



Tied-In

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

Playing Twenty Questions with Max

Max Allan Collins, president and co-founder of the IAMTW, recently volunteered to be interviewed for Tied-In. Here is the transcript.

1. MAX, YOU'RE A BUSY SOUL. CAN YOU TELL US WHAT WILL BE HITTING THE BOOKSHELVES FOR YOU THIS YEAR?

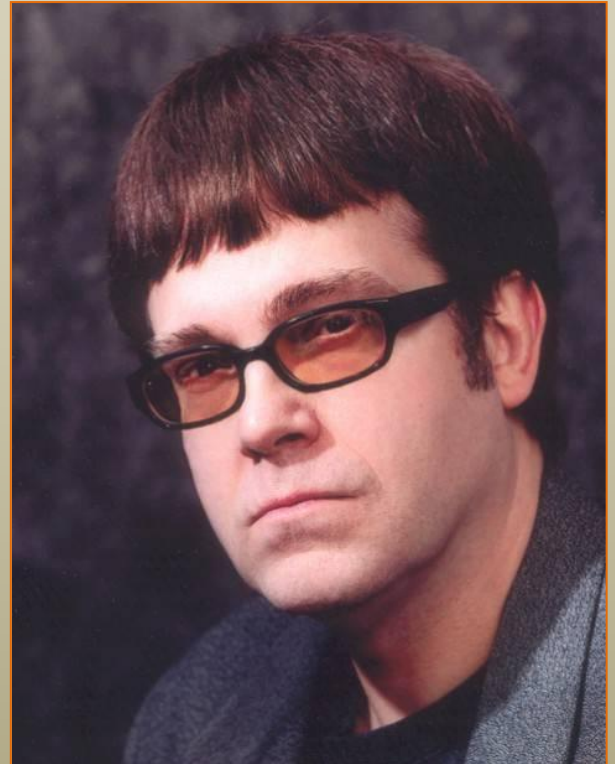
On the tie-in front, I've done the movie novel, *G.I. JOE: The Rise of Cobra* and a prequel novel, *G.I. JOE: Above and Beyond*. These will be from DAW this summer. My second Mike Hammer collaboration with Mickey Spillane—working from unfinished manuscripts Mickey entrusted to me, in the last weeks of his life—will be out in the fall—*The Big Bang*, a Harcourt hardcover. The previous Hammer, *The Goliath Bone*, was well-received but it was designed to be the last novel in the series and took place in modernday, post 9/11 New York. *The Big Bang* was begun (and set aside by Mickey) in 1965, and that's the period I've set it in—it's really vintage Hammer, wild stuff, LSD and hippie chicks and free love.

There will also be another Hard Case crime original—*Quarry in the Middle*. The success of *The Last Quarry* for

editor Charles Ardai led to a prequel called *The First Quarry*, and now this mid-stream story, set in the '80s. A movie based on *The Last Quarry*, from my screenplay and starring Tom Sizemore, is on the festival circuit right now, winning awards and doing well—*The Last Lullaby*, it's called. Kind of remarkable, considering my hitman Quarry was in a series of four books in the mid-'70s, and now he's back.

2. WHAT'S UP NEXT? WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING ON?

I am almost finished with *Antiques Bizarre*, the fourth "Trash 'n' Treasures" mystery for Kensington, written in collaboration with my wife, Barb – the joint byline is "Barbara Allan." These books have done rather well, particularly the first, *Antiques Roadkill*. They are funny, even zany cozies, and Barb does a great job on them. We plot them together, Barb does the first draft of maybe 40,000 words and I do the next draft of 60,000 or so. After that, I'll do my draft of another collaborative novel, *Killer TV*, one of at least two, also for Kensington. My longtime associate on a lot of tie-stuff, Matt Clemens, is co-



writing and sharing byline. Matt and I had worked together on all the *CSI* novels (including *Miami*), *Dark Angel*, *Bones*, *Criminal Minds*, and assorted other *CSI* stuff, like jigsaw puzzles and comics. He's a wonderful writer and has moved from just researching into co-plotting and now full collaborative mode. We had done so many serial killer/forensics books based on TV shows we decided to create our own series.

Most of the rest of the year will be spent on the first Nathan Heller novel since 2001. This one's called *Bye Bye, Baby*

and is about the murder of Marilyn Monroe. It's for TOR.

3. DO YOU DRIVE A HARDTOP OR RAGTOP?

Right now I drive a small mini-van. I once had a Chevy HHR, which is an old-fashioned buggy like the PT Cruiser. We loved it, but it was cramped for the long-haul driving we find ourselves doing when we're out doing promo. For many years I drove a Firebird, and in my mind, I still do.

4. IN ADDITION TO YOUR TIE-IN WORK, DO YOU HAVE ANY ORIGINAL NOVELS YOU'RE WORKING ON THAT YOU'D LIKE TO TELL US ABOUT?

See above.

5. YOU AND LEE GOLDBERG FORMED THE IAMTW. WHAT PROMPTED THE TWO OF YOU TO DO IT?

We'd both been thinking about doing it, and when we discovered we were on the same wave length, threw in together, to divide up the work. Don't ask Lee how evenly work is divided, because he definitely gets the "biggest" half, as the Kingfish used to say.

6. ICE CREAM . . . CHOCOLATE, VANILLA, OR STRAWBERRY?

Vanilla, but only with hot fudge.

7. WHAT TIE-IN PROJECT WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT FOR YOU, AND WHY?

Several have been tough.

Daylight was a horrible script, but I couldn't turn it down because I'd already turned the editor down on another movie project, and knew I'd never be asked again. But I figured out a way to do it interestingly – both for me and the reader – which was to make it a kind of documentary on paper, as if the disaster depicted in the film had been real. I did half a dozen or so first-person voices, alternating. That may be my best tie-in.

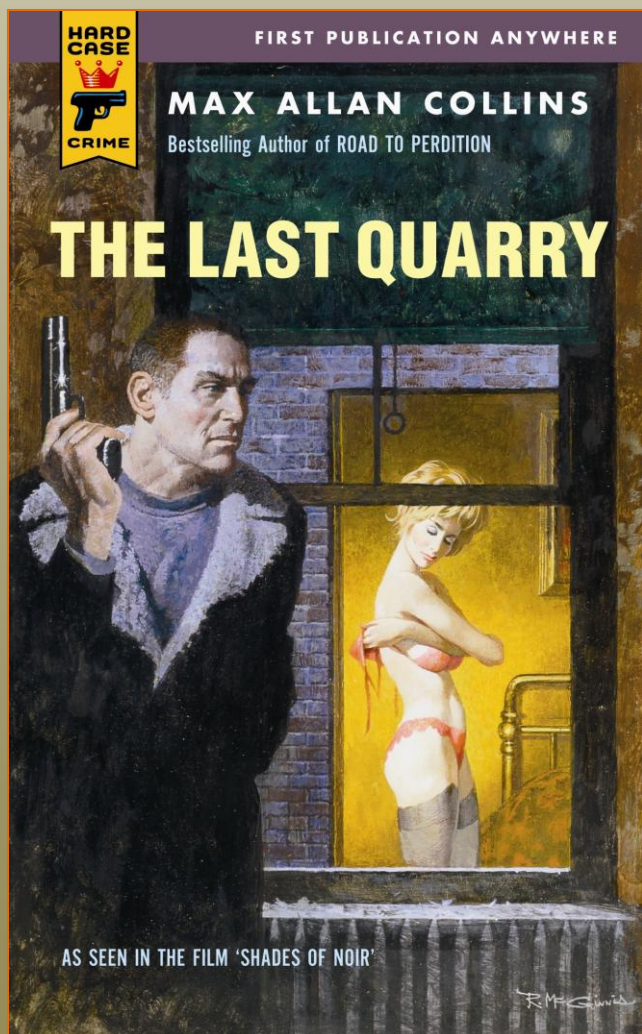
Similarly, *I Love Trouble* was an awful screen-play. But the set-up had two reporters, a fairly lame Spencer

Tracy/Katherine Hepburn wannabe pair, who were rivals in love and journalism. So I alternated first-person chapters between them, and made them both unreliable narrators, contradicting each other all the time. That came off very nicely, considering what I was working from.

My nightmare story I've told many times – doing the novel of the screenplay of *Road to Perdition*, a screenplay based on my own graphic novel. I did a 90,000 word, very solid novel that the editor called the best tie-in he'd ever read; then DreamWorks made me cut everything that wasn't in the movie. The published version was maybe 40,000 words. Couldn't write dialogue for my own characters. I never felt worse about the writing game.

8. LET'S LOOK AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN. WHAT TIE-IN PROJECT WAS THE EASIEST, AND WHY?

The recent *X-Files* movie novel. I loved the show, had tried to get one of the tie-ins and failed (back in the day), and this was a gift. Frank Spotnitz, the co-writer and producer of the film, communicated with me throughout, and I was provided all kinds of stuff. I had the complete script when nobody but the director and maybe the two lead actors had the thing. They trusted me and supported me, and I loved the property. Some people didn't like the film, but I did, very much. I never had a better time in the tie-in game than writing that book.



9. WHAT DO YOU MOST ENJOY ABOUT TIE-IN WRITING?

Well, I love movies. I have a knack for (hate this word) novelizations because I've directed indie films – four features, several shorts, two documentaries – and I know how to read a script, how to translate it into prose. So that's enjoyable to me, making a novel out of a screenplay, just as an exercise in craft.

The other great thing has been the ability to work in all sorts of genres that would otherwise be denied me – I'm a mystery specialist and in particular am known for historical crime novels, so getting to do a western (*Maverick*), science-fiction (*Waterworld*), horror (*The Mummy*), fantasy (*The Scorpion King*), war (*Saving Private Ryan*), romance (*I Love Trouble*), techno-thriller (*Air Force One*), and so on...that's a real kick.

10. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MUSICAL?

I am a huge buff on musicals, actually – my father was a music teacher and in the early '50s did the first high school productions of both *Oklahoma* and *Carousel*. I can give you a list of *some* of my favorites: *Sweeney Todd*, *Carousel*, *Damn Yankees*, *Into the Woods*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and *Lil Abner*. I would not cross the street to see an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical. In fact, I would run in the opposite direction. I also like the quirky "cult" musicals, *Little Shoppe of Horrors*, *Reefer*

Madness, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

11. PUBLISHING HAS TAKEN SEVERAL HITS IN THE PAST FEW YEARS . . . LAYOFFS AT THE BIG HOUSES, A CUT IN TITLES. HOW DO YOU THINK THE TIE-IN INDUSTRY HAS BEEN IMPACTED?

I can't tell yet. Sorry to duck it, but I just can't tell. I do think tie-ins will survive, and the kind of versatile, resilient writers who belong to the IAMTW will be among those able to meet the market, however it's shifted. Tie-ins rarely sell huge numbers (there are exceptions) but they are dependable, and on some level are no-brainers for editors and publishers.

12. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU OFFER AUTHORS WHO ARE TRYING TO BREAK INTO TIE-IN WRITING OR ESTABLISHED AUTHORS TRYING TO GET MORE WORK?

If you have any, please tell me.

13. CAN YOU DESCRIBE ONE OF YOUR TYPICAL WORK DAYS?

I would say the morning tends to be business, plowing through e-mails, getting snail mail

ANTIQUES ROADKILL



Barbara Allan

ready, maybe a little research. After a late breakfast or early lunch, I write all afternoon. Then again late evening, if necessary. Usually seven days a week, but certainly six.

14. DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE CUISINE AND DISH?

Probably Italian – any great pasta dish.

15. WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST TIE-IN NOVEL AND HOW DID YOU LAND THE PROJECT?

DICK TRACY was my first. I was writing the syndicated comic strip at the time, and had received good press for revitalizing the strip when it was on the verge of cancellation. I was consulting on the movie, helping with research and

suggesting villains, and providing visual info. So I lobbied for the job, and so did my agent. They paid me miserably but gave me a nice royalty, and then the book sold something like 800,000 copies. Would that all tie-ins since have paid as well!

It was a tough gig, though – Warren Beatty and his people were incredibly fussy. My first draft, which was much better than the film (it really was) had only loosely followed the screenplay, and Disney and Beatty were both understandably offended. I did a page one rewrite and stayed true to the material, but still wed it to the original strip, putting more Gould characters in (Vitamin Flintheart, for example). My version of one scene actually got into the movie – they re-shot the scene, after the producer called and asked me why I'd softened Tess Trueheart's mother's negative opinions of Tracy. I explained that Tracy had avenged the death of Mr. Trueheart, and that any diehard fan of the strip would not buy her being so down on Dick. They also used some of my stuff in post-production. The producer told me I'd solved a lot of script problems for them, after the fact (they did the fixes in ADR). So I take pride in having written a novelization that the film was in part based on!

16. I FIRST MET YOU A LOOOOONG TIME AGO, AT A CHICAGO COMIC CONVENTION WHERE CHET GOULD WAS THE GOH. CAN YOU SHARE A FAVORITE MEMORY OF WORKING WITH CHET ON DICK TRACY?

We never worked together. He consulted on the strip, which consisted of me calling him and asking questions, often technical police ones. We kept his name on for a while out of respect, but it was entirely done by me and artist Rick Fletcher. Chet and I were close, though, and I visited him often. He gave me a great piece of advice – when I took over, and was getting a lot of attention, he said, “Don't put all your eggs in this basket. DICK TRACY will never be yours – you'll always be the second guy and in my shadow. Stick with the strip, but do your own stuff, too.”

17. DID YOU HAVE OTHER CAREERS BEFORE WRITING?

I sacked groceries and bussed tables. At the start of my writing career, I taught at a community college, for five years, part time. I've been a semi-pro musician since 1966. Still playing gigs. My band, The Daybreakers, which had an Atlantic single out in 1967, was recently inducted into the Iowa Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

18. WHEN AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BE A FULL-TIME WRITER?

I had that in mind from about age 11 onward. But I went full time when I got the *Dick Tracy* comic strip assignment – it meant a monthly pay check, and

I had that for fifteen years. A freelancer with a regular check – can't beat it.

19. IF YOU COULD BE A CONTESTANT ON A PAST OR PRESENT GAME SHOW, WHICH SHOW WOULD YOU PICK?

I *have* been a contestant, on two game shows: in the early '80s I was on TO TELL THE TRUTH (“Will the real Max Collins please stand up?”) and another one later on, around '90, a Bert Convy show about professional collaborations (my wife and I appeared), the name of which escapes me.

But I would love to have been on MATCH GAME in its Richard Dawson/Charles Nelson Reilly/Brett Sommers prime.

20. WHAT DO YOU HOPE THE IAMTW CAN ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS?

To bring respect to its members and their craft. I have had a remarkable, and very blessed, career. But in the past ten years or so, when I've made tie-ins a large part of what I do, I have taken incredible abuse from people who assume we are all talentless hacks. I wish all of these critics an assignment to purgatory, where they cannot move on until they have written a novel at least as good as the worst one ever written by one of our members – they'd have a long, warm stay, believe me.

**Congratulations to IAMTW member John Helfers
on his recent Hugo Award nomination:**

Best Related Book

The Vorkosigan Companion: The Universe of Lois McMaster Bujold
by Lillian Stewart Carl & John Helfers, eds. (Baen)

THE LONG, STRANGE TRIP TO NEKROPOLIS

by Tim Waggoner

It's January 1995. I'm thirty-one years old and I'm living in Columbus, Ohio. My then wife is pregnant with our first child, and I'm teaching composition part time at various area colleges while writing fiction full time. I'm in a writers' group with a number of wonderful people, including the fantasy novelist Dennis McKiernan, best known for a series of novels taking place in the wondrous realm of Mithgar. Dennis has become both a good friend and mentor to me, and he's introduced me to his agent, Jonathan Matson, who's taken me on as a client. I've published about a dozen short stories by this point, and I've got my first novel deal cooking: Jonathan is negotiating contract terms with a publisher for a surreal horror novel called *The Harmony Society*.

Life, as the saying goes, is pretty damned good.

In addition to my writers' group, I'm also in a gamers' group with Dennis and another member of our writers' group, Peter Busch. What's cool about this group is that each person takes a turn being gamemaster and designs an original scenario for the others to play. We've just finished playing a wonderful game Dennis designed, in which we were aliens – truly inhuman, scientifically plausible aliens – sent to investigate a mysterious abandoned space station. Now it's my turn to develop and run a scenario for Dennis and Pete.



I have to admit, I'm intimidated. Both Dennis and Pete are experienced gamers, and while I've played D&D and such before, I've never gamemastered, let alone designed a scenario myself. But Dennis and Pete promise to help me with the game mechanics as we play, so I roll up my metaphorical sleeves and get to work. For a few years, I've been thinking about writing a novel set in an otherworldly city full of monsters. So I decide to finally get to work on bringing this dark city of mine – which I've named Necropolis – to life. Or unlife, whichever is more appropriate.

I design the city, its inhabitants, come up with a nefarious plot for Dennis and Pete to deal with, and create characters for them: a pair of Earth cops who were trapped in Necropolis on a previous case: one who can no longer withstand sunlight (though he's still fully human) and the other who has become a zombie. The two work as private investigators on the very mean

streets of this shadow-enshrouded city.

I'm pleased with what I've developed, and when the day comes to begin playing, Dennis and Pete love the world and have a lot of fun with the scenario (even though I've made a rookie mistake and designed their characters to be too strong and they're tearing through my world like it was made of tissue paper – but then, maybe that's part of why they're having so much fun). We get halfway through the game scenario in our first session. It'll be a few months before we finish, though. My daughter Devon decides to come into the world five weeks early, and I'm a bit busy for a while. Eventually, we get back to the game and finish it up. Dennis and Pete had a great time, and they congratulate me on doing a good job on running the game, and an even better one on designing Necropolis.

Life is still pretty damned good, even if now I'm suffering from new parent sleep-deprivation most of the time.

Then I get a call from my agent. The publisher's made an offer on *The Harmony Society*. It's a small publisher, and the money's not great, but I'm thrilled. My first novel sale!

Then Jonathan calls me a few days later to tell me the deal's fallen through because the publisher "No longer feels comfortable with the book." Whatever the hell that means.

Naturally enough, I'm devastated, and like any other first-time novelist in my position, I want to give up, want to curl up in a corner and die, boo-hoo, sob-sob. Instead, I get good and pissed and decide to write another novel.

Jonathan to start sending around, and I move on to the next project.

Nine years pass.

It's 2004. My daughter Devon is nine, and her sister Leigh is four. I'm now a tenure-track professor teaching composition and creative writing at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio. I've published close to fifty stories now and a few novels, most of them media tie-ins. *Necropolis*, however, still hasn't found a home. It's too weird, blends too many genres, and publishers aren't sure what to do with it. I decide to submit it to editor John Helfers for Five Star

at an astonishing pace. I have a website now, and through it, readers send me e-mail, usually telling me how much they enjoyed this story or that novel (with the exception of the anonymous three-word e-mail I received which said, in all lowercase letters: "you write badly"). The most common e-mails I get are those telling me how much the sender enjoyed *Necropolis* – which they found at their local library – and asking when there will be a sequel. When I do panels at conventions people ask me when there's going to be a *Necropolis* sequel. People I run into at the bookstore recognize

my name and ask about a sequel. It's getting so bad that I'm starting to have dreams in which nameless, faceless apparitions demand I write a sequel to *Necropolis*.

Hmmmm, I think to myself. Maybe I should start listening to these folks. At least that way maybe I can stop having those dreams . . .

It's around 2007 now, and a couple new genres have become extremely popular in publishing: urban fantasy and paranormal romance. For the past couple of years, I've been wandering through bookstores, seeing these books and thinking, *Man, I guess I was ahead of my time with Necropolis*. (And truth to tell, thinking this with more than a bit of envy.) Still, pragmatism is the hallmark of the professional writer, and I hope that the current popularity of urban fantasy means a publisher might be interested in bringing out a mass-market edition of *Necropolis*, hopefully as part of

For the past couple of years, I've been wandering through bookstores, seeing these books and thinking, *Man, I guess*

I was ahead of my time with Necropolis.

I turn my attention to *Necropolis*. I've already got the world designed, and I have a plot, plus, I've *lived* the story along with Dennis and Pete. So I sit down and, with some changes (combining the two detectives into one character, for example), I plant my ass in the office chair in front of my computer and my fingers start flying across the keys. Twenty-one days later, *Necropolis* the novel is finished. It only runs about 67,000 words, relatively short for a novel, but around the right size for a mystery, and since *Necropolis* is as much a mystery as it is fantasy and horror (with a little science fiction, humor, and romance sprinkled in here and there), I'm satisfied. After some revision, the book goes off to

Books, a publisher that specializes in producing library-edition hardbacks (meaning sturdy books sold directly to libraries instead of in bookstores). I've worked with John on numerous anthology projects. He's a great editor, a swell guy, and we work well together, so I figure he might like *Necropolis*. And indeed he does. *Necropolis* comes out from Five Star late in 2004, and I'm a happy man. I've come to really love that world and my main character over the past nine years, and I'm glad other people will finally get a chance to read about them.

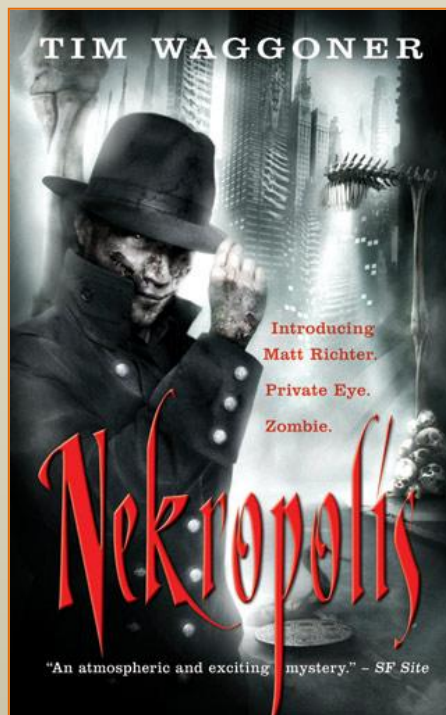
More years pass.

I continue to publish more novels and stories, some original, some tie-in work, and the Internet continues to grow

a new series. So my agent and I rededicate ourselves to pitching the book to editors. We get some nibbles, but no one swallows the bait. In the meantime, I'm getting even *more* people begging me for a sequel to *Necropolis*, and I tell them that I'm working on it.

Early in 2008, author, editor, and more-wonderful-than-you-can-possibly-imagine person Jean Rabe is kind enough to ask me to write a story for an anthology of urban fantasy tales called *City Fantastic*. I've toyed with writing some stories about my main character from *Necropolis* for years, but I've never gotten around to it. I decide to quit stalling and write "Disarmed and Dangerous," zombie detective Matthew Adrion's first new adventure in thirteen years.

Then, almost as if that story sends out cosmic vibes into the publishing universe, one day in late 2008 I get an e-mail from publisher Marc Gascoigne. Marc's worked with the Black Library, publisher of the hugely popular *Warhammer* and *Warhammer 64K* novels, and with science fiction/fantasy imprint Solaris. I wrote an original novel based on *The Nightmare on Elm Street* franchise for Black Flame, a division of Black Library, a few years back. Marc knows my work and we've chatted at several conventions, and I've always been impressed with his intelligence, energy, professionalism, and enthusiasm for writing and publishing. In his e-mail, Marc tells me he's going to head up a new imprint for HarperCollins called Angry Robot, and might I



have any novel projects to pitch to him?

As a matter of fact . . .

Marc agrees to take a look at *Necropolis*, and he's very enthusiastic about it. He wants me to add about twenty thousand more words to expand the setting in more deliriously gruesome detail, and he suggests a couple minor changes: calling the city *Nekropolis* to give the word a more sinister spin, and he thinks my main character, Matthew Adrion (a spin on the Latin name *Adrian*, which means *dark*), could use a better last name. Since it's been close to fifteen years since I named the man, I have to admit his last name has worn a little thin on me too, so he becomes Matthew Richter (which has an association with *rictus* which works well for a zombie PI, don't you think?). Marc would also like me to write two more *Nekropolis* books for him.

And, as you're probably expecting me to say by now, life is once again Very Good Indeed.

Marc wants to bring the new and expanded *Nekropolis* out with the first wave of books released by Angry Robot, which means I have only a month to do the revision: nine more days than it took me to write the original. No prob, says I. And it isn't. I've lived with *Necropolis* – now with a K instead of a C – for fifteen years. I have no problem returning to it because, in truth, I've never left.

So here we are today, Matthew Richter and I, in 2009, with *Nekropolis* due to come out from Angry Robot in August, and two more adventures to follow. And after that, who knows? I'm not worried about what might happen, though. I've learned from experience that you can't keep a good zombie down.

Professional writers often quote the famous line from the *I Ching*, "Perseverance furthers," not because they believe in fortunetelling (though maybe they might – who am I to speak for all authors?) but because it codifies in two simple words a very powerful mental and emotional survival skill writers need to continue in the face of rejection and setbacks. So now that you've read this, if you're still wondering if perseverance really does further, let me tell you something, my friends.

You bet your undead ass it does.

***Nekropolis* Release Dates**

UK/Australia

6 August 2009 [UK]

1 Oct 2009 [Oz]

US/Canada 1 Oct 2009

eBook 6 August 2009

Angry Robot Books Website:

www.angryrobotbooks.com

A BIG FINISH IN SIGHT

By **Scott Andrews**

In these times of tightened belts, struggling publishers, and dwindling bookstores, it's nice to find one tie-in producer thriving in the face of the recession. Big Finish Productions' new monthly magazine, *Vortex*, lists 51 releases scheduled just between March and December 2009. A prodigious output!

BF has been releasing audio tie-ins for eleven years, and their stable of franchises continues to expand. They began their range with full cast adaptations—essentially radio plays released on cassette—of the New Adventures novels. This hugely successful line of Doctor Who books from Virgin had continued chronicling the adventures of his literary companion Bernice Summerfield after the Who license was reclaimed by the BBC; BF brought Bernice to life.

It wasn't long before they won the rights to Doctor Who, secured the services of four of TV's Doctors Who, and began releasing original monthly plays on CD. Spin off series focusing on the series' monsters and companions followed.

Such was the quality of their output that some BF plays directly inspired episodes of the newly revived TV version – a rare example of original tie-ins being adapted by the show that spawned them.

Other properties followed – The Tomorrow People, Sapphire and Steel, Dark Shadows, Judge Dredd and more. But certain

franchises raised a new problem. Doctor Who has only two leads; to produce audio tie-ins to an ensemble franchise like Stargate is logistically much more difficult. Also, there was a hunger for audio stories featuring the first four Doctors—a problem because three of them are dead and one rebuts all BF's advances.

BF responded by minting a brand new format, a sort of halfway house between full-cast play and traditional audiobooks. These two-hander audio plays, released on a single CD, allow them to produce tie-ins to franchises whose casts would be impossible, practically or financially, to gather in a recording studio.

The main voice is a cast member from the parent show, the second voice normally a newly created character who exists to propel the main narrator's tale. It's an exciting format that lends itself to a slightly different, more internal kind of storytelling. This new format now drives a new range of Doctor Who audios—The Companion Chronicles—as well as their Stargate and newly announced Highlander releases.

After years of buying and enjoying their output, I finally got the chance to write for BF at the end of 2008. My first script for them, *Stargate Atlantis: Impressions*, is in the new format, and it features a unique fusion of two big franchises. I was lucky enough to attend the recording

session and watched Nick Briggs, the voice of the Daleks and Cybermen and a leading light in both TV and audio Doctor Who, voice my supporting character alongside the main voice—Kavan Smith's Stargate Atlantis character, Major Lorne. As someone who's only written for print before, it was a thrill to watch such accomplished actors bring my script to life.

BF continues to redefine what a tie-in range can do. Their new Robin Hood series has been developed in close collaboration with the BBC. It comprises tales set between specific episodes of the forthcoming TV season, to be released online between the episodes they bridge. It's an experiment in real-time tie-in storytelling one step more integrated than the between-season webisodes produced by shows like *Battlestar Galactica*.

The future for BF looks rosy, and with opportunities to work with new franchises being explored all the time, their audio tie-ins continue to be an exciting and, crucially, financially viable proposition.



TIED INTO COMICS

By Paul Kupperberg

(Paul writes a regular column for Bookgasm.com, and he graciously allowed Tied-In to reprint this one from earlier in the year.)

I thought for the first installment of 2009, we might try something a little different (and slightly longer). Rather than reviewing novels that they may have written, I've asked my colleagues in the 150ish-member strong International Association of Media Tie-In Writers to answer a couple of questions about the characters and books they would *like* to write, as well as to share some of their wackiest experiences dealing with unreasonable or just plain dumb editors and licensors (with names changed to protect the innocent ... and the likelihood of these guys ever getting work from those same dummies again).

KEITH R.A. DECANDIDO, whose most recent novels include *STAR TREK: A SINGULAR DESTINY*, *SUPERNATURAL: BONE KEY* and *CSI: NEW YORK: FOUR WALLS*, and who edited many of the Marvel novels produced by Byron Preiss for Berkley Books, said, "Well, the ideal choice would be my favorite superhero of all time: Spider-Man. Except, I've already written him. My first short-story sale *and* my first novel sale were both Spider-Man, so I've kinda already done it. But I do have an X-Men story I've been dying to tell, and maybe

someday I'll get to. It's about a mutant with a weird form of telepathy that enables him to periodically copy the personality of someone he's exposed to, a power he doesn't realize he has, and one which causes a severe crisis of identity once he realizes it."

Author of the recent comics novels *52* and *INFINITE CRISIS*, as well as the *DAREDEVIL* and *GHOST RIDER* novelizations, **GREG COX** said, "I have a distinct

Four. I love the juxtaposition of those mind-boggling Jack Kirby science-fiction concepts with such great and well-defined characters who function as a family, not just a super-team. And there's just no better villain than Dr. Doom. I like him best when his honor and pride force him to straddle the line between good and evil. I see Dr. Doom as a tragic character, a potentially great man poisoned by his own pride. That's what makes him fun."

"If there's one comic-book character I'd still really like to write for above all others, it would be Batman." - David Mack

weakness for the spooky heroes: Doctor Strange, The Spectre, Dr. Fate, Morbius, etc. I got to play with The Spectre a little bit in my *INFINITE CRISIS* novelization, but I'd love to explore the creepier sides of the Marvel or DC universes some more. In the meantime, however, I just got to write a Phantom story for Moonstone, which was fun. Beware the Ghost Who Walks!"

J. STEVEN YORK, author of novelizations of the *THE AGE OF CONAN: THE ANOK HERETIC OF STYGIA* trilogy and novelizations of the *MECHWARRIOR: DARK AGE #20: TRIAL BY CHAOS* said, "I'm partial to team books and/or those with a strong science-fiction element: Iron Man, Green Lantern, Legion of Super-Heroes, etc. But I have to say the one I'm most disappointed I never got a chance to write: The Fantastic

"Well, I got the chance to write a novel based on a superhero whose persona was a perfect fit for my style of storytelling: Wolverine," said David Mack, author of many *STAR TREK* novels, including the recently released *DESTINY* trilogy and the acclaimed *VANGUARD* series, as well as the Wolverine novel *ROAD OF BONES*. His first work of original fiction, a supernatural thriller titled *THE CALLING*, will be published this July by Simon & Schuster.

"I co-wrote and sold an unpublished Batman script about a decade ago," Mack said. "If there's one comic-book character I'd still really like to write for above all others, it would be Batman. I have this old proposal in my files for a 'what if?' origin story that sets Batman's genesis in a war-torn former Soviet puppet state, such as Georgia or Ukraine, and

"Still, it might be interesting to do a story on Bruce Wayne leaving Gotham and starting over somewhere else, when the city has turned its back on both him and Batman." - Russell Davis

bases his story on the concept of redemption, rather than on vengeance. I could imagine that story working in an updated form set in the Middle East. Running a close second to ol' Batman would be Iron Man, followed by Doctor Strange."

BRANDIE TARVIN, who has contributed short stories to the **BLUE KINGDOM** anthologies **PIRATES OF THE BLUE KINGDOM** and **SHADES AND SPECTERS** admitted, "If I had a choice, I'd like to write an ensemble piece for the Teen Titans. I enjoy telling tales about those characters, heroes or otherwise, who haven't been fully explored in other media. Groups like the Teen Titans — or even single heroes who don't fit the standard Superman/Wonder Woman/Batman trio — really deserve a chance to shine. The best part about it is that lesser characters can often go places, character development-wise or plot-wise, that you can't get away with for the big names. An author can really drag out the angst or play in a new sandbox."

YVONNE NAVARRO, whose more than 20 books include the novelizations of **HELLBOY** and **ELEKTRA**, simply said, "I would so love to do a novel about Nightcrawler," while Bob Greenberger, whose credits include numerous **STAR TREK** novels as well as this year's mammoth **THE ESSENTIAL BATMAN ENCYCLOPEDIA**

and **HELLBOY II: THE GOLDEN ARMY** novelization, said, "Lots of great choices, but I would think Green Lantern given the cosmic scope and camaraderie inherent in the concept. It was always the character I wanted a crack at editing and never had the chance."

RUSSELL DAVIS, author of **TRANSFORMERS: ANNIHILATION**, **TRANSFORMERS: FUSION** and **RED EDEN** (with Gregory Simay), chose an old favorite: "I'd love to do a Batman novel, but I think covering new ground would be very, very difficult. A lot has been done with that character already. Still, it might be interesting to do a story on Bruce Wayne leaving Gotham and starting over somewhere else, when the city has turned its back on both him and Batman. Perhaps where he confronts a new villain, rather than one of the more familiar foes."

DAVID SEIDMAN, who has written books based on characters from King Kong to Mickey Mouse to Spider-Man, as well as characters that have nothing to do with animals, would also have to go bats. "If I'd had to pick one, it'd be Batman, because of the story that I have in mind: Take the money away. Strip him of the cash that pays for those wonderful toys. How would such a change affect his relationship

with his employee Alfred, with his still-wealthy allies Nightwing and Robin, with the enemies that he has to defeat even though he's losing his resources, and even with his own alter ego of Bruce Wayne? Oh, the tale I could tell!"

The prolific **JEFF MARIOTTE**, author of **SPIDER-MAN: REQUIEM**, **30 DAYS OF NIGHT: ETERNAL DAMNATION** (with Steve Niles) and **CSI: MIAMI: RIGHT TO DIE**, also added his vote for the Dark Knight. "I've written comic book-based tie-in novels using Spider-Man, **30 DAYS OF NIGHT**, **Gen13**, **Superman** — along with **Phantom Stranger**, **The Demon**, **Jonah Hex**, **El Diablo** and **Scalphunter**, which was really fun — so I've been able to play in that world quite a bit. But I still haven't had the chance to do anything with my favorite superhero: Batman. One of these days! I'd also enjoy writing about **Daredevil** and/or **Doctor Strange**."

MATT FORBECK, whose novels include **BLOOD BOWL**, **MARKED FOR DEATH** and **SECRET OF THE SPIRITKEEPER**, decided to make his Marvel: "Flat out, I'd snatch up Spider-Man. I learned to read with Spidey comics, and I've been hooked on the character since. Should I ever have the shot at such a book, I'd love to tackle an **ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN** novel. Brian Michael Bendis has done a

great job of bringing the character back to his teen-angst roots while updating him for a modern audience in the comics, and I'd love to tackle that same angle in prose."

Author of **THE BLOOD ANGELS OMNIBUS** and **STARGATE SG-1: RELATIVITY**, **JAMES SWALLOW'S** choice is based on an old love rather than on the character's newfound

popularity. "I've been a comics reader since I was a lad, and my experience writing comics characters has all been prose or radio, although not in the traditional

spandex 'n' capes sense: I wrote novels and audio dramas featuring future lawman Judge Dredd and clone soldier Rogue Trooper from 2000 AD. But if we're talking superheroes here, it would be Iron Man, without doubt. Tony Stark's alter ego has been my lifelong fave, and the recent uptick in old Shellhead's popularity thanks to the movie has made me a happy fanboy. I'd write him in something that mixed techno-action with some 007-style globetrotting, giving Stark a chance to be a hero inside and outside the red-and-gold armor. And maybe a classic villain or two."

From the author of **UNHOLY: HAUNTED LANDS**, the third volume in his **FORGOTTEN REALMS** trilogy, **RICHARD LEE BYERS**, comes another lifelong favorite: "There

are so many great characters, but I guess I'd go with Doctor Strange. I've got a strong idea for a story. I'm reluctant to lay out all the details, but it would pit the character against a challenge unlike any he's faced before and give me a chance to play with diverse elements of the supernatural part of the Marvel Universe. If I couldn't have Doc, I'd go with Batman, another lifelong favorite."

"Marvel insisted there be no references to Nazis ever. Seriously." - Keith R.A. DeCandido. "Made it real hard to do a Captain America novel, because the Red Skull was off limits."

As for wacky experiences in the tie-in field, most writers have a story to tell:

"Marvel insisted there be no references to Nazis *ever*. Seriously," said DeCandido. "Made it real hard to do a Captain America novel, because the Red Skull was off limits. We managed to use Baron Strucker in a bunch of different books, but only in his role as the head of HYDRA, and then we could only refer to his background as being a 'Prussian war criminal.'"

Cox concurred with DeCandido's choice of wacky interference: "Headache-wise, Keith beat me to the punch on the Nazi thing. It still amuses me that I had to turn Baron Wolfgang Von Strucker from an ex-Nazi to a Prussian war criminal of unspecified political orientation. Beyond that, I don't

want to bite the hand that feeds me."

DeCandido also had a hand in (but not on) another headache involving a Marvel novel, this one written by Richard Lee Byers, who remembered, "I wrote an X-Men novel called **SOUL KILLER**.

The cover artist painted Storm with a big ass. The editorial powers that be felt it was an *inappropriately* big ass. So they

covered it with a black circle. But you can't just have a black circle in the middle of your cover illustration for no apparent reason, so they put the author's name in it. Thus, my name's right on top of Storm's ass."

"Speaking as the editorial power-that-was in question," DeCandido said, "we had to do *something*. What Richard didn't mention was that the cover art in question was by Richard Corben, who did not do revisions. And it was a great cover, except for the ginormous ass on Storm — and really, that illustration put the max in *gluteus maximus*. So we put in a butt-blurring byline burst!"

Davis, a soul of discretion, said, "There are so many to choose from, and few that don't reveal at least some of those involved. Here's one: a highly intelligent, technologically advanced, space-faring race is surprised by gravity!"

Greenberger ran into a bit of political correctness that still has him scratching his head: "In my forthcoming Iron Man book,

Marvel was freaking out and telling me I *could* have HYDRA as terrorists threatening NYC, but I *could not* reference Al Qaeda having done the same in the recent past.”

Seidman’s silliness involved a studio with a security fetish counterproductive to the creation of a good book: “I got an offer to write a movie novelization, but the studio would have let me read the script only once and refused to show me film footage or other visuals. Try writing an entire novel that way, especially when the novel had to be point-by-point accurate to the film. It hurt to turn the job down, because I was dying to write about the movie’s characters, but I just couldn’t produce a decent book under those conditions.”

But Swallow takes the prize, with an entire book slipped out from under him ... just as he was about to start writing it: “I’d outlined a novel that had been approved by the publisher and I was just about to start writing it when I was told that the book, despite having already been contracted, announced in the trades and up on Amazon for pre-order, had not been approved by the owners of the franchise. So when the entire plotline of my novel was kicked out because the same story was going to be done in the ongoing comics series, I was forced to come up with a totally new plotline using the same title and race through the usually months-long approval process in a matter of days, in order to keep to the production schedule.”

2009 Scribe Awards

Nominees Announced

The International Association of Media Tie-In Writers is pleased to announce this year's nominees for the 2009 awards, which honor excellence in licensed tie-in writing—novels based on TV shows, movies, and games. The nominees for this year's awards are:

Best General Fiction Original

BURN NOTICE: THE FIX
by Tod Goldberg
CRIMINAL MINDS:
FINISHING SCHOOL
by Max Allan Collins
CSI: HEADHUNTER
by Greg Cox

Best General Fiction Adapted

DEATH DEFYING ACTS
by Greg Cox
INDIANA JONES AND THE
KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL
SKULL by James Rollins
THE TUDORS: KING TAKES
QUEEN by Elizabeth Massie
THE WACKNESS
by Dale C. Phillips
X-FILES: I WANT TO
BELIEVE by Max Allan Collins

Best Speculative Fiction Original

GHOST WHISPERER:
REVENGE by Doranna Durgin
RAVENLOFT: THE

COVENANT, HEAVEN'S
BONES by Samantha
Henderson
STARGATE SG-1: HYDRA by
Holly Scott & Jamie Duncan
STAR TREK: TEROK NOR,
DAY OF THE VIPERS
by James Swallow

Best Speculative Fiction Adapted

HELLBOY II: THE GOLDEN
ARMY by Bob Greenberger
THE MUTANT CHRONICLES
by Matt Forbeck
STAR WARS - THE CLONE
WARS: WILD SPACE
by Karen Miller
UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE
LYCANS by Greg Cox

Best Young Adult Original

DR. WHO: THE EYELESS
by Lance Parkin
PRIMEVAL: SHADOW OF
THE JAGUAR by Steven Savile
DISNEY CLUB PENGUIN:
STOWAWAY! ADVENTURES
AT SEA by Tracey West

Best Young Adult Adapted

IRON MAN: THE JUNIOR
NOVEL by Stephen D. Sullivan
THE DARK KNIGHT: THE
JUNIOR NOVEL by Stacia
Deutsch and Rhody Cohen
JOURNEY TO THE CENTER
OF THE EARTH 3D
by Tracey West

The highest honor the IAMTW can bestow is the coveted **Grandmaster Award**, which recognizes a writer with extensive and exceptional work in the tie-in field. This year's honoree is **KEITH R.A. DeCANDIDO**. He has written more than thirty novels, most of them original tie-ins or novelizations. His work includes many *Star Trek* novels, as well as original books in the *CSI: NY* and *Supernatural* tie-in series.

The Scribes will be awarded at a special ceremony at Comic-Con in San Diego July 23-29.

The IAMTW also awards two **Special Gaming Scribes**, honoring excellence in game-related tie-ins. Those awards will be given at a ceremony at Gen Con in Indianapolis August 13. The nominees are:

Special Gaming Scribe - Best Original

EBERRON: THE
INQUISITIVES, THE
DARKWOOD MASK
by Jeff LaSala
DRAGONLANCE: DEATH
MARCH by Jean Rabe
EBERRON: THE DOOM OF
KINGS by Don Bassingthwaite
WARHAMMER: ELFSLAYER
by Nathan Long

Special Gaming Scribe - Best Adapted

THE WORLD OF WARCRAFT:
BEYOND THE DARK PORTAL
by Aaron Rosenberg & Christie
Golden
THE MUTANT CHRONICLES
by Matt Forbeck
METAL GEAR SOLID by
Raymond Benson

2010 SCRIBES

Work has already begun on the 2010 Scribe Awards, with judging panels selected and waiting to receive submissions.

For books published between Jan. 1, 2009 and Dec. 31, 2009. Send a copy of your book and the entry form to each judge in the category you are entering and to the IAMTW at:

IAMTW
PO Box 8212
Calabasas, CA 91372

GENERAL FICTION
BEST NOVEL—ORIGINAL
Keith R.A. DeCandido (Chair)
PO Box 4976
New York, NY 10185

Bob Greenberger
36 Yarrow Road
Fairfield CT 06824-4559

David Spencer
41-07 42nd Street #4B
Long Island City, NY 11104

BEST NOVEL—ADAPTED
D. J. Stevenson (Chair)
P. O. Box 297
Claridge PA 15623

Alina Wickham
160 W. 95th St. #5A
New York, NY 10025

Raymond Benson
811 Thompson Blvd.
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

SPECULATIVE FICTION
BEST NOVEL – ORIGINAL
Jean Rabe (Chair)
3511 22nd St.
Kenosha, WI 53144

Steven Schend
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Ben Rome
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Springfield, VA 22151

BEST NOVEL – ADAPTED
Debbie Viguie (Chair)
PMB-418
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Lihue, HI 96766

Christina York
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Lincoln City, OR 97367

Lance Parkin
1410 Wharton Drive
Newark DE 19711

BEST YOUNG ADULT
ORIGINAL & ADAPTED
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7440 Sepulveda Blvd. #312
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Convention Calendar

MisCon

May 22-25 is the date for Montana's longest-running science fiction convention. Set for Ruby's Inn and Convention Center in Missoula, MT. Guests of Honor: Steven Brust and Michael Stackpole. For more information, visit the con's web site: www.miscon.org

WWA Convention

The Western Writers of America Convention is set for June 9-12 at the Sheraton in Midwest City, Oklahoma. Visit the organization's web site for more information. www.westernwriters.org

DucKon 18

Chicago's Science Fiction community hosts this gathering June 12-14 at the Holiday Inn in Naperville, IL. Guests include: Jim Butcher (author), Loren Damewood (artist), Michael Harrington (scientist), Seanan McGuire (filk), Shannon Butcher (special guest). For more information visit the convention's web site: www.duckon.org

Origins Game Fair

The Columbus Convention Center plays host to one of the country's largest game events. June 24-28. More than 4,600 events and more than 170 exhibitors are scheduled. Visit the web site at: www.originsgamefair.com

FiestaCon

Westercon 62

July 2-5 in Tempe, AZ, at the Tempe Mission Palms. Programming will feature many local and regional authors, artists, and scientists. There will be a Masquerade, Art show & Auction, Charity Auction, Writing Workshops, Dealers Room, Gaming, and July 4th Fireworks. Guests include Alan Dean Foster and Stanley Schmidt. The convention's web site has more detailed information: www.leprecon.org

RWA 29th Annual Conference

Washington, DC's Marriott Wardman Park Hotel will play host to the RWA event July 15-18. More than 100 workshops, panels, and round-tables will be offered, and many publishing professions will be on hand. One-on-one pitch sessions with agents and editors are included. A 500-author charity book signing is also planned. The conference early registration fee is \$425 for members and \$500 for non-RWA members. Registration is open on the RWA Web site. www.rwanational.org

Gen Con Indy

August 13-16 at the Indianapolis Convention Center. The country's largest game convention boasts seminars, games, a massive dealer's room, art show, and a Writer's Symposium with a double track of programming. Several IAMTW members are planning to attend, including: Ed Greenwood, Tim Waggoner, Steven Schend, Donald J. Bingle, John Helfers, Jean Rabe, Matt Forbeck, and more. The Scribe Awards for gaming related fiction will be presented at 1 p.m. August 13th. For information about the con: www.gencon.com

MileHiCon 41

Oct. 23-25, at Hyatt Regency-Tech Center in Denver, CO. More than 80 guests and speakers on science fiction, fantasy, and horror are expected at what is billed as the largest literary convention in the Rocky Mountain Region. Some of the scheduled guests include: Barbara Hambly and Nancy Kress. Visit: www.milehicon.org for more.

WindyCon

November 13-15, Lombard, Illinois, is the site for this year's WindyCon. Guests include: James P. Blaylock and Phil and Kaja Foglio. Early bird registration is \$45 for the weekend, with hotel rooms at \$104 a night. For more information: www.windycon.org

TusCon 36

Stoker-winning author Weston Ochse headlines the guests at TusCon 36 Nov. 13-15 at the InnSuites Hotel in Tucson, AZ. The convention staff requests that hotel reservations be made early, as the “room block” is expected to fill up quickly. Activities will include an art show, filking, panel discussions, gaming, and more. For more information, write the convention at TusCon, PO Box 2528, Tucson, AZ, 85702. Or you can send an inquiry via e-mail to: bsfa@earthlink.net

Philcon 2009

The Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cherry Hill NJ is the site of this year’s convention, set for Nov. 20-22nd. The web site lists more information: www.philcon.org

Thought Bubble 3

Nov. 20-22nd has been set for one of the UK’s prominent comic conventions. The event will be held in Saviles Hall, Leeds, England. More than 1,600 fans attended the previous year’s convention. Activities will include workshops, seminars,

comic-related film screenings, and a “book crossing.” For information on attending and/or participating, contact Lisa Wood: thoughtbubble@hotmail.co.uk

The next issue of Tied-In will feature articles by John Helfers and Brandie Tarvin. If you have news to report or writing advice to offer, send your articles to: jeanrabe@hotmail.com.



Lee and Tod Goldberg recently attended the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, where they signed copies of their tie-in novels at the Mystery Bookstore booth.

BATMAN MEETS SUPERMAN—KEVIN J. ANDERSON STYLE

ENEMIES & ALLIES, Kevin J. Anderson's new novel, hits the shelves May 5th. He called the project "fun to write." Sample chapters are available to read at the Harper Collins website. The following is from Kevin's website: www.wordfire.com.

As Sputnik silently circles the skies above the fabled cities of the United States – Metropolis, Washington DC, Chicago, Los Angeles, Gotham City – danger lurks in the Earth's darkest corners. Evil genius Lex Luthor, Superman's arch-enemy, is leveraging international tensions to build a military-industrial empire, competing against his primary business rival Wayne Industries, run by Gotham City's enigmatic millionaire Bruce Wayne.

Meanwhile in Metropolis, Daily Planet reporters Clark Kent and Jimmy Olsen are assigned to look into the crash of a supposed flying saucer. While Lois Lane pursues her own dangerous story, Clark is desperate to know if there may be other lost interplanetary visitors on Earth secretly living among us—like himself.

In a time of fear and mistrust, as America and the USSR race to build bigger nuclear missiles aimed at each other's greatest cities, two extraordinary heroes – polar opposites in their attitude and actions – will come together to stop the bad guys and save the world.

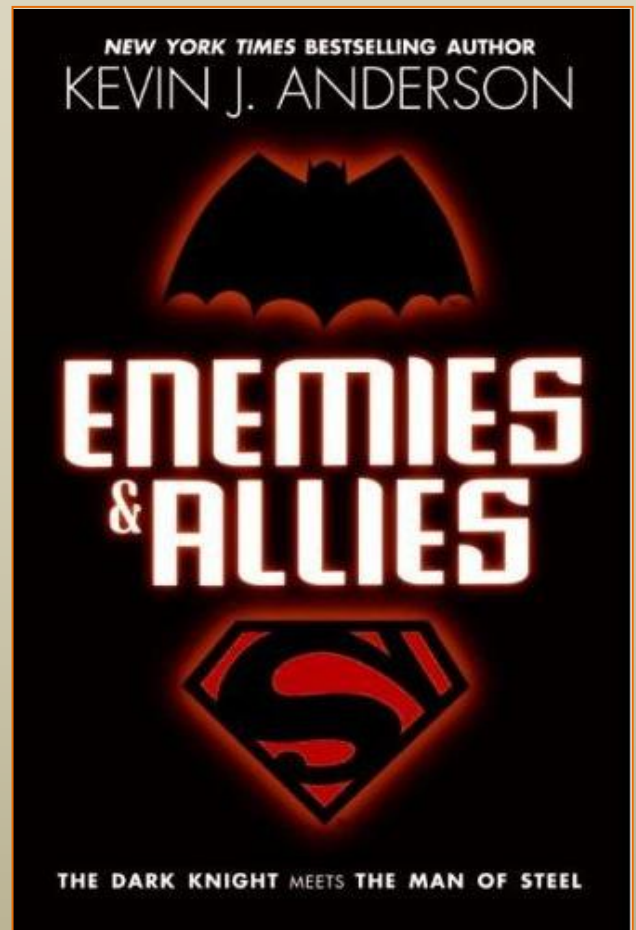
Superman and Batman are polar opposites in their attitude

and actions—Superman is all about rescuing people while Batman gets the bad guys. ENEMIES & ALLIES promises to be a fun and exciting adventure novel and a fresh take on two iconic heroes.

ENEMIES & ALLIES is a unique chronicle of the first meeting between to pop culture icon – never before told in novel form.

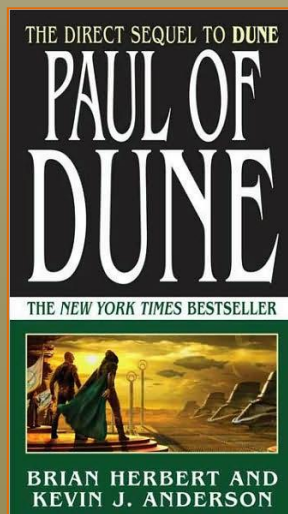
Kevin is the author of more than one hundred books, 47 of which have appeared on national or international bestseller lists. He has more than 20 million books in print in thirty languages. He has won or been nominated for numerous prestigious awards, including the Nebula Award, Bram Stoker Award, the SFX Reader's Choice Award, the American Physics Society's Forum Award, and New York Times Notable Book.

He has coauthored ten books in Frank Herbert's classic DUNE universe with Herbert's son Brian. The initial deal with Bantam Books was the largest single science fiction contract in publishing history. The first novel, DUNE: HOUSE ATREIDES



became a #1 international bestseller and was voted "Book of the Year" by the members of the Science Fiction Book Club by the largest margin in the history of the award. All of the subsequent DUNE novels have also been bestsellers, each one peaking even higher on the lists; the most recent volume is PAUL OF DUNE, a direct sequel to the original classic DUNE; the authors will release JESSICA OF DUNE in August 2009. For further information, see the official "Dune" site, www.dunenovels.com.

Herbert and Anderson are also co-producers on a major new film of DUNE from Paramount Pictures.



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