moon's con job. Also announced was WSFA's new web page <http://www.wsfa.org>

Disclave '97 chair announced an oragami party scheduled for later this meeting and said that Patricia Anthony has a new book *Cradle of Splendor* out from Ace.

Joe Mayhew made a motion that WSFA produce business cards stating where located and when we meet. Objections were made that if the address was included it might lead to weird people showing up (unlike the normal WSFA folk) and that our hosts might not want their phone numbers going out. Someone suggested that the WSFA card have the web site address. After some discussion, Joe withdrew his motion.

The producers of the cable TV show Fast Forward requested \$3 12 for use in distributing their show in the Washington DC area. Tom said that WSFA gets credit on the show for underwriting it. No one opposed it so we voted by acclamation. Lee Strong said that one of the reasons I come to WSFA is for the Parliamentary procedure. He also announced that the video release of *Twilight of the Dogs* was being delayed 60-90 days due to a possible deal with Fox. "Oh no! Another new series!" complained Dan.

Sam Lubell explained his lateness by telling a tale of woe of how Kinko's failed to copy the February WSFA Journal because of copyright fears even though no © appeared anywhere in the Journal. "We thought it looked professional" they said. (This issue is

designed to alleviate such fears.) When Sam complained, pointing out that he was the editor, they copied it without making him sign anything, leaving him quite bewildered. "It's not their capacity to copy right." said Eric. He also wrote on graph paper, (k) Kincowrite 1997: There are no reasons for Kinkos not to copy this newsletter.

Someone announced that a rest stop going North on 95 has coupons for Baltimore. Someone else announced that a new book is out by someone whose real name is Commander Tom Cool. Cool! shouted out the WSFans. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:00. Mike took out the Disclave brochures for the folding.

Correction: Elspeth pointed out that Sue Schroder's husband was named Larry, not Lou. Apparently her nickname is "Sue Who" which was misheard by the editor. Members of WSFA are reminded that anything they want to appear in the Journal the way they want it should be written down. Anything else is subject to the whims of the editor.

Attendance: Pres. John Pomeranz, VP Elspeth Burgess, Sec & 98 Chair Joe Mayhew, Treas. Bob Macintosh, Trustee & 97 Chair Mike Nelson, Trust. Jim Edwards-Hewitt, 99 Chair Sam Pierce, Covert Beach, Bernard Bell, Dan Burgess, Chuck Divine, Terilee Edwards-Hewitt, Alexia and Lee Gilliland, Erica Ginter, David Grim, Dan Hoey, Chris Holte, Samuel Lubell, Keith Marshall, Winton Matthews, Walter Miles, George Nelson, Lance Oszko, Kathi Overton, Rebecca Prather, Tom Schaad, George Shaner, Steven Smith, Lee Strong, Michael Taylor, Michael Walsh, Michael Watkins, Madeleine Yeh, Beth and Mike Zipser.

JOHN CON '97 A con report by Joe Mayhew

The Johns Hopkins students who put together the first John Con issued pixie sticks along with their glossy souvenir booklet. This year they were relegated to their "Food" room (a stack tiered theatre classroom in which video movies were being projected a good bit of the time) They also served spaghetti.



The main interest of the Con seems to be games and comix. Their Author GOH was Michael A. Stackpole, who authors in "The Battletech Universe." He's a pleasant fellow and very kind to his fans, explaining gently that while he writes the stuff, he actually doesn't do role-playing games.

Lissanne Lake was art GOH. According to Chairman Sarah Hall's report on the 1996 John Con, published in this year's booklet, "Wonderful kudos also go to

Lissanne Lake, who put together our art show -- it's one of the reasons she's our guest of honor this year. Not only is she a great artist, she's nice.

Their other featured player, Comic GOH Stan Sakai, creator of Usagi Yojimbo, a samurai rabbit, may not be well known to WSFAns. Indeed, most of their guests would be strangers to those who attend the mainstream SF cons. Some because they are gaming/comics folk; some because they are unpublished poseurs.

Two unpublished "authors" Bennet Pomerantt and Jeanne L. Spicer offered a writing workshop. "10 AM - 12 PM Saturday. Bring a manuscript. Have it dissected to critique your manuscript." I don't know how many participated. Spicer was listed as on twelve program items; Pomerantz was listed for a mere seven, but was included on "GET PROFESSIONAL HELP! The all-purpose panel to help you break into the low-paying field of professional entertainment. How you sell your work while avoiding common pitfalls?" along with Nancy Springer, Michael Stackpole and Lawrence Watt-Evans. Pomerantt' seems to have been mis-cast. I have often put fans on programming and think it is a good idea, but as fans, not as expert writers.

I attended and/or participated in six panels. At 2:00 on Saturday there was "GAKI, ASWANGS, AND DUCK PEOPLE: Non traditional Races in SF&F. Nancy Springer moderated with Lissanne Lake, Michael Stackpole, Nathaniel Koffler, L. Gavin and the ubiquitous Jeanne Spicer. The panel outnumbered the audience until Catherine Asaro came in. Koffler suggested

that one simply cut and pasted from the known to come up with neat critters. I suggested that the critter should come out of the needs of the story. Lissanne Lake said it helps to have something neat for the cover.

At 4:PM there was a panel called "THE FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY MARKET, moderated by Catherine Asaro, with Nancy Springer, Eric Kotani, Nathanel Koffler. It was actually about "Is S&SF split along gender lines for its target audience? How large a role do women play in the field, as writers, protagonists, and readers?" The professional writers seemed to agree that they wrote what they wrote, without procustian tailoring for an audience.

I was on "HISTORICAL FANTASY" at 6:00 PM with S. Sakai, Eric (Yoji Kondo) Kotani, Nathaniel Koffler and L. Garvin. We talked a lot about Japanese movies and alternate history works. Sakai said that a "yojimbo" was usually a lower-class type who worked for Samurais. He didn't mention the specific class status in Japan of rabbits.

At 7:PM I hurried down the hall to be on TONIGHT ON GERALDO...GOD ALMIGHTY! with Michael Stackpole, J. Zimmerman and a fan who claimed she was a witch. The premise was "In lots of fantasy, divine and semi-divine beings make personal appearances. How does knowing that there is an afterlife, that people have souls, or that someone really is the Son of Zeus change a fantasy society?" We wandered pleasantly through the Elysian fields. Jehovah was towed, etc.

At 11 PM I was on "WHEN DOES ART BECOME PORNOGRAPHY" with Rick & Wendy Frane, Lissanne Lake, Joe Bellofatto & Jennifer Brandes. Joe Bellofatto

said that our culture was slipping into a trashy state of mind. He's an artist who has small kids. Lissanne was opposed to censorship, but her work is not known for its porn content. The Franes admitted that to some people what they do is pornography (soft core) but didn't think they were dragging western civ down. I suggested that Pornography is an attempt to manipulate its audience by the lower third of their brains, to pass something inferior and ugly off as the real goodies by associating it with a serious subject, I include bad religious art and most political art as pornography.

On Sunday I commuted back to JHU, for "Art as Business, Business as Art." I thought that I would, as a fan who has sold art at cons for thirty or more years, be able to make a small contribution. As it turned out, I was on with Jeanne Spicer, who also had not sold any art.

When I mention that someone is on a panel, please bear in mind that the audience and panel tended to blur one into the other.

It's all held in classrooms on the Homewood campus. The desk-chairs were usually pushed back into a solid wall and thus few could actually be used. Fortunately, few attended any panels.

Due to the inauguration of a new president of JHU, the John Con attendees weren't allowed to park there on Sunday. Sarah told me that there were supposed to be some parking but the University didn't seem to communicate that to their campus cops. JHU also jerked them around from space to space for their events. The kids were mostly cheery and good natured about it all, though. I had fun.



The TRYS Drive Theory:
 Revised For The Last Tune
 by
 Alexis Gilliland

We begin with a thought experiment. Our apparatus consists of a skateboard, a bicycle wheel, and a pistol. The pistol is mounted on the wheel so that it will fire tangent to the rim of the wheel, the wheel and **pistol** are balanced, and the pistol wheel (**pw**) **subsystem** is mounted horizontally on the skateboard **so** that its rim is tangent to a line drawn parallel to the direction of motion which passes through the center of mass of the pistol wheel-skateboard (pws) system. Figure 1. Shows a top and front view of the apparatus.

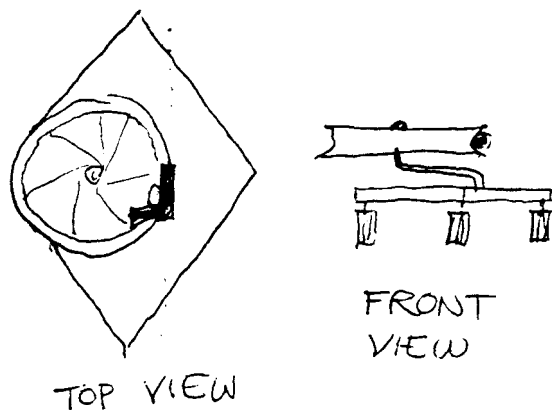


FIG. 1

A few details to embellish an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative. The pws system masses 10.0 lbs. The wheel in the pw has a radius of 1.25 ft., and the pw subsystem, that incorporates the wheel masses 4.0 lbs. The pistol mounted on the wheel fires a bullet weighing 0.010 lbs with a muzzle velocity of 1800 **ft/sec**.

We now line up the wheel so that the pistol is directly over the center of mass and fire one round due north. What happens? Newton's Law says that for every action there is an **equal** and opposite reaction. The linear momentum of the bullet, mv , 0.010 lbs x 1800 ft/sec, or 18.0 ft/lbs, is our action. What is our **reaction**?

The design of our apparatus is such that the pw is **free** to rotate, and the pws is free to recoil, so that the reaction to **firing** the bullet must be that the pw subsystem starts to spin, and the pws system starts to recoil. Two reactions instead of only one. How does the 18.0 ft/lbs of reaction divide itself between pw and

pws, between angular and linear momentum? Given that the two reactions take place simultaneously it is hard to imagine that that they are not qua). In other words, $mv = 1/2mv(\text{recoil}) + 1/2mv(\text{spin})$. Given that mv is **equal** to 18.0 ft/lbs, that means that 9.0 **ft/lbs** are available to recoil the pws **system**, and 9.0 **ft/lbs** are available to spin the pw **subsystem**.

Let's look at our system in a little more detail: $mv = M_1V_1(\text{recoil}) + M_2V_2(\text{spin})$. Given that the V is ft/sec, we get V by dividing momentum, ft/lbs, by mass, **lbs**, to **find that** $V_1 = 0.90$ ft/sec, moving due **south**, while V_2 is 2.25 **ft/sec**, moving clockwise in Fig. 1. Note that with a radius of 1.25 ft. we have a circumference of 7.85 ft., so that dividing circumference by speed, more properly angular velocity, we get one rotation in 3.5 seconds, or 17.2 rpm. A larger radius would provide fewer rpm, but if the mass remained constant, so would the angular velocity.

After firing our shot, the pws system is moving south at 0.90 **ft/sec**, while the pws subsystem is rotating clockwise at 17.2 rpm. What happens when we **give** our apparatus a carefully calibrated kick of 18.0 **ft/lbs** in a northerly direction? The answer is that the pws system must then move north at 0.90 **ft/sec**, while the pw subsystem-in obedience to Newton's Law which says a system's angular momentum must be conserved-continues to rotate at 17.2 **rpm**.

Suppose we now mount a loo-percent **efficient** bullet catcher on the front end of our apparatus, 1.8 ft from the muzzle of our pistol. We fire the pistol, with the results described above, and 1.0 msec. **later**, we catch the northbound bullet, which imparts 18.0 ft/lbs of energy to our pws system, with the results described in the preceding paragraph.

The counter-intuitive result is that we can use up to 50 percent (there are always frictional losses to reduce efficiency) of the momentum of our bullet to move our system in the direction that we fire the bullet. Thii is possible because we designed our system so that the other 50 percent of the bullet's momentum is used to generate angular **momentum**. **In theory**, we could kill the unwanted angular momentum by braking, or by firing an antispinwise shot in the same direction, to move us a second time while **cancelling** out the spin.

The application of this principle to a space drive, in which Solar panels are deployed to power electro-magnetic cannon and cannonball catchers, seems entirely feasible. The size, shape and deployment of our electro-magnetic cannon are engineering problems less formidable than those we are solving to build the next **generation** shuttle. **Once we can construct** a spaceship in orbit, the TRYS drive will move it around the Solar System at constant acceleration.

An *Evil Overlord Guidebook: Part I* from the Internet

Being an *Evil Overlord* seems to be a good career choice. *It pays well*, there are all sorts of **perks** and you can set your own hours. However every *Evil Overlord I've* read about in books or seen in movies invariably gets **overthrown** and destroyed in the end *I've* noticed that no matter whether they are barbarian lords, deranged **wizards**, mad scientists or alien invaders, they always seem to make the same basic mistakes every sing/e time. Therefore, if I ever happen to become an *Evil Overlord*:

1. My legions of terror will have helmets with clear plexiglass visors, not face-concealing ones.
2. My ventilation **ducts** will be too small to crawl through.
3. My noble half-brother whose throne I usurped will be killed, not kept anonymously imprisoned in a forgotten cell of my dungeon.
4. Shooting is not too good for my enemies.
5. The artifact which is the source of my power will not be kept on the Mountain of Despair beyond the River of Fire guarded by the Dragons of Eternity. It will be in my safe-deposit box. The same applies to the object which is my one weakness.



6. I will not gloat over my enemies' predicament before killing them.

7. When the rebel leader challenges me to fight one-on-one and asks, 'Or are you afraid without your armies to back you up?' My reply will be, 'No, just sensible.'

8. When I've captured my adversary and he says, 'Look, before you kill me, will you at least tell me what this is all about?' I'll say, 'No.' and shoot him.

9. After I kidnap the beautiful princess, we will be married immediately in a quiet civil ceremony, not a lavish spectacle in three weeks' time during which the final phase of my plan will be carried out.

10. I will not include a self-destruct mechanism unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary, it will not be a large red button labelled 'Danger: Do Not Push'. The big red button marked 'Do Not Push' will instead trigger a spray of bullets on anyone stupid enough to disregard it. Similarly, the ON/OFF switch will not clearly be labelled as such.

11. I will not order my trusted lieutenant to kill the infant who is destined to overthrow me -- I'll do it myself.

12. I **will** not interrogate my enemies in the inner sanctum -- a small hotel well outside my borders will work just as well.

13. I will be secure in my superiority. Therefore, I will feel no need to prove it by leaving clues in the form of riddles or leaving my weaker enemies alive to show they pose no threat.

14. I will not waste time making my enemy's death look like an accident -- I'm not accountable to anyone and my other enemies wouldn't believe it.

15. I will make it clear that I do know the meaning of the word 'mercy'; I simply choose not show them any.

16. One of my advisors will be an average five-year-old child. Any flaws in my plan that he is able to spot will be corrected before implementation.

17. All slain enemies will be cremated, or at least have several rounds of ammunition emptied into them, not left for dead at the bottom of the cliff. The announcement of their deaths, as well as any accompanying celebration, will be deferred until after the aforementioned disposal.

18. My undercover agents will not have tattoos identifying them as members of my organization, nor will they be required to wear military boots or adhere to any other dress codes.

19. The hero is not entitled to a last kiss, a last cigarette, or any other form of last request.

20. I will never employ any device with a digital countdown. If I find that such a

device is absolutely unavoidable, I will set it to activate when the counter reaches 117 and the hero is just putting his plan into operation.

21. I will design all doomsday machines myself. If I must hire a mad scientist to assist me, I will make sure that he is sufficiently twisted to never regret his evil ways and seek to undo the damage he's caused.

22. I will never utter the sentence ' ' But before I kill you, there's just one thing I want to know.'

23. When I employ people as advisors, I will occasionally listen to their advice.

24. I will not have a son. Although his laughably under-planned attempt to usurp power would easily fail, it would provide a fatal distraction at a crucial point in time.

25. I will not have a daughter. She would be as beautiful as she was evil, but one look at the hero's rugged countenance and she'd betray her own father.

To be continued.. .

Disclave Names Names

MINUTES OF WSFA MEETING February 21, 1997 At Ginter's.

The meeting was called to order at 9: 15 by President John Pomeranz, There was no old business pending from the previous meeting. The sites for the March meetings are reversed: the first Friday meeting being scheduled at Ginter's, Third Friday to be at Gilliland's.

Bob Macintosh stated that WSFA's Treasury Balance was \$2,020.80. Those wishing to remain members in good standing were reminded to pay their dues.

DISCLAVE '97: Chairman Michael Nelson reported that more than 1,200 fliers were prepared for mailing at the Feb 7th meeting (Some of the 1,500+ names on the mailing list are at the same residence). While

most of his department heads are already working away, there are some positions still unfilled: e.g. someone to run dances, and to coordinate volunteers. As of that meeting, Disclave '97 had 170 members. 65 of these were transferred funds from the '96 Disclave for people who had worked.

NEW BUSINESS: Alexis Gilliland presented his proposition for a WSFA business card to be handed out by club members to people they think might wish to come to a meeting. It is a two sided card, reproduced here. It is submitted for discussion. Joe Mayhew had moved that WSFA produce a business card at the February 7th meeting, but had withdrawn the motion when the discussion became heated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Sue Wheeler is looking for help in Balticon's Operations.

The BUCCONEER Saturday night party LACon III was, for Craig Macbride (according to his CON REPORT in THYME #113 issued for January 1997, page 15) "...the best party...Bucconeer had the best food (Chili con came and a vegetable version of it as well). the best drinks (lots of scrumptious concoctions with Captain Morgan rum in them), and the best atmosphere too, though the Texans the night before came close. The red drink and the "white whale" were both really excellent. Not the sort of drinks to make your eyes water. like the Croats' punch, but the sort that taste good as well. If the Bucconeer Worldcon has the same sort of atmosphere as its parties, it looks like being the best Woridcon in coming years."

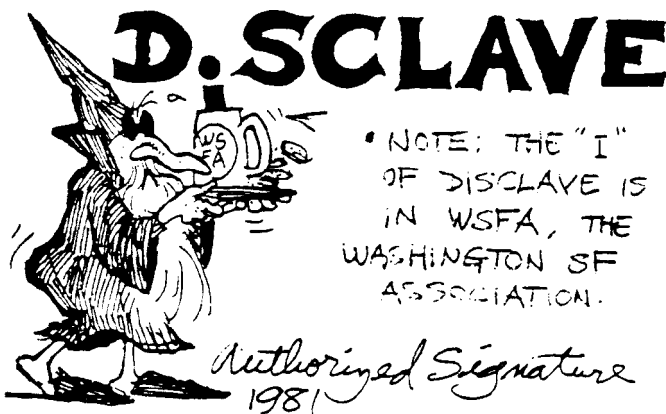
Bucconeer had already warmed Craig up on Friday afternoon: "...a room nearby was

holding an afternoon tea, chatting about food, politics and over-priced hotels. That was the friendly folks of Bucconeer, who are running the Worldcon in 1998 in Baltimore."

It seems one doesn't need a map to an Aussie's heart, only a menu.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

Attending: Pres. John Pomeranz, Sec. & 98 Chair Joe Mayhew, Treas. Bob Macintosh, Trust. & 97 Chair Mike Nelson. Trust. Candy Myers, Alexis Gilliland, Lee Gilliland, Erica Ginter, Joe Hall, Dan Hoey*, Eric Jablow, Bill Jensen, Judy Kindell, Richard Lynch, Nicki Lynch, Keith Marshall*, Walter Miles*, George Nelson, Barry Newton, Judy Newton, Meridel Newton, Lance Oszko, Jul Owings, Mark Owings, Dick Roepke, George R. Shaner, Michael J. Taylor, Ronald C. Taylor, Sue Wheeler. (*arrived after meeting.)



Card Front

WSFA Inc. IS A
 NON-PROFIT SOCIAL
 ORGANIZATION THAT
 MEETS TWICE A MONTH
 IN PRIVATE HOMES TO
 CONDUCT BUSINESS
 (MAINLY DISCLAVE) AND
 PARTY. LIBRARIANS,
 ENGINEERS AND COMPUTER
 NERDS SHOULD BE RIGHT
 AT HOME. INTERESTED?
 CALL (703) 920-6087
 AND ASK FOR MISTER
 GILLILAND, WHO WILL
 TELL YOU WHERE TO GO.
 1997

Card Back

What I learned from LunaCon



1. The Pocket Programs don't really have to be at the con until after programming starts
2. And the Program books can wait until mid-day on Saturday.
3. The Con Chairman doesn't have to have his name in the Program Book.
4. You can totally rearrange the rooms at a moment's notice and only a few people need to be notified of the change
5. And the program participants don't have to be included in those few.
6. You can pay for a media Guest of Honor and then schedule one of his few appearances in a tiny room
7. You can pull a Guest of Honor out of dinner before she eats and rearrange her schedule last minute.
8. You can delay the masquerade nearly two hours
9. You can divide the dealer's room into threes
10. And somehow, no matter what goes wrong, everyone will have a good time despite it all.

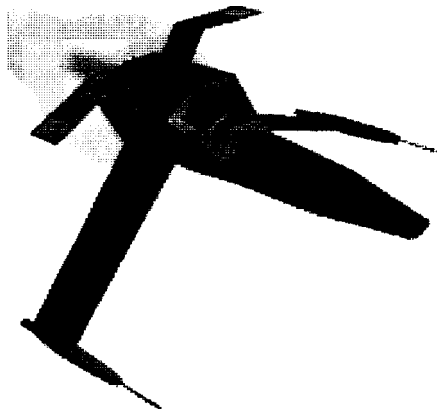
Once *A Hero* by Elizabeth Moon Book Review by Madeleine Yeh

The first three chapters of this book appeared on the Web, courtesy of Baen Books. These were so fun and so promising that I haunted the book stores for two weeks until the novel was finally available.

Unhappily the first three chapters are probably the best three chapters in the book. *Once A Hero*, is the story of a young lieutenant in the Regular Space Service who has performed a great deed of heroism. She obtained command of a ship after treason and mutiny and counter mutiny, and destroyed an enemy heavy cruiser saving an entire planet. Instead of honor

and glory and a hero's welcome, Lieutenant JG Esme Suiza receives a Court Martial and a Board of Enquiry. Her superiors also keep demanding the answer to the question "How did so mediocre a person as Lt. Suiza do so well?" Our hero, has not planned, and truly does not want a glorious Navy career and has no ambition to command a ship.

The book is beautifully written. It has a clean clear elegant style, free of the extraneous reminiscences and explanations that clutter other military Science Fiction. The societies and cultures are revealed in



pieces as the story progresses allowing the reader to assemble it like a furniture kit.

While this story is set in the same universe as a previous trilogy it stands alone quite well. Unhappily the society revealed is a massive old fashioned rectangular library table balanced on three legs. There are some very silly discrepancies in this book. In one place our hero claims to be the first person from her planet to serve in the Navy in 200 years, in another place she mentions someone else having joined 30 years before. Early in the book it is implied that she has some monetary resources besides her salary, later the reverse is suggested. These particular points are mere scratches on the table, annoying but not critical.

The real problem lies with the Navy. Through out most of the book it appears to be completely competent and professional organization. The legal proceedings, the Court Martial and the Board of Enquiry, are done in a fair, established, professional manner clearly showing that this is a functioning organization. The further glimpses of Navy actions and procedures as Lt. Suiza starts her new assignment also show a competent military force, easily holding its own against smaller but still dangerous opponents. The new assignment is on board what is legally a ship, but resembles more closely a fairly large space station. This artifact contains 25,000 people and is a major Navy research, repair and resupply facility.

This extremely valuable, very heavily manned facility is attacked. The Navy changes into a group of disorganized, inexperience, untrained, unprepared fools. Twenty five men are pulled from a damaged Navy vessel.

No one notices that these people are completely uninjured despite blood on their uniforms. Without verifying any sort of identification, giving any sort of orientation, or even checking with an officer from that particular ship, a petty officer from the space station assigns these men to different departments. When it is established that these men are all enemy agents, the Captain of the repair facility immediately thinks of self destruction. The Navy does not, it seems have established procedures for dealing with hostile intruders, for securing critical facilities (life support, the bridge, the sole self destruct mechanism), for denying intruders access to medical supplies like knock out gas, and weapons. The very large, very valuable space station does not have redundant facilities for life support, and weapons control and self destruction. It does not have a secure method of communication. It doesn't seem to have any sort of internal security force, or any method of preventing unauthorized personnel from moving freely, or any security system monitoring critical areas.

The flaws in the Navy wrecked the book. The society revealed by a science fiction novel doesn't have to be nice, or admirable, or even perfectly consistent, but it does have to be believable.

1995 NEBULA NOMINEES

Novels

Griffith, Nicola: *Slow River*
Hoffman, Nina Kiriki: *The Silent Strength of Stones*
McKillip, Patricia: *Winter Rose*
Powers, Tim: *Expiration Date*
Sawyer, Robert J.: *Starplex*
Stephenson, Neal: *The Diamond Age*



Turtledove, Harry: "Must and Shall"
Wilson, Robert Charles: "The Perseids"
Wolverton, Dave: "After a Lean Winter"

Short Story

Brewster, Kent: "In the Pound, Near Breaktime"
Friesner, Esther M.: "A Birthday"
Goonan, Kathleen Ann: "The String"
Lethem, Jonathan: "Five F-cks"
Rogers, Bruce Holland: "These Shoes Strangers Have Died Of"
Smith, Dean Wesley: "In the Shade of the Slowboat Man"

How Many Have You Read?

Novellas

Dann, Jack: "Da Vinci Rising"
Le Guin, Ursula K.: "A Woman's Liberation"
Martin, George R.R.: "Blood of the Dragon"
McDevitt, Jack: "Time Travellers Never Die"
McHugh, Maureen F.: "The Cost to Be Wise"
Steele, Allen: "The Death of Captain Future"

Novelettes

Ford, John M.:
"Erase/Record/Play"
Guthridge, George: "Mirror of Lop Nor"
Levinson, Paul: "The Chronology Protection Case"
Rogers, Bruce Holland: "Lifeboat on a Burning Sea"

COSMIC TAD

by Joe Mauer
and
Joe Mauer

