



June 2010 Newsletter

Monsters from the ID: Psychology in SF

Feel that shiver of fear? That nagging doubt to not enter that dark room? Join us as we enter the realm of Monsters from the ID: Psychology in SF. Tales of psychological terror and suspense. Poe did it (The Tell-Tale Heart and The Cask of Amontillado). Caleb Carr wrote an entire book around it, The Alienist. SF, fantasy, and horror stories that use psychology to hold you hostage and instill fear.

That's Science Fiction

Tuesday June 1, 2010 – 7p

Hillsdale Public Library

Lars and the Real Girl

*Dining follows the movie.

Drawing A Crowd

Wednesday June 9, 2010 – 8p

New Moon Comics

Join moderator Tim Cook as he explores mind power.

For additional information click

www.newmooncomics.com.

Face the Fiction

Saturday June 12, 2010

8 – 10 p

Panera Bread Restaurant

1300 Rt. 17 North

Ramsey, NJ 07446

SFSNNJ welcomes author **Barbara Campbell**

Suspense Central

Monday June 14, 2010 – 8p

Borders /Interstate Shopping Center

Rt. 17 South Ramsey, NJ

The Lathe of Heaven – Ursula K. Leguin

Fantasy Gamers Group

Saturday June 19, 2010 – 2:30p

Directions available upon request/contact **Todd**

Join us for terror, monsters, madness and more as

GM BJ Pehush explores the city of Arkham MA

with our monthly Call of Cthulu (Chaosium 6th edition)

game.

Films to Come: 4-Star Movie Discussion Group

Wednesday June 16, 2010 – 7p

Ramsey Borders/Interstate Shopping Center

This group discusses the world of cinema and

entertainment. Classic, current and upcoming genre

and genre-related films, TV, books and media

happenings are discussed. If it deals with

entertainment, our Master of Entertainment Moderator

will cover it. *Dining follows this event.

Themes of the Fantastic

Tuesday June 22, 2010 – 8p

Wayne Public Library

Psychology in SF and genre

www.waynepubliclibrary.org

Fantasy Gamers Group

Saturday June 19, 2010 – 2:30p

Directions available upon request/contact **Todd**

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Modern Masters

Friday June 25, 2010 – 8p

Borders Ramsey/Interstate Shopping Center

Glasshouse – Charles Stross

***pre-meeting dinner/check sfsnnj.com for details**

Rogue Trader: Wolves in the Fold

Saturday June 26 – 2p – 10p

Panera Restaurant Community Room

Ramsey, 1300 Rt. 17 North

Welcome to the Western Nations of Temnia, a brutal

and vicious tyranny ruled by the Immortal

Emperor, the illustrious Naram'tzin, your boss. This

game explores life in the far West, where

powerful Samurai serve demon-worshipping madmen,

and expediency and survival are balanced

by honor and horror. A new day in the Yenxhai

Dominions is dawning, and the peaceful nations of

the East should beware!

please visit www.sfsnnj.com for full details

**SFSNNJ Face the Fiction presents
Barbara Campbell**

When: Saturday, June 12, 2010

Time: 8p – 10p

Location: Panera Bread Restaurant Community Room
1300 Rt. 17 North
Ramsey, NJ 07446
201.236.6300

This month we welcome author **Barbara Campbell**
(<http://www.barbara-campbell.com/index.htm>)

Come meet Fantasy Author Barbara Campbell, author of the Trickster's Game series of Primitivist Fantasy stories. Brilliantly evocative, stylish, and groundbreaking are only a few of the words used by reviewers to describe this ambitious series published by Tor books. From the Neolithic forest dwelling tribes of Darak's home to the copper age cities and beyond, Campbell weaves an artistic tapestry of gods and nature, detailing a story of travail, tragedy, and perseverance. Join us as we travel to the forests of the Children of Oak and Holly with this author and explore the world of *Heartwood*, *Bloodstone*, and *Foxfire* with this imaginative and celebrated author.

Face the Fiction: Where imagination lives!

May Meeting Recaps

That's Science Fiction! – Tuesday May 4, 2010

That's Science Fiction's May movie was *The Philadelphia Experiment* (1984) starring Michael Pare and Nancy Allen. We were pleasantly surprised how well the movie stood up to time. Yes, the graphics left much to be desired, but the overall feel of the movie wasn't dated the way many films from the 80's are. The movie fit May's Time Travel theme quite nicely.

The movie is about a navy experiment that goes wrong. The year is 1943 and the US is involved in WWII. The government develops a way to render their naval vessels undetectable to radar using electro magnetic fields. A navy vessel is used for the experiment. At first, all involved think they've successfully found a way to hide ships from enemy radar. Then things go horribly wrong - the ship disappears - vanishes. Two sailors jump ship only to find themselves in the future - 1984 to be exact. If that wasn't bad enough, the scientist responsible for the 1943 fiasco has been tampering again and has created a black hole. While the two misplaced sailors try to figure out what has happened to them, the scientists are trying to figure out how to save the world from black hole destroying everything in its path.

You do feel for the two sailors. Not only are they out of their own time, but also who would believe their story? Overall, the movie was enjoyable and told a good story. Nice movie to revisit and lesson learned - never tamper with the time continuum or stick your finger in an electrical socket.

Next month's selection is *Lars and The Real Girl* (2007). This one looks fun. The tag line is *The search for true love begins outside the box.....*

Face the Fiction: Ben Tate– Saturday, May 8, 2010

Again, I would like to start by thanking Alisha Klauger and the wonderful staff at Borders Books & Music at the Ramsey Interstate Shopping Plaza. They are so nice, accommodating, and professional in the way that they work with us to make these events a success. Next time you are in the store, please tell them thanks for all their hard work. To quote the warrior-sage Xenophon, "The sweetest sound of all is praise." OK, now: on with the show!

The evening started off with Paul, Kate, Jim, Steve, and I gathered around the big table, chatting ourselves silly and discussing a plethora of books, movies, and more. The topics ranged from a Cthulu 'post-Old Ones' anthology recommended by Kate, to discussion of Thomas Harlan's *House of Reeds*, to Gail Carriger's *Souless*, to Jack Campbell's Lost Fleet series, the movie *Moon* with Sam Rockwell, and comparing quality of Jack McDevitt and Peter F. Hamilton's works. This last was especially interesting, and Paul and I had a great deal of fun chatting over Hamilton's irritatingly huge, but enormously entertaining, novels. During the conversation, more and more folks filtered into the store and began taking up seats in preparation for the main event, and soon I found myself introducing the debonair Mr. Joshua Palmatier (a.k.a. Benjamin Tate).

Josh started the evening off with a bit about himself, and describing life in Binghamton, NY, teaching mathematics at SUNY Oneonta (the alma mater of Mrs. Assunta M.R. Ehrenfels, mother of the redoubtable Todd, who is even now having a Happy Mothers' Day), as well as the road to becoming a published author, the wonderful folks at DAW, and much more. Turning quickly from the personal to the professional, Josh began showing us his Throne of Amenkor series (*The Skewed Throne*, *The Cracked Throne*, and *The Vacant Throne*), even going so far as to brag (deservedly, in my opinion) about the release of the books in Germany with far superior cover art. In addition to these older works, Josh also showed us *Close Encounters of the Urban Kind* from Apex Books (<http://www.apexbookstore.com/collections/frontpage/products/close-encounters-of-the-urban-kind-edited-by-jennifer-brozek>), and explained that this was an anthology collection with the rather spiffy premise of taking traditional Urban Legends and giving them a UFO twist. This done, we turned our attention to Josh's most recent release (and we mean really recent since it just came out at the beginning of the week) *The Well of Sorrows*.

Unlike *The Skewed Throne* and the rest of the books of the Throne of Amenkor series, which are set in the same world as *The Well of Sorrows* but at a later period in history, this new book is not told in the first person, but rather the third person omniscient style. The action centers on Colin Harten and his family, who are refugees from a civil war in Andover. Having fled across the ocean to the New World, they find life exceptionally difficult on the coast and are forced to make the journey out into the plains. Josh explained that he really wanted to go for the frontier expansion feel of the American mid-west in the early 1800's, since that seemed like it would be fun,

interesting, and not the same old hum-drum fantasy that we always see out there. From descriptions and discussion last night, it sounds very much like he succeeded (keep your eyes on Stanger than Truth as I have the feeling I will be reviewing this book before too long).

Questions and answers dominated the night, and Josh was a great sport, fielding our strange questions for over two hours, and discussing topics ranging from Plotter vs. Pantser (Josh is a Pantser, or fly by the seat of his pants writer, who uses narrative guideposts to keep his story on task), scene and structure of *The Skewed Throne* (Josh indicated that the concept of the majority of the story being flashback leading the reader back to the events started in the prologue and crescendo-ing to an even higher level was purposeful), narrative flow (one has to let the story unfold organically or you will be fighting against your own books), temporal mechanics (obviously the people who fix things that are Temporally Out of Order), Star Trek (DS9 for the win!), literary influences (Terry Brooks, Tad Williams, Stephen R. Donaldson... you know, all the people I keep telling you to read), and even projects and concepts for upcoming stories. It was an amazingly diverse time with all manner of subjects flying about the room like assassins' daggers. Speaking of which, we got great insight into Josh's mind, and I am telling you now: do not make this man angry! Much to Deena's delight, Josh loves the killing (hey, she's an assassin, she should be killing folks every chapter, it's her job), and even went so far as to start writing the story with the idea of having each chapter dedicated to a specific mark that Varis is after.

The night seemed like it would last forever, but sadly, in order to make sure that we could get the event area policed and back in order for the stalwarts at the store (oh, yeah, and to get our copies of the books purchased), we did eventually have to force a halt to the questions. Had I not done so, I surmise that we would have stayed at the store until... well... now. Josh was a fun, energetic, and exciting guest, and his love of his work, both in literature and in mathematics, was plain for all to see. Of course, his casual mention of board gaming with Patricia Bray (author of the *Sword of Change* series), and their circle of friends who get together to play *Settlers of Catan* and *Carcassonne*, as well as his hard partying ways (even professors need to have fun), showed us that his energy is a diversely applied in real life as it is in his stories. All in all, it was a great discussion with a fantastic guest, showcasing the fact that 2010 is truly made of awesome for the SFSNNJ!

After the fun at the Borders, many of us ran up to the Stateline Diner for food, folks, and fun. Sadly, Josh could not accompany us as he had been partying the past evening and did not wish to make it too late an evening lest he risk crashing on the way home (I am sure I speak for everyone when I say that we would prefer a live friend who can write many more wonderful books for us to read). Topics in discussion included the Library initiatives, the doom that came to Arkham, the joys of real estate, knee-cappings, Walden Farms flavored air, weight loss without body dysmorphia, Fantasy novels, theft of breeding, the pros and cons of using flamethrowers to cook, and, of course, what is coming up over the next few weeks on SyFy Original Movies (I expect a *Mongolian Death Worm* review any minute now).

Join us next month at Panera Bread in Ramsey for Barbara Campbell!

Suspense Central – Monday May 10, 2010

Suspense Central's May selection, *Replay*, by Ken Grimwood provided topics for a lengthy discussion. The book was given two thumbs up by everyone that had read it, and it was the consensus that the small details we found issue with did not take away from the overall enjoyment of the book. *Replay* won the 1988 World Fantasy Award.

If you've ever seen the movie *Groundhog Day*, then you have the basic premise of the book. This was a good book to sit in on the discussion even if you had not read the book - the theme is familiar enough that you can navigate the storyline.

Replay's main character is Jeff Winston. The year is 1988 and Jeff dies at age 43 of a heart attack and awakens back in 1963 in his 18-year old body. He is once again a student at Emory University, in his dorm. He retains all memories of his life - he knows he died, he knows he's back, but has no idea why. He begins to relive his life making some changes along the way - he bets big money on horse races and sporting events using his knowledge of future events. For the next 25 years Jeff rebuilds his life only to die the same way again in 1988, at age 43, on the same day, at the same time - to reawaken in 1963. This cycle replays and Jeff starts to try to change events and takes note of events. This leads him to another 'replayer' Pamela. Jeff and Pamela try to figure out the who, what, where and whys of the replays for a very good read.

The future replays are becoming shorter and shorter. How will things unfold? Will the replays end?

The book gave some interesting twists, fully fleshed out characters and was engrossing. Todd and Aurelia did not care for Jeff Winston. Todd felt Jeff was a 'schlub'...he was. Todd felt Pamela was a better character and he thought she should have been given more attention. He thought the book should have gone back and forth

between Jeff's perspective and Pam's, rather than concentrating on Jeff. Liz felt the book had a realism to it that made it believable. Kathleen agreed, citing Jeff's memories of his daughter. Chris did not think Jeff was that bad, dense, but not that bad. We all got a kick out of the Stuart scene.

The book had fun using movie directors and producers, news events and other historical events in the body of the story. Steven Spielberg and George Lucas got a shout out as unknowns that Pamela uses in a movie she writes before the world knows who either is. Cute. The Kennedy assassination, Kentucky Derby and Dodgers game all get tossed in for a fun medley of historical events. Liz made the point that she would not have been able to cash in like Jeff did, as she had no idea that won the Kentucky Derby or any football game either! She added that we often don't pay enough attention to daily minutia and forget details.

We had a good time discussing what Jeff could have done differently - pretty much everything! How the characters interaction impacted events. Characters we liked and disliked. What events were changed in the book and why we will never go to Tacoma...ever. Appeasement!

The tragic irony of the book; author Ken Grimwood died from a heart attack while writing the sequel to *Replay* in 2003 at age 59. The irony alone could have its own discussion and did. All I kept hearing in my head was, "but I'm not dead yet" - I know, so wrong, but it was there, replaying (no pun intended) over and over again (for those who don't get the reference it's from Monty Python and the Holy Grail).

Next month's selection is *The Lathe of Heaven* by Ursula K. Leguin. **(recap by AM)**

Drawing A Crowd – Wednesday, May12, 2010

Tim runs a great meeting. He gets *everyone* involved (like it or not - lol).

Tim made sure to tell the group he likes the concept of time travel, but that it often is not done well or effectively. Tim then cited several examples of why he has some issues with time travel. He mentioned the *X-Men* and some of the inconsistencies in their frequent time travel escapades (i.e. children in alternate universes suddenly existing in the current).

Tim proudly exclaimed to the group that if time travel were real and he could do it, he would "go back about 80 years and see to it that that ridiculous character *Superman* was never created." He emphasized this sentiment by stating, "that was not a joke."

Haywood discussed both Marvel and DC and the respective time travel story-lines in each. Marvel had many *X-Men* story arcs utilizing time travel, while DC had *Traveler's of the Unknown*, *Parallax* (super-villain) and *Chronos*. Haywood also brought up the TV show *Fringe* as it employs time travel.

Steve Rubin talked about several books/movies focused on time travel (alternate histories regarding 9/11/03, dinosaurs and other 'what if' scenarios).

I mentioned the season 8 *Buffy* comics/graphics, and the *Buffy* episode where *Buffy* is a rogue slayer who never came to Sunnydale and things there are horrific. Elaborate... you had to be there! It was at this point I threw Jim under the bus to draw attention away from my answers, that moderator Tim felt should be elaborated upon. Lucky for Jim he was ready with a story about an article he had written that focused on body count (*Conan*, I believe). It met with criticism because some people misunderstood his angle and thought he was highlighting violence in comics.

Yeah, there was some talk about *Sabrina the Teen-aged Witch* that Jim and I *possibly* knew the details about that we probably heard from someone else, anywhere else...we of course had no actual familiarity with *Sabrina*...that is my official story that I will staunchly stand by.

I seem to recall *Darkwing Duck* popping up in conversation as well. I think I panned that one off on Steve Rubin - lol.

We were very happy to see Ana. Ana brought along some of Brian's comics collection for advice. She was not sure what was worth trying to sell or what should be given away to Brian's friends for enjoyment. Haywood and Rob obliged and gave her some guidance.

In all, a very fun time and a well run meeting. **(recap by AM)**

Our moderator Tim Cook opened the discussion by saying that *Time Titans*, superheroes fighting mutants, orbiting around a black hole, and others. As we were winding down we discussed the concept that one person's non-existence could change *Travel* in comics can work as long as it's done well. His first example was a Marvel comic's character named *Kebar*, who kills people as he travels thru time. He also asked the question, if you could *Time Travel*, with the knowledge that you have now, would you? Tim answered that question by saying he would first &

foremost stop the creation of Superman (showing again his well known dislike for the character).

We then went around the room to cite examples from the world of comics. Chris H. cited Superman from the first movie where he flies around the earth making time go backwards to save Lois Lane. Storylines involving Batman & Capt. America fighting their way through time after being shot were cited, as well as X-Men storylines involving Cyclops & Lane Grey stopping Xavier's Assassination. Jim asked if the show Lost involved any Time Travel, and was promptly rebutted by Chris H. Steve Rubin cited Simpson's episodes involving Homer wiping out the whole race of dinosaurs with one sneeze, as well as a novel on alternative realities involving the sinking of the Titanic. Ann-Marie cited a Buffy eighth-season story where she visits Angel in L.A. and he tells her to go home in a very mean fashion. Jim & AM also cited a Sabrina story where she is tried for Witchcraft in Salem. Josephine mentioned a crossover series between Batman & Judge Dread. Flash was cited as a Time Traveling hero who could kill Superman (Tim liked that idea).

I cited a Twilight Zone story about an elderly financier who goes back in time to start over only to be done in by his faulty memory. Other examples cited include Star Fox, Green Lantern, Fantastic Four, the X-Men meet Star Trek-Next Gen. novel, Teen the whole planet. Tim also said that he would like to be going back in time but be invisible so that he could be witness to historical events (like the assassination of Julius Caesar).

See y'all next time!!! (recap by Steve Spinosa)

Heros & Rogues Call of Cthulu 1920's

Cast of Characters:

Bunta, Tibetan Sherpa and valet to Prof. Aloyssius Van Dyne (Thom Purdy)
Father Jamison Crawford, Roman Catholic Priest (Todd V. Ehrenfels)
Rose Dalloway, Freelance Reporter (Kate Landis)
Dr. Leo McAllister, Alienist and MD (Kate Landis)
Harry Niaman, Struggling Artist (Chuck Garofalo)
Nikolai Rostov, Russian Tailor (Todd V. Ehrenfels)
Professor Prof. Aloyssius Van Dyne, Cryptozoologist and Monster Hunter extraordinary (Thom Purdy)
Sammy 'the Sledge' Salviani (Chuck Garofalo)
Special Guest: Gilbert the German Shepherd dog (Beau Ehrenfels the Yorkie)

From the Journals of Father Jamison Crawford, Saint Mary's Parish, Arkham, Mass.

April 1921

I have determined today to keep a separate journal from my Personal Journal in order that those events that are not a part of my work for the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church be chronicled properly. I suppose, though, that I should give some background as to why I fear that this journal is necessary.

A few months ago, I made the acquaintance of a group of intrepid investigators of the paranormal and supernatural. While I was at Seton Hall I studied secretly under Aliester Crowley during his sojourn to New Jersey, and learned much of the occult from that learned man that would help me in my ministrations as a servant of God. Nothing could prepare me for the adventures that ensued, and claimed the life of our companion Grace Chang at the hands of several Ghouls in the cemetery. My own near death during an explosion while chasing a vampyre some weeks later and the recent murder of Harry Niaman at the hands of strange Russian cannibals have finally moved me to prepare for the worst.

Over the past few days, Dr. McAllister, our resident determined to make a purchase of German Shepherd puppy from a local farmer. During this purchase, it was discovered that several local farms had experienced animal attacks of a rather unusual nature. Our group endeavoured to trap the beast, and during the engagement with the massive mountain lion, Harry was mauled with the result of his mercifully swift demise.

Sadly, we learned that the mountain lion was being handled by two Russian madmen who were traveling the country selling all manner of meat poached using the 'wild' beasts as a cover. In addition to poaching animals, it seems that these cretins had also been poaching people! Selling the meat to restaurants and the occasional discerning private client, like the artist Pickman, would have been bad enough, but these monsters in the forms of men appeared to be enjoying the savory taste of long pig themselves.

These men, who were descendants of a tribe of steppe roaming savages who were feared across the length and breadth of the old Russian Empire, had apparently emigrated to the United States much like my enigmatic friend Nikolai Rostov. In spite of their common point of origin, though, I find it hard to believe that our inscrutable and observant tailor could have anything in common with these vile degenerates.

Though too late to save Harry, Nikolai Rostov and Sammy 'The Sledge', with the aide of Dr. McAllister were able to ensure that the criminals would never be able to harm another of God's children ever again. Thus it was that while Rose Dalloway, a freelance reporter lately come to Arkham in pursuit of her first big break, and I, summoned forth the authorities in the form of the State Police, our compatriots laid the villains low with minimal damage done to themselves (though it was a near thing for our Russian tailor).

While we mourn the passing of Harry, my companions and I have determined to endure, much as Harry did after he came home from the Great War. As we continue our countdown to Professor Armitage's Antarctic expedition, I can only hope that we can survive long enough to board the ships...(recap by Todd Ehrenfels)

Films to Come – Wednesday, May 19, 2010

Barry said I didn't have to do a recap - if you weren't there, you don't get to know what went on! He's the moderator, so there.

But, since Todd needed something for the website....

Films was a good time. The discussion was varied, lively and at times a free-for-all.

Barry opened the meeting with a list of the top grossing films of 2010 to date (January 2010 to current). He had us "fill-in-the-blank" to guess the film. Moshe pointed out that the blanks were terribly "difficult". An example: Barry gave us How ___ Train Your Dragon. Hmmm, what exactly are you trying to say about us Barry?! Luckily, we were able to pool our resources together and figure out the veritable web of confusion he offered up. The films were:

6. *Valentine's Day* @ \$110,476,776
5. *Shutter island* @ \$127,213,670
4. *Clash of the Titans* @ \$160,127,747
3. *How To Train Your Dragon* @ \$208,000,613
2. *Iron Man 2* @ \$214,916,361 (and still going)
1. *Alice in Wonderland* took top billing @ 331,533,915

Next up was a fun and inclusive list of the top earning Super Hero movies (compiled by Box Office Mojo from 1978 - present). This list had 79 films that ranged from top dog #1 *Dark Knight* raking in a whopping \$533,345,358 to #79 *The Specials* pulling in \$13,276 - ouch. This list had everyone calling out titles, seeing if their favorite was on the list and trying to recall what some of the movies were about. Some films, # 77 - Orgazmo for example, completely stumped us. Not one of us had heard of this movie but the title alone provided much merriment.

After corraling us to a semblance of order, Barry moved on to a list of Marvel franchises and how the particular franchise earned. Spots 1,2, and 3 were *Spiderman 1,2, and 3* respectively. #4 - *Iron Man*, spots 5 & 6 were *X-Men* films, and #7 was *Iron Man 2*. Some other titles making the list; the *Blade* trilogy, *Hulk* and oddly enough *Howard the Duck*. Mike Piazza provided background details for the comic book challenged to make things a bit more clear.

Next up was the usual 3-month list of films (last month to recap, current releases and upcoming). April, May and June had some titles we were looking forward to as well as several films we had seen. Mike Paulmeno provided much insight to many of the films.

April:

Clash of the Titans - several of us had seen and recommend this one.

Kick Ass was of interest to many. Mike Paulmeno recommends this one and said it was funny, violent, but funny.

Death At A Funeral - Todd had seen the original and Mike Paulmeno had seen the remake. Since the remake used the original's script, both Todd and Mike recommend this funny film.

A Nightmare on Elm Street - Bill informed us that people who slept on PosterPedic mattresses had no dreams so they had to be cut out of the film.

May:

Robin Hood - Mike Paulmeno and Moshe had seen this one. Mike thought it was a good origin story and Moshe agreed citing that it clearly laid groundwork for a sequel. Moshe also kept thinking the theme song for Gladiator was going to start playing as the 4 notes of Robin Hood's theme song reminded him of that film.

Prince of Persia - Mike Paulmeno has high hopes for this saying that a good video game movie is needed.

Babies - Barry commended us all for not having seen this film.

Best Worst Movie - woo hoo! Vindication for Todd & me!

Survival of the Dead - did I hear someone say something about a cookbook?!

June:

Knight and Day - all I can say is poor tom Cruise - ask Todd if you want to know more.

Jonah Hex - the DC comic's film might be a sleeper.

The A-Team - why?

The Twilight Saga: Eclipse - Barry likes that the franchise churns those films out. Mike Paulmeno pointed out that the 4th would be shot in 3-D so there will be a gap.

Ondine - mermaid?

During this portion of the meeting we had many asides and digressions that the moderator pretended to take in stride - he's taking names people, he's taking names. Good thing I'm well behaved.

Summer Movie List was next. This list made predictions for gross earnings. Predicted top earners were #1 *Toy Story 3*, #2 *Iron Man 2* and #3 *Shrek Forever After*. We'll have to check back. The predicted top horror earners: *Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Splice*, *Jonah Hex*, *Twilight*, *Predators* and SF titles were: *Splice*, *Predators*, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, *Inception* & *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*.

Barry came well prepared and kept us entertained for 3 hours - no small feat. Barry called the meeting to a close, but not before Bill read us *Zombie Haiku* - the person who left that book on the table will be found and punished accordingly. Barry then tried to pass out the July list of films but we said we'd wait for next month. Well! I won't repeat what our illustrious moderator told us to do - my sensibilities - lol! Shame on you Barry!

The night continued for some...dirty stay outs. (AM)

Rogue Traders – Saturday, May 23, 2010

Chapter 3: A Perilous Journey (828.859,M38)

From the personal journal of Wensicia Tremnar-Marioc

One would never surmise that so short a journey could be undertaken with so great an amount of peril, especially on so luxurious a vessel as the *Lady Malbec*.

It took months of travel aboard the *Tremnar's Luck* for us to arrive here in this horribly uncivilized warzone, only to find ourselves foisted off on the incompetent Imbrogio Marioc, recently named Captain of the *Marioc's Pride*. When I demanded to see my cousin Sarvus Tremnar, I was advised that he had transferred to the newly acquired *Lady Malbec* along with the entirety of the command crew of the *Marioc's Pride*. Luckily, Imbrogio has little spine or spirit and was easily convinced to take the *Pride* to the planet Ciria, which has become the center for our House's economic interests in this benighted sector of space. Due to good timing and more than a bit of fortune, we arrived as the *Lady Malbec* was busily outfitting itself in preparation for building a mining colony in the nearby Lum system.

When Faraden and I arrived aboard Captain Malachai Harmon's new flagship, we were immediately impressed by the decadent grandeur of the ship. As a Diligent-class Auxiliary Cruiser, it boasts all of the benefits of a Light Cruiser alongside the cargo capacity of a transport. Strangely, the entire ship seems to be outfitted in luxuriant Usadra wood paneling, even the crew's quarters boast a luxury not seen outside of the grand palaces of most sector governors. It is little surprise that the captain finds the crew content in their current surroundings.

Placing Faraden in the care of my cousin, Sarvus, so that the young Missionary could see to the education of the boy, I approached Captain Harmon and was immediately pushed off on the ship's Executive Officer, Liana Harm. It seems that Liana and I will be working together with Artemus Wayne to help ensure the economic viability and stability of our ventures. Malachai, while undoubtedly a great combat Captain, seems a touch mad and is best left out of the overall economic decisions. Liana had determined to stop off at the Lithu system on the way to the Lum system to attempt to find out more about the Orkish pirates that infest the Lum system, and to perhaps procure some experienced deep space miners from the local mining colonies.

Lilith Benetek and Ramhat Singh-Modar, the ship's Navigators, plotted a course to the Lithu system, and we arrived just in time to watch a pair of Ork Killkroozers leaving the area. Jacob Dreer, the ship's Astropath, managed to convince one of the Wierdboyz on the Ork vessels that they should try to attack House Shrek in the Fager system. I am not sure why, but it seems like there is some level of animosity between this crew and the people of House Shrek. It will bear looking into. Once the Orks had left, ostensibly for the fat pickings at Fager according to Zacharie Cort's readings on the Augur Array and the Navigators' mathematical projections, we dealt with the local miners and recruited nearly one thousand men to come with us to Lum. It was then that Liana had another idea.

Her research at Ciria had revealed the presence of an abandoned Oasis-class fort in the nearby Hubble system. This fort was used as a supply port and waystation for both commercial and military traffic in the area, and would be an excellent asset to have if we could reactivate it. While I am often loathe to agree with a Marioc, even a distaff Marioc like Liana, her argument made quite a bit of sense, and so we made for Hubble.

We arrived to find the station cold and dead on the Augur Arrays, and so we moved in closer. Stubbs was given command of the Arvus lighter that would be used to ferry over the first team to explore the station, and Jacob Dreer, Micro (the ship's chief Techpriest), and Jorn of Lacustra (the chief of security for the *Lady Malbec*) were sent over to explore the abandoned station. On boarding, they found evidence of battle between the station's inhabitants and the Orks, but more importantly they found that the station had run across a derelict vessel known as a Space Hulk, and become infested with Xenos! During a brief battle with the nefarious Genestealers on the Oasis-station, Micro was critically wounded, his leg severed and thrown across the room. Luckily the near absolute zero temperature served to ensure that the blood loss was minimal, and the intrepid Explorer and the corpse of the Xeno were returned to the *Lady Malbec* with all due haste.

In spite of the command crew's obvious mistrust of the new Navigator, Ramhat Singh-Modar, he was allowed to operate on Micro and graft on a replacement bionic leg of excellent quality. It was determined that we would contact the Military Governor at Thapsus and inform him of the infestation after claiming the station as House Marioc property. It is likely that a contingent of Adeptus Astartes or Inquisitorial Deathwatch will be sent to cleanse and purify the station. Once they are done, we can use it for the furtherance of our aims.

We turned our attentions next to the Lum system and Sparta Hill, the sole habitable world in the densely packed system. Mistress Benetek, with the aid of Master Singh, was able to plot a faster than normal transit to Lum, and we began exploring the system well in advance of the arrival of the *Marioc's Pride*. Sadly, before reinforcements could arrive we were ambushed from one of the many dust clouds by a pair of Ork Onslaught Raiders! The battle was fierce, but a few lucky shots from Jorn at the Weapons station, and the timely misfiring and detonation of the lead Ork's Lance batteries, led to a victory for the *Lady Malbec*.

Now, all I need to do is to figure out a way to turn this to the advantage of House Tremnar, that we may finally regain our preeminent position as masters of this Rogue Trader Dynasty...(retelling by Todd Ehrenfels)

Themes of the Fantastic – Tuesday, May 25, 2010

We began our discussion of Time Travel with a brief dissertation on different types of time travel, and a non-linear time stream. Bill discussed the science of Time Travel by Master Bill, which referenced Terry Pratchett's Trolls (Todd), Billy Pilgrim in Slaughterhouse-Five, Einstein saying that Time is Money, and Stephen Hawking's Closed Causality Loop (Steve Rubin), which led to Frederic Brown's The Time Machine (Todd) then more science from Steve R. Steve Rubin did a great job of explaining Hawkings theorems regarding Time Travel and the impossibility of making a machine that would allow for paradoxes. Mathematically brilliant and sound reasoning:)

Chuck then cited *The Man Who Murdered Muhammad* by Alfred Bester, and I cited the Outer Limits episode *The Man Who Was Never Born* (written by Anthony Lawrence) and Todd cited *Demon with A Glass Hand* by Harlan Ellison (also from the Outer Limits TV series). Steve Rubin talked about Robert Heinlein's *All You Zombies*, and Crosstiming *The Dark Side* by Chalker (echoed by Todd who slipped in David Gerrold's *The Man Who Folded Himself*). Bill then mentioned *Time Enough For Love* by Heinlein, and Chris mentioned Harlan Ellison's *The City on The Edge of Forever* (from the classic Trek series), which led to a sidebar discussion (by Todd and myself) of David Gerrold's battles with Gene Roddenberry during the original series and the Next Generation series. Steve Rubin then tied in with Gerrold's *Star Wolf* and his scripts for *The New Voyages* fan series, which dealt with two explicitly gay characters created by David G.

Ann-Marie cited *Quantum Leap*, and Bill & Todd did an extended discussion on this series, with Chuck & AM chiming in. Bill then cited Irwin Allen's *Time Tunnel* and I cited the TT episode "Town of Terror" set 1978 Rhode Island (which loops back to the beginning of the series on the Titanic), and Bill cited the TT episode "The Day The Sky Fell In" set in 1941 Pearl Harbor where Tony Newman talked to his naval commander father before his death in the attack (which led to a joke about Tony interfering in the creation of the Philly Cheese Steak sandwich [because James Darren, who played Tony Newman, was from South Philly]). Chuck then mentioned the film *The Final Countdown*, and I cited the *Twilight Zone* episode *No Time Like The Past* where Paul Driscoll tries to warn the Japanese about the Hiroshima bombing, then attempts and fails to kill Hitler. This led to more discussion on the 1945 bombings by Bill, Chuck, Todd & Steve Rubin.

Steve Rubin then mentioned Robert Silverberg's *Up The Line*, which dealt with Time Travel Tourism (people on a tour seeing Christ's Crucifixion) and Todd cited an episode from the new Outer Limits dealing with a bigoted Civil War reinactor who intends on killing the President. Other examples cited include-from Books: Stephen King's *Dead Zone* (Bill), Ray Bradbury (Bill), Joe Haldeman (Rubin), *Thief of Time* by Terry Pratchett (AM), *Bid Time Return* by Richard Matheson (Chris), *A Christmas Carol* by Dickens (AM), Paul Levinson's *The Plot to Save Socrates* (Todd), *The China Cloud Death Time Trial* & *The Very Slow Time Machine* (Steve Rubin), *Army of Darkness* (AM) & *Guns of The South* (Todd).

From Movies and TV: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure/Time After Time (AM), Time Cop (Bill), Warlock (AM), the Disney Channel movie *Minutemen* (AM), *Austin Powers 2 & 3* (AM & SS), *4400/The Event* (Todd), *Time Trax* (Bill), *Red Dwarf* (Chuck) & *The Twilight Zone II*'s episode "Profile in Silver" dealing with the Kennedy Assassination (Todd & SS). Bill also mentioned Robert Stirling's *Island in The Sea of Time* as we were wrapping up. See y'all next time!!!

Modern Masters – Friday, May 28, 2010

Modern Masters presents *Timeline* by Michael Crichton 5/28/2010

The evening started early... really early... I mean super-duper seriously silly early with Barry Weinberger and I chatting in the parking lot at 6:00. Lucky for me, I happened upon our good friend when I arrived early and got a chance to chit-chat before he left on his 'secret mission'. I would tell you more, but my oath to the super hero defense league prevents my discussing it further... but perhaps I have said too much!

Around 7pm I wandered into the store and met up with Deb Matovsky, David, and Chris, and we sat around chatting about various subjects before being joined by Josephine, Kathleen, and Ann-Marie! Discussion wended around and about from place to place, languid as the Rio Grande, before we turned our attention to *Timeline*... only to be derailed and sent caroming off topic within 5 minutes! I suspected time travelling saboteurs, however the rest of the group seemed to think that it was just my inability to focus... I am beginning to wonder if they are in on the plot.

Anyway, on with the show; we spent some time discussing the works of the late Michael Crichton, focusing some attention on early efforts like *Terminal Man* and *The Andromeda Strain* and even *The First Great Train Robbery*. The consensus was that we all enjoyed Crichton's dialog, though I expressed irritation at the lacking non-dialog prose. Crichton tends to write like a script writer (which is what he really is, so no surprise there), and while that makes for great characterization and dialog, it tends to place the narrative in the hands of the characters a bit too often.

Turning our attention to *Rising Sun*, David observed that the story felt kind of racist. My only defense was that while the Japanese were not portrayed flatteringly, all of the traditions and actions ascribed to the Japanese characters were authentic and based on real traditions of high powered CEOs of the old guard (thankfully that has really changed a lot since the 1990's). Aside from a few changes to characters in the film, the movie adaptation with Connery and Snipes was pretty faithful to the book.

On to *Congo*, during which I kept say “Bad Crichton, bad Gorillas, bad movie”, making reference to the gorilla Amy’s repeated bits of dialogue. There were huge differences between books and movies, and I cursed the lack of a good film expert to help guide through the morass. David kept laughing at the Tim Curry impersonation, but seriously: was he *supposed* to be channeling Boris Badenov?

Eaters of the Dead, better known as *The Thirteenth Warrior* was then trotted out for examination. I started that portion off with, “Can you imagine him pitching this to the publisher? ‘OK, so I’m going to do a retelling of Beowulf, but with Grendle being a tribe of Neanderthals and the main character not being able to speak with anyone else about what’s going on...” We waxed eloquent on both the book and the film, and I pointed out the change in the film’s story where Banderas learns to communicate with the Northmen (of course, nobody can actually understand the words coming out of Banderas’ mouth most of the time, so subtitles would still have been helpful). Sorry Antonio, I still love you, but diction classes would be appreciated.

Hey, look, we finally made it to *Timeline*! Before we discussed *Timeline* in detail, though, we talked about *Airframe*, *Prey*, and *Pirate Latitudes*. We liked those. We also liked *Timeline*, and although the movie does stray from the book rather significantly, it was not terrible (OK, Paul Walker was terrible, but the rest of the film was fine). Sorry, Paul, I still love you, but acting classes would be appreciated (alternately you can stand around looking pretty). Deb thought my impression of Lord Oliver was amusing, all I can say, “Well, they’re French after all, not much of a threat, wuha, wuha, wuha!” (picture me buck toothed and blowing out my mustaches and you get an idea of why the laughter was merited).

All in all it was a fun 2 hour discussion that wound up continuing in the Seattle’s Best Café, where we discussed Disney and Marmaduke collectibles, *Glasshouse*, *Halting State*, Ian MacEwan, Iain M. Banks, the merits of multiple redundant SQL servers, and much more. Are you jealous? Well you should be!

Next month join us as we discuss *Glasshouse* by Charles Stross. There will even be a pre-meeting dinner! Check the website for details (<http://www.sfsnnj.com/groups/MM.html>)! (Todd Ehrenfels)

SFSNNJ Member Movie Reviews

Sex and the City 2 – Chris Hasselkus

I went to see it this morning. Sillier than the first film, but still a lot of laughs. If you cared about the four girls before, you’ll care again. Grade B+

Forbidden Planet – C. Hasselkus I had obtained this last year on DVD for two reasons: one, there was a chance we would show it at That’s Science Fiction! or Medium Screen Classics and, two, I always wanted to see it. I just watched it, and it has excellent suspense. It stars Eric Braeden, between The Rat Patrol and The Young and the Restless. It reminded me of Fail Safe, but even more sinister. Grade: A.

Iron Man 2-C. Hasselkus I wouldn’t even try to critique a film after Aubrey has already done so. However, I thought the plot a bit stranger than that of the first film. I totally agree that the banter, especially between Tony & Pepper, is priceless.

Impostor/ DVD - C. Hasselkus I just watched "Impostor" starring Gary Sinese. It's based on the story "The Impostor" by Philip K. Dick. Very similar to "Blade Runner" which I was never very fond of either. You didn't know who was a replicant and who wasn't. Grade: C.

Imposter – Susan P I remember seeing IMPOSTOR in the theatre when it first came out: very difficult movie to recommend, especially if you had been cheering for the wrong guy when the film ends.

Imposter – Todd Ehrenfels Not to be contentious, but that is what I *liked* about both *Bladrunner* and *Imposter*.) Also, I am not sure which movie you are referring to, but in the end of *Imposter* we know exactly who the agents are (we see the corpses in the enemy ship, thus anyone walking around while there is a corpse in the ship is obviously an agent).

I like not having the plot spelled out for me every minute of the film, and the ambiguity of the story means that you are actually kept in suspense, rather than spoon-fed the answers like most of the pap that Hollywood hands out. The action sequences were smart, well handled, and not too over-the-top (except for Sinese’s breakout of holding which felt a bit too contrived) while still piling on the gunfire, melee scrums, and explosions. The acting, writing, and direction were all well above average, though the cinematography was bit 'standard' with no inventive or exciting shots to call attention to it.

All that being said, this is not a film for everyone. Those who like their bad guys to wear black hats and their good guys to wear white hats will be sorely tested, as you obviously were. In addition, it really seems like nobody is an actual good guy. Dinofrio's character is doing his job with vicious and ruthless efficiency, Sinese's character is just trying to survive, and Madeline Stowe is walking the tight rope the whole time. In fact, the only character that seems to be genuinely 'good' is Mekhi Phifer's character, Cale.

SFSNNJ Member Book Reviews

Iron Man 2 - The Book (by Chris Hasselkus)

I just finished Iron Man 2, a novel by Alexander Irvine based on the screenplay by Justin Theroux. I was surprised Peter David didn't write this, in that he did the first Iron Man novelization, as well as those for Spider Man. The main thrust of the plot is that Tony Stark's father Howard is being blamed for stealing credit for technology that Russian Ivan Vanko's father Anton created. Thus Ivan (Mickey Rourke) is after Tony (Robert Downey Jr.). There are other factors going on here, but suffice it to say that there will be special effects galore. And we don't have to worry about 3D in that there isn't any. Book: B.

Iron Man 2 – Gene McGrath

I loved the reference that Justin Hammer (Sam Rockwell) made to Joyce's Ulysses (I've just started reading it) when describing how 'smart' one of his weapons was - something to the effect of: "If it were any smarter, it would write a book. A book that would make Ulysses look like it was written in crayon. And it would read it to you."

Upcoming Conventions



PARSIPPANY, NJ
Fri., Sat. & Sun.
July 9-11, 2010
Hilton Parsippany Hotel/Creation Entertainment's East Coast - **Supernatural Convention**

Albacon 2010
<http://www.albacon.org/>



PARSIPPANY, NJ
Fri., Sat. & Sun.
August 13-15, 2010

Twilight Convention

PARSIPPANY, NJ
Fri., Sat. & Sun.
Aug. 20-22, 2010
Hilton Parsippany
1 Hilton Court