



Tied-In

The Newsletter of the International Association of Media Tie-in Writers

Matt Forbeck Goes to Hollywood

IAMTW member Matt Forbeck recently returned from a trip to Hollywood, where he was given a screening of the *Mutant Chronicles* so he could revise his novelization of the film.

“I had worked entirely from the script, using my imagination and my long experience with the *Mutant Chronicles* games to bring it to life,” Forbeck said. “It’s no surprise that director Simon Hunter’s film differed from the images in my head. As with most films, the story changed a bit during shooting and editing too, so there were some inevitable discrepancies between the movie and the script-based book.”

Forbeck adds: “To fix that, I watched the film twice. Paradox set up showings—for other business reasons than just helping me—in a private screening room on the Sunset Strip. I sat and took notes, tapping them out on my laptop as the film rolled. Now I get to go back and polish the book until it more closely resembles the film.”

He said there are not too many differences to resolve. “But being able to see the film means I can pay a lot more attention to descriptions of the people and places than I could before, and make them more accurate. As for the movie, I loved it. I’m bound



to be biased, of course, having worked on both this novel and for years on the games on which the film is based. But it looks great, the actors do a wonderful job, and there are some truly fantastic moments in it. I can’t wait until you all get to see it too.”

In other news, Forbeck has signed on to write a novel for *Wizards of the Coast*, and is penning a five-issue *Blood Bowl* comic book.

John Muir Goes into “Space”

John Muir announced that he has begun work on two officially-licensed projects—an original *Space: 1999* tale called *Odysseus*

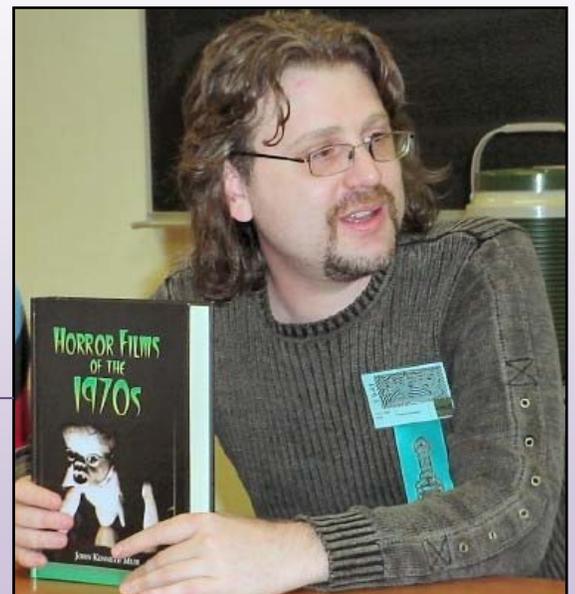
Wept, and a *Prisoner* novel, *The Last Waltz*.

In addition, Muir has an independently-produced science fiction series for the Internet called *The House Between*. He reports that the series is gaining viewers and attention. It recently concluded its second season.

Visit the series web-site at: www.thehousebetween.com.

A *Sy Fy Portal* review of *The House Between* praises Muir’s work:

“What makes this low-budget series succeed is the excellent writing. John Kenneth Muir is an award-winning author of more than 20 reference books covering film and television. He has made low-budget films in the past, but in 2006 decided to try his hand at an original web series. The result is impressive.”



John Muir at a book signing.

Spotlight on Sonny Whitelaw

Sonny Whitelaw's Master's Thesis from Queensland University of Technology (Australia) has been officially published in the international digital thesis database. She writes:

It's not the first academic work that mentions tie-ins, but I understand it is the first mainstream academic work, and a thesis at that, to be based solely on tie-ins. Not that we need credibility, but this exegesis is now public domain, so you can add it to a website for downloading or freely stick it under the noses of whichever literary snob gets under your skin or turns his back on you at a writers' festival (as happened to me a few months back).

As to why I chose the topic – I think that's best explained in the introduction:

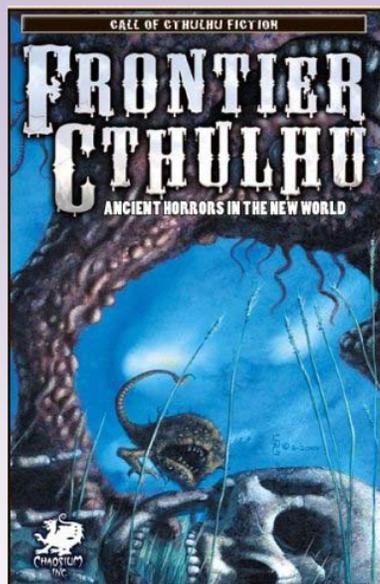
“ In 1976, when I was a science student at university, I read the transcript of a lecture that John Brunner had given at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. In his essay, Brunner expressed dismay at the manner in which Velikovsky's theories of cosmic catastrophes, L. Ron Hubbard's *Dianetics* and Pauwels and von Däniken's alien-gods-built-the-Egyptian-pyramids notions had escaped the world of science fiction, disingenuously insinuated themselves into pop culture history and science, and morphed into cults disguised as

Esther Friesner Adds to her Credits

Esther Friesner's YA novel *Nobody's Prize* will be released by Random House April 22nd. It is the sequel to the popular *Nobody's Princess*. Both novels are about a young Helen of Troy.



Friesner reports that in addition to her tie-in work, she has other novels lined up. She has signed with Penguin to write the YA novel *Burning Roses*, about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire. She will be working on two more YA novels for Random House, both about Nefertiti. She has agreed to edit a humorous fantasy series for Baen Books. The concept, she says, is Martin H. Greenberg's—witches, werewolves, and vampires in suburbia. The first is titled *Witch Way to the Mall?*, which will be followed by *Strip Mauled*. The third title will be determined through a Baen Books contest.

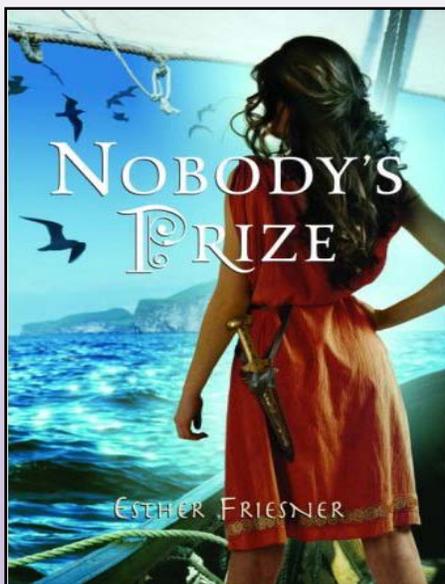
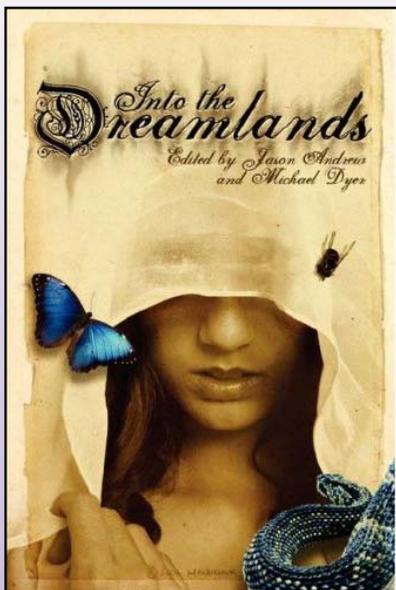


Cthulhu Calls to Jason Andrew

Seattle writer Jason Andrews recently had a short story published in *Frontier Cthulhu*, a tie-in anthology published by Chaosium.

Andrews has been previously published in *Arkham Tales: Stories of the Legendary Haunted City*, and *Triquorum Two*. He served as co-editor for the anthology: *Into the Dreamlands*. He is working on his second novel. Andrews works as a technical writer.

He says that by night he “writes stories of the fantastic and occasionally fights crime.”





religions. “What,” asked Brunner, “is the attraction in this kind of sloppy nonsense?” (Brunner, 92).

While the notion that people were buying into the “larger lunacy” (Op Cit, 73) intrigued me, I took for granted that it was because Velikovsky, Hubbard, Pauwels, von Däniken, and others offered appealing—indeed beguiling—answers to those seeking enlightenment in the Age of Aquarius, a phenomenon that would later be describe as the “cult of alien gods” (Colavito, 2005b).

In 1994, Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich produced what they intended to be the first of a movie trilogy, *Stargate*, in which they: “wanted to bridge the gap of all the creatures of legend”

(Sum). Basing their story on the ‘alien gods built the Egyptian pyramids’ theme, Devlin stated that:

While I don’t expect everyone to go out and buy von Däniken and Sitchin’s books, I want people to think about it, to re-examine the possibility (Devlin and Emmerich, 2003).

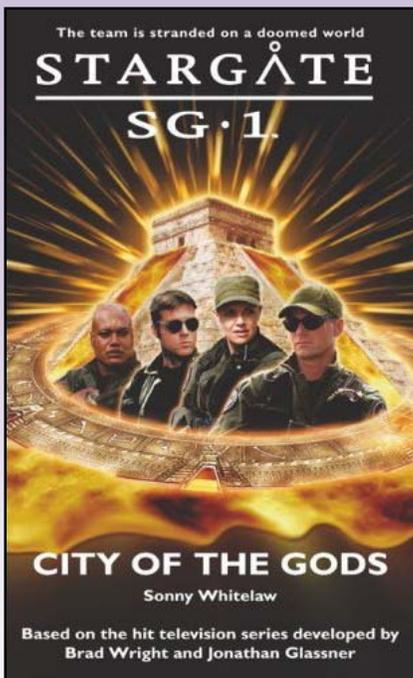
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who purchased the movie, also developed the television series *Stargate SG-1* under executive producer, Brad Wright. When, in 2004, I was asked to write a *Stargate SG-1* tie-in novel, I was aware that Wright’s vision for the books was to explore the archaeological aspects of ‘alien god’ mythology in a way that was not possible given the budgetary constraints of a television series.

With Devlin, Emmerich, and Wright’s conceptual vision firmly in mind, I created, *Stargate SG-1 City of the Gods*, by expanding upon Mesoamerican mythology within the Stargate framework. As a homage to the root source of the Stargate framework, I used the same tagline Lovecraft used in *The Call of Cthulhu*:

Of such great powers or beings there may be conceivably a survival . . . a survival of a hugely remote period when . . . consciousness was manifested, perhaps, in shapes and forms long since withdrawn before the tide of advancing humanity. . . forms of which poetry and legend alone have caught a flying memory and called them Gods (Algernon Blackwood cited in Lovecraft, 1928).

In January 2006 *Stargate SG-1* entered preparations for its tenth year of production while the spin-off series, *Stargate Atlantis* began its third year. That same month, because of a conceptual overlap with a second season *Atlantis* script (the episode was yet to air), I needed to rewrite story elements in an *Atlantis* tie-in novel to be published in 2006. Such a conceptual overlap had not occurred when writing for the original series, because the broader *Stargate SG-1* framework allows an almost unlimited scope to explore ancient human mythologies.

Atlantis, however, was a nascent series. Being set in a fictional galaxy and needing to establish a unique identity in the broader Stargate universe, attempts to use the same architectural components of the existent framework exposed the sort of difficulties that Joe Flanigan, who plays Colonel



John Sheppard in *Atlantis*, referred to after pitching his own story idea to the producers:

Of course they've done everything on SG-1, so you're met by the usual answer, which is 'We've done that on SG-1.' And they have! They've done a million stories on SG-1.

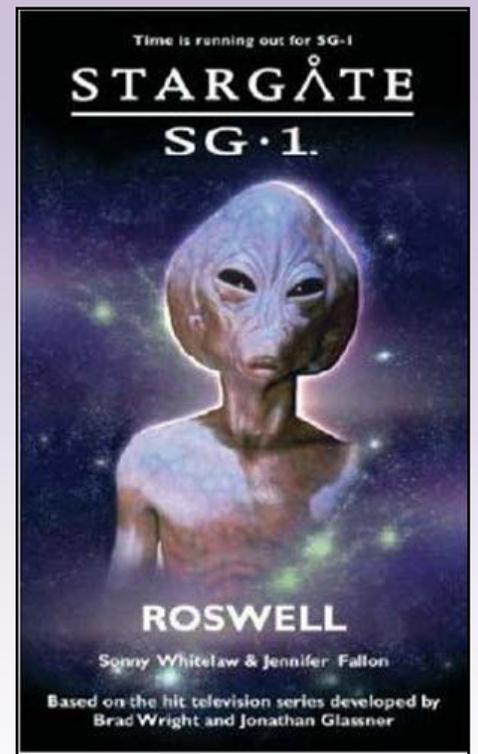
As a tie-in writer I can't create new stories that have the potential of clashing with the *Atlantis* framework—which itself is still undergoing *ad hoc* construction. To put it another way, although mythology is the backbone of the Stargate franchise, I could not engage in

independent mythopoeia within the Atlantis world. This creative challenge led me to consider the appeal of these concepts or, to paraphrase Brunner, the attraction of von Däniken and others' 'sloppy nonsense'." (p1-4)

Why a Masters degree? It was one of those spur of the moment decisions when the Queensland University of Technology Creative Industries Faculty offered ten research scholarships to established novelists interested in writing a novel and exegesis. I applied because I'd long been fascinated by 'sloppy nonsense,' and saw it as a chance to delve into the bowels of academia and flush out the answer.

I started out writing another novel, but a month into the research set it aside to finish *Stargate Atlantis: Exogenesis*, with Beth Christensen. It struck me then that there was nothing in the academic literature on writing tie-ins, although there was a great deal in mainstream publications vilifying it. That was the light bulb moment. I could make this scene(rio) work for me six ways:

- (1) write the Stargate novel, which was already contracted, as part of the thesis
- (2) satisfy personal curiosity about the attraction of alien god cults
- (3) write an exegesis on the profitability of the phenomena – this being the 'industry' side of the Creative Industries Faculty



(4) initiate the process of validating tie-ins by detailing in an academic framework the complexity of the writing process

(5) obtain a Masters degree in Creative Writing which is useful for running writing workshops titled 'Making Money from Alien Gods'

(6) punch a hole in the literary snobbery directed at tie-ins

Okay, a single thesis crammed to within an inch of its life into the requisite academic jargon, isn't exactly going to punch huge holes, but it's a sharp little needle that should help expose literary parochialism for what it is: an anachronism.

It might also help poke a few holes into alien god cults, exposing them as money-making fallacies, all of which stemmed from the very first known work of literature, Gilgamesh.

Besides remembering how to write academic jargon after a thirty year break from university, it was a lot of fun!

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Lee Goldberg to Lecture for MWA

IAMTW Vice President Lee Goldberg will be among the lecturers at the Mystery Writers of America Crime Fiction University, April 29 and 30 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City. May 1st, the Edgar Awards will be presented.

Goldberg will lecture with David Black on "Breaking into Television." They will discuss the difference between writing for a one-shot TV movie versus a year-long series.

Convention Calendar

Stargate SG1 Con

April 3-6, Vancouver, B.C.
Hilton Metrotown Vancouver
6083 McKay Ave.
Registration: \$50-\$199
For more information:
www.creationent.com

I-Con 27

April 4-6, Stony Brook, NY
Stony Brook University
GoH: Charlene Harris
Registration: \$50
For more information:
www.iconsf.org

Odyssey Con

April 4-6, Madison, WI
Guests: George R.R. Martin,
Kage Baker
Registration: \$45
For more information:
www.oddcon.com

ConGlomeration

April 18-20, Louisville, KY
Clarion Hotel
Guests: A.C. Crispin, Eric
Fortune, Walter Koenig, Michael
Capobianco
Registration: \$40
For more information:
www.conglomeration.org

CONduit XVIII

May 23-25, Salt Lake City, UT
Radisson Hotel
GoH: Michael Stackpole
Registration: \$35
Events: writers' workshop,
panels, and more
For more information:
www.conduit.sfcon.org

Balticon 42

May 23-25, Baltimore, MD
Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn
GoH: Connie Willis
Registration: \$59
For more information:
www.balticon.org

Soonercon

June 6-8, Oklahoma City, OK
The Biltmore Hotel
Guests: John Ringo Tom Kidd,
Walter Koenig
Registration: \$20-\$40
For more information:
www.soonercon.info

Origins

Columbus, OH
June 25-29
Greater Columbus Convention
Center

Events: games, seminars,
activities for spouses
Registration: \$60
For more information:
www.originsgamefair.com

Westercon 61

July 3-6, Las Vegas, NV
JW Marriott Resort
Registration: \$60 to April 26
For more information:
www.westercon61.org

Comic Con 2008

July 24-27, San Diego, CA
San Diego Convention Center
Registration: \$75, no on-site
badges will be sold.
For more information:
www.comic-con.org/cc/

Archon 32

August 3-5, Collinsville, IL
Gateway Convention Center
GoH: Laurell K. Hamilton
Registration: \$50 from April 1
until July 31; \$55 from August 1
until September 15;
\$60 from September 15
Main convention hotel: Holiday
Inn: 1000 Eastport Plaza Drive,
Collinsville, IL 62234-6104;
1-800-551-5133 (\$119.95 single-
quad, \$189.95 for parlor half of
Junior Suites).
For more information:
www.archonstl.org

Star Trek Vegas

August 6-10, Las Vegas, NV
Las Vegas Hilton Hotel, home
of Star Trek: The Experience
3000 Paradise Road
Guests: John deLancie,
Malcolm McDowell, Robin
Curtis, Marina Sirtis, Armin
Shimerman, Denise Crosby,
Robert Picardo, and others.
For more information:
www.creationent.com

Denvention, the 66th World Science-Fiction Convention

August 6-10, Denver, CO.
Colorado Convention Center
GoH: Lois McMaster Bujold.
Events: Masquerade, Hugo Awards Ceremony, Critter Crunch robot battle.
For more information:
www.denvention.org

Gen Con Indy

Aug. 14-17, Indianapolis, IN
Indy Convention Center
Guests: Several IAMTW members will be in attendance, presenting writers' workshops and signing books. A special Scribe Awards ceremony will be held to honor the best in game-related fiction.
Registration: \$60
For more information:
www.gencon.org

Foolscap X

Sept. 26-28, Bellevue, WA
Bellevue Sheraton
GoH: Esther Friesner
Registration: \$45
Events: Art show, banquet, panels, and more
For more information:
www.foolscapcon.org

Bouchercon

World Mystery Convention
October 9-12, Baltimore, MD
Sheraton City Center
GoH: Lawrence Block
Registration: \$175 to July 15
For more information:
www.charmedtodeath.com

World Fantasy Convention

October 30-November 3
Calgary, Canada
Guests: Tom Doherty, Barbara Hambly, David Morrell, Tad Williams, Todd Lockwood
Registration: \$125
For more information:
www.worldfantasy2008.org

Upcoming Tie-Ins

IAMTW President Max Alan Collins is soon to start work on the novelization for the *Mummy 3*. Collins did the novelizations for the first two *Mummy* films and the *Scorpion King*. In addition, Collins has signed on for the *X-Files 2* novelization.

Tod Goldberg has signed a three-book deal to write original novels based on the USA Network *Burn Notice* show. The first novel is set to come out this July.

Robert Greenberger is working on the novelization of *Hellboy 2: The Golden Army*.

Karen Travis is #1



Karen Traviss snared the #1 spots on the New York Times bestseller list and the Publishers Weekly mass market paperback bestseller list

with her *Star Wars* tie-in: *Revelation*.

Hungry for News

Tied-In wants your news. *Needs* would be a better word. Just signed a contract for tie-in work? Tell us about it and we'll promote it here. Have a new book coming out? Received rave reviews? We'd like to report those things, too. Tied-In is the perfect place to display your accomplishments.

We'd also like features on your take on the tie-in industry, tips for authors trying to break into the market, sage advice on how to jump-start a tie-in career, and more.

Would you like to be the next author featured in our "Spotlight" section? Drop us an e-mail.

Just attended a convention? Send us a report. Going to be a guest at an upcoming show? We'd like to announce it in our Convention Calendar.

Want to tell the editor that you disapprove of the various colors she sets as the background for each issue? We'd like to hear about that. We'll even take classified ads (no charge).

To keep Tied-In coming out six times a year, we need submissions. If our "in basket" doesn't have enough in it, we'll be forced to go quarterly—which isn't necessarily a bad move. MWA, SinC, and other writer groups have great quarterly pubs.

Send Tied-In material to: jeanrabe@hotmail.com.

Take Care,

Jean