

# The Devniad Book 50a

un zine de Bob Devney  
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## Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

Pause your pod racers, SF/F fans. There's a review of The Big Movie coming along pretty soon in this issue.

But first. For me, the most exciting big-media news of Spring 1999 is *not* the new *Star Wars* flick. It's instead a long-postponed, longingly awaited entertainment banquet of a disturbingly different kind:

The new Thomas Harris book.

Name: *Hannibal*. Release date: June 8. Publisher: Delacorte Press, Dell's hardcover imprint. Price: \$27.95. Prognosis: oooh wow.

In case you haven't guessed from that less-than-classy, market-driven title (Harris' working title was *Morbidity of the Soul*), this book will continue the character of FBI agent Clarice Starling ... and, of course, the brilliant psychiatrist/psychotic murderer Doctor Hannibal Lecter.

That's right. "Hannibal the Cannibal" is back.

I've been an avid fan since Harris, a former AP reporter/editor, wrote his first fine thriller in 1975, *Black Sunday* — about a plot to bomb the Super Bowl. (Remember Bruce Dern in the movie as the disturbed Vietnam vet and dirigible pilot?)

We first met Lecter in Harris' second, unrelated book, 1981's *Red Dragon*. Here's Stephen King's blurb on my first paperback copy of that masterpiece: "The best popular novel written in America since *The Godfather*." I agreed with his assessment wholeheartedly.

Starling was introduced with the third novel in 1988: *The Silence of the Lambs*. The movie, with Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins, made Lecter a household god of horror.

Incidentally, I thought Brian Cox's smaller performance as Lecter in the underrated *Red Dragon* movie, called *Manhunter*, was actually more restrained and closer to the book than Hopkins' take. Admit it, Hopkins chewed the scenery a bit. Among other things ...

Anyway, since then: nothing. The Silence of the Author. Until now.

Hints from the Hannibal Lecter Homepage (at <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~cory/lecter>) suggest that material in the new book may be related to 16 murders/mutilations committed in Italy between 1968 and 1985. Allegedly by Pietro Pacciani, the elderly Tuscan farmhand (age 71 at his arrest in 1993) known as *Il Mostro di Firenze* — The Monster of Florence.

Harris attended the trial. Pacciani's convictions were subsequently overturned, and he died in somewhat suspicious circumstances in 1998. What will Harris make of all this?

I'll find out the first night Borders offers this baby for sale.

Apparently, although I've heard comparatively very little about this release to date, other fans share my enthusiasm. The book's not available yet, but today (Saturday, May 22) it's *already* ranked number 5 in amazon.com book sales!

I may have made Harris sound like some sort of sleazy excitement-happy goremaster. Far from it. I think most thoughtful SF/F fans would love his work.

As you can see from the agonizing 11-year wait for *Hannibal*, Thomas Harris takes his time. He gets his books *right*. Really right.

He also writes a great sentence. Every person in every conversation wants something, often *intensely* wants something,

and their words come out that way. As they do in life. In other words, his dialog is superb. He knows how to pace, and to build suspense.

Harris is also a genius at delivering telling details and technical exposition — forensic techniques, police procedures, interpersonal dynamics between a cop and her chief, or a killer and his victim — absolutely cleanly and sparsely, so that we know just enough, but want to know more than he tells us. We hunger for more.

Why is driving a blimp harder than flying a plane? How can working at a large commercial film-processing laboratory further a murderer's ends? What's it like to be new boy in an orphanage when you've got a harelip? What makes someone a psychosexual killer? (Those last two are related, as you might guess.) How does the FBI profile a killer? (Harris got into writing about serial killers early; I'd never heard of profiling until I read his books. Neither had almost anybody else.) What brave strategies hang behind the clothes in a fat girl's closet?

Harris knows, and he lets us in on it all.

Above all, and very unusually in his category or in bestsellerdom in general, he's a master of restraint. Combine that gift with an almost formal precision of language and you get a kind of terrible poetry, as with this scene-setting for a chief character in *The Silence of The Lambs*:

"Room into room, Jame Gumb's basement rambles like the maze that thwarts us in dreams. When he was still shy, lives and lives ago, Mr. Gumb took his pleasure in the rooms most hidden, far from the stairs. There are rooms in the farthest corners, rooms from other lives, that Gumb hasn't opened in years. Some of them are still occupied, so to speak, though the sounds from behind the doors peaked and trailed off to silence long ago."

And you thought *science fiction* gave you a good look at a truly alien intelligence ...

If you hurry, you can go read *Red Dragon* and *The Silence of the Lambs* before *Hannibal* comes out. I'd most strongly recommend it.

## **Ego Scanners (Shall Not) Live in Vain**

Dan Kimmel, moviemanager extraordinaire, alerts us to some upcoming flicks to watch out for:

"*The Winslow Boy*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Get Real*, *Tea with Mussolini*. In a summer offering us an animated *Tarzan* and a live action *Inspector Gadget*, it's nice to know there will be SOME stuff out there that makes sense.

"Oh, there's also some space thing coming out on [May] 19th. I think most people will wait for the next *Devniad* to see if it's worth catching."

I'm sure you're right, Dan. It's OK, people; you're good to go. (See review on next page.)

Fan Fred Lerner of *The Fanzine That Dare Not Speak Its Name* (Because I'd Screw Up The Spelling Again) avers that "the best historical analogy for 'these intense friendships fans can form when they meet only for a few frantically busy con days per year' [*Devniad* 49] can be found among the political leaders of colonial and Revolutionary America. These men were well-read, passionately interested not only in ideas but in the shaping of a new society, and used to maintaining an extensive correspondence. And, like the fans of yore, they were accustomed to visiting one another on their travels, but they rarely had the opportunity to gather en masse."

Of course, Fred, fandom has a lot more Sam Adamses and Tom Paines than George Washingtons. Although you, sir, naturally, would be a combo of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.

Both Jerry Kaufman and Eric Knight caught a screwup in my review of *The Matrix*. They noted that Morpheus doesn't bestow the name Neo on the hero played by

Keanu Reeves; it was his hacker handle from the beginning. Sorry, guys.

Jerry also sent the latest edition of his fanzine *Mainstream*. My joy at receiving my first issue was tempered only by reading it and finding out it's also the last *Mainstream*.

San Francisco fan Chris Benitz also sent what must be the longest, most closely reasoned letter ever received at *The Devniad*.

He doesn't wish to be quoted, but basically thinks, as a peaceful firearms owner, that some anti-gun remarks in the last ish were founded on a mistaken knowledge of history. Specifically, he believes I hinted that the 2nd amendment to the U.S. constitution should be interpreted to restrict handgun ownership only to members of the National Guard, whereas when written, "militia" would have referred to every male citizen of fighting age, "well-organized" would have meant something like "well-practiced [in marksmanship]," and all the Bill of Rights provisos including this one meant to give rights to private citizens, not to the state in setting up an armed force.

Very good points, Chris. You've rocked me back, certainly. I still think current-day gun owners — with the possible exception of the survivalist "militias" you and I both view with concern — exercise their rights without much thought to banding together to undo wrongs of the oppressive government. And I've got to do some etymological research on "well-organized." Thanks for the thoughts. Without turning this thing into a 400-page *FOSFAX* debate, any help from other readers?

### **From "Deep Thoughts" by Jack Handey**

(on TV's old *Saturday Night Live*)

" I wish I had a kryptonite cross, because then you could keep both Dracula AND Superman away."

## **FlimFan**

### **Best of the Art Show: Eleven Points About *Star Wars One (or Is It Four?)***

Chances are good that if you're reading this, you've already seen the movie with the incredibly clumsy title *Star Wars: Episode I — The Phantom Menace*. Which I shall henceforth helpfully abbreviate as *SW:EI—TPM*. There, is that better?

So I'll assume I can lard this article with spoilers, since you've been there, done that.

I'll also assume that you enjoyed it.

What's not to like? Oh, the thing has a number of dead spots, and creator George Lucas displays his usual deftness deficit in handling character, dialog, and political sensitivity. But overall it's a most exciting, entertaining night at the cineplex.

*SW:EI—TPM* is a great travel extravaganza, bringing us to far places we've only imagined and showing us sights ditto. Many frames could be stills from the SF movies we run in our minds when we're reading space opera. The sets and design and architecture are fabulous, the set-piece spectacles — battles, a race — are, well, spectacular.

Oh yes, there are some special effects too.

Look, there's an easy analogy here. The central joys of these flicks are visual and kinetic, not, ah, scriptural. If you brought a *Star Wars* movie to a con, you wouldn't offer it from a bookstall.

You'd enter it in the Art Show.

In terms of box office? I predict *SW:EI—TPM* will be big, but not the biggest ever. It's no *Titanic*. A huge chunk of the possible moviegoer audience likes romance and dislikes SF, so why would they go to this?

I went expecting a crowd, yes. And in fact there were about 40 people in front of

us when we arrived an hour early for a show in a suburban theater, on only the second night of *SW:EI—TPM*'s release.

When they finally let us in, we filled about half the theater. But even by showtime, it was only about 90 percent full.

However, the space in front of my seat was sticky. Rather than having my feet emit tiny pockpockpock sounds all through the movie, I got an usher to mop my floor. We all have different ways, my child, of seeking to achieve true balance with the Force.

OK. Given that you've already seen the thing, permit me just to commit some random acts of criticism.

**1.** Liam Neeson as the Zenmasterish Jedi Knight Qui-Gon Jinn is the emotional heart of the movie. He's got a serenity, a supreme confidence, and a stature that allow him to stride through the grandest, most mind-bogglingly prodigious set designs and never look small in our eyes.

Neeson's the only actor here that manages to create an actual character. He steps away from the cardboard backing gluing all the others to Lucas's beautiful backdrop.

On the other hand, you've got the sad case of the young Scottish actor Ewan McGregor. His reckless glee and energy have already driven fine comic performances in films like *Trainspotting* and *Emma* and *A Life Less Ordinary*. But here, as Leeson's Jedi apprentice Obi-Wan Kenobi, he's asked to out-solemn his master. What a waste.

Speaking of which, look what this movie does to the great Samuel L. Jackson. They've got him delivering his entire performance, what there is of it, sitting down!

Like the Sundance Kid, he's better when he moves.

**2.** Are you telling me that, with all the makeup experts and futurist costume consultants a billion bucks can buy, the most attractive look you can come up with for the beautiful young actress (Natalie Portman) playing your female lead, the Queen, involves lacquering her hair into a huge

cockamamie *radar dish* and then slapping onto her lower lip a thing that looks like some kind of big red nasty *cold sore*?

Man, and you thought Princess Leia's infamous Breadroll Do was bad.

Plus I had trouble following the whole lady-in-waiting secret identity bit here. And maybe Lucas just had a moment of rare political sensitivity and wanted to give an empty nod to democratic forms, but are we supposed to believe 1) this 17-year-old girl was just "elected" 2) Queen?

**3.** We know as soon as we hear his name — Anakin Skywalker — that the little boy (Jake Lloyd) in this movie will grow up to be a Jedi Knight. But will then pick up the catchy nickname Darth Vader, step off the True Path, and start trampling the galaxy's flowerbeds. This foreknowledge lends a certain sad dignity to the role.

But not enough to smother our suspicion that the kid is equally likely to grow up to be Mark Hamill. Because they're both blond and neither one can act.

Anyway, we're not sure yet exactly how this Vaderization will come about. Although as a great man — or, in this case, an ugly midget with stuck-out hairy green ears — once hinted, in fact in this very movie, "Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering ..." Which, I guess, eventually leads to getting yourself a big black helmet and your very own portable ventilator.

**4.** I loved the underwater city. But actually, it would be more accurately described as an *underswamp* city. And how does that whole big metroplex fit under that smallish-looking swamp? And don't the root systems of all that vegetation on the surface kinda get in the way of building a city underneath?

**5.** If Jedi Knights are so galactically ethical, how come Qui-Gon Jinn tries to cheat the little green flying repair shop owner with a sneaky little handwaving Jedi mind trick? This isn't some evil Imperial guard he's trying to sneak past, just a struggling small

businessman (OK, and slaveholder) trying to make a credit.

**6.** The pod race is undoubtedly the high point of the movie. Notice how beautifully the whole thing is done and paced. And how skillfully we learn about the race, its rules, and the pod's neat new technology — all this learning done mostly with visuals, not dialog.

I got a real craftsmanship buzz off the little bit when there's a malfunction in one of Anakin's energy pod outriggers and he uses his diagnostics to ID the problem, then effects a solution by diverting energy from one pod to the other. We follow the whole sequence entirely through quick-cut visuals of Anakin's face, his brilliantly conceived little dashboard control schematics, and the pod engines themselves.

If you think it's easy to deliver expository lumps this smoothly and entertainingly, you've never tried to tell any kind of visual story.

**7.** In attempting to re-create some of the atmosphere of the old kids' movie adventure serials, Lucas has perhaps succeeded a tad too well in mimicking their tin ear for names.

One name here, however, really displays a nice poetry: the galactic capital world of Coruscant. It shines, it glitters, it's simply a great choice.

Otherwise? Well, this time there may be no Princess Lay-Ah or Hand Solo to set the boys in the back sniggering afresh. But we return once more to Tattooed Weenie or whatever Skywalker's planet is called. And fresh horrors await.

I hear that Lucas had his kids make up some of the proper names for characters and places in this movie. And it shows.

Naboo? Darth Maul? Jar Jar Binks? And one of the worst of all, although I didn't catch it in the movie and had to read it off the Web site (at [www.starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com)): the name of Anakin's mother.

Shmi Skywalker? Oh please.

I guess we should be grateful that the real first name of Darth Vader, Dark Lord of the Sith, didn't turn out to be Schmoo.

**8.** Don't try to enjoy *SW:EI—TPM* with a large Tub O' Coke. Believe me, I know. Otherwise, you might hold it and hold it and then have to bolt for the bathroom near the end, returning just after the death scene of (I know I said these are spoilers but I can't bear to actually name names so let's just say) an important character played by an actor from the British Isles whose first name is an anagram for MAIL.

Did I ever tell you what scene I missed the first time I saw *Psycho*, for a tragically similar reason? Hint: it took place in a common household enclosure where people go to get clean.

**9.** The technical credits are technically impressive. I understand the shooting schedule for this huge, sprawling flick included just 65 days of principal photography. Everything else onscreen is just effects. Which could explain why it's the first movie I've ever seen where there are so many tech creds they're set up in *five* columns.

And why the tag at the very end may be the most important credit of all: "Computers by Silicon Graphics."

**10.** Major spoiler speculation: teleologically, where is all this heading? You know, the first movie — and this one — starts with text rolls reminding us that these events occurred "[A] long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away ..."

I'm always suspicious of Hollywood's tendency not to have learned anything new in SF plot devices since about 1948. Is it beyond the realm of possibility that Lucas will conclude the series with somebody going toward or ending up on the planet that will someday be known as ... dramatic pause, then hushedly portentous tone ... Earth?

**11.** Anyway, as you may have gathered, if you want funny dialog, you won't find it in

SW:EI—TPM. But try this by-play that occurred in the lobby afterwards ... between Devniad Science Advisor Dr. Stephen Kennedy and me:

Steve: "It was good, but nothing could live up to all the hype this one got. You expect a 2-hour orgasm."

Bob: "Say! Maybe *that's* why the floor was sticky."

Enough about that. Listen, there are a few other movies in the universe, you know, people.

Like the others I saw this month:

**EXCELLENT:**

**eXistenZ** — It's hard to tell you anything about this quietly freaky, subversive flick, because that would ruin all the nasty little surprises. Let's see. It's written and directed by Canadian art horror genius David Cronenberg. It stars Jennifer Jason Leigh and Jude Law, with juicy smaller roles for Willem Dafoe, Ian Holm, Sarah Polley, and Christopher Eccleston. It's set slightly in the future. It involves playing a virtual reality game — the title is the name of one such game. I think I can say that much. It draws many parallels between games and movies; Leigh's character at one point talks dreamily and passionately about the elements of game style: "Jagged, brutal cuts. Slow fades. Shimmering little morphs." What else? Well, mutant amphibians play a big part. Of course, this is a science fiction movie. But not big, stupid SF, like *Independence Day*. And not wild in the same way as *The Matrix*. More on the small scale of the 1980 PBS TV production of Le Guin's *Lathe of Heaven*. It's so arrogantly modest. So Canadian. Special effects? We see two count 'em two examples of future technology; everything else on screen is pure 1998. But those two — a ubiquitous game machine or "game pod," and a security-proof gun — are right up there in plain view, with plenty of time for us to examine them and be convinced of their physical reality. Did I mention they're both completely disgusting? That's Cronenberg. The brain that came up with those repulsive, terrifying, unforgettable

"gynecological instruments for mutant women" in *Dead Ringers* is still alive and pulsing gently. I propose *eXistenZ* as proof positive of my brand-new Davian Multiplication Theory, which states that David Mamet (*The Spanish Prisoner*, *House of Games*) times David Lynch (*Blue Velvet*, TV's *Twin Peaks*) equals David Cronenberg. I'd say *eXistenZ* is a jewel. A nasty, slimy, frustrating, slow-growing little organic jewel. Set right in the forehead of an imaginary toad in an imaginary garden.

**ALSO EXCELLENT, BUT NO TIME TO REVIEW:**

***Election.***

***Cookie's Fortune.***

**GOOD:**

***Pushing Tin*** — It's not so much a buddy movie as a pissing contest. John Cusack is great as Nick Falzone, who for several years has been the hard-charging, fun-loving stud duck of the Long Island air traffic control center. That's the busiest in the eastern U.S. — we're talking 7000 flights per day, what with Kennedy, La Guardia, and Newark. Along comes Billy Bob Thornton as Russell Bell, a cowboy controller who's rumored the best of the West. They compete at their craft, juggling multiple aluminum tubes carrying human beings around in the unseen airspace over their heads; "pushing tin" using just the sight of little blips on the radar, the sound of their voices on the radio, and the forces of their personalities. The work is a tad stressful. As one quote from a real LI controller says at the film's start: "You land a million planes safely. Then you have one little mid-air and you never hear the end of it." Or as someone tells a bunch of schoolkids on tour: "An air traffic controller is responsible for more lives in a single shift than a surgeon in his entire career." So you'll be glad to hear the boys (and one girl) deal with this stress in a mature manner ... by boozing, driving too fast, and making plays for one another's wives. Billy Bob Thornton's Bell has a kind of hard-won self-taught Zen master centeredness. *Elizabeth's* Cate Blanchette is unrecognizable but very good as Nick's

Long Island Blonde wife. Angelina Jolie is also good as Bell's tough/tender mate, whom Falzone comes onto with lines like "So besides getting tattoos, what are your hobbies?" At the end, the filmmakers' desire to make an intelligent flick has a midair collision with Hollywood's desire to make a Hollywood ending, and intelligence goes down in flames. But you come out revved up, laughing, and happy. *Pushing Tin* — fly it, you'll like it.

**ALSO GOOD, BUT EVEN LESS TIME TO REVIEW:**

***10 Things I Hate About You.***

**DECENT, BUT ETC.:**

***Never Been Kissed.***

**Backchat**

**on APA: NESFA #347, April 1999**

**To Tony Lewis**

Thanks for the Minicon report. It was almost like being there, he whimpered pathetically.

Noting your winning score of 105.5 chocolates at the Minicon Trivia Bowl: since I won the similar Boskone event in Feb with a lifetime personal best of 55.0, it's obvious I should be grateful you usually wander in late, Tony, if at all. Of course, all NESFA has long been in awe of your triviality.

You know "the wife of the fellow who runs Pandemonium book store"? I didn't know Tyler Stewart *had* a wife. This suggests he also has a life, which seems so unlikely for the proprietor of an SF bookstore.

About your recent illness; wish you a happy, full recovery. Bet you're glad that hospital gown is now behind you, huh?

And again, thanks for resurrecting those well-forgotten English words for me and George Flynn. You fill my heart with refulgency.

**To Paul Giguere**

Keep hearing happy talk about the good space opera in Doyle's and Macdonald's Mageworld series, and now you concur.

Sigh. Another series to galumph onto my tottering pile of get-to's.

You say you've lost about 95 pounds in the last year and a half. Envious congratulations, sir. But I note that in about the same period, your APA contribution has dwindled to less than a page and a half. Coincidence?

**To Elisabeth Carey**

Congrats on the new computer. Now you can play the latest violent video games I wish I had time and computing power to play.

One of your statements sounded as if Compaq charged your credit card when you ordered your PC, then shipped it 3 weeks later to your Staples. It's my impression the mail-order PC makers I've dealt with (Gateway, Micron, Dell) make hay re the fact they don't bill you until they ship.

Didn't mean that the achievement of the European discoverers of the 15th-16th centuries is cheapened because there were already people living in the new lands they found. The Europeans' perils were deadly, their voyages epic, their progress real. But writing, talking, or thinking in the 20th century, we know they weren't (usually) the first people there. We can mourn the loss of those other, perhaps even more epic tales of the "Indians," Polynesians, etc.: the true *first* discoverers. And try to be careful exactly how we talk about Hernando Cortes or John Muir. They were discoverers — but so are we all. Didja know I discovered Mount Washington in New Hampshire? Yup, on a hiking trip in about 1979 with my friend Mike ...

**To Ray Bowie**

Hey, I'd forgotten that Raoul Walsh directed that 1950s flick of *Captain Horatio Hornblower*. You know how Forester's books make a big thing out of Hornblower's uttering a kind of throat-clearing noise, like "Ha-hmm," when he's thinking or noncommittal? Gregory Peck's pathetic try at actually *saying* that in the movie was one of my early lessons in how a dialog bit that

seems OK on the page can ring completely false on stage or screen.

Plus, like young Ioan Griffud in the current A&E TV movies, he was too handsome. Hornblower should have more of a lean, hungry, smart, sharp-nosed look. At various times in their careers, maybe David Niven, James Woods, or Stephen Rea. Jeremy Irons? Daniel Day Lewis?

### **To Nomi Burstein**

Can't find much of a gap to insert my crowbar into the seamless story of your search for a new apartment. Not looking good for me to be able to help you on moving day; we'll see. And if I do go, I promise there will be no repeat of last time's ugly underwear incident.

Not that I'm saying you have ugly underwear. I meant ... oh, let it lie.

Anyway, since you're a fellow word worshipper, let me just point you toward a new little Web site I found: an English Homophone Dictionary maintained at Earlham College in Indiana.

URL at: [www.earlham.edu/~peters/writing/homophone.htm#a](http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/writing/homophone.htm#a)

Includes a neat little discussion of the broad range of things possibly eligible under the rubric of "homophone." How about ones that are spelled alike (bear, bear)? Proper nouns (Wales, whales)? Acronyms pronounced as words (WACS, whacks, wax, etc.)? Spelling variations of the same word (manikin [the bird]), mannequin [the clothing dummy]? Actually, their list says "no" to all but the last. But still leaves plenty of room for others. Some I'd given no thought to before include analyst/annalist, belligerence/ belligerents, brews/bruise, and chic/sheik.

But ewe gnu awl those ...

### **To Lisa Hertel**

I always said you should write more, Lisa. You've got the gift, for certain.

Take that beautiful little essay last time on your daughter Liana's first year of existence. Very evocative; nicely done. Especially touches such as the speculation about whether our finding babies cute is a

built-in survival mechanism. Taking one step further, I wonder if it's an individualized mechanism built into the babies, to make them *act* in a way we would find cute; or a sort of gene-inspired racial survival mechanism built into adult perception, that we observe babies' (neutral) behavior and *perceive* it as cute.

Anyway, your whole article just makes me want to run out and get somebody pregnant.

### **To Mark Olson**

About your criticism of the recent A&E TV Hornblower series, agreed they were overall very good. Perhaps not quite as good as the Sharpe TV adaptations, though; better lead actor (Sean Bean vs. Ioan Griffud) there.

No, certainly the early 19th century wasn't a clean and tidy place. But I get the impression Royal Navy ships were the exception, with all that obsessive holystoning and painting going on. Not that they would have *smelled* very nice, of course; in all the Hornblower books, you know he's our hero because he's the only one who takes a bath.

So Olsonholm's library just passed the 12,000 count. You realize that by the War of 1812, Thomas Jefferson himself had only managed to amass 6,700 volumes at Monticello. And I doubt he could have come anywhere near your count of 98 *Star Treks* ...

### **To Tom Endrey**

Fascinating little capsule history of Kosovo from the Hungarian viewpoint. It occurs to me that those areas offer a rich and as far as I know totally untilled field for some SF or alternative history writer to try.

Yes, I've seen a few episodes of *Futurama*, the new cartoon show by Matt Groening, creator of *The Simpsons*. The world of the 30th century, as seen by a frozen pizza delivery guy from our time who wakes up then. Great stuff; well worth your time to watch. And yes, it's obvious from the in-jokes that some of the writing staff are old SF fans.



Told this rude joke from the series to Mark Olson, and he just grimaced in pain, so I'll try you, Tom. The crazy professor explains to our hero that astronomers long ago got sick of all the jokes about the planet Uranus, so they renamed it.

It's now the planet Urectum.

**To George Flynn**

Gah! *Five* separate stupid mistakes you picked up in my last ish. You shoulda been a proofreader or sumpin. And looks like I was zero for two with my Old English vocabulary. That does it. I'm never writing about Fred Lerner's zine title again.

Aha, gotcha! It was only *four* stupid mistakes ...

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

While you're sending in your Hugo ballot, no pressure! No pressure! Just thought I'd mention that I'm up for Best Fan Writer and really need the validation to illumine my otherwise purposeless existence.