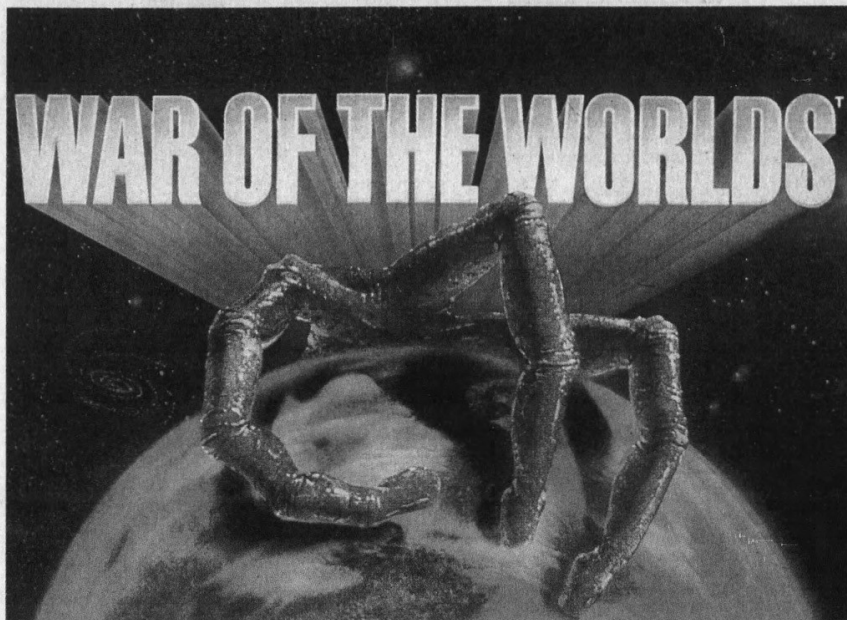


First it was a book by H.G. Wells, then it was a radio show based on the book, then a movie based on the book, then a TV script based on the movie, and now it is a novel based on the script and written by a Temple Terrace woman.



Photograph provided by Paramount Pictures Corp.

By **WALT BELCHER**
Tribune Television Writer

TAMPA — Jeanne Dillard had the unusual chore of writing a novel based on a TV script that was based on a classic H.G. Wells story.

The Winter Haven native said she knew that Wells was a tough act to follow, but she couldn't turn down the money or her publisher.

Dillard is author of "War of the Worlds: The Resurrection," a paperback book based on the script for a two-hour movie sequel to the 1953 film, "War of the Worlds."

That film, which starred Gene Barry and Ann Robinson, will air at 8 p.m. Saturday on WTOG, Channel 44.

The sequel, on which Dillard's book is based, will air at 9 p.m., Oct. 9. Dillard's book, however, is already in Bay area bookstores.

The new made-for-TV film kicks off 22 episodes of a new "War of the Worlds" science-fiction TV series.

"I haven't seen anything of the new movie or new series," Dillard said. "I can only hope that it will be successful."

She described the new "War of the Worlds" script as "interesting."

The TV script was written by Greg Strangis, a writer/producer whose background includes "Happy Days," "Eight Is Enough" and "Falcon Crest."

But he also has served as a creative consultant on "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

"This was an action story obviously designed for television, and although the plot was laid out for me, I had some freedom with descriptions and characterization," Dillard said.

Wells' original story of an invasion from Mars was published in 1898.

Fifty years ago, Orson Welles almost panicked the nation with a realistic radio version that aired on Halloween eve, 1938. Later this fall, National Public Radio will air a new radio version of the story.

Director George Pal's \$2 million 1953 film version was a box-office hit and won an Oscar for special effects.

By 1953 standards, \$2 million was an impressive figure for a "B" science-fiction film, especially when \$1.6 million of it went into special effects.

In the film, seemingly invincible aliens take over Earth, and all seems lost until the Martians suc-

cumb to ordinary bacteria.

Barry plays a scientist who is unable to conquer the aliens. However, the common cold accomplishes what no atomic bomb could do.

The premise for the sequel is that the aliens did not die in 1953. They merely slipped into suspended animation for 35 years.

An accidental exposure to radioactive waste brings them out of their sleep and the war is on again.

Filed in Canada, the sequel centers on four characters — scientists played by Jared Martin and Lynda Mason Green, a wheelchair-bound computer genius played by Phillip Akin and a military-weapons expert played by Richard Chaves.

"War of the Worlds: The Resurrection" is the fourth novel for the 33-year-old Dillard.

Writing under the pen name of J.M. Dillard, she has authored three other science-fiction novels based on the "Star Trek" television series: "Mindshadow," "Demons" and "Bloodthirst."

Her next project will be the novel version of the next "Star Trek" motion picture. It is based on a story by William "Captain



Jeanne Dillard has written four science-fiction novels.

Kirk" Shatner, who will direct the next film, set for release next year.

Dillard will be sworn to secrecy on the plot. It's a requirement from the producers at Paramount, which owns the rights to the "Star Trek" series and films. Paramount also produces the new "War of the Worlds" series.

Dillard also is completing work on a hardback novel, "The Lost Years," which chronicles the adventures of Captain Kirk, Mr. Spock and Doctor McCoy during that "lost time" between the end of the Enterprise's five-year TV mission and the beginning of the "Star Trek" film series.

"I explain how Kirk became an admiral and what happened to the crew during those years," she said. "It's unusual for a 'Star Trek' book because it is a large, hardback edition."

Pocketbooks publishes the "Star Trek" series of novels.

Because of the popularity of the series among science-fiction fans, the "Star Trek" stories continued in print long after the original network series was canceled. More than 40 "Star Trek" novels have been published.

The Pocketbooks editors select



Gene Barry and Ann Robinson, above, appear in the 1953 version of the film, which airs Saturday on WTOG, Channel 44. Lynda Mason Green and Jared Martin, at left, star in the sequel to "War of the Worlds."

Author sold first novel

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only a handful of authors to continue the tradition.

An avid reader, Dillard said that she has been interested in science-fiction and horror stories since her high school years.

Although she did not pursue a career as a writer at first, she did sell a story to Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine, a publication named for renowned author Isaac Asimov.

"It was a horrible pun contest," she said. "You had to write a story that ended in a horrible pun. I won \$50 for that one, but I didn't write again for years."

She went to the University of South Florida seeking a degree in linguistics. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees at USF and worked in Tampa as a legal secretary, where she learned to type.

She met and married her husband, George, a stock broker from Winter Haven. Eight years ago, they moved to Washington, D.C., where Dillard began teaching at American University.

"I had always been a closet Trekker," she said. "I was a fan of science fiction, but I was always too busy going to school or teaching to write."

When enrollment dropped one semester and Dillard was laid off, her husband dared her to try to write a 'Star Trek' novel.

She said she had been reading a lot of them while she was unemployed, and she secretly had been writing a book. It took her four months. She sent off the manuscript and waited.

"I didn't have an agent or anything," she said. "It was about a year later that they said they'd like to publish my book."

First novels usually don't make much money, but the "Star Trek" novels have a built-in audience. Dillard was encouraged to keep writing.

"Mindshadow" and "Demons" were published in 1986; "Bloodthirst" was published in 1987.

This summer, Dillard and her husband moved back to Florida. They live in Temple Terrace, where

she has an office in her home.

Dillard acknowledges that some constraints are involved in writing novels that have to be approved by Paramount. The stories have to be consistent with the TV series and the films.

"The characters have already been defined," she said. "You can't kill off Captain Kirk."



The Sun Dome

thru Sun., Oct. 2

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W101 Special Persons Night

Sat., Oct. 1 - 10:30 a.m.*
& 2:00 p.m.*

Sun., Oct. 2 - 1:00 p.m.*
& 4:30 p.m.*

Ticket Price: \$9.50 & \$8.50

*Children 12 and under receive a \$1.50 discount on these performances courtesy of J.C. Penney's.

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