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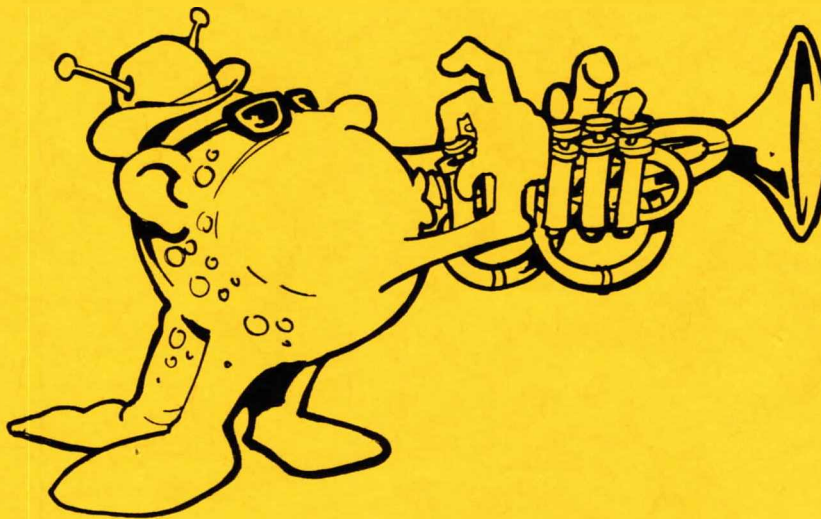
spring 2001

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Covers by Marc Schirmeister

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Dany Frolich

CHALLENGER 14

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! - an EDITORIAL

April 18, 2001 ... almost 7PM Central Time. A few minutes ago, just as I finished a call with my beloved fiancée, Rose-Marie Donovan, my phone rang again. "Is this Guy H. Lillian III? The editor of **Challenger**?" Ah, I thought. A fan in search of a copy. But no. It was Saul Jaffe of Millennium Philcon, this year's World Science Fiction Convention, with news.

For the second time, **Challenger** has been nominated for the Hugo.

I am supposed to keep the news secret until the first of May. T'was okay, said Saul, to tell Rosy ... and I'm sure he won't object to my informing my brother. (Lance likes SF - especially Stephen Donaldson - but he's not a fan.) Beyond that ... Can I resist? Can I resist e-mailing Rich Lynch with a "?" in hopes he'll reply with a "!"? When I next speak with Mike Resnick, how can I not trade our great news, since I'm sure he's been tapped for "Elephants on Neptune". And what about my local mates? How can I keep this from Bryan Norris or Dennis Dolbear? **Chall** is a Hugo nominee. How can I keep that news to myself?

By the time you read this, May 1st will be long past, and all of the Hugo nominations will be public knowledge. So as I giggle and shriek tonight, all but alone with this exquisite news, I can only imagine sharing my pride and my gratitude. Thank you, **Chall** pals, who wrote and drew for this project, and thank you, **Chall** pals, who encouraged me with your kindness ... and your examples. A lot of wonderful fanzine editors have never gotten a call such as I just got. A lot of terrific fans have never known this bone-deep excitement and pride. Guys, ladies ... *this is for you.*



May 1st is now, indeed, long past. It is June, in fact, as this **Challenger** goes to press and to post. Before I move on to other matters, I have a convention to chat about briefly, the small but feisty **DeepSouthCon** in Birmingham, Alabama. It was a thoroughly enjoyable event, replete with friends from Southern fandom and my home apa of 30 years' standing, the Southern Fandom Press Alliance. It began with Grecian ballet (no, the troupe was *not* called "the Fire Maidens from Outer Space") and bagpipes (our athletes should march in to "Scotland the Brave" at the first intergalactic Olympics) ... and a close encounter.

The first fan to greet Rose-Marie and myself when we walked into the 2001 **DeepSouthCon** was a nice-looking yuppie dude in a white shirt and tie. "Hi," he chirped, "my name is Cary Guffey. I'm an alien abductee."

"Hi! Nice to see you! Beautiful weather we're having!" I squeaked around my suppressed grimace, and carefully backed my precious and myself away.

It was Meade Frierson who clued me in. "Take a closer look. *That's the kid pulled through the*



doggy door in Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

I ran back to the yuppie abductee (almost rhymes, doesn't it?) and took that closer look. "Damn!" I exclaimed. "It is you!"

It was him. No longer in the movie business, though he shows for CE3K reunions, Cary's now a Merrill Lynch financial planner, living in Birmingham. He'd read about the DSC and simply showed up, bringing not only stills from the movie, but the tiny little shirt he'd worn as aliens yanked him from Melinda Dillon's hands – Melinda Dillon: *ooooohh ummmmm* – and dragged him through the doggy door.

"Did Spielberg really have a guy dressed as a clown off-camera to get you to smile?" I asked.

"Actually," he said, "it was Snoopy."

It was the first of many pleasant surprises about DSC 2001. Another was **Catherine Asaro**, the Guest of Honor. *Class act*, people, a brilliant (physics degree!) and lovely lady and fine writer, who came within a sliver of winning a Hugo at Aussiecon. Get this: the frightened 14-year-old daughter of an exec with the Atomic Energy Commission, she was in Berkeley in May, 1970, and witnessed the pitched street battle that followed the Kent State massacre. When she said that she remembered watching some people try to upend a police car, I realized that she and I were within a hundred yards of each other on that terrible May 5, 1970. Interestingly, we had our conversation on May 5, 2001. One of us, anyway, had come a long way.

The passage from this planet of **Gordon R. Dickson**, genial SF genius and all-around splendid fellow, has been long noted within the science fiction community. I will add only my own pleasure at his acquaintance – in 1969, when Quinn Yarbro handed me the impossible task at St. Louiscon of waking the dear gentleman, and he forgave the starry-eyed neo who pounded and screamed outside his door for the interminable time it took to rouse him, and in 1981, when we shared a dais as Guests of Honor at a delightful Knoxville event called Satyricon, and he forgave the raving blowhard whose egomaniacal oration practically ended the practice of allowing Fan Guests to speak. (I apologized, but he only chided "C'mon, you know you were a hit!") Gordy was a wonderful, funny, generous guy, well-loved, well-respected, much honored. Let's lift a toast to his spirit ... if possible, in tequila at least a hundred years old.

One of the best things about science fiction nuts is that we value what we read, and share it. In this time of mostly-happy upheaval, I've been churning through popular paperbacks. But popular has its rewards, and among them is **Purple Cane Road**, the latest Dave Robicheaux novel by James Lee Burke. It is, like all of Burke's novels set in southern Louisiana, a wonderful and terrible experience. Burke is a profoundly sensuous and passionate writer – they aren't the same thing – moral and real. The brutality, hypocrisy and obscenity of life in this society don't escape Burke, but neither do the compensations of *caring*, about people and about ethics. There are flaws to his characters – Robicheaux is a violent, furious drunk, who nevertheless affects a ponderous political correctness – and occasionally, alas, to his stories – **Cimarron Rose** contained a cross-examination that would have been tolerated in no American court, and the statue of Robert E. Lee at the base of St. Charles Avenue is *not* equestrian. But Burke sees the world I walk in daily through deeper, braver, more observant and resonant eyes, and for that, he is invaluable.

Whatever would he write if he wrote science fiction?

I recently blundered onto **Classmates.com** on the Internet, and looked up Ygnacio Valley High School, Concord, California, class of '67. Their listing was loaded with names I recognized, and one or two I loved. Kathy Ericksen, now Kathleen Corrick, was a lively and crazy and utterly adorable girl who once sat me down and lectured me about being arrogant and distancing. She's now a geriatric nurse in D.C. Jan Grogan was tall, elegantly beautiful, and a good ten years more mature than the goofy teenagers she had to hang with. She was also the first girl I ever kissed – and boy, was I terrible at it. Hit her nose. Now she lives in Atlanta, of all places. On the male side, Mike Langley, Mr. Van Daan to my Otto Frank in our senior play, **Diary of Anne Frank**, and one of the souls I respected most in my three years at that school, and Steve Bishop, another YVHS alum who went on to Berkeley and who has **God almighty** *grandchildren* now.

It's a delight to be in touch with these people again, and I hope we'll stay that way. But hearing from them now is also daunting. Bishop, like I say, is a grandfather. Grogan has put nearly 30 years into her

profession. Another pal from those days, Frank Bosche, was a Gore delegate at last year's Democratic convention. Kathy's *son* is an attorney. It's those old high school reunion blues. Back then we started out at the same point, and we can judge our passage through life by how well these others have done. They've done pretty darn well.

But comparing resumes isn't the point of "seeing" my classmates again. For I had a question for them, one I've mulled in these pages. Columbine's anniversary passed shortly after we got back in touch. It still haunts me. I've long since decided that Klebold and Harris went on their rampage not merely because they were bullied and ostracized, but because they were criminals at heart – sociopaths lacking in fundamental empathetic humanity. But they were neither the first nor the last kids to strike out against their oppressive environments with violence. We never did that. *Why not?*

It's not that anything is much different. SFPA Brother Mike Weber recently brought up the story of a girl who, citing high school's hideous social pressure, hanged herself. 30 years ago, I wrote a controversial editorial for Ygnacio's newspaper about Thomas Tawser, a Bay Area kid whom school taunting drove to – and over – the railing of the Golden Gate Bridge. (He survived, by the way.) That facet of the nightmare hasn't changed. What *is* different now? What was our advantage?

It's what I asked my fellow Ygnacio Boomers. It's what I ask you.

The most powerful and important work of art I've encountered in the last few months is also the most difficult to write about. **Open Fire** was a play put on by Loyola University's Drama and Speech Department, 65 minutes of Hell on Earth, and while I was stung through by its passion and presentation, my feelings on it are almost inarticulate. I have grown old enough and seen enough of life to where the agony of high school – subject of Howard Burman's vivid play – is at least a little bit foreign. Certainly, when I was suffering through that ghastly period, that transition from family child to society digit, our problems weren't so terrible. At least no one thought to solve the eternal quandary of cliques and rejection – the sour inevitability of that time of social caricature – with guns. No, my generation withdrew into the self, found solace in dope or politics – or fantasy – and didn't *act out* on our anger. Thank the Lord.

The five kids in this production do act out their anger. The play begins with the gentle music and sparkling light of a high school prom. Enter Brandy, in her prom dress, awkward, beaming, beautiful, amazed at the beauty about her. (Remember the name *Becky Johnson*.) But the sparkles on her cheeks are incipient tears, as the dance with her date is overwhelmed by a building drum beat, and terror and hatred and fury assume power in their lives. Brandy, you see, is part of a cadre of four alienated teenagers who intend to bring vengeance, not valediction, to their prom. They rave, they rant, they strip their rented tuxes and gowns away to reveal the garb and weaponry of warriors – out for revenge for the humiliations high school has mashed upon them. They're videotaping their last testaments for posterity – and fame – before bringing a dose of Columbine to their all-American school.

Two sensory impressions survive. One is the anguish and fear the play brings forth. Brandy's plea to her mother for understanding is a cry from the heart of American adolescence ... a cry for understanding, and comfort, a plea for hope. If that cry is not answered it is our most grievous and unforgivable fault. The other is the furious percussion these kids beat out on the corrugated set to accompany and sustain and embolden their rage. It is a deafening, desperate, undeniable march to oblivion.

This winter it happened again. And what's our answer, what do we tell our progeny? We tell them, *Inform*. God, we are such sick and selfish fools.

But the true solution is also obvious from **Open Fire** – one reason I hope the play finds a wider audience. We Boomers are a generation that has never feared to speak its mind. Okay – now we must show that we are not afraid to *listen*.

Omnium Challenger en tres partes est. Meaning that this is a *trifurcated* issue – like Gaul, it's split in three. In early pages, the usual eclectic mess obtains – well-turned articles on a variety of unrelated topics. In the second ... *laissez les bons temps roulez!* As should be evident from Marc Schirmeister's brilliant cover, its theme is the turf beneath my feet – *New Orleans*. Then, following the lettercol, our theme shifts again, to the minor *kof* changes in my life which summer, 2001 betokens. All I can say is that Kubrick didn't know the half of it. So: read, enjoy, respond.



"Getting It Right":

A Reflection on Titans and Technologies

Gregory Benford

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In the twentieth century, as others note, the Western world broke the close link between art and science, as prevailing currents flowed away from external nature to internal feelings – a big factor, I believe, in what C. P. Snow argued was a growing divide between "the two cultures." Scientists studied nature, artists studied themselves. They also showed the modernist shattering of consensus reality, rendering experience through abstraction, surrealism and stress on the non-natural ways of seeing (cubism, for example).

Space art can rebuild the bridge between these two cultures, celebrating nature on the broadest canvas, reflecting both scientific and aesthetic values.

My interest in space art was first sparked by the works of Chesley Bonestell, so I was thrilled, in 1969, to visit the artist at his home in Carmel. To recapture that moment, let me begin by reprinting a short essay I wrote as a fan in 1970 after that meeting, entitled "The View from Titan."

To get to Carmel and avoid the neon jungles that infest the northern and southern California coasts, you must travel on the sheer coastal route, brave the fogs and curves, you must take Route One. Carmel is an appendix to Monterey, an afterthought of summer cottages and organic food stores. There are a lot of writers and artists there and they are to be seen avoiding work in the afternoons, sipping coffee in the Tuck Box or thumbing paperbacks in the small book store.

To reach his house you turn off Route One in the geometrical center of town, the bisection point, and travel but a block up a dead end street. His house is cloaked in pine and wisps of the fog that pursued you down from Santa Cruz. It looks warm and cozy; orange splashes signal to you through the windows. You wonder why reading lamps seen through windows in winter seem to glow with a sun warmth, kindling meaning, while in the summer they are just reading lamps in the distance.

His rug muffles your inward step. A cat melts away at your entrance. His wife makes coffee in the wide kitchen. You and he sit in deck chairs. Feeling of being a movie producer; look for your name on the back. But he has been there, you have not; he worked for Disney and Pal. Just a chapter in a long life.

There was a portrait of him on the cover of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* in the early 1950s, but you do not remember it until an hour later, finding it in an odd corner of his work room. He has not changed from those days. He is over eighty now and his face carries a weight behind it while still retaining its walnut-brown look. A smile crinkles everything.

Here in the house, sipping tea in green Japanese mugs that warm the hands, you see the work for which he is not known. Oriental prints. Portraits, belying the common judgment that he cannot render the human figure and make you feel with it. Delicate pencil work. Architecture, stress and design, massive stones balanced in a fine grid of lines. "I see the patterns first, then the rest. I was an architect, you know, before the first world war. I designed the ceiling of the San Francisco opera house."

After that? "I traveled. I saw the world. I lived in New York and Paris and London and finally Los Angeles. Designing buildings and then movie work, backdrops, special effects. Disney did a lot of innovation in special effects, but it required someone who could draw and paint with such detail that the film viewer wouldn't catch an error. Things had to be real. I learned much that way. We were very well paid; that was Los Angeles."



Steven Fox

There are no astronomicals inside the house. To see them you must go outside, up an exposed wooden staircase, into the study. There they crowd the room in the heady smell of fresh paint, rags, stretched canvas. A congress of infinities.

Does he ever read the things he has illustrated? No, he doesn't like science fiction very much. Not enough solidity, perhaps. He rarely if ever willingly puts a human artifact into his work, a spaceship or a pressure dome, or a space-suited figure. He doesn't have any idea of what the future will bring and feels awkward trying to visualize it. But stars and planets, yes, the astronomer friends he has can give him descriptions of how things must be there and he can see it, too, in some closed mind's eye, so that it comes out right. Most science fiction is quickly outdated, anyway. Look at all the fins on space ships, and the cloudless Earths. Better to stay away from it.

Someone in Palo Alto has made prints of two of his oils. One is of an expedition that has landed on a dry, rust-orange Martian desert and is deploying equipment. It seems oddly out of balance and unconvincing, not his best work. The other is better: Saturn from Titan. His classic signature piece. Wrong, of course, since we now know that the methane atmosphere there blankets everything. But it was right when he painted it, the way any scientific theory is correct as an approximation of the truth which is never fully known, and that is all anybody can ask. He has a few prints left. We should not feel that it is necessary to buy anything, of course. We take the Saturn. There is something awesome in the mass of the planet even at this distance, a cold white with a hard curve to it. Looking at it you believe in your soul that planets are gods and men but pawns.

There are stills from motion pictures he has done. George Pal, worlds colliding, rockets, **The Day The Earth Stood Still**, a Groucho Marx hanging from a 20th story window against city lights done in oil, but the distant car headlights moving. Stop-motion. Planet-wrecking. It was a lot of fun and a lot of money but his reputation will probably rest on the astronomicals displayed in Boston and New York and San Francisco. Double stars and novae and howling unseen storms in deep atmospheres. A sense of the infinite.

At the center is craft. A view of Saturn at dawn from the Grand Tour probe: it stands dead upright on the easel, half-finished. "Black is very difficult. It is so hard to get the absolute pure black in comparison with the soft color of an atmosphere or a star's envelope. Almost impossible, I think, unless one practices a great deal. I have seen very few painters who can handle it, even in abstracts."

He shows us a few abstracts he has done and they are very good, though none uses very much black. He has tried everything and mastered many techniques, though he has sold very little of it. Most of the good oils he keeps for himself; he can afford to. For a while there was a rush to buy his astronomical oils and he nearly became a factory, turning them out faster than he should have, but that is past. Most sold to aerospace engineers and now they have less extra money and perhaps it is just as well.

He works hard and keeps a regular schedule but he cannot keep up with the load of work. Today arrived an offer from *Playboy* which he will accept for a three page oil, even though it will mean disturbing his schedule. His agent is trying to get him to do another book of the sort he did with *Willy Ley*, but there is no time. Perhaps next year.

You speak of working together on a book. He thinks **Profiles of the Future** is a good title but you tell him Arthur C. Clarke has already used it. Well, something else, then, but keep in touch.

(Connections: the book doesn't go through because you are too busy to finish the chapters that year, and then you move to the University and there are years of intense physics after that. But he gives you a name of a friend, just a boy who he knows does good work but has had few opportunities – after all he is but eighteen yet, give him time. In a few months you hear from him – Don Davis – and then you sell a novel, **Jupiter Project**, the first one worth a damn and as true to the Jupiter we know as you can get it. Don Davis does two oils to illustrate it. The next year it is published and prompts a letter from Robert Heinlein, which is as much as anybody could ask for. A friend praises it too, exclaiming that you were so lucky to get someone so like Bonestell to do the cover. The whole set of principles is now a tradition and it came mostly out of this one man. Connections.)

The only science fiction person he sees these days is Heinlein, he says, who lives an hour away on the coast. He likes the Heinlein approach; it seems more honest somehow, closer to the

tenuous facts of science. And the Heinlein futures have a lived-in feel. "He's the titan of the field," the old man says reflectively, never remarking on his own stature in the landscape he and the writers inhabit.

He does not see many artists. Carmel is a center for them but they are mostly dabblers, amateurs. He does not have much interest in the young: he thinks their technique is poor. They do not see how important it is to get it right. The test of learning to draw a cow is not in the fingers but in the eye: you must learn to see the cow. Few do this today. "Once having seen it, you must draw or paint so that others can see it. Not the thing itself, but the way it seems, that is art. What else is there?"

Though we exchanged cards afterward, I never saw Chesley Bonestell again. Soon, however, I became aware of a different style of space art – Soviet space art – which, while often impressive, appeared to display very little interest in "getting it right." However, the stereotypes were shattered when I became acquainted with Soviet painter Andrei Sokolov, who was working in his own way to fulfill Bonestell's agenda.

In general, several features distinguish Soviet space art from the American version. Instead of erecting theoretical frameworks to explain these differences, I prefer a painterly approach, not a critical one. When I think of the many Soviet-era space paintings I have seen, both in the US and in Soviet galleries, I remember fuzzily painted groups of indistinguishable figures striding toward the unknown. American sf and astronomical art, in contrast, usually featured traditional lone figures against immense landscapes.

In US SF and space art, realism rules. This is part of the hard sf aesthetic, the Bonestellian "rocks and balls" school as some Russian painters have described it. Such reality was the stuff of **Astounding Science-Fiction**. To illustrate its value, William Hartmann, a space scientist at the University of Arizona who has a parallel career as a painter, recalled to me how he had depicted pedestal formations on comets, setting up and painting at a specialist comet meeting. Several astrophysicists, including David Brin, had theorized that rocks on the surface would shield the snow and ice beneath them, so that the rest of the landscape evaporated during close passage to the sun. The comet would then literally "grow" toadstool-like formations. Hartmann drew this, and soon enough, the effect proliferated into NASA brochures. (Yet when the prediction was stated in a paper to a journal, it was rejected. Now it is the conventional wisdom, based finally on direct observations.)

In contrast, the USSR's state artists preferred symbolism, with European SF artists often falling somewhere in between these poles. Such moody, symbolic work usually appeared in US SF only in magazine illustrations like those of *Galaxy* magazine, to portray social SF. (Marx spoke of scientific socialism, but the Soviet tradition, even when literal in appearance, invoked social goals, not scientific ones.) Referring to this moody school as "symbolic-fantastic", Sokolov said, "The theory of relativity might yield images that could be shown only in emotional, artistic form. It could be a symbol, a fantasy, a dream." Contrast this with attempts to show the relativistic Doppler effect, as observed from a starship, called by Frederik Pohl the "starbow."

Portraits of "courageous pioneers of space" were sanctioned by the Soviet space program, so realistic work did have a place. Cosmonaut portraits were in great demand for offices, regional galleries, public buildings.

As someone keenly aware of the value of such representational art, Sokolov was an oddity in Russian space art, a realistic worker who had direct access to astronauts. He could remark from inference, "Landscapes seen from an airplane are vague and colorless, because we observe them from inside the atmosphere with the light scattered from all around. Cosmonauts are not impeded by the scattered light; they see the Earth in all its magnificence."

He had an immense advantage. Necessarily, Americans did not, since even today no professional artist has flown in space – though several astronauts have turned to art later. So Americans concentrated on photographs. Soviet cosmonauts studied Earth with color-sample atlases and color-measuring viewers, confirming that perceived colors are remarkably more vivid than views from aircraft. Our eyes discern details twenty times finer than a typical camera and two hundred times better than a TV image. We also have far more subtle color perception. For the first time, an artist with the Soviet era readings could compare nighttime clouds lit by city lights, by lightning, and by

moonlight. Peculiarities emerged: no up or down, no atmospheric perspective, sharp contrasts of light and dark, arriving suddenly.

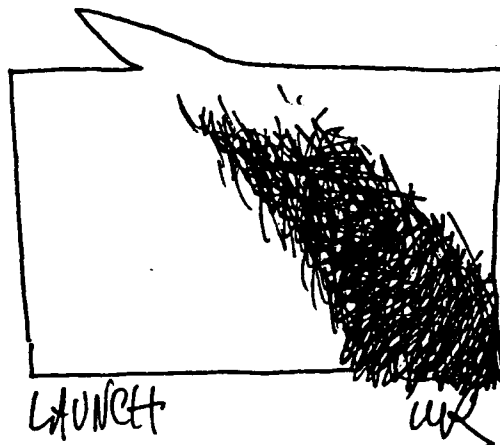
Sokolov had cosmonauts compare his sketch with the real scene as it passed below, writing comments on the sketch about color, form and lighting. (Alexei Leonov, the first space walker, has done primarily realistic paintings and sketches, using his own experience and Sokolov's data.) Using frequent interviews with cosmonauts, he gave this vivid description:

"At the terminator, when valleys sink into darkness and a chain of snowy mountains is shining in the background. Late in the evening, just beyond the terminator, the very high mountains glow red-orange, like live coals Mountaintops cleave the clouds, leaving a wake like that of a ship. Tropical thunderheads, lit by lightning flashes at night, recall the blooming buds of white roses The shining constellations of cities at night, enmeshed by a glittering web of highways is also very lovely. One's heart fills with pride at our accomplishments when one recognizes from orbit artificial seas and water basins, and cultivated fields, particularly in virgin lands." In this passage we see how much of Soviet society retained the pride common in 19th century America about the domesticating hand of humanity upon the untamed wilderness.

Not all decisions on either side of the cultural divide came from aesthetic ideas. The Soviet Artists' Union was ordered from above to produce art heralding the great space achievements, so there was work to be had. Landscape painters migrated in, symbolists found ready employment ("Most of it looks like Russian music sounds," American Jon Lomberg remarked to me). Even the most highly regarded "space artists" cared little for the facts of their subject. On a rare junket to the west, at Voyager's Neptune encounter, as a body they skipped the Jet Propulsion Laboratory tour prepared for them, in order to go to Disneyland! (Sokolov apologized for them.)

Contrast this with Bonestell, the father of the American school. He painted his classic "View from Titan" in 1944, soon after Kuiper's measurement of methane in the atmosphere of Saturn's major moon, Titan. Saturn hangs clear and cold above a frosted landscape. But by the 1970s further work showed that Titan's atmosphere was very thick, so that at its surface the pressure was even higher than one Earth atmosphere. Saturn would be forever shrouded by the opaque methane clouds. So Bonestell painted later views, accounting for this. He did not scrap the earlier work, just updated his views to those of the scientists. In honor of this, astronomers began in the 1980s to call the blue-sky layer above the methane haze, where perhaps one could peer out at Saturn, not the Titan Stratosphere, but the *Bonestellosphere*.

I think this contrast of aesthetics, the presence or absence of that hard-sf commitment to "getting it right," is the principal difference between the American and the European/Russian temperament. No doubt, both schools of space art have their virtues. However, as a hard SF writer who strives for scientific accuracy in my stories, I have a natural fondness for artists who strive for scientific accuracy in their depictions of space. It is such artists – like Bonestell, Hartmann, and the idiosyncratic Sokolov – that I most admire.

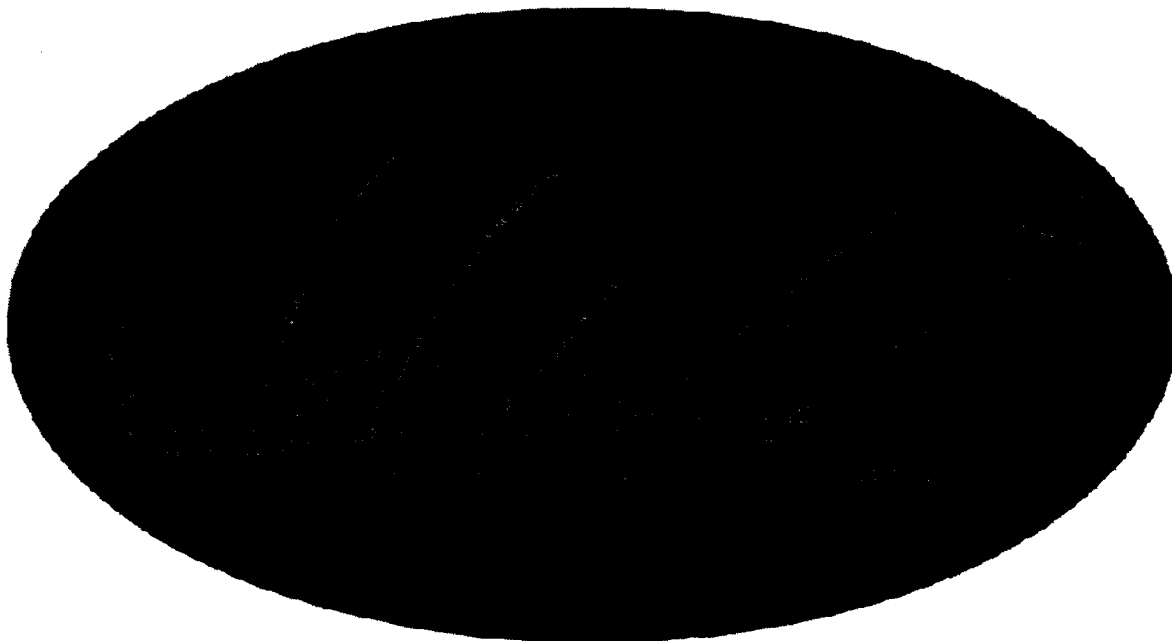




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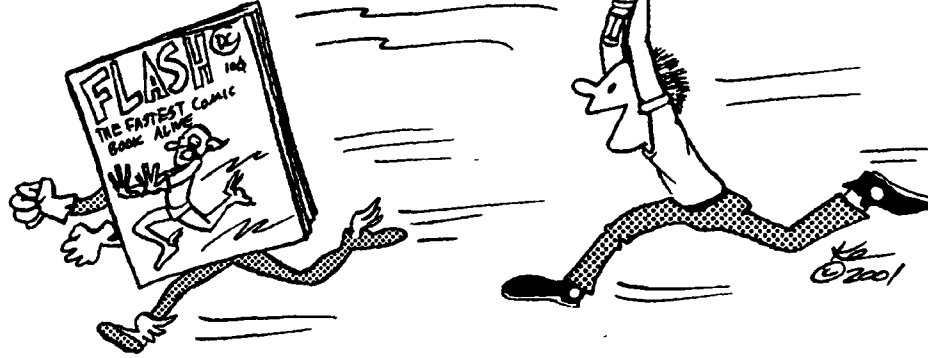
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Every comic fan in the world has a version of this story – and Gary tells it so, so well ...

The Chase

By Gary Brown



Artwork by KURT ERICHSEN

Like solving a mystery, every comic book collector has spent countless hours searching stores for a certain title or issue. Failure brings frustration, but success is like finding a pirate's treasure chest overflowing with gold.

"The Chase" is what drives most collectors.

It's not just the attraction to an item or its value, but searching for it, finding it and claiming it as your own. It's like following a pieced together map and discovering the pirate's buried chest of gold and silver – only much more difficult.

My lifelong chase for comic books began on a Sunday in early 1959. I clearly remember the circumstances. I was 12 years old and we were visiting my cousin during a family gathering. Exhausted from running around in the backyard, teasing the girls and eating German sausage and potatoes, we retired to my cousin Ken's room to talk and read books.

I had been collecting comic books for about two years at the time, concentrating on **Superman**, **Batman** and **Blackhawk**. That year, my interests were beginning to expand. I bought titles like **Showcase**, **The Brave and the Bold**, **Strange Adventures** and a variety of the Dell cowboy and movie books. While looking through his stash of funny books and being unimpressed with their lack of number, I suddenly got stopped in my tracks. There it was, **The Flash #106**. The second issue of the Scarlet Speedster's return to the comic books racks of America.

"Where did you get this?" I asked.

Ken shrugged and said he bought it at the store.

"No, what store?" I insisted while paging through the book.

He didn't know.

He didn't know? Why not? Think man, I've got to get a copy of this comic book. "Let's go play in the sprinklers," someone said. And off, everyone ran, including me. But the words kept beating in my head: "I've got to find that comic book; I've got to find that comic book."

The next day, I was off to school on my Schwinn bicycle. But good cursive writing and cute little Donna Pagnota were not on my mind. All I could think of was how I'd visit the three important comic book sales stops in my limited by-bicycle world, looking for **The Flash #106**. It would be there, ready for my dime

(plus a penny tax). I had no doubt. After school, I headed straight for the Rexall Drug Store about a block from the school. It was fairly new and they kept a neat rack of comic books and magazines, but their selection was not always the best. I left my bike outside and walked straight to the comics.

Spinning the squeaky rack slowly, I scanned the rows for the pink cover. It wasn't there.

I went through again, flipping each section in hopes a spare copy of the treasured book had lodged between **The Fox and the Crow** and **Journey into Mystery**. Nothing.

Worried, but determined, I hopped back on my bike and headed to the second Rexall Drug Store. The one was on Fourth Avenue, across "the canal." Until recently, I was not allowed to ride my bike "across the canal" for any reason. Traffic was bad and I was, of course, just a kid.

But I started to break that rule in an effort to get my weekly fix of comic books. Not telling my parents, who assumed I was safe and secure on this side of the canal. The second Rexall was older and had a great comic and magazine section. They had a lot of books the other store didn't carry. Surely, I'd find **The Flash #106** there.

Strike two.

I started sweating. I've got to find it, I thought. I can't let the day go by without it. So, I headed to what I considered the minor league comic outlet. It was a convenience store called U-Tot-Em. Located on 49th Street in Hialeah, Fla., it didn't treat comics and magazines with the reverence that could be found in the Rexall stores.

Their comic book racks routinely were stuffed full. Some ripped copies could be found on the floor and it was not unusual to find a comic three or four months old there.

I pedaled back across the canal, down behind the Royal Castle and to the U-Tot-Em, which sat smack in the middle of a strip shopping plaza anchored by Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.

Tired and pessimistic, I passed the Twinkies shelf, soda coolers and stacks of oil cans to the back corner. There I found the rack of comics, wheezing and bloated like Porky Pig after a battle with Daffy Duck. You couldn't spin the comic book rack at the U-Tot-Em. You had to use all your strength to move the entire stand around so you could look at the back side.

Suddenly, after going through a few of the sections, something caught my eye. Glory be, it was **The Flash** in all its splendor. **The Flash ... #105**.

Number 105? Hey, this wasn't the comic book I saw at my cousin's house. It was another one. It was the previous issue. I didn't have it. But I still didn't have #106.

However, there in the bottom row, just bearily sticking up was the pink cover of my Holy Grail. It was ... yes, it was **The Flash #106**. Not only had I found the comic book I wanted, but I located the previous issue, which was the first in the series. *Victory*.

I rode home a proud conqueror, clutching my four-color fantasies firmly and happily thinking about reading both books after dinner. But little did I know that the obsessive behavior I had displayed over that 24-hour period would stick with me the rest of my life.

It was about this time that I started to pay attention to when certain comic books were put out for sale on the racks and about how long the stores allowed them to remain there until they disappeared into who knows where. If I was going to collect comic books, I certainly had to understand how to get the ones I really, really wanted.

Comic shops did not exist and the only way to get back issues was to trade with friends. If you missed an issue off the drug store or newsstand racks, you were out of luck.

My first realization was that new comic books we placed on the stands (at least in Florida) on Tuesdays



and Thursdays. How I figured this out, I'm not sure, but I suspect it was making daily trips to the Rexall in search of an advertised book.

However, most of the stores I frequented had employees put out the magazines when there was time. Comic books, of course, were usually the last thing they did because they were the most trouble. But on most Tuesdays and Thursdays, I usually found the new comics in the spin racks by the time school was out.

This was not a good thing in the summer months, though. Many mornings in June, July and August, I'd ride up to the Rexall only to find the bundles of comics still sitting there. Once, I tried to look through the tightly bound stack, but was told to "leave them alone!"

So, there were wasted hours or trips, when the employee assigned to set out the comic books didn't get to them until the afternoon. My young patience was tested often.

At one point, I noticed in the house advertisements for National Periodical Publications (DC Comics), they often would encourage readers to "Reserve Your Copy at Your Favorite Newsstand Today!" Wow, what a great idea. If I could reserve a copy of the comics I bought, I'd never have to worry about missing an issue again.

So, I walked into the Rexall one day with a list of my "reserved" comic books. I packed an extra dollar, just in case I had to put a deposit on my order.

"Ma'am," I nervously started. "I'd like to talk to someone about reserving some comic books."

Puzzled, the woman behind the counter looked at me and asked for clarification.

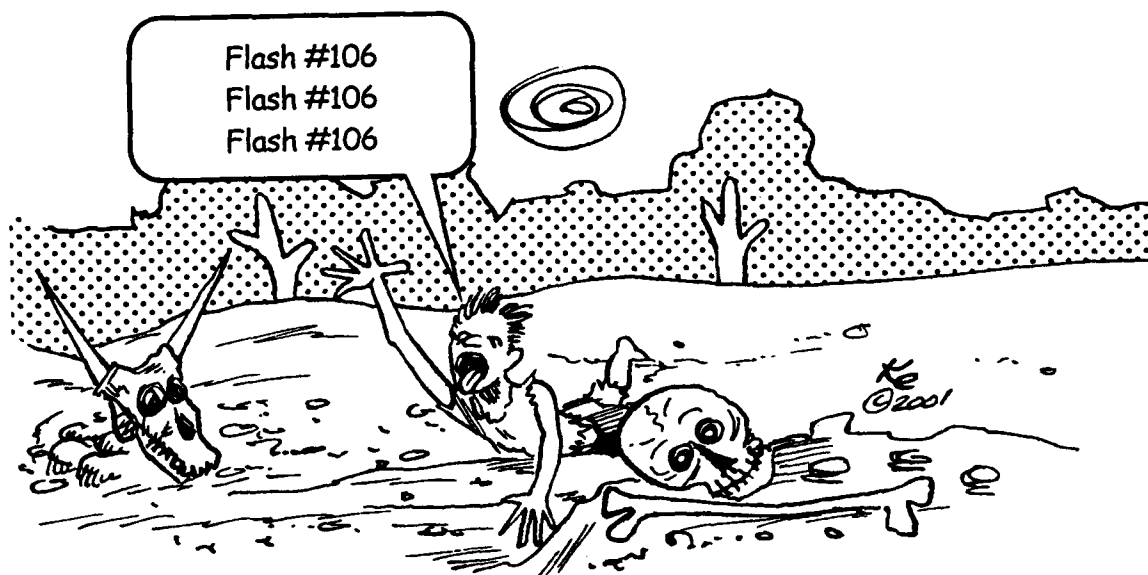
"Yes, I'd like to give you a list of comic books for you to hold for me each week," I stammered.

Suddenly, the woman's face turned into a smile and morphed its way into a sneering cackle.

"Ha, ha, I don't believe it," she said loudly. "We don't reserve *comic books*!"

Reduced to what seemed like about two-inches tall, I quickly shuffled out of the store and didn't return there for weeks, fearing I would be pointed out as "the kid who tried to reserve *comic books*" and laughed at repeatedly. When I did muster the courage to return, I avoided the female employee at every turn, even paying for my comics at the perfume counter to avoid embarrassment.

After my self-taught lesson in how comic books appeared on the racks, I fell into a routine of going to the stores each Tuesday and Thursday. There was, of course, a degree of worry if I couldn't make it to the Rexall on either of those days, but I learned to become more aware of when certain favorite comic books came out.



Action Comics, for instance, was always at the end of the month (or the beginning, I'm not quite sure). It was published monthly. **Adventure** and **Detective Comics** also were monthly and came out on subsequent weeks. The bi-monthly books presented a slightly different problem, but I realized that if I wanted every issue

of these comics, I had to keep records of when they appeared.

The biggest problem were comic books like **Superman** and **Batman**. At that time, they were published "eight times a year". That meant I might get new issues of **Superman** from one month to another, then nothing for two months. The publishing information usually would give what months the book was published (or not published) and that helped in figuring out when to expect something.

However, looking at the publication dates of comic books brought up an even more difficult mystery, I discovered. In January, you could buy comic books with the dates of March or April or, even May on the covers. And each company, it seemed, had different dates at different times.

I later learned that comic book companies did that so their books wouldn't look outdated on the racks if they sat there for two or three months. I mean, kids don't want to buy a comic dated May if it is June. That must mean an "old book." And lord knows, no one is going to buy old, outdated funny books.

This later was changed and more comic books featured dates closer to when they were put on sale, but the differences in dating philosophy between companies remains.

So, just when I figure I have everything under control in terms of my comic book buying habits, a curve ball was tossed my way: A G.C. Murphy Department Store opened at the new Palm Springs Shopping Center.

Murphys sold comic books, I learned. Placed in a huge wooden magazine shelf at the front of the store. But I soon discovered that Murphys got their comic books on Wednesdays!! Once a week. They only sold DC, Dell and Archie. Companies like Atlas, Charlton, ACG and others were shut out of Murphys. I always thought that whoever was in charge of ordering comic books for the Murphys chain was a supporter of the Comics Code and avoided any mystery or monster comics.

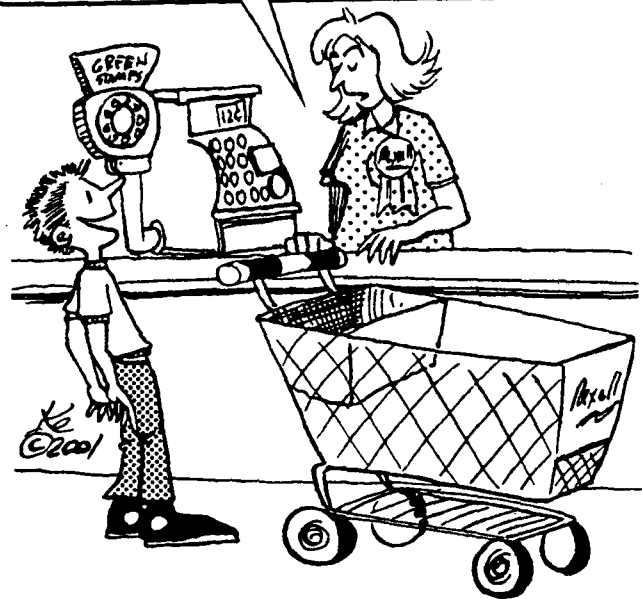
While their title selection was a tad limited (they had all the **Superman** and **Batman** titles and the romance books, but didn't sell **House of Mystery** or **Challengers of the Unknown**), it gave me a sense of accomplishment to buy comics on Wednesday, thereby owning certain books a day earlier than the rest of the world. And to make things a little more complicated, occasionally Murphys would get books a week in advance. This routinely happened with the 25-cent annuals.

But there was one plus to going to Murphys, the manager didn't mind if I looked through the comics *before* they went on the shelf – in the event I got there early or they were late putting them up. I mean, what more could a comics fan ask for?

As I grew older, my world expanded and I was able to search more and more places for new comic books. There was a small Mom and Pop store near Hialeah High School that sold comics. *Old* comics. Sometimes as old as a year or two. This was a revelation to me and I talked my Dad into stopping there every chance I could.

The comics were, for the most part, old Charltons, I.W. reprints or had just 2/3rds of the cover remaining. In those days, retailers had to tear off the cover logo of the comic to get credit for unsold books. I believe they had to destroy the remains, but I suspect the children of many stores that sold comics had nice collections of issues without cover logos.

Why certainly, sir. I'll be glad to call you whenever a new funny book comes in. Would a 5¢ discount per book be acceptable? Why don't you ask for a date with Marilyn Monroe while you're at it? She can read *Superman* to you.



The strangest part of the Mom and Pop comic rack were the coverless comics. They were not coverless, so to speak, but had a white cover stapled on them with the words "Comic Book" in big blue letters on the front. I was fascinated by these for a while, wondering what the covers looked like and how they became coverless.

But as I got more serious about collecting, I frequented this shop less and less. Who wanted ripped up, coverless comics. Not me.

I also found there was a newsstand in downtown Hialeah that sold comic books and a wide variety of magazines. Some of them, behind the counter, featured topless women and promises of "bare all" photos inside. When I went into this newsstand, I tried not to stare at the men's magazines behind the counter (for fear of being banned from the shop), but I did catch a side glance or two when the owner wasn't looking. But at that age, my sexual jollies had to be confined to photos of women in bikinis in **Skin Diver** magazine. (In fact, for about a year I bought every issue of **Skin Diver**. My parents thought I had developed an interest in the sport, so I was allowed to take diving lessons at one point. Little did they know that I wasn't as interested in going below the ocean as I was meeting those tanned women in those little bikinis.)

He had a nice selection of comic books. I remember buying the first **Captain Atom** story there, as well as many of the DC war books. It's funny how you associate certain stores with certain "key" comic books in your life. For instance, there was a small drug store on 49th Street (next to the Kentucky Fried Chicken) that had a small selection of comic books and paperbacks. It was there I found the Mad magazine paperback featuring "SuperDuperMan." For some reason, I always visited that place to look that their thin selection of books – no doubt hoping sooner or later I'd make another find of equal value to me.

As a college student, I'd frequent the downtown Hialeah newsstand as often as I could. Once while crouched down in the back, looking through the comic books, I heard the owner on the back phone. He was taking bets on the horses. My newsstand was a *bookie joint*. Cool.

The Tuesday and Thursday sale dates for comic books remained for decades, finally disappearing amidst circulation and distribution changes. As I got older, though, the twice weekly visits to the nearest comic book seller remained a ritual with me.



When in college, I learned the Miami Airport got there new comics in on Sundays. So, I'd often visit the airport when I was home (parking in the Eastern Airlines employee parking lot, thanks to my Dad getting me a parking sticker), sometimes with friend Wayne DeWald.

But times have changed. Buying comics these days is easy – I place my order with the local comic shop and pick them up each Wednesday. No more worries about missing an issue or getting a crumpled comic.

My two Rexall Drug Stores are still there, but they don't sell comic books anymore. Both have Hispanic owners and cater to the dominant Hispanic population in Hialeah.

G.C. Murphy burned to the ground several years ago. It had stopped selling comic books long before.

The airport no longer carries comic books.

And the newsstand in downtown Hialeah is gone, replaced by a 10-story condominium.

But nothing can replace that feeling of buying the brand new issue of your favorite comic books and flying home on your bike to read them. Treasures found and enjoyed. A lifetime of searching for the pot of comic book gold at the end of the rainbow – every Tuesday and Thursday.



Once again Rich Dengrove sails into the past and returns with a wise, informative article.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC

WAS A REAL PERSON AND HE WROTE SCIENCE FICTION

Richard A. Dengrove

*I derived most of this essay from Richard Aldington's *Voyages to the Moon and Sun/Cyrano de Bergerac* (1923). I have a 1962 edition. Another printing came out in the '90s, which apparently is very expensive.*

Cyrano de Bergerac was a real person, but that was not his real name. His real name was Savinien de Cyrano. That was his name when he was born in 1619 to a wealthy but non-noble family.

The Cyrano family did have a coat of arms, it is true, which I have chosen to reprint. But it tried to make a claim of nobility twice, and the authorities rejected it both times. And fined them. Once in 1668. Then Abel de Cyrano, Cyrano's brother, was fined 300 livres for claiming nobility. And in 1704, a cousin J.D. de Cyrano was fined 3,000 livres for it.

Cyrano's offense should have been much greater. He claimed to be of noble Gascon blood. Bergerac is best known as a town in Gascony. Cyrano did not come from Gascony but from around Paris. It is true Cyrano's father had a small estate called Bergerac, which he sold in 1637; but none of the family claimed to be related to the old de Bergerac family. And there is no proof that the small estate served as more than an inspiration.

There is another way of looking at his name, however. Cyrano fought in the Gascon company of de Carbon de Casteljaloux. At least some one among them must have known he was a pretender. In fact, I am sure all knew. But it would not do to have one of their best swordsmen not a noble and not a Gascon. So maybe Cyrano de Bergerac is Cyrano's real name and Savinien de Cyrano is merely a name he was born with.

The real Cyrano differed from the legend in another way, his nose. It was large, it is true, but not a monstrous nose. As contemporary prints of Cyrano show.

While they may not look like the same person, drawings of myself do not either.

Cyrano was well aware he had a large nose. But rather than causing the inferiority complex of Rostand's Cyrano, he took his nose in ribald good humor. At least in his *Voyages*.

He said that, in a land on the Moon, children with too short a nose are castrated. The



Coat of arms claimed by the
Cyrano family.

reason is a large nose shows "a witty, prudent, courteous, affable, generous and liberal man." A small nose shows the vices from being just the opposite.

At another point, Cyrano has a jailor in Toulouse comment on what a lovely nose he has – and then throws him in prison.

I suspect the legend of Cyrano's nose started with the tale of the Battle of Brioché's monkey. It originally was based on an anonymous work almost certainly written by a friend with whom Cyrano had quarreled, one Dassoucy. In short, not a credible source.

When Cyrano went to see Brioché's

monkey perform, a mob of thirty or forty decided to make trouble for him and made fun of his nose. One actually flipped it on its end. And that, I believe, was how Cyrano got his reputation for having a large nose.

By the way, out came his sword and, being a great swordsman in fact as well as myth, he drove the mob away. And killed the monkey by accident in the process. But that is another story.

The 19th Century French romantics not having any more of an idea what Cyrano looked like than we do, I believe, hopped on this story. And his nose grew and grew like Pinocchio's. As Theophile Gautier wrote in 1844 in his *Les Grottesques*:

"This incredible nose is settled in a three-quarter face [portrait], the smaller side of which it covers entirely; it forms in the middle of a mountain which in my opinion must be the highest mountain in the world after the Himalayas; then it descends rapidly towards the mouth, which it largely obumbrates, like a tapir's snout or the rostrum of a bird of prey; at the extremity it is divided by a line very similar to, though more pronounced than, the furrow which cuts the cherry lip of Anne of Austria... This makes two distinct noses in one face, which is more than custom allows."

This is of a piece. Aldington says that Gautier's book is filled with every conceivable misstatement of fact about Cyrano.

Of course, this is where Edmond Rostand got the information for his play. Which is why there is so much misinformation in it.

Another way the real Cyrano differed from the legend was in love. Richard Aldington, goes too far. He has read Cyrano's love letters, and claims that they are made of "clever and wholly frigid conceits, which glitter and clink like chains of icicles." The very opposite of feeling. And thus Cyrano was no lover.

That does not necessarily mean Cyrano was no lover, although certainly not the serious, passionate lover of Rostand's play. Ironically, his clever conceits may have attracted women. He may have made them laugh and given them some excitement. If the real life Cyrano was anything

like his *Voyages*, he certainly would have.

This attitude is certainly found in his book. In the voyage to the Moon, Cyrano is describing a topsy turvy society, a lampoon on utopias. There Noblemen do not parade their swords, but their phalluses. They make love not war.

Also, chastity is not considered a virtue there and any man can take any woman. In fact, he has one Moon man say that virginity is against nature. And wonder why God did not cause humans to be born like mushrooms.

In his voyage to the Sun, Cyrano lampoons the Precieuse school of drippy sentimental writing. The tears of a woman's ex-lovers cause a flood. And, on one ex-lover's suggestion, she almost rips out her heart to use as a boat. The ex-lover is sentenced to exile for wrongful use of metaphor. Etc., etc.

In one area, however, the real Cyrano did not differ from the legend. He was a great swordsman. In one anecdote, Chevalier de Lignieres, his good friend, had chided a noble about his marital problems. Not a wise move. The noble sent armed men to crop his ears on the public highway, a hundred of them. At Porte de Nesle, they ambushed Cyrano and Lignieres. It was oft' cited, even by enemies, that Cyrano sent them packing. Richard reputation uppermost in his mind, admitted only to a crowd, not a hundred.

Because of his swordsmanship, Cyrano was named second in a hundred duels. In those days, the second had to join in. Military virtues were above all else. Cyrano was so good at being a second that he was offered a commission in a Gascon company. And in effect Gascon nobility.

Apparently they were a bunch of daredevils. Cyrano was called on active duty in 1638. By June, he had been shot through the body in Mouzon. Next year he was wounded by a sword thrust through the throat in Arras.

Which brings me to another way in which the real Cyrano differed from the legend. He acted very sensibly and resigned. And attempted a life much more conducive to longevity, of letters.

Also, he became sanguine about war. It is true he writes that, on the Moon, old men should bow to youth because youth are brave. However, he had war on the Moon being fought by armies made utterly equal. Including equal in bravery.

Cyrano showed he was not a total hothead

in another way. While he fought others' duels as a second, he never challenged anyone himself. This was verified by both friends and enemies.

So much for Cyrano being real. I said he wrote science fiction. I admit most of his works are not but his *Voyages to the Moon and the Sun* certainly is. Some may argue that it cannot be science fiction; because it contains fantastic ideas, satire, and humor. Of course, they have not been foreign to modern science fiction.

On the other hand, his novel meets my definition: It has something to do with science. Among other things, it advocates the Copernican theory. Cyrano advocated Copernicanism merely by claiming there were other planets like the Earth. Under the Ptolemaic theory there would not be.

He does this at the very beginning of the novel. He shows many examples, witty then, of men not believing the Moon is a world. He is returning from a party with four companions. One likens the Moon to a window in Heaven through which "the glory of the blessed might be faintly seen." Another imagines that Bacchus keeps a tavern in Heaven and has hung out the sign of the Full Moon. Another says it is the block where Diana set Apollo's ruffs. Another still says it is the Sun itself who has put down his rays and is watching through a hole.

Cyrano alone is an advocate of Copernicanism. He ventures that the Moon is a world like ours and our world is the moon to them. When someone laughs, he says at this moment the Moon men are probably ridiculing people who believe the Earth is a world like theirs.

Of course, his novel is about the men, animals, spirits and other beings that inhabit the Moon and the Sun.

In addition, Cyrano advocated the Copernican system outright, in a long dialogue. Which would be boring to us but people then could not, it seems, get enough of them. And there is some wit there. He uses standard arguments but then compares the Sun to a man's genitals

The Copernican system must have been on Cyrano's mind at the time. He went to study with the priest Pierre Gassendi. Two years prior, Gassendi finally proved Copernicus' theory that the Earth moves around the Sun.

Tycho Brahe in the 16th Century had said that the Solar System looked very much as

Copernicus claimed. And all the planets went around the Sun, except for Earth. When it came to the Earth, it was the Sun going around the Earth. If this were not the case, then Aristotle's physics would be violated. And we would be flung off the Earth, either by its revolution around itself or around the Sun.

Galileo had first suggested the experiment to prove we would not; and, in fact, we would not even know if the Earth were moving. But this remained a thought experiment, just like a lot of Galileo's hypotheses. It took two members of Catholic Holy orders to test it. In 1634 the Minorite Friar Marin Mersenne, who worked with Gassendi, had a friend make the experiment on board a ship. But the results were never published.

In 1640, Gassendi finally did the experiment and published the results. He made it using horses and chariots. However, he had to have it done with a ship since the Copernican theory's opponents used that as the prime example. He had the experiment done on a naval trireme.

All the results proved we would not know if the Earth were moving, and thus they proved the Copernican theory.

Of course, Cyrano's long proof for Copernicus had nothing to do with Gassendi's experiment. His arguments are more Classical than scientific. As was people's want then. In fact, his arguments for the Earth going around the Sun go back to the first ancient Greek who proclaimed that, Philolaus of Crotona. He lived in Plato's time.

In effect, to both, the Earth must be going around the Sun, and not the other way around, because fire is superior to earth. Cyrano says the Sun is the central fire just like the Sun was Philolaus' central fire.

In fact, I suspect the events preceding this in the novel would go completely against Gassendi's principles. Cyrano's hapless space traveler headed for the Moon fails to move with the Earth. When he cannot reach the Moon, he ends up in French Canada.

Did Cyrano misunderstand Gassendi's ideas? Very possible. Or was he making jokes? Having read his novel, I have to believe that is very very possible. He plays a lot of jokes in it. At one point, he claims An acquaintance, Tristan L'Hermite, was the greatest man of his age. And in



Sketches of Cyrano presumably drawn from life. Not a small nose, but not monstrous.

a spiritual sense. Aldington quotes someone, maybe Cyrano, to the effect he was “an epicure of the cabarets, a hare-brained duelist, a gambler, a libertine, a beggar.” Also, he was in exile for killing a man.

Now that I have proven my point, that Cyrano wrote science fiction, I should stop here. But some gems about Cyrano’s novel make me keep going. So I hope you are dying to know how Cyrano had people of the 17th Century fly to the Moon and the Sun. The hero does tie bottles of dew to himself, like I have been told numerous times. The dew having ‘occult virtues’ that attract it to the Moon. However, the commentators on this are wrong; he does not get to the Moon this way. He ends up in French Canada.

How does he get to the Moon? He uses a Aldington, his scholarly poorly described device that seems to be powered by rockets.

How does the hero get back? His host is blasphemous, and the Devil comes and takes him to Hell underneath the Earth. The hero tries to

keep this from happening, but can only hang on as far as Italy.

Here is how the hero goes to the Sun. He is in jail and his friends give him the tools and supplies he requests. He builds what he calls an icosahedron because of its shape. In effect, it is a solar powered jet. Air flows in it to fill a vacuum, and the solar heat of several large glass lenses forces it out. The hero uses it to get out of jail and to the Sun.

Others jet off into outer space besides the hero. On the Moon, the hero meets the hero of Bishop Godwin’s 1638 novel, **Man in the Moone**, the Spaniard Domingo Gonzales. He had hitched himself to some geese and they flew him there.

At one point, Cyrano burlesques the Biblical Genesis, and there are some techniques in that. The original Adam had such a strong imagination that he could fly to the Moon. Noah’s Ark reached the Moon. Enoch reached the Moon on bladders filled with the burnt sacrifices of the

righteous. An Elijah, apparently not the Biblical Prophet, reached the Moon sitting in a chariot and throwing a loadstone. Which would attract the chariot to it.

In short, his methods of reaching the Moon and the Sun are as witty, irreverent and off the wall as the rest of this novel. It is no fault these methods are often described in the vaguest terms possible. Sometimes even contradictory terms.

Having said that, now I hope you are interesting in whether Cyrano influenced other authors. He did a big one, Jonathan Swift in his *Gulliver's Travels* better. Of course Swift exudes an air of common sense and an illusion of reality, while Cyrano revels in being a fantasist. But it is obvious he did influence Swift.

Swift does not actually plagiarize, but he does take ideas and scenes. Obvious borrowing is found in the utopia he describes for Lilliput, the land of the little people. And at a number of points in Brobdingnag, the land of the giants.

Also, Richard Aldington believes that the land of the Houyhnhnms, where enlightened horses rule over rather bestial men was inspired by Cyrano. Cyrano always has man being shown to be inferior to the beasts.

For some reason, Aldington mentions how a Tom d'Urfey plagiarized wholesale for his *Wonders in the Sun or the Kingdom of the Birds* (1706). Which, I think, was an opera. Opera or not, who in the 20th Century has ever heard of Tom d'Urfey?

It takes wholesale from a neat scene, however. On the Sun the hero is put on trial by the birds for being a human. Birds of course can fly to the Sun. And humans, of course, are their enemy. And they also regard them as the enemy of all the animals and of reason. The latter a great crime in this era so near the Age of Reason. Cyrano's hero is sentenced to be pecked to death when a reprieve comes. A parrot had testified that he once let him out of his cage.

I wonder if a 20th Century puppet show borrowed from Cyrano too. I remember it from my '50s childhood, "The Kaboosta Kid in Outerspace."(?). It was on one of the Ernie Kovacs morning shows. There, the Kaboosta Kid had been jailed so he sent away mail order for a kit to build a rocket ship. Which he puts together and uses to escape from prison and into outer space.

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The Last Morning

These are the photographs
lying in their undeveloped potential
in the camera, flashes of life.

The sun sheds its morning glow
on the marshy lake, sweet with birds.
Your ashes fly from the canister, riding
the breeze, white swirls like the sea
in tempest, or snow in winter's naked rage,
gusty as your life.

On the edge of the murky shore
José and I pose, arms encircled,
as giddy as the water is flat, watching
flurried ashes melt into primeval muck
as the past blends into the present,
a developing continuum.

Birds cry as if one of them
is home at last, the one gone too long,
the journey that seemed endless until it ended.
Wings settle in the cool morning,
but for those probing the depths,
diving, again and again, for fish.

The sky broadens, the plain flattens, the grasses sway,
shades of gold, orange and green,
the colors of the sun, the colors of life,
your favorite colors. The birds seem black
and white, the colors of death and mystery,
of light and spirit, of art, of you.

When the pictures join the rest
in the albums, on the shelves, in the drawers,
we will smile from them, because we found
peace on wing, in muck, in glory,
as companions in your world of
the ever changing ever green River of Grass.

These are the photographs
lying in their undeveloped potential
in the camera, flashes of life.

-- Rose-Marie Donovan

The last worldcon was a fan's delight ... and a pro's. Viz:

Chicon 2000

*a report by
Mike Resnick*

Food highlights:

Dinner at the Greek Islands, our favorite Greek restaurant, with Nick DiChario, Mary Stanton, and Jay Kay Klein. Great pastitso, dolmades in a thick lemon sauce, flaming saganaki.

Dinner at the Parthenon, Chicago's second-best Greek restaurant, with Rick Katze. Same meal as above, good but not -as- good.

Dinner at the Ritz-Carlton with Eleanor Wood. Great venison steak in a cream sauce, very nice chocolate souffle for dessert. Only other con member we saw there was Bob Silverberg.

Dinner at Lawry's The Prime Rib, with Greg Benford, Dick Spelman, Tony, Suford and Alice Lewis, and Kristine Kathryn Rusch. Best prime rib in the city, plus wonderful Yorkshire pudding.

Dinner in the hotel at Stetson's, with Beth Meacham. Much better than I'd anticipated. I had a 18-ounce filet mignon.

Best meal of all: Dinner at Eli's, with Anne Groell, my Bantam editor. Chopped liver appetizers (free, and all you could eat) and shrimp de jongue, one of my favorite dishes and all-but-impossible to find these days.

Brunch with Gardner Dozois and Susan Casper. The company was better than the food.

Also had gastronomically-unmemorable business lunches and breakfasts with Shayne Bell, Josepha Sherman, Marty Greenberg, Kris Rusch, and Beth Meacham.

Business highlights:

22 Beth Meacham and I have agreed on the next book I'll do for Tor. Only question now is whether I want a one or a two-book contract; I'm leaning toward one.

Anne Groell wants another book from me at Bantam; we're still trying to work out which it'll be.

Gardner Dozois bought "Old MacDonald Had

a Farm" from me at our brunch. He'd received it the day before he left for worldcon and actually brought it along to read, something -I- would never do at a worldcon.

Greg Benford assigned me a story for a non-science-fiction anthology.

Met the guys from Frequency Audio Magazine, picked up my CD (their first "issue" has pro actors reading the 5 short story Hugo nominees). They want more stories from me, so I'm going to spend a day trying to figure out what will read well aloud and then send it to them.

Decided it's time to get some more newcomers and semi-newcomers into print, so I had lunch with Marty Greenberg and gave him 8 or 9 anthology ideas. I told him I would only edit one a year, but I was willing to commit to 3 in the next 3 years if he could sell them now.

Had a long meeting with Josepha Sherman. Years ago I wrote the first 40 pages of a Young Adult sf novel called THE HERO, and had no luck at all placing it. Since Jo writes YA books, I showed it to her a year ago and asked for some input. She offered to collaborate, I agreed, and evidently she's got some editor so hot for it that the woman has begged us to give her a 3-book outline/synopsis, which is what we came up with over an extended lunch.

Got an assignment from an anthology and made arrangements to collaborate with M. Shayne Bell on it. We had breakfast and came up with the plot.

Believe it or not, someone who isn't Marty Greenberg has asked me to edit an anthology. I can't give any details until I decide whether or not to do it. (I'm leaning against, but I'm getting a lot of pressure for; you'll understand once I can discuss it.)

Got a green light to keep writing GalaxyOnline columns, only to find out shortly after arriving home that they're giving up buying new stuff for the web page and concentrating their efforts on Amazing, which they just purchased.

I was approached by DUFF -- the Down Under Fan Fund, that sends a fan to Australia every year -- with an interesting request: would I be willing to Tuckerize (i.e., write someone's name into a story) the high bidder for the right to be Tuckerized By Resnick? I said sure, and a new groom paid \$650 for his wife of 6 weeks to be

written into a story. (Harry Turtledove got \$665 for the same thing; highest of all was Lois MacMaster Bujold, who offered the same service for the SFWA Treasury, and got \$1,000.) The story's already done; I had a major female character in the story I just sold to Gardner, and he had no problem with my changing it to the auction winner's name.

Did a TV interview with Joseph Formichella and another with Donna Drapeau. Did 3 radio interviews, I have no idea with who or for what stations. Oh, and a long print interview with Frederique Roussel, a lovely Parisian; the French seem to have staked a claim on me this year.

Parties:

The most fun I had was at the CFG Suite Sunday night. We played two hours of the most hilarious Broadway musical trivia anyone's ever seen, and then a couple of more hours in which we had to identify opening and closing lines of sf stories and books. I don't know why that 4-hour stretch was so enjoyable, but it was.

Also had a great time at the Resnick Listserv party, which drew a hell of a lot more of us than I thought would be there. At one point Brad Sinor tried to cram us all into one photo; I'm dying to see how it came out.

Tried the SFWA suite a few times, as usual; it was so crowded that I never stayed more than 4 or 5 minutes tops, as usual. Tried the Tor party; it was so jammed I didn't even make it 3 minutes before I gave up on it and went out into the hall for some fresh air -- where I bumped into Mr. Tor himself, Tom Doherty, who couldn't stand the crowd and was out there, hiding from his own party, in splendid isolation. We talked for a few minutes, and one by one were joined by Ben Bova, Bob Silverberg, and a couple of others who couldn't take the noise and the jostling. It was a nice "rump party", though I didn't stay too long even in the hall.

The Frequency Audio boys put on a nice one, and Boston, as always, threw a pair of very enjoyable bid parties. I stopped in at the Toronto and Japanese bidding parties, skipped Charlotte and Con Jose, hit Minneapolis-in-73 and the Bucconeer thank-you party.

And, as I've done just about every night for better than 20 years of worldcons, I wound up

each evening in the CFG suite, usually arriving about 12 or 1, and staying until they closed up at 4 or 5 in the morning. This is still the place where most of my friends, most of the old-time fans and pros, come to gather -- and we owe Linda Dunn a huge thank you -- she was in charge of the SFWA Suite and didn't want to cart home all the unfinished booze, so she made a present of it to CFG. (That's Cincinnati Fantasy Group -- my home club -- for the uninitiated. We're not bidding for anything, we're not running for anything...but we've had a hospitality suite about 90% of the worldcons during the past half-century. It's where trufen and fannish pros like Robert Bloch and Bob Tucker in the past, and me and George RR Martin and Josepha Sherman and Jack Chalker and Joe and Jack Haldeman in the present, gather late each night at worldcon to visit and unwind a bit. Stop by at 3 or 4 in the morning, and you can usually find Bruce Pelz, Craig Miller, Tony Lewis, Rick Katze, Joe Siclari, Tom Veal, and others of that ilk deciding the fate -- and location -- of future worldcons.)

Oh -- one other party I forgot to mention. My daughter will recognize it, because she's experienced it before. Once per worldcon the Japanese put on a private, invitation-only party, and never invite more than a handful of guests, almost always writers or editors. You show up and realize that you are outnumbered about 4-to-1 by your hosts, who do -everything- for you. You look around for a chair, they rush over and carry it to you. You look thoughtfully at a food tray and it is instantly brought to you. You sit down, and are quickly engaged in conversation by some member of the hosting party who has read every one of your books and stories and can discuss them intelligently. If another guest sits down and starts talking to you, the host who -was- talking to you discreetly vanishes (but stands at the ready to talk to you again the instant your new companion departs.) It is quite an experience, let me tell you. This was the fifth or sixth year in a row I've been invited; over the years I've run into Connie there, and Silverbob, and Greg Benford, and David Brin, and Nancy Kress...but the only person I see there year in and year out is Rob Sawyer, who just happens to also be a Seiun winner.

Programming:

I did a really dull (I thought) panel on collaborations, a surprisingly interesting panel on all the writers and artists who had lived in or passed through Chicago over the course of the last century, a well-attended and active panel with Kris Rusch called "Ask Bwana" which included repeats of all the questions I've been answering for years in the Ask Bwana column, and an okay panel on writers who were too good to be famous or too famous to be good or some such thing.

It was when someone complained that I didn't spend as many hours talking to newcomers as I had at some worldcon 10 or 12 years ago that I pulled out my schedule to find out why – and that's when I realized just how hard they work the pros, at least the more prominent ones, at a worldcon.

I had 4 panels. Doesn't seem like much. But I also did an "official" one-hour autographing, and two unofficial ones – one at Larry Smith's table, one at **Asimov's**. I led a tour through the History of Worldcon exhibit, which was another 75 minutes. And I did 2 TV interviews and 3 radio interviews and a print interview; there's another 6 hours. I won't even count the two photo sessions, one for Locus, one for a French magazine. I did a half-hour online chat. I showed up for the Hugo "rehearsal" because as a presenter I needed to know where to pick up the envelope and the Hugo. I went to the pre-Hugo ceremony, and I attended the Hugos; there's 3 more hours. I did a 75-minute kaffeeklatsch. I did a 75-minute reading.

When the dust had cleared, I figured that I was onstage or obligated or call it what you will for over 21 hours, not counting all the time it took to simply get from one venue to another – and that doesn't include 4 business dinners, 2 business lunches, and 2 business breakfast/brunches, which had to take another 16 or 17 hours. I'm not objecting, mind you – I loved every minute of it (well, except for the two minutes when I lost two more Hugos), but it does explain why I had so few blocks of time available before the late-night parties.

And I'm not unique; I can think of a couple of dozen pros who worked as hard, and poor Harry Turtledove probably worked considerably harder, given his Toastmaster duties.

The Eisenstein Art Exhibit:

All during the 1960s and 1970s Alex Eisenstein (husband of author Phyllis Eisenstein) spent the bulk of a major inheritance on science fiction art. The public finally got a chance to see it at Worldcon: he had a large room in the display area, and had most of his stuff hanging there. (Not the Frazettas, which were too valuable.) He had almost 100 paintings by Emsch, another 30 or so by Kelly Freas (including the wonderful **Martians, Go Home** cover), a bunch by Schoenherr, some Virgil Finlays, a lot of other stuff. A truly wonderful exhibit.

The Art Show:

Not all that impressive this year. Nothing by Whelan, Mattingly, Rowena, David Cherry, Frazetta, Gurney. The only major artists represented were Bob Eggleton and Don Maitz.

The Huckster Room:

More books than usual, but I only bought two the whole weekend. Usually I go there hoping to find some new specialty editions or fanzines and semi-prozines that I hadn't previously seen, but this time they just weren't there. NESFA had a phenomenal weekend, selling close to \$30,000 worth of books from their single table; and Larry Smith told me he had a record weekend. Some of the other dealers weren't as happy.

I had some new books out: **Putting It Together: Turning Sow's Ear Drafts into Silk Purse Stories**, from Wildside; **The Branch**, from Wildside; **In Space No One Can Hear You Laugh**, from Farthest Star; and Fiona Kelleghan's massive **Mike Resnick; An Annotated Bibliography and Guide to His Work**, also from Farthest Star. Farthest Star missed the con with my 4-in-1 **Compleat Tales of the Galactic Midway**, which will be out in September; and Obscura Press missed the con by less than 2 days with **Magic Feathers: The Mike and Nick Show**, a collection of my 11 collaborations with Nick DiChario. As it was, I think I signed over a thousand books, including the ancient ones that always come back to haunt me at worldcons.

The Fan Lounge:

A wonderful idea. Huge room, divided into fan

history and fan lounge. The lounge had tables and chairs, sold old magazines and fanzines (and I bought more fanzines there than books in the dealers' room). Dozens of Hugos and program books and photos and ribbons and badges from different years were on display. A very nice place to relax, located on a level between the restaurants and the dealers room, It was run by Janice Gelb and Pat and Roger Sims, and a lot of CFG members volunteered their time in various capacities.

The Hugo Ceremony:

I lost another Hugo to the Female Person From Colorado (so what else is new?), and one to Michael Swanwick. I had the pleasure of handing out the Best Novelette to my good friend Jim Kelly, a most deserving winner. And I picked up the Seiun (Japanese Hugo) for Best Novel. I was sure I was going to say "Domo obligatto" rather than "Domo arigato", but I got it right; I also spend most of the time thanking my Japanese translator, Masayuki Uchida, for without him I'd never have won the Seiun, any more than I could have won the Prix Eiffel Tour last June without my French translator, Pierre-Paul Durastanti.

Leslie What also made me a beautiful little trophy that I just love, so much so that it's sitting beside my four Hugos right now. It's a tiny lucite mountain, with two miniature spaceships, shaped exactly like Hugos, crashed into it, and engraved at the base of the mountain is "Chicon 2000: You wuz robbed!"

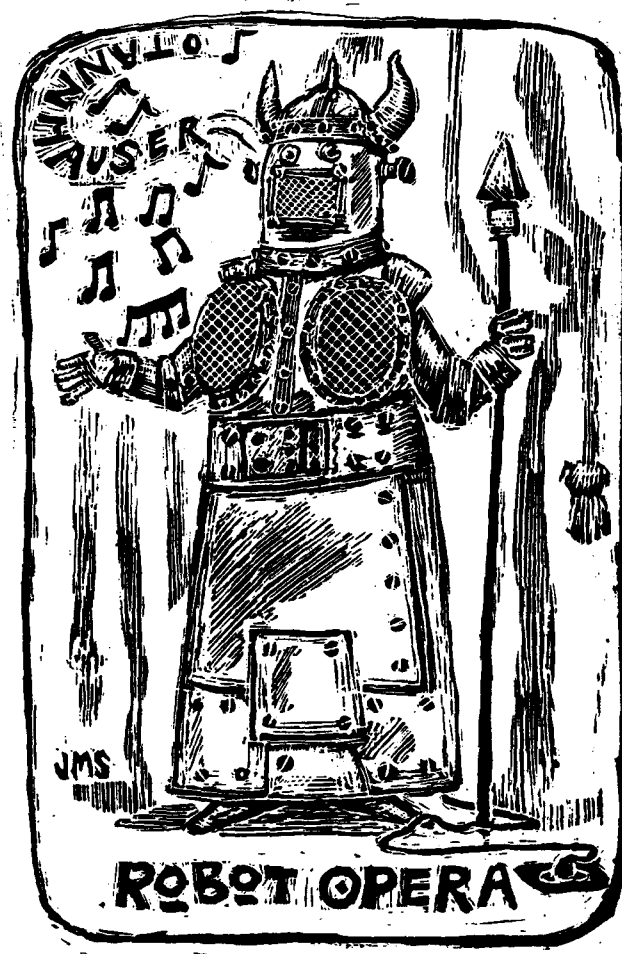
OK, that's a preliminary overview of the worldcon. I averaged about 5 hours of sleep a night, ate like a king, and, as I do at almost every worldcon, had the most fun I'll have all year.

The same, alas, can't be said for Carol. We went to the Field Museum Wednesday, and did some shopping in the Loop on Thursday. Then, Friday morning, as she was showering just prior to going to the Art Institute, she slipped, and as she was falling, she came down hard on the little metal extension atop the water nozzle that activates the shower, and tore a goodly piece of flesh out of herself. We patched her up, cleaned the wound a few times each day, and while it didn't prevent her from going to the Art Institute Friday or the Aquarium Monday or any of her

duty dances such as the Hugos, or meals with editors, she was understandably uncomfortable for the last 4 days of the con. First thing we did when we got home was take her to the doctor, who cut off some flesh but pronounced the wound Uninfected and Healing.

The Babes for Bwana t-shirt craze seems to be catching on. Kris Rusch wore one (with "President: Oregon Chapter" printed on it) to our 'Ask Bwana" panel (and BJ Galler-Smith and Ann Marston were in the audience wearing theirs), and Carol wore hers ("International President and Founding Member") to the Listserv party.

I realize I was (purposely) vague about some of the books and stories I sold at Worldcon. As I sign the contracts and make them official over the next few months, I'll be happy to announce what they were. In the meantime, I think I'd better end this report and see if I can't produce something for next year's Hugo ballot.



John Berry returns with another tale of his career in forensic fingerprinting, as originally told in *Fingerprint Whorld* ...

"But I REALLY Believed Him!"

John Berry

Fingerprint experts who have made a positive fingerprint identification, have had it checked by another expert and passed the information to the investigating police with its evidential status. duly file the papers and forget about the case. We presume that the investigating police are completely confident of the identification and will interview the offender knowing that unless a defence of legitimate access is proffered and accepted, a prosecution will invariably follow because fingerprint evidence does not require corroboration.

But I have occasionally been involved in cases where the offender, when being interviewed, is so emphatic in his denial of involvement that some police officers (and not necessarily inexperienced ones) are clouded with doubt and reluctantly find themselves swayed by the utter sincerity and bewildered demeanour of the interviewee.

Recently, I identified a superb left thumb imprint on an interior car mirror, after search. The same person had also made marks on a 'soft-drink' can found on the back seat of the vehicle, which had been involved in a road traffic accident whilst stolen. The police were informed of the availability of evidence of identity. Because the case was so straightforward, it was given to a young policewoman to deal with. The offender was interviewed in the presence of his parents, and in an hysterical manner denied that he had ever been in the car, either with or without permission, and had no knowledge of the accident. His

parents, being very respectable people, were deeply distressed by the accusation, stating their son was always at home at night, was extremely well behaved, and couldn't possibly have stolen the car or crashed it. The policewoman admitted that she found herself in an impossible position . . . she believed the fingerprint evidence, but she was also convinced of the youth's innocence . . . something, she said, was 'terribly amiss'. She temporarily solved her dilemma by taking the youths finger impressions and submitting them for re-checking against the 'scenes of crimes' marks. Of course, the marks on the vehicle were made by the person she had fingerprinted. She was instructed by her gov'nor to charge the youth with various offences associated with the theft of the vehicle. I gave evidence of identity at the Magistrates Court, and the youth was convicted despite strenuous denials of involvement. Counsel asked for bail for appeal purposes but the appeal was not pursued.

It is understandable that an inexperienced police officer can be psyched into believing false but well-acted protestations of innocence, but a dozen years ago a very experienced police officer felt that the fingerprint system had seriously erred.

A man had forced an offertory box in a Roman Catholic chapel, and had thrown brass candlesticks all over the place, and

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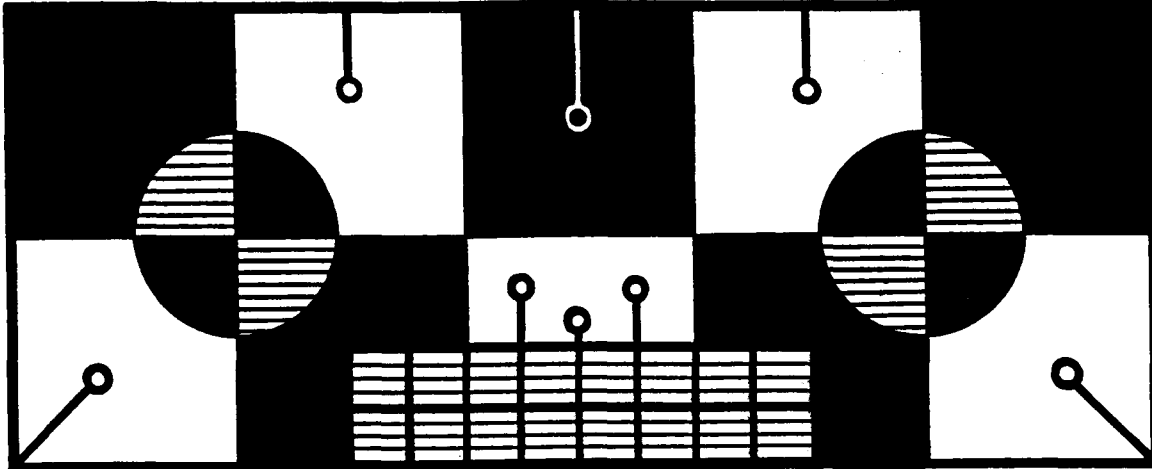
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Call this an op-ed piece, Gene's opinion, not necessarily Challenger's.

HUMAN VS. ROBOT: A BATTLE OF WORDS

Gene Stewart



Sean Russell Friend

Print fen can write coherently, even persuasively. They can spell. They can think, of all things. They hold opinions that have been thought out, and they articulate them in an orderly way. They can spell. They understand basic grammar, know many obtuse and wonderful things, and embody the saying that All things are known in fandom. They can collect, edit, collate, and distribute beautifully published zines and keep arguments straight for decades. They can spell.

Electronic fen can do none of the above consistently, few of them for even brief stretches, and only one or two of them with any hope of inadvertent success.

There are some electronic fen who began in print. Often they lose skills in the exchange. They hop from careful print to careless, hasty chat and the many shortcomings they managed to cover up with patience and time are revealed. Spell-checkers don't help much. They learn the joys of flaming and forget cool manners and cold logic. They get carried away with instant feedback and imagine that they're communicating, when all they're doing is echoing the chaos.

There are email discussion groups and message board forums, too. These lie somewhere between the artistry of print and the squalor of chat. Sloppy is the best description for what one finds here. Sloppy expression of sloppy thinking, sloppy typing, and sloppy adherence to any traditions that might try to apply some form or order. Exchanges in these forums can be better than those in chat, but as often lead to decay and decline, even flame spats and huffy exits.

Print demands more, perhaps due to its illusion of permanence. People tend to take more care with writing destined for print, and they tend to look it over before sending it out. Some even write more than one draft; imagine that.

In electronic exchanges, it can appear on the other's screen the instant it's typed. First drafts are the only drafts and everything scrolls off the margins. Anonymity's built-in. This leads to the mask effect. It's as if one wears a mask. One can become anything or anyone, and hide behind a persona, or a dozen, without apparent consequence, because the screen keeps changing anyway and no one bothers looking back.

While it's true there are pen names used in print, there is no mask effect in print that comes close to the one pertaining to electronic communications; a pen name in print offers some anonymity, but it's

traceable. One cannot change one's nom de plume instantly, or rotate through a list of them inside a minute, or claim to be from anywhere in the world with a postmark staring the recipient in the face.

In electronic battles of the witless, anonymity's a given. Multiple identities allow cluster-flaming and topic threads tangle as more pile on. And no one can effectively be traced, so pointless hit-and-run trouble-making thrives.

One glance at an average chat room's contents at any given moment suffices to demonstrate its low level of intellect and communication. Now contrast that glimpse with a look at the message boards and email digests. While there's a good deal more information being swapped, the attitudes and stances remain at a low level, as does the spelling.

A look at any page of the average print zine shows a density and polish the other forums cannot aspire to. And a look into the letter columns will reveal discussion, discourse, and correspondence on a level unreachable by the other communications.

Some compare email to letter writing, but it's closer to a miscengenation between telephone and telegraph communications. While they're one-sided like a telegram, they're fairly fast and easy, like telephoning.

And yet in letters more is revealed – would Grandma save bundles of old telephone call transcripts in her dusty cinnamon attic? Do people scan through email files sighing nostalgically? Isn't a letter, with its touch of hand to pen to paper, more personal in more ways than anything electronic could be?

And so it is with zines. Print zines bring something personal to communication that is missing from the electronic hybrids. It offers a touch of humanity in an increasingly dehumanized world.

We lose this human touch at our peril.

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“BUT I REALLY BELIEVED HIM!”

CONTINUED

had committed other minor damage. I identified an offender after search from marks found on various items and informed the local police. The man was taken to the police station for interview, and denied the charges, stating he had never been inside the chapel. He sobbed his innocence, and asked for the attendance of the Parish Priest. When the priest entered the police station the man sank to his knees in front of him and in an impassioned manner swore his innocence. The priest believed him, and told the police they had arrested the wrong man.

The first intimation I had that the local police thought a fingerprint error had been made was when the Detective Chief Superintendent came into the fingerprint office and asked for the marks to be double-checked. The senior detective told us that he was entirely confident with the identification—he had actually signed the correspondence—but he had been asked to ensure that the fingerprint aspect of the

identification was in order, which of course it was.

At the Committal Proceedings, where I proved the marks, I continuously received dark looks from the priest and the investigating police officer, both of whom firmly believed in the man's innocence. When I was leaving the courthouse, the police officer sidled furtively up to me and whispered hoarsely “you've got the wrong man.”

On the day the trial was fixed, my front door was knocked at 5.30 am in the morning, and a police officer instructed me not to attend the court.

In the afternoon, the officer in charge of the case telephoned me, and said that the man had pleaded guilty to the charge, and asked for eleven additional cases of sacrilege to be taken into consideration.

“I'm sorry, but I really believed him”, admitted the embarrassed officer.

Challenger is always open to tales from the jury. Here are some good ones.

MY TIMES IN THE BOX

Robert Kennedy

Having been called to jury duty a number of times in Los Angeles County and Ventura County, my experience might be of interest to others. As **Milt Stevens** wrote in **Challenger #12**, it used to be that the time one had to serve in Los Angeles County was for a month, longer if you were on a jury at the end of the month. In Ventura County you are only there for one day unless you get on a jury. Los Angeles County is now the same. Both are "one day or one trial."

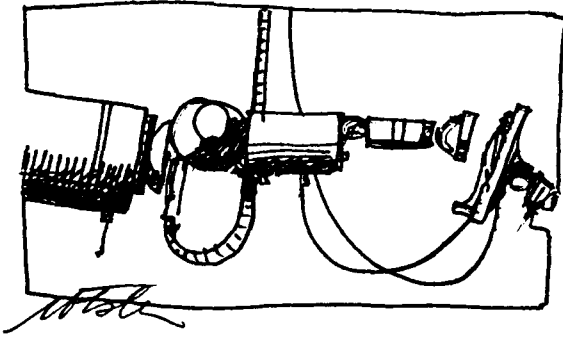
Los Angeles County

My very first call to jury duty was in the 1960's in Superior Court. I was accepted on the first jury for which I was called. It involved a young man and his girl friend (or wife, I don't remember) who were charged with trying to break into a drug store. While the man was trying to break into the drug store, the girl wandered around some stores nearby to see if she could hear any noise from the break-in. At some point the man was spotted and people started chasing him. The girl got in their car and drove beside him trying to get him in the car. The chasers were so close that she had to make several attempts before he was finally able to get in the car. The police later found the car at a motel and the two of them in one of the rooms. The evidence against them was overwhelming (eyewitnesses, articles in their car, etc.). I was chosen as foreman. The first vote we took saw 10 Guilty and 2 Not Guilty. The Not Guilty votes were both women. One of them appeared to be in her 70's and the other probably in her 40's. It was about noon, so we went to lunch. As we were waiting for lunch the older woman tried to discuss the case with me. I told her that we could not discuss it outside the jury room and that was that. When we got back from lunch she changed her vote to Guilty. Oh boy, it was then obvious that she just wanted a lunch at taxpayer expense. Engaging the other woman in discussion, the best reason she could come up with for her vote was that the defendants were new to California. After a while we were able to get her off that and she

finally voted Guilty. So, back to the court room and I delivered the verdict.

The next jury panel for which I was called also resulted in my being picked for the jury. This time it involved three young men who were charged with killing a fourth. The evidence again was overwhelming and the only question should have been the degree of guilt. One of the defendants was the actual killer and he had stabbed the victim in the heart with an ice pick. The other two had beaten on him with tire irons. The killer claimed he had grabbed the ice pick from the soon to be deceased and struck in self-defense and that the victim then ran a considerable distance at which point they fell on him and beat him with the tire irons. Actually, the three defendants had seen the victim walking down the street. They drove around the block, stopped, took tire irons out of their car, and went after him. Any claim of self-defense was ludicrous. It did appear that it may have been a drug-related case and that the victim had been an informer. After much discussion we took a vote on the killer. To the best of my memory the vote was 3 First-Degree Murder, 7 Second-Degree Murder, and 2 Not Guilty. The Not Guilty votes were from a 20-something male and female pair with sawdust for brains. Thanks to them we were locked up for five days. One day as we were leaving for lunch I noticed the female looking through a doorway. I walked over to see at what she was looking. It turned out that the doorway was in a straight line to a holding cell that contained the three defendants. She turned to me and asked: "Don't you feel sorry for them?" After getting my jaw up off the floor, I responded: "No! And if you feel sorry for them why are you staring at them like caged animals?" She didn't answer. When it became evident that there was no testimony as to whether or not the victim could have run the distance claimed with the ice pick having punctured his heart, the First-Degree Murder votes changed to Second-Degree Murder. The two bubbleheads were still voting Not Guilty so we changed to discussing the other two defendants. Finally, everyone agreed on a verdict of Assault for them. Then the

bubbleheads agreed to a verdict of Manslaughter for the killer. We were getting very tired and now took another vote on the killer that was 1 Second-Degree Murder and 11 Manslaughter. The woman voting Second-Degree would not change. In open court we informed the judge that we had two verdicts and could not reach agreement on the third.



The judge then declared a mistrial for the actual killer and the verdicts were read for the other two. Through a very quick comment, one of the defense attorneys brought out the "hung jury" vote. The judge got upset and said we could not do that but it was too late since he had already declared a mistrial. At the time I thought we had screwed-up. Later I was glad that the woman voting Second-Degree Murder had refused to change, thereby forcing another trial. However, I have no idea what, if any, verdict was rendered in a subsequent trial.

My next call to jury duty was in the 1970's in Municipal Court. The first panel for which I was called involved a DUI. The Defense attorney excused me. The next panel was also for a DUI and I was accepted. The defendant had been arrested about 2:30 a.m. The defense brought an "expert" down from Sacramento. He was quite long-winded and really didn't help the defense very much. A humorous part of the defense was when the defense attorney obtained testimony that a person who had used mouth spray just prior to taking a Breathalyzer test would give a false reading. When we came back from lunch the defendant was using a mouth spray. When we got to the jury room we all cracked-up laughing.

In listening to people talk I thought we might have a hung jury. I was chosen as foreman. During the trial the defendant claimed that he had just been out looking for something to eat and a bar was the only place he could find food. Sadly for him, one of the jurors was familiar with the area and said there were several fast food places open even at that time of night. It was the end of the day so I asked if people wanted to go home and discuss the case the next day. They said OK so we called the bailiff and told him that we wanted to go home. He went off to inform the judge. While he was gone someone said why don't we take a vote just to see where we stand. I told the people to write Guilty or Not Guilty and the paper and if they were undecided and wished to discuss the case to turn in a blank paper. So, I'm opening the papers—Guilty, Guilty, Guilty—12 Guilty. I told the people that if we went in now the defense attorney would poll us to be very sure we were all in agreement and if that bothered them we had better wait. No problem and the defense attorney did poll us. After we were out in the hall we found out that the defendant had been drinking since the morning. It was surprising that he was not very drunk instead of a DUI. Under today's draconian law he would have been considered drunk.

The next case was a young man accused of assault against another in a bar. Actually, there were two attackers (who were trying to kick the victim's brains in), but the other one had skipped and was not present. We learned later that he had entered the building during the trial and was eating lunch in the lunchroom. Someone informed the bailiff and the other attacker was now residing in a cell. (A not very bright person.) After some discussion we took a vote. 11 Guilty and 1 Not Voting. On our questioning, the woman Not Voting turned out to be afraid that the defendant and his friends would come to her home and do terrible things to her. We were able to convince her that her fear was groundless and she voted Guilty. Oh yes, the attackers did not know that there were three off-duty police officers in the bar.

Next was a man accused of contracting without a license. During the questioning of the jury, the defense attorney elicited from me that my wife and I had been sued in Small Claims

Court by a painter who did not have a state contractors license and whom we had fired. He did not ask about the result, just asked if that would affect how I judged this case. I said no and was accepted. (We won the Small Claims Court case because we had done our homework and discovered that if a job was for more than \$100, an unlicensed person did not have a case.) The homeowner testifying for the prosecution in my opinion did not help their case. He was a psychologist who was obnoxious and had refused a reasonable request by the man who had done the work. The man had put in a patio cover and apparently it leaked. Anyway, we went to the jury room, looked over the evidence, and took a vote. 11 Not Guilty, 1 Guilty. After awhile the man who was voting Guilty (and who had been on the DUI case with me) went to the bathroom. When he came back he said, "it's not worth it" and changed his vote to Not Guilty. You can imagine the reaction of the worker on hearing the verdict. It was "thank you, thank, thank you," to all of us jurors. I believe (but am not positive) that if he had been found Guilty, he may have been barred from ever receiving a state contractors license. Although it was never discussed, I think our verdict just may have been an example of "jury nullification." At least that was rather much my thinking.

And here's one I almost forgot about. A man in his early 20's and his high school girlfriend were being tried for stealing an expensive model airplane from a hobby shop. A man had grabbed a model plane that was hanging from the ceiling, ran out the door, and jumped into his pickup truck that also contained a young female. They then took off and were chased by some people who had been in the store. The thief drove down a dead-end street and had to reverse himself so that the people chasing them were able to see the windshield. I don't remember the circumstances of how the two on trial were arrested. Anyway, these two were on trial and I was on the jury. There was testimony from people who had been in the store and who claimed to have gotten a good look at the male who grabbed the plane. The people chasing them claimed to get a good look at the two people in the truck. Both the man and the girl testified claiming it wasn't them. The girl claimed to have been in school at the time.

The school principal testified for the defense that he had checked a record and it indicated the girl was in school at the time of the theft. After lunch, the principal got back on the stand and had to reverse himself. Apparently he had not checked the right record and when he did so at the lunch break it was very clear that the girl had not been in school. What a blow for the defense. The male also testified that he had tinted windows and someone on the outside would not be able to recognize anyone inside. A hazy point on my part is some other testimony given by the man. I don't remember what it was (this was some 26 years ago) but other testimony for the prosecution clearly refuted it. The defense attorney in his closing argument even apologized and said he didn't understand why his client had lied. During our deliberations we asked if we could see the pickup truck. We were allowed to do so and it appeared that a person could see who was in it. We asked if someone could sit in the truck so that we could be sure. The request was denied. Obviously we found the two idiots guilty.

Ventura County

In the 1980's while still working I received several jury summonses. Each time I was excused for medical reasons. After retiring in 1993 I felt better so went for jury duty the next two times

The first time I showed up it was to sit in the jury room all day, never being called. So, it was read a good SF book, eat lunch, continue reading the book, then go home at the end of the day.

The next time I did get called for a jury. The case involved a man who was charged with



beating his wife. We were informed that he was shackled (although we could not see the shackles) and asked if that would affect our thinking. Everyone said no. There was very extensive questioning by the judge, the prosecution, and the defense. Among other things, we were asked about our education, marital status, and opinions on various subjects. We were also asked about any trials we had been on previously. So, obviously I had to mention the trials in Los Angeles County and whether or not the juries had been able to reach verdicts (without indicating what verdict we had reached). The judge, as well as the prosecution and the defense excused a number of people. After a considerable time there was a break. When we returned the defense attorney dismissed me. That was that and I went to lunch and sat with one of the potential jurors who had been dismissed earlier by the judge. She was a scientist who was from some Asian country and not familiar with our legal system. I told her that it was obviously the reason for the judge dismissing her and she agreed indicating that she really didn't understand what was going on. Although the prosecution and defense never tell you why they dismiss you, I think it is reasonable to conclude that my dismissal was based on my previous jury experience. I had too much experience for the defense to want me on the jury.

That's it for now and I hope to be called for jury duty again.



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A million thanks to everyone.

*For once, here in **Challenger**, I'm not going to talk about a past legal case, but describe – obliquely – one that is current. It probably won't go to trial until 2002, if it goes at all.*

THE EMPTY MAN

Guy Lillian

His very name is Emptiness. He is a little man, bandy-legged, with wide shoulders and a head too big for this body. His hair is gray, his skin is ashen, and in his white prison jumpsuit he indeed seems a void as he sits across the table in the visiting room of Death Row. Behind him, on the wall, is a mural painted by a talented inmate: a forest lake, a fishing cabin, a bald eagle crossing the twilight. Down the wall is a goofy drawing of Scooby-Doo, but the striking incongruity is this gray, empty man against the pastoral dream.

This little man, according to the juries, is a genuine serial killer: this small, runty, colorless little man. There was nothing romantic and little particularly interesting about his crimes. He was a burglar who beat people to death in their own homes, for money. He is under two death sentences and a separate life term. Several months before, I heard one of his death sentences pronounced. It was only the third such I've witnessed in 12 years as a lawyer. I am here to try to prevent another.

I saw the photographs. May you never see such photographs. The empty man, if indeed he committed the crimes, has somewhere in himself a reservoir of hatred and violence far surpassing his diminutive frame. My worst dreams are dreams about morgues, nightmares of abattoirs far more hideous than the actual morgues I've seen. These photos are worse than those dreams. Remember Snowden's secret? Man is matter. Drop him out of a window and he'll fall. Set him on fire and he'll burn. Smash him with blunt objects and he'll cave in, and bleed. That was what happened to the people in those pictures. They look like victims of a bad car wreck.

I think that worse than the photos of the smashed bones and violated flesh are the pictures of the homes. The empty man was said to choose affluent-looking homes for his assaults. There are family portraits on some of the walls. How were the people in those smiling portraits to know that their lives would someday be wrenched apart dreadfully and permanently and senselessly and pointlessly? The bodies and the blood are like obscene graffiti smeared on the neat walls and the clean furniture and the tidy lives that were there before the empty man came in through the bathroom window.

The empty man has been convicted in trial twice, and pled guilty once. I hope to convince him to plead guilty again. It's hard enough to beat one death sentence; two is a thousand times worse. To beat three? I've worked out a sweetheart deal protecting his appeal rights and not forcing him to admit to anything. As we go to press, he's thinking about it.

I must point out that there is no evidence against the empty little man but this: his confession. When he was arrested he was questioned for the better part of a day by police trained in FBI interrogation techniques. If you read what follows, only a few pages out of the enormous transcript, you'll see some of that instruction at work. The defendant's previous lawyers hired expensive experts to try to prove that the use of hypnotic, suggestive, minimizing/maximizing language was coercive, and therefore the confession should not be allowed into evidence. They lost, so the client lost, and now he faces death twice over, and life imprisonment in addition to that.

These pages don't deal with my case and are a public record, so I feel no ethical problem in showing them to you. Look at them from the lawyer's point of view – from the judge's. Was this interrogation *fair*? Can we rely on the result as reflecting the truth? Or did the efforts of T.H., the cop, to wrangle words out of the empty man – initials D.B. – pervert or distort the truth?

Do you understand why it matters?

DS: All right lets go.

DB: I asked him a long time ago if I can smoke a cigarette, he said after while, and he never.

TH: [REDACTED] you want some uh water a coke or anything.

DB: Just a coke.

TH: You want a coke, I think we have uh, I'll get somebody to check on that for you, see if we can get you a coke. Feel better, using the bathroom.

DB: Yeah I still ain't got to smoke a cigarette.

TH: I'm gonna work on that for you alright, I'm close the door [REDACTED]

DB: Somebody turned the fucking heater off again I guess.

TH: I'll see if I can get somebody to turn the heat back on for you. We been here- we been speaking to you, we've been talking to you about a number of things. More specifically the- the [REDACTED] homicide.

DB: Thank you.

TH: We uh every now and then I put my ear by the door and you know I'm an investigator and uh I've heard some of the things that you know that - that you said and some of things that Dave's said. I personally believe I- I know your momma died, I- we did so much background history on you it's unbelievable, I think I know more about you then I know about myself. I wasn't bullshitting you, those two file folders on- on the floor over there are everything about you, okay. From failing first grade, being uh socially promoted two times in school, uh I told you everything we asked you we knew the answers to, okay. I haven't - lied at you - I haven't lied to you, anyone of us okay. I- I'm not like, I'm completely honest with everybody I talk to and in respect I expect the same return, okay. I know your mother died, Christmas time that was about two years ago. I know I don't know how I would react if I my momma died you know, unless you well.

DB: Don't talk about my momma.

TH: [REDACTED] listen to me, okay listen to me, it's all right. I know she was close to you okay.

DB: Still.

TH: I know she was close to you, I know it hurt, I lost my grandparent- I lost my grandmother less then three months ago. I know it's very difficult.

DB: Been having chest pains for a month.

TH: You need to see a doctor about that, but listen to me, listen to me we've got grave issues we need to discuss okay. What happened was wrong, we all know it was wrong, okay there's nothing we can do to change it, the clock is still ticking, we can't turn back that time, okay. We can't- I can't bring that bullet out of that child, okay we can't bring people back from the dead it doesn't happen, all right. That's something that we can not control. The only thing we can do is to do the right thing and try to make it better, you understand what I'm saying. You know sometimes in life, it's a point where you gonna stand up and be a man or be a fuckin mouse, one of the two all right. Think of this as a football game, in the fourth quarter, I'm the quarter back, you're the receiver, we on the fucking two yard line, fourth down. Okay I just hand you the ball, it's your responsibility to run it in for a touchdown or to fumble it, you understand what I'm saying. I know your momma meant a lot to you all right, my parents mean alot to me, Mike's parents mean alot to him, okay. It's very difficult when you loose a loved one, all right. An especially my grandmother suffered for over two years, okay. So I know how you feel seeing your momma suffer with emphazima, I mean that- that's nothing to- that shit hurts man you

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TH: know that hurts. My grandmother had cancer of the stomach and the liver and kept spreading and I see her on her death bed going over there every Sunday after church to go visit her, I mean that sucked, you know life ain't fair, it ain't fair at all, life sucks. There's no rules given to you when you born, there's no play book given to you when your born, you got to go on your own, you got to the best thing that you know how to do. Sometimes we make bad decisions, there's no doubt about that- there's no doubt about that all, nobody's perfect. You understand what I'm saying?

DB: Ah-huh.

TH: I want you to close your eyes for me, close your eyes for me, keep them closed. Your momma was a big part of your life before she died am I not correct? You were very close to her, she meant alot to you, she took care of you and your brothers and sisters. She was a good woman, I know that I've talked to people in Paulina, I talk to people in Lutcher. [REDACTED] was a very nice person. Very sweet, very kind, considerate. And I know that she meant a great deal to you, I know that. Do you think your mother would be proud of you no matter and- and a mother loves her son no matter what, you know that. But if you're responsible, no we know you're responsible, she knows and she wants you- she raised you better, she raised you to take responsibilities for your actions, she raised you to do the right thing, she raised all your brother and sister's that way. She instilled that in each one of her children. She knew that she was doing her best to provide for her family and it wasn't much, and I'm not being rude and mean when I'm saying that [REDACTED]. I mean that- you- your daddy has a decent place to live, it ain't no fucking mansion you understand. Fucking eight brothers and sisters, I mean that's alot of people in one house growing up, it's difficult, pass down clothes, I mean. I've been there, I have a big family, I know how it is all right. There's certain times in your life when you have to stand up and take responsibility and I know your momma wouldn't be proud of you if she knew you were lying and didn't own up for what happened. Now a perfect example, listen to me, close your eyes for me [REDACTED] listen to me okay. I know that you didn't mean to hurt anybody, I know that, nobody has to tell me that, I know that. Is that correct, yes it's correct. I know what happened wasn't planned is that correct, yes it's correct, I know that. We all know that, we're not stupid I been doing this shit for six months, I ain't worked on another fucking case. I know the type of person you are, I know what type of person you are, you're a good person, but we all make mistakes, we all make mistakes, nobody's perfect, the only person that's perfect is God. And he's in this room also, cause he is with us all the time. You understand what I'm telling you [REDACTED], keep your eyes close and in your mind I want you to go back to the morning of May 14th of 1997. I know it's a date, I wish we could all forget, but we can't it happened okay, it's over, it's done with, there's nothing we can do. Nothing at all, the only thing we can do at this point is to try to make it right, that's the only thing we can do. We can't bring Mrs. [REDACTED] back, she's gone, she didn't suffer long, she didn't suffer long at all. The injuries were quick and she died very quickly, she was not in a great deal of pain for very long. And sometimes we get in situations when we commit ourselves and we can't turn back, we do things that we don't want to do. Now do you think your mother would be proud to know that you weren't owning up to your responsibilities? We all have responsibilities [REDACTED], I have a responsibility to my family, just as you have responsibility to your family. You're trying to provide for your family, you're trying to

TH: get your kids better clothes more clothes then what you had. You're trying to get them those things that you didn't have growing up cause you had so many brothers and sisters and you can only stretch a dollar so fucking far. Mrs. [REDACTED] can't go to the fucking Dollar General in Paulina and get every fucking things she needs. You understand, the fucking dollar just don't stretch that far, we know that, we're not stupid, you know that. Did you mean to hurt her, no. You didn't, did you mean for it to happen, no you didn't am I correct, yes I'm correct. [REDACTED] all evening we been speaking to you and you feel, and I'll tell you exactly what you thinking at this point. You feel at this point, you've been in denial since you walked into this room and you don't know how to begin talking to us, you don't know what to say, you don't know how to say it. But you want to cause that fucking cancer is eating you up, you can't breath at night, you can't breath like you suppose to cause that fucking weight is on your chest and until you get that weight off, you'll feel better. You know God forgave Able for killing Cane you know that right? You know that, you heard that story, he killed his brother you know that correct? God forgives everybody, you ask for forgiveness, you are forgiven, you know that. You're momma brought you up right, she went to church every Sunday with her kids, she raised a good Christian, have I said any lies, no I have not. Has everything that I said true, yes it is. And you just don't know how to begin to talk to me, all you got to do is tell me what happened that's all. Just tell me what happened, that's it. You don't know when to begin, begin at that morning. The weight will be lifted off of your shoulders, off of your chest, and you'll feel so much better. I don't want to go to court showing this is a premeditated planned attack that took you three months to plan, that's not what happened, that's not what happened at all, fucking Mafia people do that shit, not you, you didn't plan this, you didn't plan for any of this to happen. The only thing you wanted was the safe. Plain and simply, you didn't want Mrs. [REDACTED] to die, you didn't want to have to do what you did. Well all know that, you understand. Look at me [REDACTED], take a sip of the drink and talk to me. That's all right, shake my hand- shake my hand, you need to trust me [REDACTED], you need to trust me. Start from the beginning. It's all right come on. You spent all the money at the casino's we know that, you still have the jewelry? It's in your house? It's in your trailer? Remember before I asked you or I told you, all the questions we asked, we know the answers to, I know that's where the money went, I'm not stupid. Start at the beginning come on, tell me what happened. Did you mean to hurt her? Did you mean for it to happen? Come on, talk to me, it's all right. Come on [REDACTED] talk to me, tell me what happened. You okay? It's all right, it's all right take a deep breath- take a deep breath, it's okay. Get this off your chest man, you need to continue living your life, you don't need to live like this. You don't need to live like this, you don't need to be in pain when you close your eyes at night. You don't need to see the things that you see when you close your eyes at night. Talk to me [REDACTED], come on, that's all right, we not gonna think bad of you we're not gonna judge you. We're not here to think bad thoughts about you that's not while we're here, you need our help, you need our help, you understand. You know that, you need to talk to somebody professionally about what's been happening. Cause it's not normal, I know that real [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in here, that Mrs. Alice raised, can't be responsible for that, that there's diseases in peoples heads, there's things that go on chemical imbalances that go on in people. It just makes them do things that they shouldn't do, it just makes them stupid, it's no part- it's not your fault, is is your

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TH: fault that your body works that way, you been saying you had chest pains, that means something's wrong -something's wrong in your body.

DB: It's like this- it's like ever since my momma died.

TH: I know- I know [REDACTED], I know that's what been tearing you up. I know that's what been tearing you up, it's a cry- you know what it is it's a cry for help, you can't talk to your momma no more, you can't see her anymore, and it- it fucking kills you , it tears you up and I know that. You never had the chance to say what you wanted to say, I know that

TH: was the turning point in your life. Fucking Christmas will never be the same, to have a relative died at Christmas time, that's the ultimate fucking kick in the ass from life. That fucking sucks. You think, [REDACTED] do you think you're first person to sit in this fucking chair, you think you're the only one, you think you're gonna be the last, no, you're not. We're here to help you, I want to help you, I really do, you need to talk to somebody professionally to help you deal with this and we can arrange that. I can't sit here and promise you anything but I can guarantee you- I can guarantee you this, I'll do my fucking damndest, and I'll bend over fucking backwards to get you help to talk to somebody I can promise you that, I'll promise you my efforts, that's what I can promise you, I can't promise you the outcome. Man you need to get this off your chest, you need to it's gonna kill you, give me your hand- give me your hand. Talk to me, talk to me, tell me what happened. You miss your momma don't you?

DB: Yeah.

TH: You didn't mean to kill Mrs. [REDACTED]?

DB: No.

TH: Talk to me, that's all right- that's all right, let it out, let it out.

DB: (Crying.)

TH: Let it out. What you were getting ready say, you were getting ready to say something.

DB: The moment.

TH: Uh.

DB: The moment since she left me.

TH: I know you feel bad because you think that she left you but she didn't, God took her man, she's in a better place now, she's not suffering any more, that's how I felt about my grandma, you know what I grandma doesn't have to lay in bed taking 50 milligrams of fucking morphine every 1/2 an hour you know why because she's was fucking suffering, your momma is in a better place man, your momma is in better place. Fucking earth is a shit hole, life sucks, its not fair - its not fair. I know you haven't been right since that time, I know your head has been fucked up. [REDACTED] I'm here to help you, you need to trust me, you need to talk to me. I'm the only person that you can trust you understand.

DB: I don't know.

TH: Don't be a fucking pussy, you a man, stand up and be a man you know - you know that's what your momma wants you to do you know that. You know how many people I talked to in Paulina and Lutcher, that's where I been spending shit, I - how the fuck you think I knew how to spell your daddy's name, you think everybody's name is fucking [REDACTED] I know how to spell your daddy's name, I been there, I've done that, I knew how many brothers and sisters you had, I knew all there names, I - I knew which ones were married, which one's weren't, [REDACTED] lives in Belle Point working at the Mitey Muffler

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TH: Shop, he left , I know all that shit. That's not the issue, is it? You need to breath at night, you need to be able to close your eyes and not see the fucking shit that you see. You understand. Come on talk to me. What happened - what happened? Let it out, let it out.

DB: I don't know what.

TH: Is there any property that we can recover? Did you keep any of the jewelry or just threw

TH: it all away? You threw it away. You spent all the money at the casino? That's right, okay. Listen - listen to me. We need to get a tape statement from you to let everybody know that you're not some fucking monster that premeditated this shit you understand. We need to let people know that your mamma died, your fucking head was messed up at that point and you're trying to provide for your kids, better then what your mamma provided for you, because you want a little better for them, I know that man, I knew that fucking shit when I walked in the room. You feel better? It feels better doesn't it. Okay. Tell me what happened.



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THIS ARTICLE COMPLETED 6-11-01, THE EXECUTION DATE FOR TIMOTHY MCVEIGH.

THE ZINE DUMP

Publications received between the beginning of 2001 and June 11. Italicized titles not received.

Aces / Paul McCall, 5801 W. Henry St., Indianapolis IN 46241 / pmccall@indy.net / www.paulmccall.com / \$10, no subs

The Accidental Fanzine 2 / Sheila Lightsey, 263 Elm St., Cambridge MA 02139 / sheilalightsey@yahoo.com / Sheila won a FAAn Award at this year's Corflu as the best new fanzine fan. Her second issue – which 007 fans would want to call *The Coincidental Fanzine* – is a sliver more traditional than the first, but only in format: the style remains absolute Lightsey and the tone is light-hearted and free-spirited. That Sheila enlisted writing from other ladies only shows the strength of her editorial personality. This issue she themes around food. Christina Lake provides an enviable account of a trip to Mexico: some mention of tacos. Sheila herself writes of the joys of ice cream and bugs. I told you she was a free spirit. A friend recounts the tale of a mulligan stew once served to Timothy Leary. He provided his own bugs. Julianne Chatelain, a fringie and another crony, reviews fanzines, including **Challenger** #12, to which she is more than kind. (I deal with “[generic] guy topics”: violence, justice, history and providing for the family.” And she calls *me* generous!) She closes with an insightful feminist “rant” over the Ardis Waters controversy discussed in **Gloss** earlier on and yet another recipe. In her lettercol, Sheila apologizes for “putting people off” in issue #1 with her Parisian depilatory: no need! It was, and this is, a marvelous expression of a gifted personality: friendly, unthreatening, and as I said last time, erotic as hell. Hey, I once showed Sheila an alligator!

Adventures in Crime & Space / Lori Wolf, 609-A West 6th St., Austin TX 78701 / e-mail: acs@eden.com; web: www.eden.com

after/shock/thoughts / Sabina E. Becker, 670 King St. E., Cobourg, Ont. K9A 4J8 Canada / coldfire@sympatico.ca / \$2.50@Cdn/US / Sabina's “big news and some not so big” in March announced that **after/shock/thoughts** is going entirely online, available at <http://www.crosswinds.net/~shockingthink/index.html>. “The big news is, it's still the a/s/t we all know and love,” she says, and invites website visits at <http://www.crosswinds.net/~thescholarly/>.

Angry Thoreauan #25 / Rev. Randall Tin-ear, P.O. Box 3478, Los Angeles CA 90028 / revtinear@angrythoreauan.com / www.angrythoreauan.com / \$3 / The good reverend took mild exception to my past review of one of his publications and sent me this issue with an e-mail: “I can understand your perceiving the AT as possessing a nihilistic tone, but bear in mind that was the ‘Failure’ issue. Too, there is the sharpness with which satire (and outright anger demanding rectification) is delivered from the more devout romantics, an edge that surely should not be mistaken as nihilistic (were I nihilistic, what would be the point of publishing?). A prime example would be Jonathan Swift's ‘A Modest Proposal’. Even by today's



standards, most pinks would fail to even begin understanding that it is an unabashed reflection of their own pointlessly ruthless (and collective) existence, and the fact that they would reel in horror after 'comprehending' it at face value would make the point all the more concise. Certainly Swift's effort was satire and romanticism at one of its many pinnacles, no?" Well, of course it is, and AT is, of its kind, exceptionally well-produced and written. #25 is the "Coprolology" issue, which means that it's devoted to shit. Indeed, many of its page numbers are encased in drawings of steaming poop, and many of the punk-oriented articles feature dung as a metaphorical reference. As one whose anger is more aged, and therefore, if I may say, more focused, I can only applaud the superior art and production values of this literate, slick and occasionally sharp underground magazine, recommend it to my younger readers as not particularly SFnal but well worth their time. I must insist, though, that anger is like water – it can wear stones to sand in millennia, but focused and under pressure, it can tear through walls.

Ansible #164-5 / Dave Langford / 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU, U.K. / U.S. Agent: Janice Murray, P.O. Box 75684, Seattle WA 98125-0684 / SAE or. / The latest issues of the indispensable Brit newszine contain perhaps the most heartfelt writing I've ever seen from Langford, as he notes – with no special fanfare – the passage of his father, a gentle man patient with his son's mad SF hobby. #165 headlines the SFWA's recent smell over the distinction between a "Grand Master" and a "Writer Emeritus", but Langford also provokes envy for his many invitations to SF conferences – not just conventions – all over the world. The standard features – news, awards, gossip, Thog's Master Class – are witty as ever. No Hugo nomination for **Ansible** this year; guess Dave's Short Story listing filled his 2001 quota.

As the Crow Flies 4 / Frank Denton, 14654 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle WA 98166-1953 / trade / Fine perzine from a guy whose been reading my trash since the early '70s. Frank is a straightforward, intelligent writer, very open about his life and feelings. He starts by bidding *adieu* to his late friend Keith Roberts, then gives good news about the granddaughter he is raising and, in the midst of a long, detailed trip report, hopeful doings regarding his daughter. The journey the family takes is to Yellowstone, Cody and Medicine Wheel, truly a spiritual pilgrimage for Frank's daughter, a recovering addict. It's simply but powerfully rendered. On, then, to Devil's Tower, the Little Big Horn (Rose Carlson take note), and other places of power. Writing this personal, this candid, this potent is rare; hooray for the Dentons; may Grandfather continue to look kindly upon them.

Aztec Blue No. 3 / Murray Moore, 1065 Henley Street, Mississauga Ontario L4Y 1C8 Canada / mmoore@pathcom.com / Neat Grant Canfield cover on Murray's third issue. Pardon my ignorance but, is Canfield still with us? I like the look of this zine – like **Barmaid**, it sports a large, rounded font that takes up loads of space – the dead opposite of **Fosfax** – but is most easy on the eyes. Murray uses it to describe a winter trip to Montreal – never been there – and a couple of recent conventions. I'm astonished anyone can move in Rochester, New York in February. His account of the con's *Win Murray Moore's Money* game is big fun; he should meet Chris Barkley. (I challenge both to a trivia deathmatch at MilPhil!) John Berry's Albanian trip report concludes; entertaining, though I can't imagine why anyone would go to Albania. Good LOCs; Lloyd Penney mentions my engagement. Coolest page is the "Soup to Nuts" puzzle page; I'm a sucker for such stuff.

Baloney / *The Tumbler Twins, a.k.a. Arnie Katz*, 330 S. Decatur Blvd., PMB 152, Las Vegas NV 89107, & Tom Springer, 15515 NE First Circle, Vancouver WA 98684 / LOCs to Tomsprung@aol.com / contributions or trade

Banana Wings / Claire Brialey, 26 Northampton Rd., Croydon, Surrey CR0 7HA, U.K.; Mark Plummer, 14 Northway Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6JE, U.K. / banana@tragic.demon.co.uk

Barmaid / Yvonne Rowse, Evergreen, Halls Farm Lane, Trimpey, Worcs., DY12 1NP UK / yvonne@hallsfarm.softnet.co.uk / trade / Where y'at, girl?

Baryon Magazine 81-82 / Barry R. Hunter, P.O. Box 3314, Rome GA 30164-3314 / baryon@bellsouth.net / www.geocities.com/BaryonMag/ \$1 / Nice to see Barry again at the DeepSouthCon. The cover features a couple of old (1979) 2001 gags by the Jerry Collins – whatever happened to him? Inside, after memorials for Gordy Dickson, Rick Shelley and Richard Layman, Barry shows the audacity to *praise Battlefield:Earth* before moving on to saner notices of a multiplicity of SF works. One, a set of interviews given by Phil Dick, makes me drool: gotta have it!

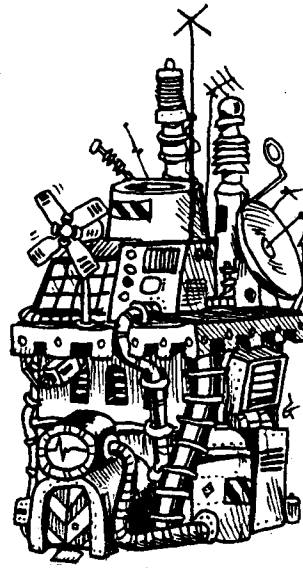
Batteries Not Included Vol. VIII #1-5 / Richard Freeman, 513 N. Central Ave., Fairborn OH 45324 NEW / \$3@ / The eighth volume of this compelling journal about – not "of" – pornography begins with its best and most thoughtful issue, ever. Much of the credit goes to the usual suspects – the ever enlightening Richard Pacheco interviews fellow supercock Jamie Gillis, who sounds funny but flaky – "Goddess" declaims upon her first experiences watching porn films, and is

very funny – and the editor describes his colonoscopy. (Boy, I'd rent *that* tape!) But what really sharpens this issue is the lead squib by Dmetri Kakmi (surely a pseud). Reviewing a serious documentary about Annabel Chong, Kakmi doesn't flinch from describing the damage her career and her pretensions about it have done to her family – and from a honest, critical, and clear perspective of the genre. For an actor, an adult film career commits you to the margins of society; porn, it seems, is forever. The third issue of this volume is no less entertaining, highlighted by Pacheco's interview with porn receptacle Keisha, who conveys the brains of toothpaste but a sweet attitude and an intelligent admiration for Hyapatia Lee. Also good is a hilarious section on "how you can tell you're a suitcase pimp" from John T. Bone and Quasarman, and Goddess closes things reviewing sex toys. *There's* a topic SF could do something with ...

Bento / David Levine and Kate Yule, 1905 SE 43rd Ave., Portland OR 97215 / david.d.levine@intel.com; kyule@spiritone.com / "editorial whim or the Unusual"

Ben's Beat 62 / Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore Ave., Teaneck NJ 07666-2626 / My first response to Indick's cover was "Don't tell me Ben's gone Republican!" But the author and his lady are simply riding an elephant as part of their "Thailand Adventure." Quite an adventure it was, and Ben describes it with richness. Sees everything from the Bridge on the River Kwai to the Lampon Temple to the glory and squalor of Bangkok (I know someone who could have shown him truly glorious squalor there). Wondrous tale. As usual, Indick reviews a spate of Broadway, "OB" and "OOB" plays, and his notices outshine even the Thai trip in my view. His book reviews occasionally run in **Publishers Weekly** and are fiercely funny and apt.

Binnacle / Victor A. Gonzalez, 9238 4th Ave. SW, Seattle WA 98106; Randy Byers, 1013 N. 36th St., Seattle WA 98103 / A oneshot mini-genzine composed of widely divergent articles by the two editors and Alison Freebairn, who opens matters with a harrowing account of a recent car wreck. She's right on about the *sound* of auto crashes – I wouldn't wish it on Hitler – and the fresh appreciation of simple metabolism they bring you ... if you survive. Byers' piece is evocative, centering on the sad sense of alienation old fanzines bring to someone who has never gone beyond the fringes of the hobby. Vic deals with the public perception of cops, an intelligent essay, especially when he laments the willingness of the populace to sacrifice their – or others' – civil rights for the presumption of safety. He also hails the ideal of law as a restriction on public power, not its justification, and hooray for *that* point of view. Hooray also for Craig Smith's cover, a fan's dashboard, a stone riot.



Bogus 5 / Sandra Bond, 46 Stirling Road, London N22 5BP, U.K. / the usual / sandra@ho-street.demon.co.uk / Any zine with illos by Craig Hilton is all right with me – even old ones from 1986! **Bogus** is very much a personal zine from the creator of **Quasiquote**. Sandra reports a new job (temptingly close to "the **Banana Wings** bunch"), rejoins to some off-the-wall opinions on the Nova Awards (such as, is Nic Farey British, even though he lives in Maryland?), exults over Dwain Kaiser's last zine, and responds triumphantly to short sections of **LOC**, ending by proclaiming **Bogus** her Christmas card substitute. It's certainly the longest such I got last winter.

Brooklyn! Nos. 31-32 / Fred Argoff, 1800 Ocean Pkwy #B-12, Brooklyn NY 11223-3037 new address / \$10 per 4 quarterly issues / Exploring the depthless variety of facts and truths about everybody's favorite city-within-the-city, Fred's latest is rich with photos (fairly reproduced – they could tolerate halftoning). What of? Dutch colonial houses still standing on those fabled streets, locomotives, canals (yucky water), even a guy named Gene Pool – Fred doesn't make this stuff up – who wears a suit made of tin cans to promote recycling. Plus walking tours, a continuing Brooklyn lexicon ("Don't tell me!"), a review of a local-oriented PBS show, and more natter about the Brooklyn Bridge, surely the most wondrous thing ever constructed east of the Watts Towers. No. 32 features photo upon photo of what should be a depressing subject: abandoned buildings. Fred even reviews a book on the subject. Somehow, Argoff's love for his fabulous borough makes the hulks of old edifices romantic and evocative. As he says, "there's a strange pull exerted by these buildings. They're ghosts, calling to us and inviting us to pay attention to what was."

Conferring with Earthquakes #7 / Brin-Marie McLaughlin, 247 19th Avenue Apt. 6, San Francisco CA 94121-2353 / brininsf@aol.com / <http://members.aol.com/brininsf/index.html> / Brin's 7th issue is a single sheet carrying her husband's **Heroine's Hero** to her mailing list, and centers on a disappointing local Potlatch and the birth of Miss America, 2020, Gemma Rose Espinosa.

ConJose Offline / P.O. Box 61363, Sunnyvale CA 94088-1363 / <http://www.conjose.org> / *What about that installment agreement?*

ConNotations Vol. 11 Issues 1-3 / Stephanie Bannon, c/o CASFS, P.O. Box 62613, Phoenix AZ 85082-2613 / leigh@casfs.org or dye@maricopa.edu / six issues for \$12 mailed bulk rate, \$18 first class / The bimonthly newsletter of the Central Arizona Speculative Fiction Society, a handsome, most comprehensive tabloid with news from all over the SF field. There's media stuff, a very welcome page – big page – of pro notes, including impressive material from David Brin (Paris, magic, even the Civil War rate among his interests – too bad he's so unapproachable in person), a long fannish report on LosCon, movie and animation reviews, gamer natter, clubs and convention listings ... in short, the Works, and very well done. Betcha it's not long till we see another worldcon bid – Iguanacón III? – from this lush desert.



Covert Communications from Zeta Corvi No. 7 / Andrew C. Murdoch, 508-6800 Westminster Hwy, Richmond B.C. V7C 1C5 Canada / raven@wolf.spydernet.com / t.u. or \$2@ / Taral Wayne's sexy catgirl cover tops Andrew's latest, provoking a guilty spasm: "are all my covers distinctly getting quite Xena-like?" Sounds good to me. Within, Murdoch editorializes briefly on Hugo campaigning – I'm not clear on his point – and, like so many of us, begs for spot art. ("Xena-like" not specified.) Eeb Frohvet reviews a "retro" SF novel from 1984, beginning a series of such

notices – prompting one to reflect on how far in the future 1984 once seemed, and how far in the past it has rapidly become. A page on award-winners covers the usual trophies plus Australia's Ditmars and Canada's new Sunbursts; the fanzine reviews, alas, include no **Challengers**. A brief conversation at a penthouse party causes Murray Moore to spin off on Canadian references in the Aurora-nominated **What's in a Name?**, and the spins are many and dizzying in the letter column.

DASFAX Vol. 33, No. 1-5 / Rick Helmich, 16245 E. Purdue Pl., Aurora CO 80013 / whelmich@abwam.com / The old order changeth, as Sourdough Jackson cedes the reins to Rick. His tenure prompts a wistful, well-turned reflection on his 25-year career in the club, and the new editor – a transplanted Southerner! – shows a deft hand in taking over. The club gives him much to write about. Barbecues, the Lungfish Awards (I profess ignorance ... and want to know who won), UFO debates ... lists of locals' websites, bookstores discounting for club members, poetry about Pokemon, member's weddings and so forth, LOCs (including two in one issue from Harry Warner, I know the feeling), and reviews. The club prospers – a treasury of over \$1200! – and laments its isolation from national fandom; we know that feeling here in the South. I'd only caution the editor about proofreading: in the midst of an interesting rumination on the nature of heroes, he says "Often you hear these characters described as 'rouges'." Only in slash fandom.

Detours / Louis Russell Chauvenet, 11 Sussex Road, Silver Spring MD 20910-5436

De Profundis 337-341 / Marty Cantor, c/o LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., N. Hollywood CA 91601 / The LASFS journal is always delightful – almost, but not quite, like being at a meeting. The "menace" are an exercise in stabilized insanity, the accompanying articles and reviews (especially William Ellern's "Search for the Purpose of LASFS") are well-wrought. What a spectacular collection of talent and personality! Club business includes library acquisitions; zine business includes a review of **Knarley Knews** and a 19-word LOC by John Thiel. Some might have problems with the small print with which Marty prints this zine, but I forgive him my eyestrain: there's a lot to LASFS, a lot to get across.

The Devniad / Bob Devney, 25 Johnson Street, N. Attleboro MA 02760 / Bob's on-line zine is some of the best fannish writing out there. Latest natter includes critiques of the Oscars – I'm with Nic Farey; **Gladiator** reeked and Ed Harris should have won Best Actor – book reviews, and more.

Erg 153 / Terry Jeeves, 66 Red Scar Dr., Scarborough, N. Yorks. YO12 5RQ U.K. / erg40@madasafish.com / 42nd anniversary issue. The venerable and thoroughly under-venerated Terry comes forth with another ration of his usual charm, an enthusiastic and accessible zine infused with *the way the future was*. The cover is very 1930s in style, but contemporary in execution: the spaceship has solar panels, and how long have we known about those? Within, a cool rundown of Terry's favorite alien critters from early pulps, drawings and ruminations on obscure old aeronautical experiments (has Terry ever visited the Air & Space Museum?), Penelope Fandergaste contributes an article about insomnia (which I beat by staying awake), a wise rumination on PC, idiotic reality TV, telephone horoscopes, cornfield circles, and **The Sopranos** (he really should watch an episode; it's excellent stuff), the lottery, LOCs from worldwide, and fanzine reviews so kind to **Challenger** you'd think we plotted an exchange of good notices. Well, Terry deserves his ... and a great deal more.

Ethel the Aardvark No. 95-6 / Paul Lewis, Melbourne S.F. Club, P.O. Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Vic. 3005, Australia / MSFC_Ethel@eGroups.com / \$15 (for Australia), \$25 (overseas) for 6 issues / Covers from Phil Wlodarczyk's Blue Period appoint this cool Aussie clubzine. #95 opens with a rather stern lecture from the MSFC President on social politeness and "sexual harassment." Apparently I've visited Melbourne and forgotten all about it. A brief but nice eulogy for Gordon Dickson precedes a book column by Terry Frost that includes James Lee Burke's Southern suspense works; good to see Dave Robicheaux being read even further south than here. Karl Roemer rants about "Crap Trek" but doesn't explain his path to his conclusion. Central: a long report on a Sydney "Whovention", reminding me of why I treasure "The Five Doctors": Troughton and Pertwee were a *great* team. "The little one" is just *fine*, thank you!" The extensive reviews plant hungers for Octavia Butler's **Dawn** and Rob Grant's **Colony**, and Sue Ann Barber makes me wish I could cram my chops just once at Xerks. (Yes, even a restaurant review ... busy little aardvarks they breed downunder.) The 96th number features an attractive revamped format and good writing, particularly William Gauvin's piece on "technobabble" and Claire McKenna's Swancon report. I must admit that the item I keep turning back to is the photo of the teenage girl club member with the Angelina Jolie lips.

Fanzine Fanatique Quarterly Winter 2000/1 / Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine St., Greaves, Lancaster LA1 9WF U.K. / FanzineFanatique@aol.com NEW / Extensive list - with brief but pointed reviews - of British publications, all the more enlightening because so few are

familiar SF fare. Walker always seems to find *unfamiliar* SF fare in his mailbox - and offer the possibility of more trades for faneds. Very valuable.

File 770:137-8 / Mike Glycer, 705 Valley View Drive, Monrovia CA 91016 / MGlycer@compuserve.com / \$8 for 5 issues / Out on a limb goes GHLIII: **File 770** is the best fanzine being published. It has the most news, most comprehensively and amusingly presented, covering the widest scope of fandom, of any zine out there ... tons of material, exceptionally presented. These issues open with gorgeous covers by Alan White - who more than anyone else deserves a Fan Artist Hugo - the later one very reminiscent of **Plokta**. While we're on the subject of illos, let me both commend and belabor Mike over his photos - lively, well-chosen shots, most of them, but streaked with lousy repro. Veloxing and paste-up, however last-millennium, are still the only way to feature photographs in a fanzine. But the drawings - and certainly the text - are immaculate. Mike's Chicon report in #137 is a model of detail, presented with an insight into conventioning that keeps it interesting. (One detail is wrong - the date I met Rose Marie - but his story is better and when in doubt, print the legend.) Elspeth Kovacs' deeply personal worldcon account, which follows, makes for a compelling counterpoint. Chris Barkley's Rivercon squib is packed with personality and verve; his skill as a trivia master is prominent. Alan White's obit for Donald Reed is a classic, as is a marvelous letter sent by LASFSn Bret Achorn to an SF-curious kid. Conventions are reviewed and touted, LOCs center on the great questions of the



fannish age – Samet Nahim’s on the Internet; who is E.B. Frohvet, and why? I repeat my praise for the pages of general fannish news. **File 770** does it all.

Flashback / Jerry Page & Jerry Burge, 193 Battery Place NE, Atlanta GA 30307 / \$6@, no subs or trades



The Floating Fan Vol. 1 No. 4 / Pamela Boat, 4 Westfield Way, Wantage, Oxon, OX12 7EW, U.K.

For the *Clerisy* Vol. 8 No. 41-42 / Brant Kresovich, P.O. Box 404, Getzville NY 14068-0404 / kresovich@hotmail.com / \$2 or trade / “*Clerisy*” are people who read books for pleasure, and these are the best issues yet collecting Brant’s reviews of every sort of tome, from Solzhenitsyn to sexologist Havelock Ellis, (best: political writing from Walter Karp) with an eclectic zine review section (too kind to **Challenger**), a page of W malapropisms and a most intelligent lettercol thrown in. Brant’s page about radio is the most personal stuff in the issue, but it’s all well done. I’m glad he’s branching out into the media: a piece in #41 reviews three glorious noir films by Raoul Walsh, including the incandescent **White Heat**. But he also reviews Gore Vidal’s novel **1876**, wherein a squalid election is thrown to the loser by political chicanery. Obvious science fiction.

For Dickheads Only / Dave Hyde c/o Ganymeadean

Slime Mold Productions, P.O. Box 611, Kokomo IN 46903

Fosfax #199 / Timothy Lane c/o FOSFA, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville KY 40233-7281 / \$3 or. / “You can’t even stand the non-political parts?” So wrote Tim Lane on my copy of **Fosfax**. I obviously hurt Tim Lane’s feelings last issue by pointedly ignoring his very conservative zine, and I’m sorry about that. For the record, I *enjoy* the non-political parts of **Fosfax**, hard though they are to find. However much decent people like *kof* me loathe the Republican minions who made – and are making – mock of American democracy through the slimy 2000 election, that should not reflect on the citizens who voted for Bush, or their artistic/fannish product. After all, if I can appreciate a good John Wayne or Charlton Heston movie (and I very much can), then I can appreciate a wide-ranging publication like **Fosfax**, each issue of which features Joe Major’s eclectic and insightful reviews of two or three libraries of diverse volumes, rich con reports by Leigh Kimmel & others, and a lettercol where the members of fandom’s right wing and scads of other articulate souls wallow and sport with enviable abandon. (Biggest hoot this time is the fool who claims Al Gore was mentally ill. *Wow.*) So get it straight: Lane and Major and **Fosfax** itself are okay by me. But this does not mean that I have the slightest truck with the zine’s ludicrous politics, nor its defiant apologia for the hypocritical and corrupt political thugs who have reduced this country’s democratic pretensions to a lie before the race of men. (That’s true from Rehnquist on down, and who else has noticed the fat federal jobs W has given to the children of the winger justices?) Understand me about the election. It was a repellant and destructive thing, a coup masking behind legal technicality (remember when wingers used to bray that term about?), and if conservatives blanch at the fury their actions have provoked ... well, there are consequences when you steal a country. Surely my contempt is the least of these, and surely they can live with that. It’s said Republicans are so obsessed with deifying Reagan and demonizing Clinton because they want the 20th century to balance: Reagan with Roosevelt, Clinton with Nixon. They’re lucky Clinton wasn’t such a morbid psychopath. Imagine the police response to their harassment of the Dade County vote count had Big Bill sent in the tear gas and billy clubs on W’s toadies. No American should be subject to the abuse Nixon’s goons put us anti-war kids through, but I must admit it would have done me good to watch those sleazy little whores scatter for their lives.

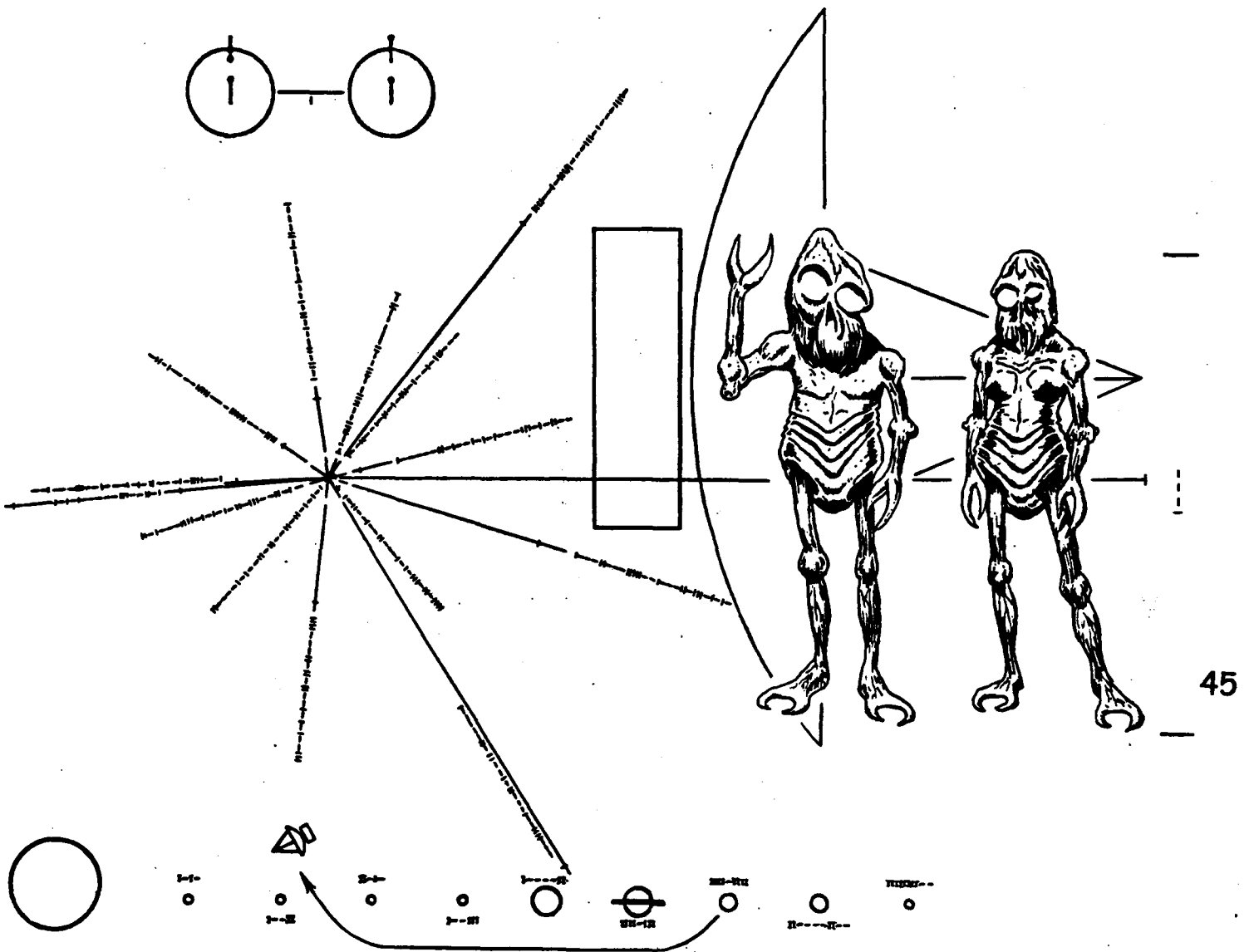
Galactic Patrol Gazette / MCFI, P.O. Box 1010, Framingham MA 01701 / info@mcfi.org / www.mcfi.org

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ

The "AL" Side

Alan Hutchinson

*Wherein the great artist contemplates
return greetings from the great beyond ...*



Grecian Odd Essays / John Berry, 4 Chilterns, S. Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 8J4 U.K. / Another of John's epic collections of fannish prose, this one first-person accounts of his journeys to Greece – well, *duh* – Turkey, Cyprus, and Crete between '73 and '97. Occasionally illustrated with maps, drawings of pottery and reprinted ATom pieces, this is hardly the usual fanzine fare, but is all the niftier for that. There's even a color photo of the author and his grandson outside a tavern nearing the Berry name!

Head! No. 3 / Doug Bell & Christina Lake, 12 Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA U.K. / head@headwest.fsnet.co.uk / the usual and the quite unusual / Good-looking zine with a witty Brad Foster cover and superior graphics. Christine reviews Brussels, a city I've wanted to visit since seeing photos of the 1958 World's Fair (whatever happened to their symbol?), and praises *Idea*, applause I join. Novacon is given a strong review by Jae Leslie Adams.

The Heroine's Hero: The Steven R. Johnson Memorial Fanzine / John McLaughlin, 247 19th Avenue Apt. 6, San Francisco CA 94121-2353 / inatlantia@aol.com / sase + 76 cents postage / A beautiful tribute to a fallen friend from several buddies in comics fandom, nicely illustrated and of course, deeply felt. Cancer may have nailed young Johnson, but he made his imprint on others, and they welcomed and loved and movingly memorialize this member of their tribe: "Pierced by their glad singing through."

Idea / Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55408-4315 / idea@toad-hall.com



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International Revolutionary Gardener 4 / Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas, 15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4JU U.K. / jehanna@gn.apc.org, josephn@globalnet.co.uk / This is a deep and serious journal, by turns wistful and irritable, as first Judith casts her gaze back on her literary childhood ("Growing Up in Books"), then Joseph applies his arch wit to fan history ("Rubbish"), local squirrels (with refreshing anger towards idiotic vermin laws) and "dot.com mania," which I am too dumb to understand. The contrast somehow makes for a compelling mix, as sentiment and outrage not so much *cancel* each other as *support* each other. Judith remembers a world imagined in beauty, and Joseph demands to know why it hasn't turned out that way. Anyway, **IRG** is highly recommended for its quality and its even rarer quality: passion.

Jomp Jr. #20 / Richard A. Dengrove, 2651 Arlington Dr. #302, Alexandria VA 22306 / dengrove@erols.com / <http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Rampart/7076> / t.u. / Richard's new publication is actually a reworking of his last, in which he touched upon the theme of *unaccepted explorations* – alleged pre-Columbian voyages to America. As usual, he is clever and exhaustive in his research, quoting everyone from Helen Gurley Brown (!) to Samuel Eliot Morrison, discussing and dissing the claims of Phoenicians, Chinese (who made "a voyage to the land of the Hairy Ainu," which sounds like Chicago), Irish and Welsh pretenders to the claims of Columbus and Lief Erikson. It's good, bookish fun, followed by a nice lettercol.

The Knarley Knews #86-87 / Henry Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton WI 53024-2017 / welch@msoe.edu or LethaWelch@aol.com / \$1.50 @ / Received with a flyer for Ditto 14 slash Fanhistoricon 11, where my spirit will dance with the attendees even if my flesh cannot. Here are Knarl's latest issues – he's incredibly prolific and consistent. In a long editorial in #86 Dr. Welch "spumes" over his new job in academia and his family's Christmas trip; I envy Henry, he can sleep on airplanes. Rodney Leighton reviews *Idea* and *Plokta* as only he could, and Gene Stewart disputes *Crossing Over*, which I think one of the meanest television shows I've seen since *Queen for a Day*. Most of the LOCs go back and forth over Ted White's recent squabbles in the lettercol and come to the usual no-conclusion. Is that *really* Brad Foster's first computer art? The following number carries a traditional Foster piece as its cover; I like the old style better. Knarl returns to a familiar "spume", credit card proliferation. I never see that many come-ons; I guess the word has gone forth.

Lofgeornost #62-63 / Fred Lerner, 81 Worcester Ave.,

White River Junction VT 05001 / fred.lerner@dartmouth.edu / FAPA and trade / Fred brings his appreciation of the arts to Ken Burns' recent series on Jazz, and comes forth with some original insights into group creativity – and a parallel with science fiction, another “art form” created when the previous genres just wouldn't suffice. He wonders if a documentary on this field is possible. His following natter deals with snooping around competitors' patents to figure out the direction of their technology and segues into an appreciation of Gaelic, Scottish, Orcadian and Shetlandic ... the first mention I've seen of that turf aside from its ponies. A fascinating review of the Jewish tales of Avram Davidson keeps that facet of that extraordinary talent alive. The followup issue – nice yellow paper – centers on how Fred “gets his vittles,” makes his living, and his LOCs are appropriately erudite, reminding me of those joyous, callow days when I thought I had brains.

Memphen / Greg Bridges, P.O. Box 820534, Memphis TN 38182-0534 / Trade

Mimosa 26 / Richard & Nicki Lynch, P.O. Box 1350, Gaithersburg MD 20885 / e-mail: jophan@zdnetwork.com / website: <http://www.Jophan.org/mimosa> / \$4 or. / An Ian Gunn wraparound cover (completed imperceptibly by Joe Mayhew) and two reminiscences of Joe make one greet this fine publication with sadness, but the cover (depicting an extraterrestrial worldcon) is so witty and the eulogies (by the editors and Kip Williams) are so well-written that joy overcomes the gloom. It's another superb **Mimosa**, with epic fannish histories adorned with clever logos (Charlie Williams, as ever, shines) abounding. Of course it's Hugo-nominated. A relative rarity in their own pages, Rich and Nicki open this issue with a long, flavorful account of their meandering trip to the worldcon, which took them through Metropolis, Illinois, and by the cool Louisville Slugger factory and museum. (I too have visited Central City KY's Everly Bros. Monument.) They publish fine photos of Chicago doin's, even if Mike Glycer does look like a banshee. The memoirs are wondrous – David B. Williams, 4E Ackerman, Mike Resnick (on his porn-writing career), Britisher Ron Bennett, Dave Kyle – plus pieces on earlier Chicons by Esther Cole, Roger Sims, Bill Mallardi and John Hertz. I loved the LOC section, but I admit that's because of all its Rotsler/Gilliland collaborations. **Mimosa** and Memory – an excellent thing about a precious thing.

Never Quite Arriving / Christina Lake, 12 Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA U.K. / christina.l@virgin.net / Trade



New Kind of Neighborhood / Ylva Spangberg, Disponentg 3, S-112 62 Stockholm, and Lennart Uhlin, Hogsatrav 22, 5 tr, S-181 58 Lindigo, Sweden / ylva_s@yahoo.com, lennart@sfbok.se / “the usual, we suppose”

News from Crime and Space Vol. 5 Issue 1 / Sara Felix, 609A W.6th St., Austin TX 78701 / www.crimeandspace.com / I must visit this bookstore!

Niekas no. 46 / Ed Meskys, RR#2, Box 63, 322 Whittier Hwy., Center Harbor NH 03226-9708 / edmeskys@worldpat.net / \$4.95, 4 for \$19 / Quality like **Niekas** is awe-inspiring; I doubt there are five other publications in this listing that match Ed's epic in appearance or content. This issue has clearly been a long, long time in the making, as its contributors include Walt Willis and Sam Moscowitz, gents who have ascended to the universal con suite – in fact, Ed laments the number of his friends who have died before he could publish their words, and pledges annual production after this. Anyway, the theme of this issue is sports, and among the pieces presented on this subject are works by Mike Resnick, Fred Lerner, and Don D'Amassa. Other articles come in from Joe Christopher, whose squib on SF song lyrics would tickle Toni Weisskopf, an excellent article on Marion Zimmer Bradley, Ray Nelson's take on Clark Ashton Smith, and Ben Indick's “The Redhead's Corner”. I admire Ben a great deal, but must ask him not to tease me about redheads. The lettercol is erudite and filled with wondrous names (like Willis') and I love Ed's idea of filler material: “extremely short science fiction stories”. There is more, of course, 64 pages of superb

text. The whole product is awesome. This neo-faned bows to a master.

No Award 9 / Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore St. #105, N. Hollywood CA 91606 / martyhoohah-@netzero.net & louishoohah@netzero.net A gorgeous Brad Foster cover heads Marty's latest genzine (received simultaneously with his clubzine, **De Profundis**). Marty's still in love with layout (lines, lines, lines, lines) but there is, as usual, good content here, mostly from locals. Cantor and John Hertz debate Fan vs. Fanzine worldcon lounges, Milt Stevens provides another hilariously devastating retelling of an SF tale (this time **The World of Null-A**, which I've never read, and I can see why), Mike Glyer talks about having a big brain (showoff), Joseph Major reviews Lawrence Person's **Nova Express**. Great howls at the collection of Thom Digby **Probably Something** subtitles, nostalgia gets a workout through Len Moffatt's "Califania Tales", and I'm always fascinated with Ed Green's recollections of the L.A. riots (sounds like an XFL team) from the police side. **No Award** is quite rewarding for the reader: consistently intense, consistently readable.



Nonstop Fun is Hard on the Heart #4 / Dwain Kaiser, P.O. Box 1074, Claremont CA 91711-1074 / dkaiser@hotmail.com (NEW) / "the faanish 'Usual'" / This zineful of '60s memories has a breezy and soothing tone, suggested by its blue hues and wide fonts, substantiated by the charming nostalgia of its content. The artwork supports this view: what other era featured Tim Kirk covers? Lee Gold's reprinted memoir from 1969 (superb color reproduction of her contemporary photo), mentioning *their* Room 770, Jerry Smith's memoir of his early fannish days, and Jim Schumacher's appreciation of his vital, life-changing first fannish friendship with Jim Keith, all enhance the sense of a wondrous era. (For me, too: there's Owen Hannifen in a photo with Bruce Pelz; I remember him!) I especially like John Welsh's revolutionary faanfic, casting editor Kaiser as a Communist agent, and told from the perspective of the FBI! One comes away from **Nonstop Fun** enlightened by the contagious joy of its memorabilia but weighted by regret that those hurly-burly early days

are lost and gone. Well ... gone, anyway. **Nonstop Fun** shows they have not been lost.

Nova Express Vol. 5 No. 4 / Lawrence Person, P.O. Box 27231, Austin TX 78755-2231 / e-mail: lawrence@bga.com / 4/\$12 U.S.; 4/\$16 Canada & Mexico; 4/\$22 International

On East Broadway 1, 7-10 / Tim Marion, c/o Kleinbard, 266 E. Broadway, Apt. 1201B, New York NY 10002 / The first issue of Tim's Slanapa zine begins "They say the Neo-Fans are bright **On East Broadway**" ... too clever not to repeat. The later numbers are almost all natter about Tim's life in and about the Apple, which always makes me wish I was there instead of here. In #9, after discussing his history with apas, he praises many and various aspects of popular culture, some of which we share – like Rick Brant books (were *they* ever rewritten by the Stratemeyer Syndicate?) and **Rockford** – and some we don't, like Catherine Zeta-Jones, who until **Traffic** I thought just another babe with a butt (and a moustache). A personal Lunacon report dominates #10.

Opuntia #47.1B-48 / Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7 Canada / \$3 @ or. / The cactus kid marks the 10th anniversary of his zine – and its 124th and 125th issues, an amazing rate of productivity. Dale credits not owning a TV. Proclaiming a faith that paperzines will never fall to the Internet, he goes on to list some of the pubs he gets in trade, including a couple of non-SF numbers I don't receive. "Mail Art Listings" follow, plus a plug for the 6-21-01 World Wide Party. Neatest item are his book reviews – one on Old Typewriters (Ned Brooks, an old type writer himself, should take note), juxtaposed nicely with text on the Burgess Shale – odd-looking critter! The Darwin Awards are noted; I have to admit that I laugh at these stories of stupid death as much as the next guy, but the whole idea still strikes me as cruel. #48 features much more entertaining fare: articles on the history of blotting paper and the ways in which animals have fouled up postal service. Dogs biting your postman is the least of it. Cue Eliza Doolittle: *the snails in Wales dine mainly on the mails*. Read it yourself! Do you think I'm bright enough to make this stuff up?

Out of the Kaje / Karen Johnson, 35 Mariana Ave., Sth Croydon, Vict. 3136, Australia / karenji@labyrinth.net.au / the usual, whim, trade, \$3

PhiloSFy / Alexander R. Slate, 8603 Shallow Ridge Rd., San Antonio TX 78239-4022 / alex_slate@hotmail.com

Peregrine Nations Vol. One No. One / J.G. Stinson,

P.O. Box 430314, Big Pine Key FL 33043-0314 / tropicsf@aol.com / \$1 or t.u. / Jan joins the genzining ranks, introducing her swell self and calling for contributions about fandom in the '70s. She reviews the BBC's **Changing Rooms** – I miss **Doctor in the House** – reports on her first con ever, the '99 Tropicon (Rosy was there) – and reviews **The Dance of the Rings** by Jane Fancher. Her fanzine review section – brilliantly entitled "The Pub Crawl" – doesn't mention **Challenger**, but perhaps we'll make issue no. 2. Stinson is a sprightly and intelligent writer – as evidenced by the spiffy pun in her title – so watch for this one.

Pink Mind Wallabies / Karen Pender-Gunn, P.O. Box 567, Blackburn Vic 3130 Australia / fiawol@ozramp.net.au

Plokta Volume 6 No. 1 / Steve Davies, 52 Westbourne Terrace, Reading, Berks U.K. RG30 2RP; Alison Scott, 24 St. Mary Rd., Walthamstow, London U.K. E17 9RG; Mike Scott, 2 Craithie Rd., Chester U.K. CH3 5LJ / locs@plokta.com / www.plokta.com / Simply the wildest and most in-groupish publication fandom has going, **Plokta** is indescribable – a crazy, exuberant, irreverent, literate, jolly and brilliantly well-crafted fannish exposition. Each issue is different, all bring grins, even if – as I've said before – you live in a backwater and don't get 5/6 of the in jokes. Anyone who knows zine fandom even slightly will appreciate their editorial exultation over their 2000 Nova Award and TAFF support for Vic Gonzalez – he won – and anyone literate in SF art will enjoy Alison's report on an exhibition by copycat extraordinaire Glenn Brown. Steve surprises me here by spending but a single page on his Smofcon excursion to Florida; his tone is amused/bemused, except when confronted with the con's two undeniable glories, the shuttle launch and Naomi Fisher's key lime pie. I'll bet STS-97/**Endeavour** was viewed by the more fans than any space launch since Apollo 11. His Brit's-eye view of Cocoa Beach is hilarious. Gonzalez contributes on account of a temp job with the USPS, several others toss in tales many & various, there are loads of mad fannish photos; a Hugo nomination salutes the energy level in **Ploktaland**, which remains celestial.

Poor Richard's Almanack no. 4 / Millennium Philcon / P.O. Box10 / Huntingdon Valley PA 19006-0310 / Progress report for the upcoming worldcon, arriving a bit late for its info on Hugo nominating, but handsomely produced and written. Diana Thayer's long article on Benjamin Franklin celebrates an astounding life – Franklin's grave is accessible for penny-tossers from the Philly sidewalk, by the way, let's get up an expedition. Much valuable information about hotels, membership rates, and the like, but again, out of date: #1504A is

listed but Rosy – #3838, no comment – is not. Well, there is yet time. See you there! *Let's get silly in Philly!*

Probe 111 / Deirdre Byrne, P.O. Box 781401, Sandton 2146, South Africa / sfsa@newhorizons.co.za / "for sale and exchange" / Excellent R. Schima covers on this saddle-stitched genzine from 'way across the Atlantic, with much going on. Al du Pisani reviews books, Norman Pringle does the same for zines (he's nice to **Chall** #11), fiction includes stories and "99-word" yarns by several. Best are the multifaceted "Etc." pieces ... one on a physicist who claims to have exceeded *c*, a cool consideration of "what if HG [Wells] had studied engineering," and topping the zine, a hysterical bit from Afrikaaner Grant Kruger on being a fan in America. For all its traumas, our turf does have its advantages. Exults Kruger, "The USA is above reproach, beyond compare and dazzling while in South Africa we still drag our knuckles on the floor as we leave our caves." "It must be that damned **Buffy** episode he watched today," rejoins his wife. Or **Baywatch**.

Proper Boskonian / Lisa Hertel, c/o NESFA, P.O. Box 809, Framingham MA 01701-0203 / pb@nesfa.org / NESFA membership + a \$16 subscription, \$3/issue or.

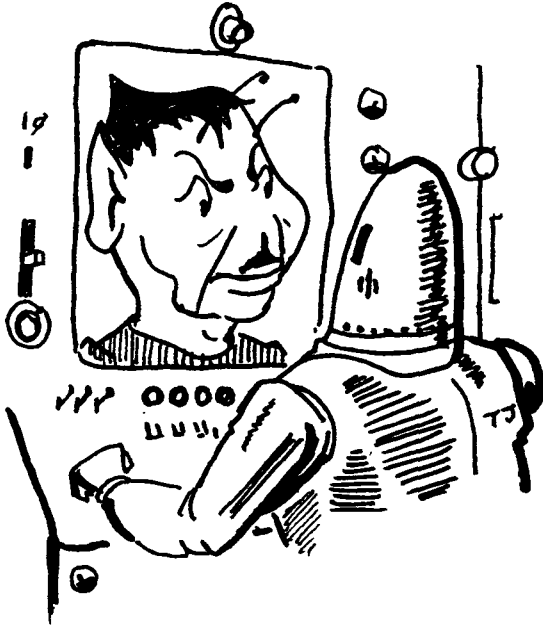
Pulpdom No. 24-25 / Camille Cazedessus, P.O. Box 2340, Pagosa Springs CO 81147-2340 / cazbooks@frontier.net / www.stationlink.com/pulpdom / \$24 next 6 issues in USA, no trades / The 12th anniversary edition of a delightful zine – devoted to pulps, what a surprise. This issue concentrates on the epic years of **Argosy**, which Caz reveals to be the very first pulp magazine (starting in October, 1896), and is rich with information, reprinted covers, corny old SF, and the editor's apt, detailed notes. I remember the magazine in its declining years, a "men's" publication of the sweaty, unshaven variety long lost. It's always a revelation, and a sad one, to see from what heights it fell. #25 is resplendent in color xerox; the many reprinted pulp and pb covers literally shine. The issue's theme is the western pulp, and **The Frontier** and writer Allan Vaughan Elston are featured. There's also a long volume-by-volume review of Robert Sampson's study of series characters in the pulps, **Yesterday's Faces**, and an enthusiastic look back at **American Boy**. Caz takes on Adventure House's **Guide to the Pulps** in a stinging editorial; I do not advise anyone to mess with Louisiana's first Hugo winner.

Quasiquote / Sandra Bond, 46 Stirling Road, London N22 5BP, U.K. / the usual, "1 pound limey or \$2 yankee" / sandra@ho-street.demon.co.uk

Quipu / Vicki Rosenzweig, 33 Indian Road, 6-R, New

York NY 10034 / vr@interport.net / Trade

Rag Soup / Susan Higgins, P.O. Box 925711, Houston TX 77292-5711 / Ragsoup@aol.com / <http://hometown.aol.com/ragsoup/RAGSOUPindex.html>



The Reluctant Famulus 56 / Thomas D. Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave., Adrian MI 49221-1627 / E-mail: tomfamulus@dmci.net / \$3 / Making an extremely welcome return is TRF, remarkable this time for two things. One is grand: absolutely *primo* color graphics, aesthetically righteous and unique. The second is suffused with sadness: *Famulus* exudes regret for a lost past. "It is beginning to seem as if time is becoming my obsession," says Tom, and proves his point with his opening editorial, a long, detailed essay on his family genealogy researches. His tactics in uncovering his familial past are interesting and instructive, and the old photos illustrating the piece are exquisitely produced and presented. Beautiful work like this is rare in a fanzine. Eulogies for, and articles by, Ken Cheslin and Joe Mayhew echo this sense of lost time. "Kench's" Olaf cartoons, a selection of which follow, lack professional sheen, shall we say, but Tom Doubrey's illos for Mayhew's piece on Confiction are both witty and well-drawn. Too bad nobody told the artist what Mayhew looked like! Also witty and deft are Kurt Erichsen's drawings for Tom's own "Fannish Adventure", documenting a fantastic (indeed!) voyage through the ultimate SF bookstore, in the company of the late Lan Lascowski. Sheryl Birkhead and Gene Stewart provide enjoyable pages, and Sheryl's farm tale segues nicely into

Marl Bovard's extraordinary "A Year Out Here", an account of life in the rural midwest. So evocative I felt the chill of its overcast autumn. After a final editorial on Y2K, Tom closes TRF with photos of his newest grandbabies, a bouncy balance to the losses of the front pages. This wheel keep on turnin' ...

The Rhizome Factor Vol. 1 No. 5 / Cathy Cupitt, P.O. Box 915, Nedlands, Western Australia, 6909, Australia / \$4A per. Extra overseas

Rommeldam #27 / Dwight R. Decker, 20003 N. 23rd Ave. #193, Phoenix AZ 85027-4160 / deklane@aol.com / A zine for Dapper, the Dutch apa, describing Dwight's most recent European trip. He was sick but accomplished much, scouring the stores for SF books, new French comics (sounds racy), Dutch dolls for his niece, and attending an SF con ("pure gravy"). Interesting analysis of an *Analog* anthology and how the teenaged DRD responded to JWC Jr. His mc's touch on romance, and I know how he feels. It may be ridiculous to fall in love in middle age, but it feels just splendid.

ScatZine / Andy Hooper, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle WA 98103 / fanmailaph@aol.com / Victor A. Gonzalez, 9238 4th Ave. SW, Seattle WA 98106 / squib@galaxy-7.net / A self-proclaimed oneshot dealing – most entertainingly – with an energetic year-by-year rundown of the FAAn Awards by Hooper. After an educated and insightful review of Ken Burns' *Jazz* by Theo Blanco, Victor chimes in with a page luxuriating in gratitude over his TAFF victory.

Scavenger's Newsletter / Janet Fox, 833 Main, Osage City KS 66523-1241 / foxscav1@jc.met / \$2.50 per sample copy / "The monthly marketletter for SF/fantasy/horror/Mystery writers and artists with an interest in the small press."

The Sci-File / Science Fiction Weekly / <http://www.scifiweekly.com>

scopus:3007 / Alexander J. L. Bouchard, P.O. Box 573, Hazel Park MI 48030-0573 / ajlbouchard@juno.com / the usual

SF Commentary / Bruce Gillespie, 59 Keele Street, Collingwood, Vict. 3066 Australia / gandc@mira.net / \$A5, \$US15 the single copy

SFSFS Shuttle #143 / Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik, c/o South Florida SF Society, P.O. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale FL 33307-0143 / This first issue in six months – dated "July 2000 - March 2001" – is suffused with anguish over the emigration from South Florida of

Joe Siclari and Edie, the area's movers and shakers. Shirlene's editorial to that effect, when it isn't lamenting the issue's tardiness, is underscored by articles by Melanie Herz and Carol Porter, and the tone of all can only be described as despairing. What, all seem to ask, can we do without them? The answer is obvious from the rest of this issue: enjoy the bounteous fannishness that remains. Dan Foster and Adam-Troy Castro provide solid reviews, and Shirlene's photographic meeting minutes and con report bespeak a group that sings with lively camaraderie and wit. Not to disparage the contributions of Stern and Siclari; they now may live in NYC but South Florida will never forget all they've done for the region. They merit recognition from Southern fandom – Rebel Awards, in fact – for that.

Skel's Trove / Bill Bowers / 4651 Glenway Ave., Cincinnati OH 45238-4503 / eWorlds@Outworlds.net / On-line auctioneering of classic fanzines, with neat descriptions and lotsa action. Also from Bill, also on-line, **eXenolith**, a FAPAazine with comments by others to earlier issues.

Skug / Gary S. Mattingly, 7501 Honey Ct., Dublin CA 94568 / gsmattingly@home.com / t.u.

Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin Vol. 7 No. 8-9 / Julie Wall, 470 Ridge Road, B'ham AL 35206-2816 / jllwall@usit.net / SFC membership or. / "The last **Bulletin** of the Millennium" is the usual fare, which is good stuff. As ever, it promotes SF fandom in the states of the Confederacy with scads of convention reports by Julie, Tom Feller, Naomi Fisher and others, fanzine listings (including many *not* originating in the South), a pretty comprehensive club listing (no mentions of New Orleans), Rebel conventions, worldcon bids and LOCs. As ever, the info is indispensable and nicely presented. Good cover by Randy Cleary, whose style should be familiar from these pages. Julie handed out the followup issue at DeepSouthCon, and it is more of the excellent same, with a list of Southern SF and fantasy authors provided by Toni Weisskopf and some ace cartoons by Teddy Harvia.

The Space Cadet Gazette / R. Graeme Cameron, 1855 West 2nd Ave. #110, Vancouver BC V6J 1J1 Canada / graeme_cameron@mindlink.bc.ca

Spirits of Things Past No. 1 / Dick & Leah Smith, 410 W. Willow Rd., Prospect Heights IL 60070-1250 / rhes@enteract.com / In lieu of another **Stet** (and congrats to these magnificents on their Hugo nomination!), a purpler than purple come-on for the 14th Ditto, to be held conjunctively with Fanhistoricon in October of 2001. The site is Bloomington, Illinois, and the burg's most

famous resident, Bob Tucker, contributes a page of local history and color. After a listing of Dittos and Fanhistoricons past, Leah wows her readership with a nifty new fannish lexicon, defining such esoteric terms as "gongulator" (I want one!) and "smooooooooth."


Squiggledy Hoy / Bridget Bradshaw, 19 Hill Court Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL52 3JJ, Great Britain (n.b.) / e-mail bugshaw@cix.co.uk / webpage <http://www.cix.co.uk/~bugshaw>



Steam Engine Time / Bruce Gillispie, 59 Keele St., Collingwood, Vic. 3066 Australia, Paul Kincaid & Maureen Kincaid Speller, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ, UK / gandc@mira.net (Bruce), set@acnestis.demon.co.uk (Maureen)

Tangent / David Truesdale, 5779 Norfleet, Raytown MO 64133 / internet - 103133.1350@compuserve.com; <http://www.sff.net/people/Dave.T/index.htm> / \$5 @, \$20 one-year sub.

Terminal Eyes #s 1-2 / Tim Marion, see **On East Broadway** / The first of Tim's FAPA/media-zines has the story of how Gary Tesser turned Tim on to **Doctor Who**, and a long "Comics Memorandum" reviewing all the comics he's read recently. Follows pieces by Walter Wentz, Aljo Svoboda and the extremely wonderful Giani Siri, hers dealing with banshees. #2 features a color cover – a collage of media babes, including that amazing kid from **Dark Angel** – and some *outstanding* superhero art by Andy MacDonald. He's great; I want this guy to do a **Challenger** cover. Tim talks about new TV SF, and his roommate ruminates on the decline of the local "free" radio station, but most of the zine is fannish as can be. Tim's comments on the last FAPA, course, but also muses on a classic FAPA mailing he's found – stuff like **Lighthouse** (Carr), **Niekas** (Meskys), **Warhoon** (Willis; are you surprised?), **Doorway** (Benford) – and a reprinted "[Walter] Wentz Upon a Time" on "Those



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artwork by Mark Fults

This ad ran in the last Millennium Philcon progress report

Damn Young Pests": neofans.

This Here ... #7-8 / Nic Farey, P.O. Box 178, St. Leonard MD 20685 / nicandbobbie@aol.com (NEW); LOCs to thisherefanzine@aol.com / trade / To start with #7's highlight, as well as the item most *personally* relevant, Nic describes his recent wedding, and reprints his & Bobbie's personally-writ vows. Lovely! He accompanies this joyous and funny account with a personal note: "Seems we both have wonderful and beautiful ladies, eh?" I can only shout *huzzah!* There's much else – a rundown of the Nova Awards vote, where Nic placed high. Then: rock reviews, serious discussion of pro wrestling (!?!), and a long, strong, passionate lettercol – Farey's argument with Rodney Leighton about TAFF should be must reading for Canadians. I disagree with him about the unimportance of the Hugo *vis-a-vis* the FAAN or Nova Awards. Both are solid honors, but the FAAN is imperviously controlled by a clique and for me, there will always be but one ultimate SF honor. #8 gripes about 2001 – Nic has not enjoyed the new millennium so far. This is possibly why his editorial is entitled "A Plan for the Assassination of Arthur C. Clarke". There's nothing funny about being laid off – I speak not only as one who has been there, but a former Unemployment Interviewer – but his tale of his clogged septic tank brings as hearty a chuckle as one can manage while holding one's nose. Dale Earnhardt's death affects Nic deeply. Lightening things up, his CD reviews include work by Dolly Parton, to whom I once professed deathless luv at a Mardi Gras parade (she ignored me like a leaf blown beneath her wheels), and there's more about pro "rasslin'." *Where* is Bobo Brazil? There's more rasslin' about TAFF, too, in the lettercol – is that fund nothing but trouble? – but also a photo of Teri Hatcher I'll remember in my dotage.

Timebound Vol. XXIV #11, Vol. XXV #1 / David Sooby, 12325 Pinehurst Dr., Kansas City MS 66109 / lensman@planetkc.com / Monthly news- and clubzine of the Kansas City SF&F Society, very sparkly, never repetitious. Good cover art by Foster and Kalthoff. Lots of personal news, Czarkon reports, "Neo's Corner" (explaining fannish terms and legends; I await *my* entry), reviews of recent Nebula winner **Darwin's Radio** and the latest Harry Potter (it's good they like it; it made the Hugo ballot), obits for Gordy Dickson and Ray Walston. Energy, interest, enthusiasm ... it's been 25 years since Ken Keller revolutionized worldcons in KC; methinks the happy force evident in their clubzine is focusing again on the Big Show. Ken's ruminations about club history do nothing to dispel that notion.

Thyme #130 / Alan Stewart, P.O. Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 3005, Australia /

a.stewart@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au / The or \$A 3; subscription \$A 15 / Received *ten months* after the cover date (March '00). We printaholics need to Do Something to improve and cheapen – in the fiduciary sense – our overseas mailings. Dick Jenssen's photo collage cover is very cool, depicting The Lady (as Ricia Mainhardt and I call the Statue of Liberty) as she might appear in a thousand or more years. (Do I mind a treasured American symbol appearing on an Aussie fanzine? Of course not – after all, *we* got her from the French!) The zine's text is dominated by obituaries, alas, and the other news is stale, but the LOCs are lively, and any zine that prints a picture of the ever-nifty Paula McGrath is a winner in this boy's book.

Tortoise 10-11 / Sue Jones, Flat 5, 32/33 Castle Street, Shrewsbury SY1 2BQ U.K. / sue.tortoise@talk21.com / trade / Taking its theme from its issue number, Sue's deft perzine is devoted to looking back over *The Last Ten ...* issues, and years. The cover is self-drawn, a "self-portrait" that shows nary a cell on Sue's face. Sue manifests her person in the things she does and the things she loves, and those she does depict, and on the back cover, explain. In between are a "trialogue" among Sue and two buddies about the number 10, an account of local floods (been there, done that **glub**), a very clever "By His Bootstraps" number by Steve Green, some unique reviews (including **Just So Stories**, literature's best opening line in English), LOCs on the last two issues (most enlightening when they speak of "Englishness"), and fanzine reviews (hers to **Chall** #13 hits on my romance and warms my cockles). There's a final nostalgic reflection on soap, of all things, proving again that a superior writer can work sincere emotional power out of *anything*. #11 is themed on music, as her Graham Higgins cover – a tortoise playing guitar – implies. She runs no record reviews or top-ten lists, but rich, articulate musings on the meaning of liquid, conscientious sound. Sue is an excellent writer, whether her subject be the leak in her roof, the 1881 vs. the 2001 census, "dancing about architecture," or the standards: lettercol responses and zine reviews. Neat is Harry Turner's quick scan of the life of the inventor of the Theremin, but this whole production is splendid.

The Trail to White's Fort / Charlie Williams, 1200 Woodcrest Dr., Knoxville TN 37918 / Charlie wrote and illustrated this graphic-format history of Knoxville's founding. It's a perfect item for school libraries and tourist shops, and amidst the historicity a trace or two of the patented Williams hilarity sneaks in. His wife, Sylvia, painted the cover – Charlie says she's the real artist in the family.

Trap Door / Robert Lichtman, P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen

CA 95442 / locs2trapdoor@yahoo.com / the usual or \$4@

Tripe Reportcard 44-7 / Bruce Pelz, 15931 Kalisher St., Granada Hills CA 91344 / More exotic locales for the perambulating Pelzes ... Cape Town, South Africa (Fishy stamps) ... Casablanca (no indication they went to Rick's) ... Istanbul, just like in **From Russia, With Love** (did they see St. Sofia's?) ...

Twink #20-21 / E.B. Frohvet, 4716 Dorsey Hall Dr. #506, Ellicott City MD 21042 / The u. / **Twink** celebrates its fifth anniversary with a sterling Taral Wayne cover and the usual quality contents, most written by the editor. I must bring up a reproductive flaw: Eeb's "m" is missing a leg. Aside from that, the look of the zine is fine (I like that typeface) and the contents are most consistent and literate. I can't think of a better sercon writer on the current zine scene. This time Frohvet proves that with a good article on religion's place in SF, "A Century of Denial & Evasion", the first of at least two articles on the subject. (In the future I suggest he discuss **Canticle for Leibowitz**, **A Case of Conscience** and the trans-galactic splendor that is Cordwainer Smith. And I hope some serious critic takes a serious look at the apocalypse novels of Tim Lahaye and Jerry Jenkins.) Lyn McConchie reviews recent classic ghost stories, whetting my thirst for such goodies, and Eeb himself gives erudite readings to Bob Sabella's **Who Shaped SF?** and Mary Doria Russell's mostly-mainstream **The Sparrow**. For some reason the 21st issue is emblazoned "Poliad" on the cover – a fine abstract from Sean Russell Friend – and the



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ALLEN MANN • WIPB

interior is dominated by a long essay on jewels, of all things. As a recent purchaser of a ring, I found it nifty. Jan Stinson's review of the Brit miniseries of **Gormenghast** has me weeping before my TV screen; hope it makes the oceanic trek soon. In both issues, we

find short but iconoclastic zine reviews – horror of horrors, he *didn't* like **Stet** #9, though he's kind to **Chall** #13 – and a lettercol as sharp and challenging as the editor: the chorus echoes the play, the lettercol reflects the zine. Initiating an ongoing shtick, Frohvet asks us to name our Best Moments in Fandom ... sexual events excluded. Hell, then, who needs it?

USCA Alumni News Spring 2001 / University Students Cooperative Association, 2424 Ridge Road, Berkeley CA 94709 / Now why on Earth should I burden this fanzine with notice of a co-op publication? Because my letter is printed within, a plaint for information about a fannish treasure lost and gone forever: co-op newszines edited not only by yhos, but by Terry Carr and Ron Ellik. The story shall be told someday ...

Vanamonde Nos. 383-402 / John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St. No. 409, L.A. CA 90057 / Trade / Every week Apa-L, collated at LASFS, gets another two-page dose of Hertz' superb erudition. These issues supplement L-comments with fascinating natter about magician John Scarne and an ongoing report on Spokane's InCon, where John shone as Fan Guest of Honor. I'd love to hear what was said at the Current-Fanzines Kaffeeklatsch. Also in the mix: a nice eulogy for the ever-underrated Steve Allen, an Oz exhibit, the French, the origins of treacle, Jane Austen, the de Camps, haiku (a favorite), dance, and our beloved Ann Layman Chancellor. John got 15 nominations for the Fan Writer Hugo this year; he should better that.

Visions of Paradise #87 / Robert Sabella, 24 Cedar Manor Court, Budd Lake NJ 07828-1023 / bobsabella@nac.net / Among zinedom's most literate publications, **VoP** this time sports an interestingly surreal Franz Miklis cover over the established and welcome usuals. Bob's diary entries detail, as before, domestic and curricular natter, with some compelling asides about the trouble Chinese kids he tutors. After so long, I'm still unclear about where Bob teaches, and just who is this wondrous and mysterious Fei Fei. He mentions two books he's recently completed – as in *written*, not just *read*; if he entrusts **Chall** with a copy of his **Who Shaped SF?**, I'll see to it that it gets a just review here. Sabella's exceptional reviews key this time on Michael Bishop's **Blue Kansas Sky**, an apparent masterpiece, plus works by McDevitt, McHugh, and Swanwick ... and **A Tale of Two Cities!** He closes with a set of awesomely dumb celebrity statements – although Matt Lauer's is anything but dumb – and a splendid diatribe on the late election. **Halcyon Days** #87 accompanies this zine, letters from his, and our, beloved readers, who often rise to the challenge of the sterling and intelligent pub.

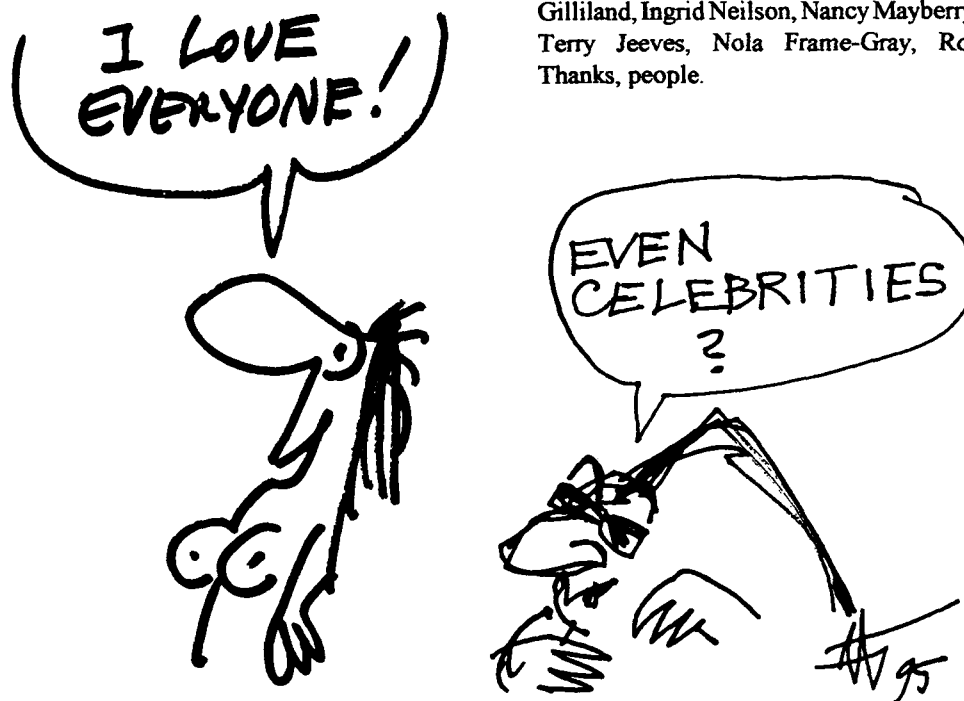
Wabe / Jae Leslie Adams, 621 Spruce St., Madison WI 53715; Tracy Benton, 108 Grand Canyon Drive, Madison WI 53705; Bill Bodden, P.O. Box 762, Madison WI 53701-0762 / jaeleslie@aol.com; billzilla@mailbag.com; benton@uwalumni.com / t.u.

Westwind #254-7 / George Nyhen, NWSFS, P.O. Box 24207, Seattle WA 98124 / mwsfs-info@sfnorthwest.org / free to members; dues \$20/year / Handsomely bound clubzine for the Northwest SF Society, featuring card covers, nicely illustrated, and information-packed contents. These issues – in addition to party announcements, birthday lists, forthcoming cons and other club stuff – sport a series on extra-terrestrial life by Burt Webb, a Connie Willis bibliography by Lisa Woodings – “Daisy, in the Sun” deserves novelization – and an account of local bestsellers. Orson Card is overwhelmingly popular, month after month.

The Wrong Leggings / Lilian Edwards, 39 Viewforth, Edinburgh EH10 4JE U.K. / L.Edwards@ed.ac.uk

Xerox Debt #5 / Davida Gypsy Breier, P.O. Box 963, Havre de Grace MD 21078 / leekinginc@hotmail.com / \$2 / Thrice yearly review pub for counterculture zinesters, mine because **Brooklyn's** Fred Argoff reviewed (kindly) **Challenger** #12 here. As ever, the variety of amateur publications out there astounds and impresses me, even if few are SF and I've only seen two: **For the Clerisy** and Fred's zine. Of special interest is a warning about an imprisoned child molester who has been collecting, listing (in his own zines), and worst, distributing (to other prisoners) zines by young girls – often angry, hurt, frustrated kids who are ripe targets for such as he. Good for **Xerox Debt** for spreading the word about this creep. (I sound like John Walsh!)

Illustrators: Joe Mayhew, Ian Gunn, Bill Rotsler, Alexis Gilliland, Ingrid Neilson, Nancy Mayberry, Bryan Norris, Terry Jeeves, Nola Frame-Gray, Rotsler/Gilliland. Thanks, people.



Late arrivals: **DASFAX's** June issue features a Sheryl Birkhead cover and fun filks, particularly a paean to Douglas Adams (“Bye, Bye, that Hitchhiker Guy ... Answer’s 42, don’t know why”). Bob Sabella’s **Visions of Paradise** and **Halcyon Days** – both numbered 88 – are fine, thoughtful fare – and the former features an *amazing* drawing by Julia Morgan-Scott. That caps it – June 15, 2001.



NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

THE TCHOUPITOULAS

CHOO-CHOO ...

You know what I first loved about New Orleans? *The nights.*

Late at night, I mean, *late* at night, hours I couldn't even reach these days, I would leave meetings of the New Orleans Science Fiction Association and drive home through the silent city. What I would feel would have no name. Part of it was the heaviness of the humid air. Part of it was the age of the funky and often dilapidated housing flanking the streets, often streets with names like *Melpomene*, from the Greeks, or *Tchoupitoulas*, from God knows where. A goodly percentage of it was the acceptance and humor I'd found in the fans, the people. And there was the shush of the wind and of Time through the branches of the willows and the oaks.

I called this sensation – for lack of a better word – *texture*, but that's a cold term for a warm feeling. A feeling that said I had become part of a heritage, part of a reality ... a flawed heritage and a primitive reality, maybe, but nevertheless, it had welcomed me, and it was here, with me, sensual and subcutaneous ...

"Subcutaneous" ... Yes, New Orleans did quickly get under my skin. I had lived in California for eight years, throughout junior high and high school, and I had begun and would finish college there. But I found New Orleans infinitely more friendly, infinitely more funny, infinitely more inviting and accepting than my birth state had ever been.

Was this true of fandom as it was for "mundane" life? Less so, because in California I had the weekly meetings of the fabled Little Men to look forward to, and the company of the Andersons and Alva & Sid Rogers and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro – then a fan, just like me – to treasure. In NOLA there was NOSFA, a giddy group of like-minded lunatics – different only in that they were my own age. Friendly, crazy, approachable, and active in a way the Little Men were not, NOSFAns were into *fanzines*. Led by Don Markstein and Rick Norwood, they were hardcore apans – most notably in SFPA, the glorious Southern Fandom Press Alliance, and K-a, the great comics apa. They had a monthly clubzine, *Nosfan*, and even a genzine – a good one, too: *Nolazine*. As someone who has enjoyed scribbling words on paper since the age of 6, this sort of fandom was obviously for me.

After two – or is it three? – DeepSouthCons, a worldcon bid and a worldcon, innumerable Saturday nights doing nothing at Faruk von Turk's and almost as many Saturdays churning out another episode of *The Oriental Fox Trot Museum*, after a thousand shared movies and meals and a zillion fanzines, I can safely say, how right I was.

There's so much I'd like to tell you about New Orleans and its fandom, so many stories and so many people. The Tent of the Turk. Our DeepSouthCons. The Symphony Book Fair. Clarence Laughlin, of the light ... and Roger Lovin, of the darkness. All, of course, couldn't fit into this issue. Well, there will be more issues of **Challenger**, and in the fannish life of this city I've found another constant to which I will be returning.

Here and now, some bits and pieces of New Orleans' fannish history, from the legendary era of Room 770 to date ... with some sports thrown in. (And some horror. I personally vouch for the Bessie story in Dennis Dolbear's "Tales of the Stumble Inn". Dolbear called me the day after it happened, and his was the voice of a dude *righteously spooked*.)

<– This illo, by the way, should be familiar. It's by **Peggy Ranson**, and was used to decorate the Nolacon II freebie bags.

MM



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Bulletin # 2

The cover – by who knows? – to the second Nolacon progress report.



Famed in fannish legend is the party in Room 770 of the St. Charles Hotel, at the first Nolacon, or Nocon as Roger Sims calls it. He wrote up his version of the party shortly thereafter, and recently revisited and amended his account..

SATURDAY NIGHT PARTY IN ROOM 770

ROGER SIMS

*Illos from the original by LEE HOFFMAN
traced by CHARLIE WILLIAMS*

(Note: the regular typeface is as best as I can read it a faithful repro of what I wrote in a SAPSzine, **Hay is for Horses**, right after I returned home from Nolacon. (Not Nolacon I, because I reject back unnumbered anything but World Wars!) The san serif writing is my comments and thoughts now, as I type from the original. Also I should say that I have not done much in the way of correcting the grammar. However I have corrected most of the misspellings. [*And my spellchecker has hopefully caught the rest – Editor.*])

The first thing that I need to say is that Nolacon was my second worldcon. So I knew about the ways of fans at worldcons. But I did not know about the party in Frank Dietz's room. I believe that either Rich Ellsberry or Max Keasler were in the room. Frank's room was a single. It may be necessary for em to explain to the younger fans

reading this, just exactly what a single room entailed. In today's world all hotel rooms have either a king-sized bed or two double beds. But in 1951 and for some time a single room had one single bed. A double room had either one double bed or two single beds!

About eleven P.M. on Saturday two things happened in Frank's room: (1) the room became very crowded with fun-loving fans; (2) the House Dick called for the umpteenth time. At this point either Max or Rich suggested that the party move to room 770. Room 770 was separated from the rest of the rooms on the floor by a fire door. Also the room was next to the stair well. This caused the noise to go up or down instead of to the other rooms on the floor. Therefore no one complained which meant that what the house dick did not know could not hurt us.

The hotel detective did not show up at the party even once. I cannot say how many drinks were consumed or even how many showed up but I can say that the next morning when I left the room I found a stack of four trays each holding 24 empty glasses.

I do not believe that I had the nerve to write the following.

Now in my estimation room 770 will attain immortality in fandom, and as you read on you will understand why I make this claim.

The room contained four beds occupied at least part of the time by Richard Ellsberry, Ed Kuss, Max Keefer and myself.

Thursday night all four of us slept in our own beds. Friday I think all of us did so except Ed Kuss who occupied a couch in the lobby because Dale Hart, a Texas fan, not having a room, claimed Ed's bed for his own. He also claimed it Saturday night. How it came about that Ed reclaimed his bed for Sunday night was never discussed. I slept in my bed for three of the four nights that we were booked into the room: Saturday night, Bob Johnson and Frank Dietz shared my bed while I stayed up cutting out very large letters from Xmas wrappings to place on the wall. **DETROIT WANTS YOU.**



Detroit fandom, in the guise of Ed Kuss, Agnus Harook and myself, had planned to throw a bid party Sunday night. Howard deVore thought that a party would convince the fans in attendance that Detroit was serious about wanting to hold a worldcon and would vote for us. As you all know, while many did feel this way, more did not, and 1952 became Chicon II.

But from about 4 in the morning until about 6, I cut out letters. About the time I finished Frank and Bob woke up and left the room. I decided I had hit the wall and really did not want to attack Sunday's activities without some sleep. As I crawled into bed, Dale also left and about the same time Ed came in. So for at least part of Sunday night all four of us slept in our own beds.

For an update on the original occupants of the room: Ed is dead; Richard and Max have not been heard from for over 40 years; and as for myself I leave it to the reader to make appropriate remarks.

At other times by Bob Johnson and Frank Dietz (my bed), Dale Hart, a fan from Mexico City (Ed's bed), Ed Kuss (Max's bed) and myself and Richard (Richard's bed). I don't know the reason but the House Dick did not bother us here so we had fun. Or at least the sober ones did.

About one we ran out of mix, so someone called up room service and asked them to send up some. When it arrived I paid the hotel boy \$1.60 for four bottles that in my estimation weren't worth sixty cents. Right there and then I said to myself I will not buy anything else from the hotel unless I can't help it. Dietz knew of an all-night drugstore where we could buy some mix, so we started out for it. Frank had left his shoes in his room and did not feel like going down the street without shoes on, but fortunately a number of fans had taken off their shoes so he put on one of their pairs and with his shirttail hanging out and a drink in his hands he accompanied me through the hotel lobby down the main drag and to the drugstore to buy the mix. Although a lot of people thought we were crazy no one said anything to us.



Along about three thirty I decided – because most of the fen had left and because Ed Kuss was asleep (and because there was nothing left to drink except a half bottle of vermouth and nobody there liked vermouth) that the party was over and everybody would leave in a short while – that I would go down to room 335 and watch or participate in a poker game going on there. There were two games in progress, a small one and a large one. Both filled to the gills. So I thought I would watch the big one. The players were Mel Korshack, Fred Brown, Moe Greenberg, and Lee Jacobs. They played a no-limit table stakes game and after watching money pass back and forth across the table for an hour, I thought that I had given the rest of the fen at the party time enough to go home and I went back to my room.

I now believe that Bob Tucker was also one of the players. The big game was a no-limit table stakes game and the small game was a nickel/dime game. It had seven players, so there was not an empty seat. Would I have taken one had there been one? I think so...

Two things happened while I was there. One, someone emptied an ashtray into a wastepaper basket that was directly under a window with a curtain. The ashtray had a cigarette butt that was not quite out. The wastepaper basket had some paper. After a few minutes the burning butt made the paper burn. But fortunately smoke from the basket was discovered before the fire reached the curtain. It was quickly put out by a well-placed glass of water.

The other thing happened during the last hand I watched. Mel Korschack was dealt a pair of aces in a game of five card draw. He kept the aces and a kicker. He drew *another* pair of aces! He was most fortunate to have several other plays in the pot who thought that they had the winning hand. The betting was fast and furious. Needless to say Mel was very happy at the end of the hand! While I do not remember how much was in the pot I do recall that I was impressed at the number of twenties

visible in the middle of the table.

As I walked back to my room I thought to myself how good it would be to go to sleep. Oh what a dreamer I was. I opened the door and the smell almost asphyxiated me, and the smoke almost blinded me. After the first sting of smoke cleared from my eyes a most terrible sight met them. Over in a corner was Ed Walters laying in a drunken stupor, with a mattress and box spring on top of him. I walked over and pulled the box spring and mattress off of him and pulled him to his feet. He rewarded me for my efforts by trying to choke me to death. I felt he didn't want me to help so instead of trying I tried to help myself from being killed.

In his defense he (a) was out of his gourd with strong drink and (b) did not squeeze too hard.

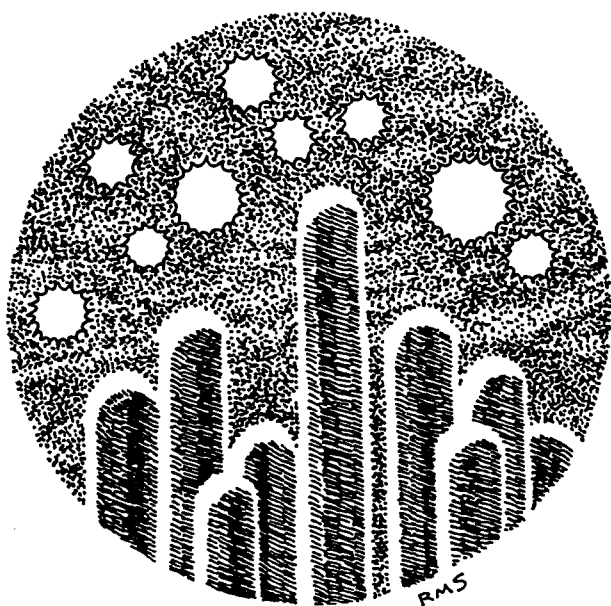
While I was gone there had been a parade in the room. The beds had been pushed together and placed directly in the path of the parade. The fen present [*led, it is said, by Terry Carr*] had marched around the room [*stomping over the mattresses*] singing and yelling at the top of their lungs until Walters had fallen on the floor and the bed was pushed on top of him.

About this time I decided to go to the bathroom. As I opened the door I nearly fainted dead away. In order for you to fully understand the sight that I saw I will have to go back to Frank Dietz' room. While we were there I personally saw one fan drink a glass of half water and half vermouth, followed by a glass full of *creme de mint*, followed by a scotch and soda. When he was drinking the *creme de mint* I told him he would be sick before the night was over. He shook his head. Well, to make long story short he did. In the bathroom of 770.

For some reason or another he didn't use the throne, maybe because it was too low. Instead he used the washbowl, and naturally stopped it up. This would not have been too bad had it not been for the fact that the faucets leaked. When I left 770 at 3:30 the bowl was half full and didn't look like it was going to overflow. My God how wrong can a guy be? At 4:30, when I came back, water was rolling off the bathroom floor onto the rug in the bedroom. I grabbed a glass and started bailing into the tub. [*Sickening account of unplugging the sink excluded*] Next I grabbed all the towels in the room (enough for four people) and mopped up the water on the floor, wringing the towels out three times in the process.

Thus I coped with a major crisis!

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I don't know how you felt about Nocon - the name I originally used - but speaking for myself "Nocon" expresses exactly what I think of it. The only part that I thought was any good was the "smoke-filled rooms" and these were bigger and better than I have ever experienced. Gee, don't fans have fun!!

(This from a neo who at the time had been to one MidWesCon and one worldcon. What an expert!)

Editor's note: Readers interested in the party in room 770 are encouraged to check out the accounts thereof in Let the Good Times Roll, the Nolacon II souvenir book, edited by ... modesty prohibits.

One of the accomplishments of Nolacon II was bringing the geniality and genius of Mike Resnick back to the attention of fandom. The man who, with his wonderful wife Carol, had dominated worldcon masquerade competitions began to dominate Hugo ballots ... and for my money, it all began with the

NOLACON II TOASTMASTER GIG

Mike Resnick

Art by Charlie Williams

To wit, a transcription, from videotape, of my speech as Toastmaster before Nolacon II, the 1988 World Science Fiction Convention held in New Orleans.

Good evening, and welcome to the Awards Ceremony of the 46th World Science Fiction Convention! Well, actually, that's not exactly true. If you'll check the third revision of the second printing of your program book ...

There, that wasn't so bad. You know, I met Bob Shaw one night this week. He toastmastered this in Atlanta [at Confederation in 1986], and he assured me that no matter how used I was to public speaking, when I actually got around to Toastmastering the Hugo ceremonies I was going to be *nervous*.

I explained to him that very few things make me nervous, except for muddy racetracks and overly aggressive redheads named Thelma. But here we are, and I think maybe he was right. For the past few weeks I've been having this recurring dream, and in this dream I'm sitting right over there, and John Guidry introduces me, and I get up, resplendent in my tuxedo, walk to the microphone, open my mouth – and I haven't got anything to say.

So yesterday I scribbled some notes, and last night I dreamed that John Guidry introduces me, and I walk to the microphone, and I know *exactly* what I'm going to say – but I'm not wearing any pants.

I'm afraid to look down.

Anyway, when the Nolacon committee invited me to be Toastmaster, I asked what the job entailed, and they explained that my primary function was to introduce the pro and fan guests of honor. I've been flown here at great expense to do just that – so you can imagine my dismay when I found out that they *already knew each other*.

So instead, as long as I'm here, I might as well hand out these little rocket ships.



At least I get to do it in New Orleans, which is a fascinating town just now recovering from a veritable plague of Republicans.

When you consider that mankind took his first tentative footsteps across East Africa four million years ago, and two hundred thousand generations later we are confronted by a Presidential contest between George Bush against Michael Dukakis, you can only draw one logical conclusion: Darwin was wrong.

So much for politics. On the plus side, New Orleans is also the home of Risen Star, the remarkable racehorse who won this year's Preakness and Belmont Stakes by huge margins. I freely admit that I'm a devout horse-racing fan, and I think you'd be surprised at how many science fiction writers are. Pat Cadigan, who's up for a Hugo tonight, is well known as a great horse follower. Her only problem is that the horses she follows are even greater horse followers.

Speaking of bettors, the former governor of Louisiana, the very colorful Eddie Edwards, was quite a gambler himself. It was at this very podium in this very hotel, while awaiting trial for borrowing money from the Louisiana State Treasury to go gamble in Las Vegas, that he called a press conference and offered 8-to-5 odds that he'd beat the rap.

Not bright, but colorful.

Anyway, the story of Risen Star, who is currently recovering from a bowed tendon – for you fans in the audience, that's the equine equivalent of Twonk's Disease – is really quite uplifting. Ten percent of his earnings are given to the Little Sisters of the Poor. It was an inspiring thing to do, and I went out looking for them in the French Quarter last night. I couldn't find them. I *did* find several *Big* Sisters of the Poor. They're on almost every street corner, along with their business agents.

Speaking of the Quarter, I hope most of you have had a chance to get there. In places, it's almost wilder than the Orlando party.

My favorite store is no longer there, but it was until about two years ago. It was known as the Endangered Species Shop. From the name, you'd think they specialized in selling science fiction novels to which there were no sequels, but in point of fact it sold ivory and animal skins and the like, and why it wasn't picketed by 20,000 students is beyond me. But it did go the way of all endangered species.

Bourbon Street is the Quarter's huckster room, and it's probably as hard to walk from one end to the other without being accosted by some fast-talking salesman as it is to walk through our huckster room without Dick Spelman trying to sell you a complete set of **Dumarest of Terra** for only \$1,600.

\$2,300, if you include New Orleans tax.

These days Bourbon Street seems to be divided into three equal parts, not unlike Gaul, but Bourbon Street's parts seem to be tee-shirt shops, brass shops, and strip joints featuring performers of indeterminate gender.

For you celebrity watchers in the audience, I should point out that the Hugo nominees are all sitting in these cordoned-off areas up front. The committee has asked that you neither pet nor feed them until the awards are finished.

Actually, some of them will probably spend all night here., since a number of the hotels won't be honoring Worldcon reservations until next Wednesday – which, coincidentally, is the very same day the next-to-final Progress Report is going out.

Fifth class.

That means the mailman tosses it on the road and hopes you trip over it.

Now, before we go any further, it's my unhappy duty to point out to you that the practitioners of science fiction, who write about longevity and immortality with such optimism, are themselves not exempt from the limitations that the Star Maker has placed upon all other mortals. Science fiction has been harder hit than usual this year, and among the departed are four former worldcon guests of honor: C.L. Moore, Alfred Bester, Clifford D. Simak, and perhaps the tallest giant of them all, Robert A. Heinlein. The complete list of our departed friends is on the necrology page of your Program Book, and we ask for a moment of silence for them at this time.

Before we give out the Hugos, I've got a few bits of business to do. Just before I came out here Algis Budrys slipped me five dollars and asked me to plug one of his books, so I want you all to know that Algis

is responsible for the sale of half a million copies of **Rogue Moon**.

I know I sold mine.

For those of you who are following the pennant races, we have some late scores for you: 3 to 1, 6 to 5, and tied at 2 to 2 in the top of the 11th inning.

On a more serious note, the Sheraton Corporation has asked me to announce that Dave Kyle is now banned from the use of the swimming pool. He leaves a ring.

At this point, I suppose I should draw your attention to the fact that for the first time in many years there is no screen on the Hugo stage. We offer no apologies for this; it was done purposely. We feel that the Hugo Award ceremony is one of the last bastions of the written word and of serious illustrative art, and if you must have pictures with your awards, we suggest a re-run of **Lost in Space**.

[I introduce Nolacon President Justin Winston, Chairman John Guidry, and Guest of Honor Don Wollheim.]

The Hugo Ceremony wasn't always the prestigious ceremony that it has become. The award wasn't created until 1953, when the very first one went not to a novel or a short story, but to Forry Ackerman as the Number One Fan Personality.

They made such an impression on fandom and Worldcon committees that they were dropped in 1954 (and Bob Silverberg has been trying, during his various Worldcon Toastmastering gigs, to give out the 1954 awards ever since).

They were back in 1955, and to show you how seriously they were taken, the legendary Lou Tabakow won a Hugo for the Best Unpublished Story of the Year. And Sam Moscovitz, arguably one off the two or three most identifiable fans in the universe, won a Hugo as Science Fiction's Mystery Guest.

However, they were back again in 1956, and since anything that happens two years in a row becomes a fannish tradition, we began taking them seriously and there's never been any suggestion since then that they should be discontinued.

No, categories have changed over the years. On occasion there were only two categories for fiction, and there was a time when if all the fans in the world were laid end to end – as I'm convinced happened outside the Cincinnati suite last night – they could still only win one Hugo among them.

Categories continue to evolve, even this year. I was personally hoping to open the envelope for the Least Anti-Social Behavior by a Best-Selling Author Not Under the Influence of Alcohol, if only to announce that there were no nominees. But instead this year's new category is entitled "Other Forms," which in these days of explicit inter-species sex truly boggles the mind.

Now, the Hugos are just one small part of Worldcon, and as I hand them out I'm going to be recalling to you incidents from other Worldcons, because most of us don't win Hugos.

[I introduce Analog editor Stanley Schmidt, who presents the John W. Campbell Award to Judith Moffett.]

More work goes into a Worldcon than meets the eye. Some of that work involves the creation of the Hugo Award itself. In 1973 the rocket ships didn't arrive on time, and the committee was forced to give out wooden bases to the winners.

I should point out that professional artist Ned Dameron, who did the cover to the Program Book, has designed the bases for this year's Hugos, which are the first ever to be shown in actual flight.

[I present the Best Fan Writer Award to Mike Glyer]

The 1971 Worldcon was held at Boston's Sheraton Hotel, and it had an open-air swimming pool which could be seen from all room above or, where it resided. One night I walked into your Fan Guest of honor Roger Sims' suite on the 23rd floor, and everyone was playing cards or reading or talking. There were

no empty couches or chairs, no place for me to sit down, and I was exhausted from lugging a bunch of books with me all day.

So I walked to the window, looked down, had a wonderful idea, walked to the center of the room, and announced that there were 500 naked people in the pool. You never saw a room empty out so fast, as they all made a mad rush to the elevators and stairs.

Well, I sat down in the empty room, and started reading some of the things I'd bought in the hucksters' room. But the room stayed empty. And finally, a couple of hours later, Roger, red of face and short of breath, entered and said, "We thought you were kidding!"

I said, "You mean I wasn't?"

And that is the origin of skinny-dipping at Worldcon.

There's a postscript to that story. The next evening it was about 45 degrees and raining, and some 2,000 hopeful voyeurs gathered by the pool, waiting for the previous night's skinny-dippers, all of whom had the intelligence to stay inside where it was warm and dry.

[I present the Best Fan Artist Hugo to Brad Foster.]

1972 was the year that Worldcons outlawed peanut butter. They really did. It seems that there was a fan who came to the masquerade in a costume of his own creation, as an underground cartoon character called The Turd. And his entire costume was about ten quarts of peanut butter spread across his pudgy little body.

But he hadn't realized that at Worldcon masquerades there are numerous bright lights, and before the evening was over the peanut butter had turned rancid. He ruined every costume that he brushed against and did considerable damage to the walls and curtains.

[Best Fanzine is presented to Pat Mueller's Texas SF Inquirer]

The 1968 Worldcon was held in Berkeley, California at the Claremont Hotel, later to be known in fannish legend as the Transylvania Hilton.

Worldcons were just beginning to get big at that point, and the Claremont had hardly any rooms, so most of us stayed at sleazy downtown Berkeley hotels. (There are no *unsleazy* downtown Berkeley hotels.)

Now, Worldcon was held at the same time as the Democratic Convention in the city of Chicago, and the local Hell's Angels decided to protest Chicago police brutality by killing a Berkeley cop. Suddenly all the hotels were cordoned off, and reaching the Claremont became a feat equivalent to climbing the Berlin Wall and getting to the other side.

I remember one night I went out to get something cold to drink, and I had three Berkeley policemen accompany me. I bribed each of them with a chocolate malt so we could get out quickly the next morning. It took two and a half hours to get to the Claremont anyway, which was when I realized, perhaps for the first time, that to outsiders such as policemen in the real world, we look even stranger than Hell's Angels.

[Best Semi-Prozine award is presented to Charlie Brown's Locus]

Prior to 1968, Worldcons weren't large enough to fill a single hotel, let alone the three and four we regularly fill these days, and we frequently found ourselves sharing a hotel with another convention.

[A fan adds a comment from the audience.] Yes, I'm coming to that one, but first I want to tell you about 1966, because it was at Tricon in Cleveland that we shared the convention with a convention of Scotsmen who donned their kilts, pulled out their bagpipes, and marched up and down the corridors all night long serenading us with bagpipe music.

I think it was the first, and I believe the only, case in history where the members of a Worldcon complained to a hotel that the mundanes were making too much noise.

[Best Professional Artist goes to Michael Whelan]

In 1967 we shared New York's Statler Hilton Hotel with a convention of Scientologists. To this day I still don't know why converted more of which to what.

But 1967 was also the year that an impassioned group of fans called *Trekkies* made their initial appearance at a Worldcon. At first we thought we might have a little fun running them off the premises, but then cooler and wiser heads prevailed, and explained that the show was on its last legs and we'd obviously never hear from it or them again.

So much for science fiction's ability to predict the future.

[Best Editor is presented to Gardner Dozois]

Every Worldcon is allowed to present one Special Award. In 1963 it was given to Isaac Asimov, right in the middle of his shtick about how he deserved awards more than anyone but had never won one. It was the only time I've ever seen Isaac speechless.

[Nolacon chieftains John Guidry and Justin Winston present a special award to the SF Oral History Association]

I want to say just a little more about the SF Oral History Association, because too many people don't know about it. They have more than 20,000 hours of recorded tapes and interviews, many with people who are no longer around. They have major speeches and addresses which will never be given again. They are underfinanced and underappreciated., and I hope all of you will take it upon yourselves to start supporting them. I'm sure they have a room or a booth here where you can find out what they are doing and how you can help. They're all we have; without them, we have no history.

Except for me. I'm going to give you a little more.

Now we come to the category of Best Dramatic presentation, and along about this time you must be wondering why we even bother listing the ever-present No Award, since it never seems to win.

Well, it did win in 1958 for Best New Author, but more to the point, it has triumphed in this particular category, Dramatic presentation, more often than Gene Roddenberry, Stephen Spielberg, or Stanley Kubrick, which makes it a formidable contender.

*[But not this year, as **The Princess Bride** wins the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo.]*

The 1977 Worldcon was held in the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. There were signs posted everywhere you could see that the residents should *leave no crumbs on the floor*. At first we thought this was merely because the maids were lazy – which indeed they were – but one night while going from one tower of the Fontainebleau to the other, we stumbled across a small army of *palmetto roaches*.

I had never seen a palmetto roach before. I hope to God I never see a palmetto roach again. They'd make dandy trophies if you could figure out a way to kill them without endangering your own life.

We immediately turned around, went back to our room, and scrubbed down the floor.

*[New Orleans' innovation, the category dubbed "Other Forms", wins a Hugo for Alan Moore's and Dave Gibbons' graphic novel, **Watchmen**]*

Worldcon voting wasn't always carried out quite the way it is nowadays. Prior to 1970 we voted only one year in advance, and there were no such things as mail order ballots. Those of you who survived the parties to the extent that you could crawl out of bed at nine in the morning and attend the business meetings heard somebody said something about the restaurants in each city and then you voted.

One year a Midwestern fan, Earl Kemp, decided to enter a gag bid – for Tijuana. It didn't take a

whole lot of votes to win in those days – 40 to 50 were usually quite sufficient – and when the perpetrator saw how well-received his proposal was, he did a very quick head count, and at the last moment he and his wife both voted for one of his main competitors. It's probably a good thing that he did: Tijuana, complete with its rent-by-the-hour hotel, missed being in the final runoff by a single vote.

[Best Non-Fiction is presented to Michael Whelan's Works of Wonder]

The 1976 Worldcon in Kansas City was billed as “the ultimate Worldcon,” and the proprietors, in the months leading up to it, became positively paranoid that people were going to try to get out of paying. So they announced that along with the normal convention badges that everyone wears, they were going to come up with a unique identification system that could not be replicated in a single weekend – and in the days and weeks leading up to the convention, that became the primary topic of fannish conversation.

Not to keep you in suspense, what it turned out to be was a hospital bracelet with your name imprinted on it ... and now that a dozen years have passed and Ken Keller, the Worldcon chairman, is no longer so sensitive about such things, I think I might as well reveal that a number of fans went to a local hospital, found a septuagenarian lady who was due to be released that Friday, convinced her *not* to take her bracelet off, and managed to get her into every function including the masquerade and Hugo ceremony.

[Best Short Story is presented to Lawrence Watt-Evans for “Why I Left Harry's All-Night Hamburgers”]

Phoenix can be a pretty hot town; it certainly was during the 1978 Worldcon, with the temperature rising to 120 by day and rarely dropping to under 100 at night.

One evening I went out for dinner with the legendary Lou Tabakow. Lou had heard about a fabulous rooftop restaurant not far from the hotel, and nothing would do but that we should go to that one and avoid the crowds. What he didn't know was that this was not a penthouse, but literally a rooftop restaurant, with no screening and no shade – and of course no air conditioning, since it was outside.

We sat down, ordered drinks, and removed our ties before they arrived. Our jackets were gone by the time we got our salads. I had my shoes and socks off long before the main course arrived. Then dignified, white-haired, legendary Lou, who in his time was both a professional writer and a worldcon chairman, looked around before dessert came, saw that we had all male waiters and that no one else was crazy enough to be dining on the roof, and finished this 4-star meal in his underwear, which is my one lasting memory of Iguanacón.

[Best Novelette goes to “Buffalo Gals” by Ursula K. LeGuin]

I remember everyone at the 1983 Baltimore Worldcon telling us they were going to make a profit. I remember everyone at the 1984 Los Angeles Worldcon assuring us there was no way



they could *possibly* make a profit.

I don't know about you, but I feel much more secure knowing where our future fantasists are coming from.

[Best Novella? "Eye for Eye" by Orson Scott Card]

I don't have any stories from Brighton last year. Everyone who went with me is still looking for the Corn Exchange.

So we'd better get on with our major award, the Hugo for Best Novel of the Year.

[And it goes to David Brin's The Uplift War]

There are going to be some very unhappy people tonight, if there aren't already. I think the audience should acknowledge that even making a Hugo ballot, no matter how much they aspire, is something that most people will never do, and give all the nominees one final ovation

[A long standing ovation follows.]

I have been asked to announce that the New Orleans Lagniappe Dance will be held in the Marriott Mardi Gras Ballroom at 11 o'clock, so you don't have to run, you have plenty of time to get there.

I've also been asked to announce that all Hugo winners are due on stage for photographs as soon as the Hugo ceremony is over.


And finally, I've been asked to announce that the Hugo winners are due on stage *now*.

Thank you and good night!



Lots happens in New Orleans ... and around New Year's, what happens is football ...

BIG ORANGE CRUSH



at the

SUGAR BOWL

Charles Williams Jr. & Charles Williams III

On January 1, 1986 the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans was the site of one of college football's most unexpected upsets. It was also the scene of a remarkable display of fan support that surprised the host city, the television audience, and especially the arrogant, favored Miami Hurricanes.

The Tennessee Volunteers were 8-1-2 and #8 in the national rankings. They had already turned in a notable performance in an early September victory against Bo Jackson's then-#1 Auburn Tigers, and then went on to win the Southeastern Conference title for the first time in sixteen years. The SEC title had been won without the services of Quarterback Tony Robinson, who'd been injured against Alabama in October. Instead, Daryl Dickey (son of Doug Dickey, the head coach of the '69 championship team) was the man who had led UT to New Orleans. The Vols were coached by Johnny Majors, UT star in the '50's and lately the man who'd taken the University of Pittsburgh to a National Championship.

The Miami Hurricanes were 10-1 and had beaten many of that year's finest teams, including Oklahoma, who this very same night was playing #1 Penn State in the Orange Bowl. The second-ranked Hurricanes, led by QB Vinny Testaverde, freshman wide receiver Michael Irvin, and defensive stars like Bennie Blades were not impressed by the Vols. The 'Canes dismissed Dickey, running back Jeff Powell, wide receiver Tim McGee, linebacker Kelly Ziegler, and safety Chris White as "lucky" and "overrated".

Nor were UT's stars enough to impress the oddsmakers, who listed the Vols as eight point underdogs.

It would be Johnny Majors' Volunteers against Jimmy Johnson's Hurricanes, and the 'Canes were already being billed as the 1985 National Champions. After all, they had bigger stars, better credentials, and since it was believed that Oklahoma would beat Penn State, Miami would advance to #1 as soon as they brushed aside the Tennessee team. All this made Johnson's

boys extremely cocky. Star running back Alonzo Highsmith remarked that "The only Vols we know are A, E, I, O, and U."

But the Vol fans who streamed into New Orleans could not be ignored. The Hyatt was soon packed with orange-and-white clad Tennesseans, dressed in orange tuxedos and overalls, rattling the building with endless, off-key renditions of the school fight song, *Rocky Top*. They filled parking lots with motor homes and the air with barbecue smoke and whiskey fumes. They spread out all over New Orleans, spending a collective \$4.5 million. Many if not most Vol fans expected to lose the game, but this was New Orleans, *so let's party!*

One elderly UT fan found himself on an Hyatt elevator with a group of Miami fans and noticed one of the Hurricane boosters sporting a button that read "Piss on TN". As the old gentleman exited the elevator he turned and jabbed a finger into the offending button and grinned evilly: "I'm afraid we're gonna have to *whup your ass!*" Only hours before kickoff UT fans were wearing their own buttons: "Vinny Who?" and "Go Vols! Kick 'em in the Testaverde!"

Finally, it was New Year's Day, and as evening came on the Superdome filled to capacity. The first hint of the coming debacle was the color scheme: orange and white. The green and darker orange of Miami were completely lost in the sea of Vol fans. High above the gridiron in a VIP box, Tennessee Senator Al Gore and Congressman John Duncan grinned like fools at the tableau. "We outnumber 'em ten-to-one!" exulted Senator Gore, slurping an orange Crush.

The game began as expected, with the Vols falling for the oldest trick in the book, the fake kick. This set up an easy touchdown as Michael Irvin caught an eighteen-yard pass from Testaverde, and the 'Canes were ahead 7-0 early in the first quarter. The 77,432 in attendance appeared not to be surprised by how well Miami was moving through the Vol defense. No one could guess that this moment was the high-water-mark for the Hurricane offense.

On the first play of the second quarter, Daryl Dickey hit Jeff Smith for six yards and the tying score. *Rocky Top* thundered from the *Pride of the Southland Band* and thousands of delighted Tennesseans. The next several Miami possessions were clumsy and ineffectual, as plays were interrupted by the Vol defense, broken up at the line or batted away downfield. Finally, as Testaverde dropped back to pass, three Vol linemen broke through the Miami defense and own fumble in Miami's end zone for the lead, 14-7. Suddenly desperate, Miami attempted a field goal at the end of the half, and the kick fell short. As the sunned 'Canes left the field for halftime, Vol fans pelted them with packets of granulated sugar.

The third quarter should have demonstrated the character and resiliency of the Miami team. Instead, the Vols continued to pile on, thwarting every clever play Jimmy Johnson's staff could cobble together. Testaverde was accustomed to hurling the pigskin to his choice of several talented receivers, but on this night he was constantly being swarmed by orange-and-white defenders, either smothering his intended targets or simply pounding his ass into the ground. The closeup of his weary face broadcast on national television told the tale; millions of children watching the game learned new words as they lip-read Vinny's frustration and dismay.

While Testaverde sucked Gatorade and combed his hair on the sideline, UT's Sam Henderson found a hole in the Miami line and punched through a one-yard score. Down 21-7, now, Testaverde returned on Miami's next possession and threw the ball to the wrong team. Moments later Jeff Powell took off at Warp Speed, leaving track star Bennie Blades stumbling in his wake.

As the third quarter ended the score was now 28-7. The thousands of fans who had driven or flown from the hills of Tennessee to New Orleans were completely deranged with joy. *Rocky Top* had become a constant, droning background noise, and the screaming din had so confused the Miami team that they could not hear plays being called on the line.

The fourth quarter saw the Vol starters taking a well-deserved rest on the bench, allowing younger players an opportunity to taste the victory that now seemed inevitable. Some starters stayed on the field, such as Chris White, whose late interception would set up the final 6-yard touchdown play by Charles Wilson. Throughout the final quarter, the Hurricanes were never able

to mount any kind of offense, and as the final seconds ticked off and the fireworks exploded into the night sky, some Miami players openly wept in anger and frustration. Daryl Dickey's Vols had overcome the odds and won, 35-7.

Dickey, the mid-season replacement, was chosen the game's Most Valuable Player. Testaverde, who had been expected to lead his team to the National Title, was intercepted four times and sacked by the likes of Dale Jones, Darrin Miller, and Richard Brown, among others seven times, for a total loss of 84 yards.

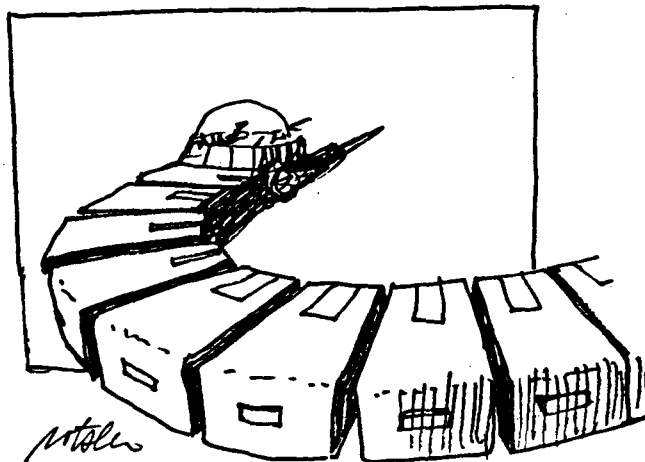
As a result of UT's stunning upset, the Vols rose to #4, the 'Canes sank to #9, and Oklahoma became the 1985 National Champions. Expectations for UT in 1986 were high following the shocker in New Orleans. Some were even talking National Championship, but it was not to be. UT suffered through a 5-6 season in 1988, following decent showings in '86 and '87. They would cycle through a series of great quarterbacks, from Andy Kelly to Heath Shuler to the legendary Peyton Manning. None of these talented men could lead Tennessee to the top of the mountain; it took the leadership of Tee Martin to take the Vols to a 13-0 record and the National Championship in 1998.

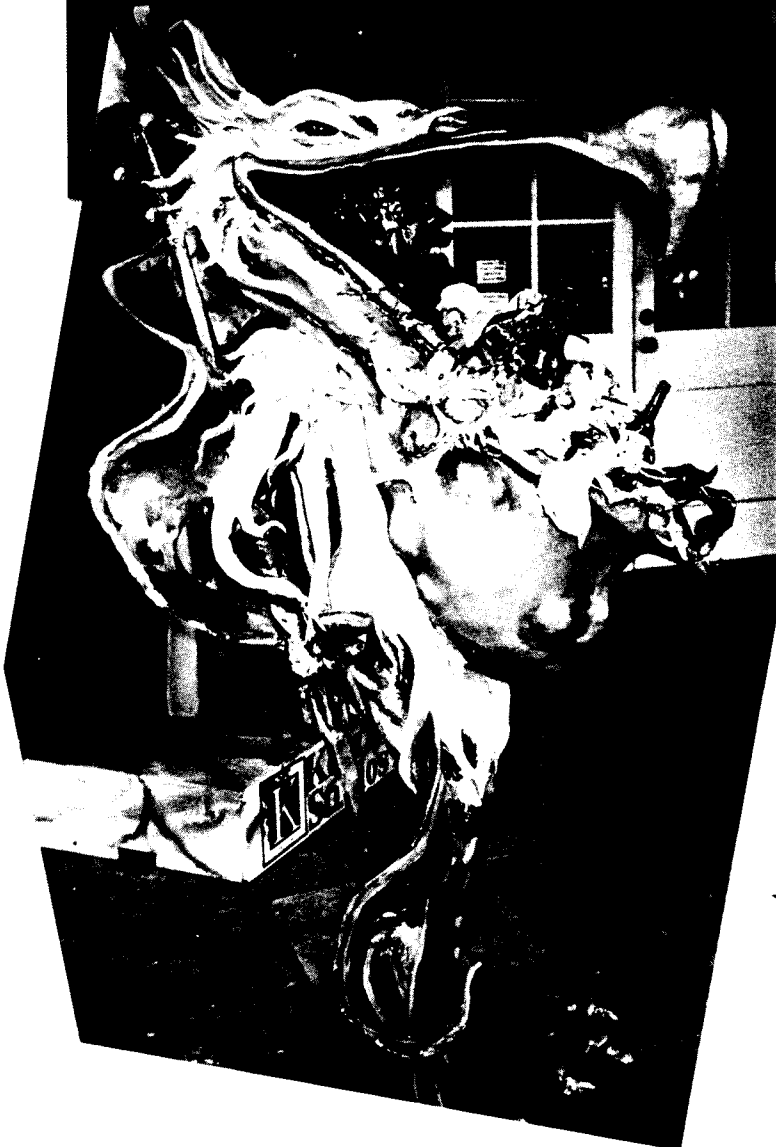
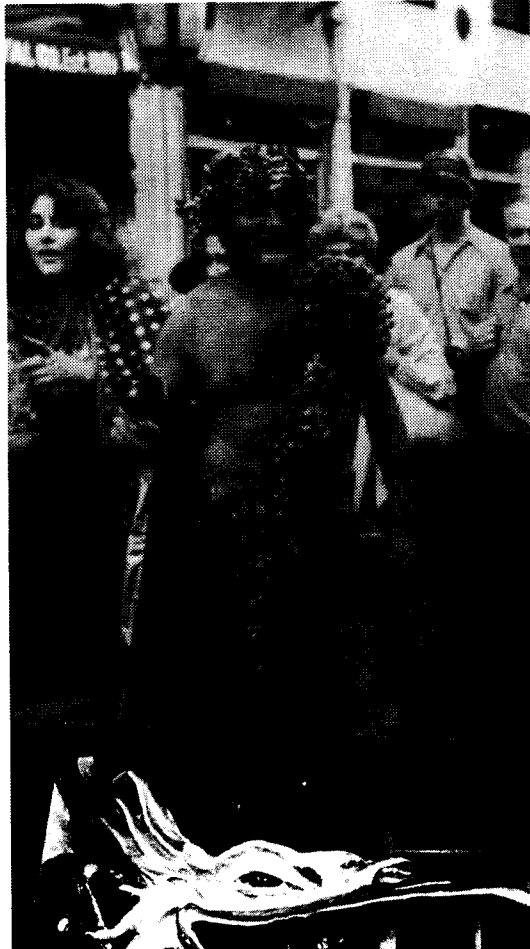
Miami, meanwhile, would rebound dramatically. They won the National Championship in '87, '89, and '9, and came close two other years. But Testaverde, who won the Heisman Trophy in '86, would never taste the sweetness of a championship. Instead, Vinny would go on to a so-so NFL career, playing for at least four different teams. Teammate Michael Irvin would play for the multi-champion Dallas Cowboys, and many other Hurricanes would play for the NFL, as well.

The Vols would send many players over the years to the NFL, some with prolific careers, but hardly anyone from the '85 squad went on to play pro ball. One notable exception was wide receiver Tim McGee, who was with the Cincinnati Bengals for nearly a decade. Daryl Dickey would have a short-lived stint with the San Diego Chargers before turning his attention to coaching.

For all those who were in the Superdome that New Year's night, the 1986 Sugar Bowl was a game of historic proportions. The Miami team learned humility, while the Tennessee team proved that, on any given day, any team can beat any other team, if they are determined, resolute, and lucky.

The fans from Tennessee were drunk with pride. In years to come, enthusiastic fans often told Coach Majors that, other than the birth of their first child, or their wedding day, or their first Christmas memories, that the Sugar Bowl of 1986 was the most exciting experience of their lives.

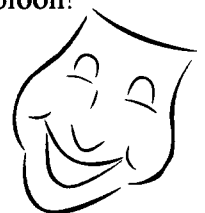
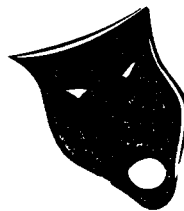




So what made

MARDI GRAS 2001

different and special? **Rosy** was here! Experiencing her first Carnival in New Orleans, **Rose-Marie Donovan** came to town to watch the lunacy first-hand ... and (as above) catch a doubloon!



art by *DONNA BARR*



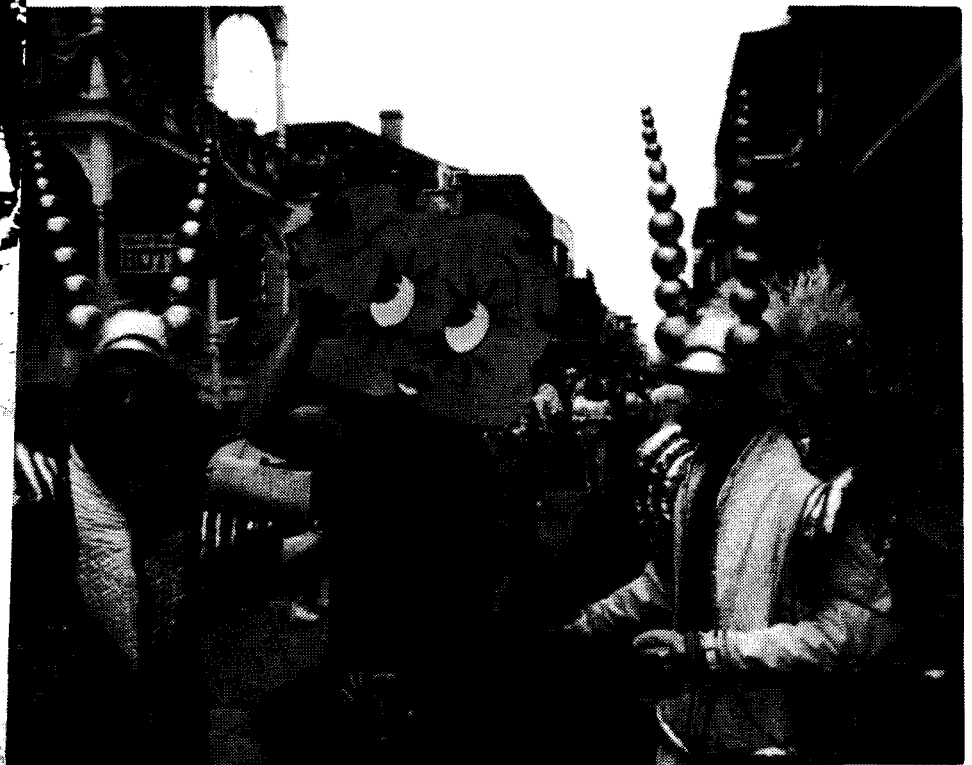
I know what you're thinking: "Sure he's great, but can he make *balloon animals?!?*" (I just found this one.)

ॐ ॐ ॐ

I don't care what anyone says, there is no Mardi Gras like a *New Orleans* Mardi Gras.

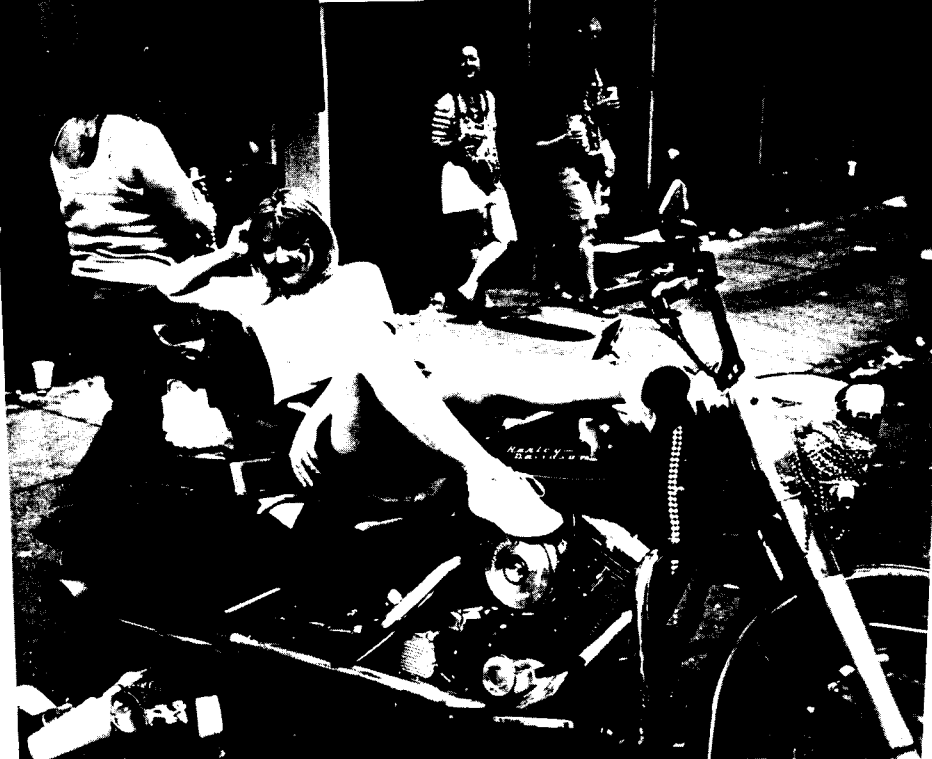
Except maybe Rio's Carnival and Venice's Carnevale, of course, but I would defy even those world-renowned bacchanalae to match the Easy's *democratic spirit* when it comes to the days before Lent.

For the celebration and the lunacy belong to everyone. The wealthy and well-blooded have their Carnival Balls. The poor and the tourist have the streets. Everyone abandons their workaday identities, puts on a crazy costume ... and reveals their true selves. It's the spirit of the day.



Above: *Tyger, tyger, burning bright ...* and Betty Boop hits the street. Opposite: ladies of the day.

LADIES of the
MARDI GRAS





Left: Local TV
dude **Frank Davis**
interviews
Floridian **Rosy** about
hanging chads.



Above: he does better on a
rope than I do on the street.

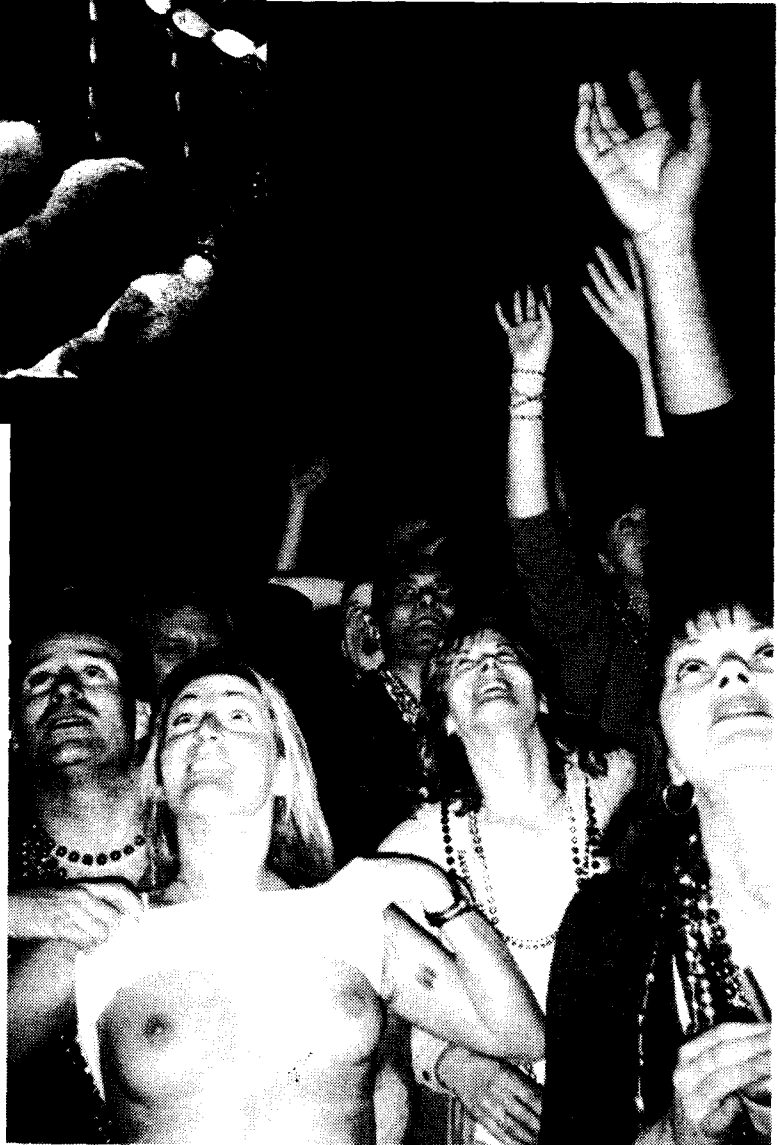
Left: King Zulu rides!





77

If these folks seem rapt – and unwrapped – by the event, what do you expect? Carnival *is* a religious holiday! Mardi Gras is for everyone, so hold **February 12, 2002** open!



COMING OUR WAY

CHOWING DOWN at Mandina's during Gras were Alabamans **Erin Stambaugh** and our artist pal **Randy Cleary**.



Hitting the NOLA streets before Carnival were **Hank Reinhardt** and **Toni Weisskopf** ...



... and right after Chicon, who should visit the grave (and statues) of Confederate general P.G.T. Beauregard but **Inge** and **Tony Glass**.

Ultimate "Yat" Joey Grillot pitches woo – the New Orleans way!



SFPA Brother Gary Brown and GHLIII prepare to sup in West Palm Beach, Florida. Gary isn't an Orleanian.

Laura Modine (right) doesn't live in New Orleans, either, but who cares?



*The Challenger
Tribute –
Annie Hebert
Winston*



A hundred stories could exalt the sweetness and beauty of New Orleans' beloved **Annie Hebert Winston**, but somehow they don't get across what **Challenger** means to convey with this tribute.

I could say that Annie joined New Orleans fandom when she was 17, and aver with complete seriousness that, considering her happy youthful spirit, this could only have been two or three years ago.

I could describe for the ten-thousandth time how she and Linda Krawecke sashayed through MidAmeriCon, leaving it awestruck in their wake, but that was 1976, and 25 years ago, Annie could not possibly have been more than a mere gleam in her parents' eyes. Remember that youthful spirit I mentioned before.

I could tell the story in which she dragged me to a wedding in an outlying parish and got me so lost I thought I'd have to rent an apartment there. But that would be mean, and if there is one term that sure never be used in the same breath as Annie's name, "mean" is it.

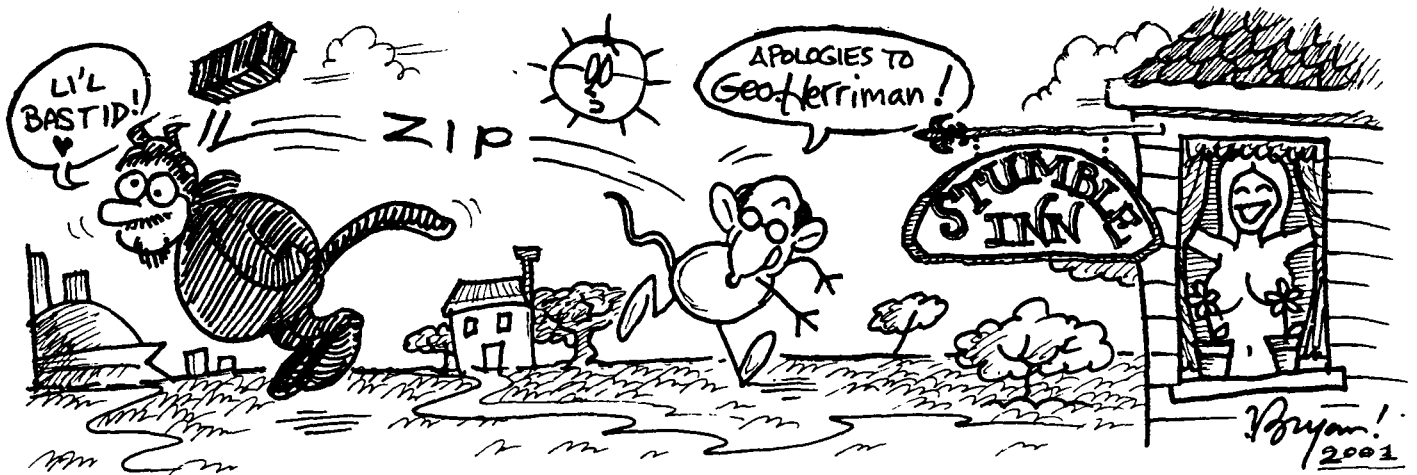
Husband Justin with Annie at Mardi Gras

I could thank her for putting me up when I staggered bruised and bloodied back to New Orleans after my divorce. I could praise her for civilizing Justin Winston, whom she married in the mid-'80s, and for putting up with his fannish pals ever since – which was easy, since they're her friends, too.

Who *isn't* Annie Hebert's friend? Who *isn't* invited to her home every April to decorate Easter eggs, every Halloween to trade spook stories, every January 1st to hail in the New Year?

No one *isn't* ... the mark of a truly royal lady. Hail Annie, Empress of the Galaxy, and of Earth, Queen!





Yes, "The Stumble Inn" was a comic strip by George Herriman, creator of "Krazy Kat". It was also the name given the home of Dennis Dolbear in those dear days when ... well, we'll let Dennis tell the story. Stories, actually:

TALES FROM THE STUMBLE INN

Dennis Dolbear

I have hosted many people in my house in New Orleans. Several times I've opened my pad on Betz Avenue for "Gras Cons" over Mardi Gras weekends, and later, the Jazz Festival brought many great people to my door. And there were other times, other guests.

There was Professor Martina Klicperova ... but this is not the place to speak of religious experiences. She was sent to me, and to New Orleans fandom, by a student of hers, the late, great, purple-haired wonder Zetta Dillie. Most of the time people pass through your life like ships in the night, but every now and then they leave you something really enduring ... and our friendship with her is such a gem. We shall speak of her at another time.

Then there were the Chicago girls - owners and staff of Leo's Lunchroom, which is located at 1807 W. Division Street in Chicago. My friend Chuck Wirstom, a student at the Art Institute, called me one year from up there shortly before the Jazz Festival. "Dennis," said he, "I need a favor." "Ask and you shall receive,"

I replied.

"Some friends of mine, four unattached young women who run a restaurant in Chicago, are driving down in a van for Jazz Fest. I'm going to ask you to let them use your shower. They can sleep in the van." I replied, "If you think four unattached young women are going to sleep in a van at my house ..."

Came the day when the van pulled up to my house. They piled out one by one. Donna wore a black leather miniskirt, black leather jacket, black leather boots. As an amateur chef, and not knowing just who I was talking to. I undertook to educate them in some of the finer ways of French cuisine. They were very sweet and didn't say anything as I proclaimed my cooking expertise.

On subsequent trips to Chicago, I've gone to Leo's Lunchroom. At 1807 W. Division, either you take a cab from the Loop or you walk through Cabrini Green, the worst housing development in the world (cf. Candyman) to get there. It is worth the journey. It is worth several such journeys. Leo's Lunchroom is beyond doubt the funkier establishment known. It's bestrewn with old

socialist newspapers and other indicia of the student / artist / boho area that sustains its clientele.

You know how such areas are. Sure, it's a slum, but it's *cheap*. Artists, intellectuals, poets move in, artists of course needing a lot of space – then the galleries come in for the artists, then come the funky eateries, and then suddenly the yuppies discover that this is really a great place to live. They can re-do some of the places and make them look beautiful. So the developers buy everything, renovate everything, and now the artists can't afford their space anymore, and they have to move. It happens everywhere.

Anyway, Leo's Lunchroom ... and the *food*. I remember Donna busily at work in their tiny kitchen, surrounded by steam and the heavenly smell of frying eggs, preparing an omelette for me that was well worth killing the population of a good-sized Venezuelan village. And these were the people whom I'd presumed to lecture about cooking! Boy, did I show my ass! But it was the best omelette I ever had.

But back to their visit – it was exceptionally enjoyable, the ladies were wondrously charming. On the last day, Vern Clark, fellow Fabulous Furry Fan Bro, and I decided to forego the last day of the Jazzfest in favor of showing the Leo's Ladies around the town. We went from bookstore to used record shop, with occasional stops at funky bars of our acquaintance and, of course, lunch at the Hummingbird Grill, located at what was then the heart of New Orleans' Skid Row district, and a New Orleans legend in itself – 24 hours a day, a greasy spoon with great diner food, and an ambience that would have to be experience to be believed – at any night, particularly during the carnival ball season, you might find transients, winos, and whores rubbing elbows with formally-dressed rich folk coming from some exclusive Mardi Gras ball – and no one minding at all, which must say something about this city.

Anyhow, after we finished at the Bird we moved to the Quarter, which wasn't as crowded as normal – so many people were at the Fest for the last day. We were lounging at Record Ron's shop – the ladies were making a few last purchases before getting ready to depart – when Jerry Brock, noted local music figure and co-founder of

WWOZ, the famous local blues & jazz radio station (*where for years, Justin Winston, a.k.a. Faruk von Turk, did a thoroughly demented radio show – the Oriental Fox Trot Museum – aided and abetted by Dolbear, John Guidry, and Ye Ed, amongst many others--GHLIII*) mentioned to me that he had two *performer's passes* to the Festival, that he wasn't going to use--did I know anyone who might like them for free? I sure did, I said, holding out my hand. And a few minutes later I was slapping Vernski on the back and telling him that good deeds do have their reward – with these passes we didn't have to wait in line or walk from a far-distant parking space – we'd drive right up, practically onto the grounds themselves. Bidding a tearful farewell to the staff of Leo's, we tore over to the Fair Grounds.¹

And we got there for the last three or four sets, seeing Fats Domino, Dr., John, the Fabulous Thunderbirds, and snatches of other acts – they have about nine or ten going simultaneously – and particularly some of a fine bluesman whose name I've unfortunately forgotten, who did an excellent mixture of classics and original compositions. At this point he was doing Mississippi John Hurt's "Hoodoo Woman":

- *She got the Mojo Hand
She got the john de ConQueroo
Woo-Wee---
When she gets that mojo working,
Then my black stuff just won't stay still.*

Class Discussion Questions

1. What do you think Mississippi John Hurt means when he refers to his "black stuff"?
2. Why won't it stay still?

¹Chuck Wirstrom told me later the girls didn't know whether to take up a collection to get me and Vern to move to Chicago or simply move to NO themselves. As Sandy, the leader put it, "there really is such a think as Southern hospitality." (*Ted White, N.B.--GHLIII*)

I don't know if the Hospitality Exchange still exists in these days of the Internet, but in the early '90s, it provided me with some wondrous experiences. I was traveling a bit in those days, so for a small fee, I joined a club and got a guidebook listing people in other cities who were willing to host other club members. It was an interconnected group of people willing to lend you their couches. Of course, you had to host visitors in return, so being in New Orleans, I probably hosted more visitors than anywhere else.

But none like *Stardancer*, and her dance collective from San Francisco – who were also a crew of *nudists*. That's a whole 'nother story there! 44 years old and a body any teenager would envy. JoAnn Montalbano, a long-time New Orleans fan and friend, came over while they were ensconced in my record room. She fixed me with that look in her eyes. "Well, Dennis," she said, "I see that you're being affected by *other considerations*" – as *Stardancer* walked *stark naked* through the room – "but let me tell you, they're going back to California, and you're going to be stuck in Louisiana with *me* for the rest of your life!"

THE SATURN BAR

Through the Hospitality Exchange I had a group come in from Holland, traveling in America shooting advertisements for boots. Photographers ... and *models!* When I met them out in front of my house, one incredibly beautiful girl got out of the car, and I complimented her, saying, "You're everything I'd expect a model to be!" She scoffed, "But I'm not *ze* model, I'm *ze* hairdresser!" And out came this other girl, who made the first one look like *H. Ross Perot*. These are the kind of people that, not only am I not allowed to date, I'm not allowed to *look at*. But they were nice, nice people.

The model's boyfriend was the camera guy, named Theo. He could have been a model himself. "Okay," said he, "we want to hear some New Orleans music." I am a music buff – guests often slept in my "roomful of records" – so I was more than happy to oblige. Our first stop was the famous Maple Leaf Bar, where Kermit Ruffin and the Barbecue Swingers were playing. The music was nice but nothing particular was *happening*. If

I could have brought them to a James Booker or Exuma concert, they would have known what a hot night in New Orleans was like!

So afterwards, we cruised about the city, and they asked, "Let us go to a really *fonky* bar." Okay by me! Off we went ... to the **Saturn Bar**.

The Saturn Bar is on St. Claude Avenue, in New Orleans' famous Ninth Ward – which natives pronounce "Nint' Waw'd". It used to be a classic working man's neighborhood, but it's going to seed now. The bar has a ringed Saturn in neon in its window. Inside – it looks like somebody's garage. What that's stuff piled in the corner? Treasure? No – *junk*. The decor looks like they ran around the neighborhood for years picking stuff off trash piles. "Look, there's a chair that still has most of its stuffing; so what if it's only got three legs?" Indeed – so what if the chair I'm sitting on has stacked phone books for the fourth leg? I can still sit on it ... after a fashion!

A miniature Statue of Liberty stands at the end of the bar. Photos of customers and events from the 1960's crowd the walls ... along with murals by Dany Frolich's uncle. Dany always considered this guy the source of his talent, talent which made him the dominant Mardi Gras artist in the last half of the 20th century. The paintings are *weird*: eyeballs riding motorcycles and shit like that. Dany's uncle never took LSD – I don't think he needed to. The tabs responsible for those paintings were *bar* tabs. Whenever he ran up a big enough bar tab, he'd do a painting to pay it off.

Always something interesting. That's the Saturn Bar.

But that night it wasn't so much what was there, as what went on. When the Dutch people and I entered, there was a crowd gathered in the center of the room ... all looking *in*. Suddenly, two *bare female legs in cowboy boots* poked *straight up* from the crowd, unfolded and opened in a *V* ... and everybody oohed and ahhed. Then the owner of the legs rose and showed herself.

Blonde, very pale, slender as a willow ... had *Galadriel* been a white trash stripper, this is what she would have looked like. She was *buck naked* – we'd walked into the middle of a *bachelor party!*

The bachelor in question was next to the bar ... in *chains*. His hands were chained behind him, his legs were chained to the ground, and in

Sonja Blue and the writer of some of the goriest horror stories ever, saw Bessie's sculptures, and said, "I'm really freaked out by those things."

Lotta juju in this stuff. Lotta *bad* juju.

Jazz Fest was on Friday and on Saturday, and it was on Saturday night that *it* came. Supposedly Bessie and Judy had spent part of the day in the French Quarter, where a weird Creole guy riding a bicycle came up to Bessie as they were walking down the street. Judy didn't hear it exactly, but his words affected Bessie profoundly. Somehow he *knew* that she was an artist. He told her something to the effect that she had tapped into *the other world*. She said something odd to Judy: that she knew this person was not a human being, but something supernatural in human guise. When I heard that at the time, of course, I blew it off. "That's the most ridiculous shit I've ever heard," I said. Idiot!

The rest of us had a wonderful day at the Fest, and made it back to the house just before a classic Olympian New Orleans thunderstorm, a storm so bad that we were isolated in the house. It ripped leaves and twigs from the trees. There was street flooding. We certainly didn't want to drive.

It was about 10:30 or 11 at night. Skip and Rusty were in my back room, which they and Vern had turned into a combination toxic waste dump and book fair. All had been spending as much as they could on books and had stacks and boxes of them everywhere. In the front Vern and I were doing our electronic music number. We had candles burning in the gloom, and Klaus Schultz electronic music booming and echoing through the house. Vern and Rusty were shaking *shok-shoks*, long vanilla or cocoa-bean pods, that would make a spooky *shishing* sound when you shook them. Considering the spirits that were around at this time, that was not a good idea. But we were *white*; we knew there was no such thing as ghosts and spirits, right? *Idiots!*

Bessie was sitting outside, on the kitchen stoop, underneath the awnings, eating an orange. I asked her how she was and she said, "Oh, fine," and I left her be. Half an hour later, I went outside again, and all I found were the orange pips. It was raining like a motherfucker, and the lights were off in the record room where she'd been sleeping. I figured she'd gone to bed. Later, I went to bed.

When I woke up, Judy was talking

frantically on the phone. To the police. She was giving them Bessie's description. Bessie was not in the record room, or in front of the house, or anywhere. She had *disappeared*.

Vern and I got into the car and cruised the neighborhood. We thought she had wandered off in the thunderstorm and gotten confused. Maybe hid under an overhang of a house. We drove all over ... and there was no sign of her. We were all intensely concerned.

She never turned up. Later that day – it was her birthday – her kids called, and I tried to cover up for the fact that I'd lost their mother. Judy stayed an extra day helping us look, then took a plane back to Tennessee.

When Judy got to Alcoa, she found that Bessie had been discovered ... at home. On Sunday morning – less than 12 hours after I had seen her in New Orleans – her neighbors had found her on her front porch, rocking back and forth, apparently catatonic. That could be explained – she hadn't taken her insulin. But it was what she kept saying ...

"The thunder did it," she said. "*The thunder did it.*"

When she could talk coherently, Bessie claimed that, in the middle of that storm, while Vern and I listened to music and the rest of the house slept, she was *taken up* from my yard by a *cow-like beast with horns, and wings*. She was taken up into the sky, where her sculptures were fighting against demons, and transported through the sky back to her porch on Alcoa, Tennessee. *The thunder did it.*

Needless to say, over at the Inn, we were pretty spooked—so spooked that Nancy actually moved out temporarily, saying she couldn't take the vibrations and just the possibility that whatever had happened that night might happen again.

But Burke and I, heirs of the Classic Greco-Roman tradition of rationality and science, made of sterner – or maybe just slower – stuff, decided we'd investigate and find out exactly what had happen, and get to the bottom of this "mystery." And we came up with the results described above.

"All right – I've given you a carbon of our list here – every possibility of transportation – planes, trans automobiles – and that last item. You checked the airport?"

"Right," Rusty replied. "No way. No money, no one by her name or description, and no flight that would have made it, as well as no way to get to N.O.'s airport."

"Bus lines – negative. Trains – hell, she'd still be on the train, two weeks later. If she's walked to the Interstate – some miles in a storm – and caught the first big rig headed north – and if he was going to her home town –"

"Yeah, like a truck driver is going to pick up a insulin-shocked elderly black lady? I'd classify that as impossible."

"Correct. Now if she'd caught a cab and hired A.J. Foyt as a driver – but I've got proof Foyt was elsewhere that weekend, preparing for the Indy 500.

"That leaves only one possibility," I said to Rusty, trying to avoid looking at the remaining item on the list.

"Yeah, " Rusty said slowly, forcing himself to look at that list line too. "Remember what Conan Doyle said about possibilities? When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains..."

"...no matter *how* improbable...."

"*Must be the truth.*" And we looked at that last line:

THE THUNDER DID IT.

I didn't want to say anything, didn't even want to think about the implications of this nightmarish episode. Finally Rusty broke the impasse, got up and came back a moment later with two glasses and a bottle of Jameson's Irish Whiskey. He poured me a glass, and said, "Now drink that down real quick." I knocked it back, and Rusty poured again. "This time sip it slowly." I did so. He picked up both our glasses and said, "We will never again discuss or even *think* about this matter."

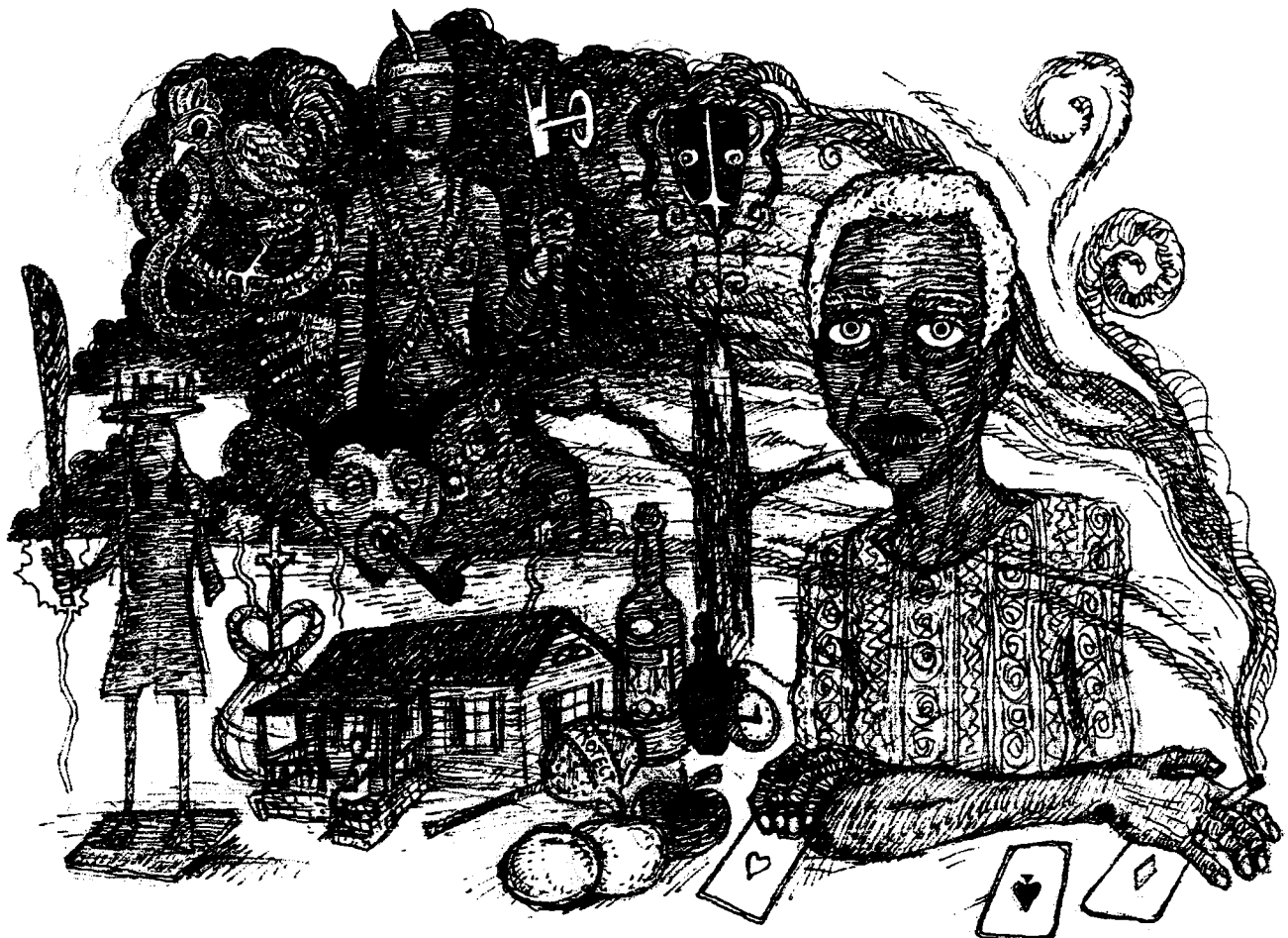
I spent years obeying his advice. I was happier for it. Then who should come onto 60 Minutes one fateful evening ... but a story about a New York art dealer who was systematically ripping off African-American artists. Bessie was one of them. Seeing her reminded me of the whole story. It was like the Pit had opened up before me and I pitched headlong into it ...a nightmare version of Proust going into that goddam bakery shop.

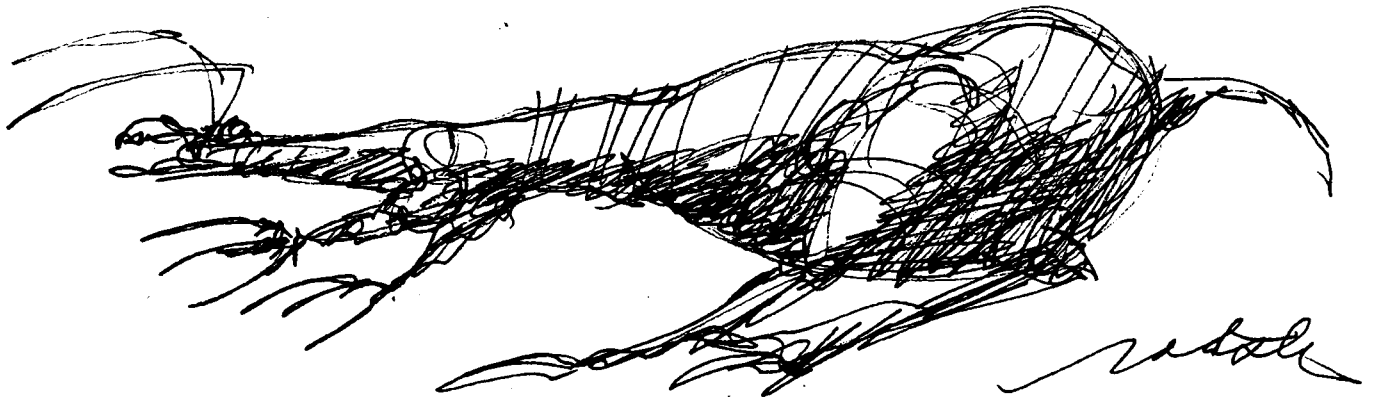
How did she do it? How did she travel from my front lawn to Tennessee overnight? How? *How?*

I think we know. And until we hear a better explanation, it's the answer I must believe.

The thunder did it.

Pass the Jameson's.





EPISTLES

WAHFle Irony ... Sheryl (not Sheila) Birkhead, Richard Brandt, Brad Foster, Gary Glasser (surely not the guy I went to college with), Robert Lichtman, Charles Mohapel, J. Palmer, Joy Smith, Rev. Randall Tin-ear, Charlie Williams, and the members of the mighty Southern Fandom Press Alliance!

Hey, lookit here ... Harry Warner is back! The greatest letterhack of all returns in style to the pages of Challenger – and in triplicate! We lead off this lettercol with Harry's response to Chall #11 ...

Harry B. Warner, Jr.
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I'm very sorry I've been silent so long. I've been able to write three-paragraph LOCs on small clubzines and perzines like *Dasfax*. But for almost a year I've had extreme trouble coping with large fanzines. I've slipped pretty badly both physically and mentally and I'm feeling my age badly. I'm pretty sure I'll be out of the LOC business before much longer. Nobody else in fandom who is 78 or older writes LOCs of any length with any regularity. I would ideally like to retire from the pastime when I've finally succeeded in LOCcing everything that has arrived during the past year. But I can't believe I'll ever accomplish this. Chances are, something in a fanzine will anger me so much one of these days that I'll decide this is it and go looking for Joel Nydahl.

Meanwhile, I'm going to try to make some remarks on the past three **Challengers**. I do appreciate your kindness in sending them with no accompanying threats or complaints about my silence. It is particularly bad that I didn't at least write you a few lines of

congratulations on your marriage intentions. I hope the two of you will live happily ever after.

Apparently, the 11th issue is the earliest one I didn't write about. I read it so long ago that I had to re-read much of it in order to write this letter, because I'd forgotten its contents. The articles about court experiences were quite interesting because I had actually enjoyed the years in which I covered circuit court for the newspapers here. I never got called for jury duty, and I suppose I'm safe by now; I'm pretty sure there is an upper age limit for this purpose in Maryland. If I'm wrong and I'm called, I could probably get off by telling the truth about my bad habit of falling asleep whenever I just sit around without any real bodily movements or conversation.

I think it's in this issue that you comment about how we should respect the tradition of the American frontiersman's need for and use of his gun. I've become convinced that it would be possible to reduce radically the gun problem by restricting firearms to the same capabilities as those the frontiersmen used. No automatic weapons, no semi-automatic weapons, no telescopic sights, no revolvers, just rifles and pistols that needed to be re-loaded by hand. This would make it quite difficult for an enraged person to go on a killing spree in a post office or a school and would still allow anyone to have a gun for self-protection. Only law enforcement officers and members of the armed forces would retain today's

awful potential in firepower. Ammunition manufacturers would be required to manufacture only ammunition for the frontier-type firearms, which would use a calibre different from any present-day guns.

It hurt to read again Joe Mayhew's article, which I enjoyed when I first read it so many months ago. It's very sad that so talented a person with both words and drawings should be lost to us three decades before the normal lifespan.

I admire Charlotte and Jerry Proctor's ability to write lightheartedly about their miscalculation of what Y2K would do. Before the end of 1999, I was amazed to read in the newspapers of what this or that local person was doing to stock up on non-perishables, in some cases accompanied by photographs of the stuff jamming the person's garage. Didn't those people realize that a genuine universal breakdown at the start of 2000 would have led to widespread looting – and many newspaper readers would head straight for their accumulation to help themselves? It also seems strange that the Proctors didn't invest in something useful either in case of a breakdown or if all went well at the stroke of 12: a gasoline generator capable of keeping the household appliances in operation. I would have long ago gotten one if my ineptitude with anything mechanical wouldn't lead to my blowing up my house if a long power failure began.



It's easy to understand why Hitler got a worse press than Stalin and Mao during and after World War II. American troops and civilians got into Germany and its satellites in large quantities and saw for themselves the atrocity evidence and acquired many documents. Russia and China had only occasional visitation by the Allied powers and anyone who visited those lands was barred from the bad stuff or talking to civilians freely. However, there is no excuse for this situation later in the century, particularly in the case of Russia, and I can only think it

is this way because too many people in the media and literary circles are unreconstructed communists who don't want to put communism in a bad light.

That could well be so, but I believe it's also because our people regard the war against Communism as won, and its sins as passe. The west has won a significant victory over Communism by economic – and moral – means, not only by outstripping the USSR in arms spending, but by providing public proof of the superiority of our system. Thanks to the global communications net, the Reds couldn't hide the symbols of our success – blue jeans and washing machines – from their people. Their socialist systems could not provide enough creature comforts to keep them happy, and their much-feared tyranny was just not powerful enough to keep them cowed. Of course, China is another story: it wasn't the goodies of our society that their people wanted to emulate, but the Good. And their government's totalitarianism was unfortunately adequate to the task of crushing freedom's cause. (For now. Only for now.)

I share Kay McCutcheon's attitude about school sports. I think students get enough exercise in their mad dashes from one classroom to another every 45 minutes to make gym unnecessary. Team sports could be arranged by parents and alumni after the manner of Little League. I went to a Catholic elementary school during boyhood. Every so often we were invited to stand beside our desks and do simple arm-swinging and bending instead of being sentenced to a gym session. The school didn't have a gym, for that matter.

Mike Resnick held my interest with his long essay on good and bad places to eat in faraway places, even though my tastes run to the simplest foods in small quantities. However, I did wonder at his dining in Africa on certain birds and animals peculiar to that continent. Even if they aren't on the endangered species list now, isn't it possible that killing them for the tourist trade may shorten the number of years until they do become endangered?

The above leaves a great many things unmentioned on in this issue, but I must move forward to the one that is only a half-year old ...

And some LOCs on Chall #12 ...

Terry Jeeves
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Very many thanks for the massive issue of **Challenger** [#12] – a real tour de force – and mailed in the U.K., how come?

Courtesy Sandra Bond.

I liked the artwork, especially the cover – a

I liked the artwork, especially the cover – a point here on page 79 you describe how you cut some stencils and say you never heard of anyone else doing it that way. Were you joking? That was how almost all fanzines were illoed in the early days – the only difference being we used a stylus instead of a pair of scissors. I still have my set of assorted cutting tools.

The uniqueness of that illo, and others I ran in the early seventies, was how I came up with the original drawing – traced it from a photographic negative projected on an enlarger. If I have space, I'll run another example of the technique – which indeed I've never seen outside of the GHLIII Press.

I liked the piece on [Confederate] flags even though battles and history are not usually my bag. But the three (violent) vignettes were over my head; I didn't see the point of them. Your own account of a gunman was much more gripping – and a warning of the harm dogooders can unwittingly cause.

"Do-gooders," like their counterparts suffering from the "Hang 'em high!" mentality, need to choose their projects with care. Perhaps the world would have been better off had Joel Durham not been given "freedom" within the prison. Certainly there was no reason to execute Karla Faye Tucker. Both sides of the capital punishment divide need less absolutism in their ideas, and a liberating dose of common sense.

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[*On Challenger #12:*] I'll race ahead of this issue, and congratulate you on your engagement. There's never a better thing that you can do than spend your life with the one you love. Yvonne and I will celebrate our 18th wedding anniversary next May.

As we all well know by now, George Dubya is now the president, already overturning every executive decision Bill Clinton made over the last few weeks, and announcing that most of the general policies made over the last eight years will be turned around 180 degrees. There's going to be a lot of upset applecarts. My condolences to the American public, and to the rest of the world, as it looks like America will once again become isolationist. Al Gore will look like Jack Kennedy in four years ...

Three and a half!

I'm not sure what it is about society these days that is creating children with the mindset of mass murderers. Is it a desensitization to death through movies, television and video games? I'm not sure; there are both sides to consider. I still wonder at how the

dozens of kids who grab dad's gun and shoot up their schools, sometimes without a plan and with just desperation and frustration driving them, and often with some of the sickest plans you'd never think a kid could come up with. There's a lack of conscience, as you've said here, plus a lack of thought, a lack of care and an empty head. I guess I expect some people like this, but there seems to be *so many* ...

My guess might sound strange, coming from a liberal, but I'd say the shooters were paranoid, criminal minds, willing to forget their socialization and just follow their impulses, no matter how sick or sadistic.

Robert Sirignano's psycho supervisors remind me of some stories Harry Andruschak has told in the past. The U.S. post office is a giant asylum, and the inmates are in charge. Yvonne has worked for Canada Post in the past, but in the offices, not in the sorting plants. She helped to implement the letter-and-number postal codes across the country, and especially in Quebec. Is the P.O. so dull and boring, it turns people around the corner mentally?

I've yet to read the Harry Potter books, but I can't explain the thinking of people who want the books banned because they promote witchcraft, as if that ever existed. Today's kids can write computer programs in their sleep, so they're smart enough to know that the books are fiction, that witchcraft, in either version, the Salem or Harry Potter varieties, do not exist. Joanne Rowling's books are entertaining adventures that are bringing children back to reading, and perhaps giving them a dose of the gosh-wow we used to enjoy ourselves. As such, they can't possibly be bad. Cheers to Ms. Rowling for not only bringing back the gift of reading, but by showing that someone can still bring themselves up from the brink of poverty with their imaginations, and some luck.

Religious objection to Harry Potter's witchcraft wouldn't make much sense – there's no mention of Satanism!

Angola in 2006! Now there's a bid I can back! It's not far away [*140 miles from my front door*], there's always a room, and because we'd be in a prison, there'd be less chance of missing your friends. It's a lot closer to me than L.A. ... Bring it on! Fans are literate, so we know what a *sentence* is ...

I recognize the name of Cara Sherman, for I came up to general fandom the same way she did, through *Star Trek*. In the early '80s, in my neofannish days, I tried writing fanfic for various *Trekzines*, so I might have sent some stories to her. I can't call *Trek* and its fandom anathema, for it encourages creativity, activity and that sensawunda we remember, the same as the fandom we now enjoy, but just not to the same degree. We all find our paths .

Steve Green
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Your portrait of the final days of Joel Durham made for disquieting reading, but fails to shake off my gut abhorrence of capital punishment. Britain still retains the death penalty for selected crimes (treason, arson in shipyards), but it's a legal anachronism with as much chance of enforcement as the by-laws demanding all taxis carry a bale of hay for the horse.

Thankfully, Ann and I live in a less violent society, or at least one in which that violence does not normally involve guns. (There was widespread amusement here at the U.S. TV report last year which claimed the U.K. stats for violent crime were much higher than the U.S. figures - so long as all offenses involving guns were taken out of the equation.)

Guns certainly didn't precipitate Durham's violence. He used them in his fatal crimes, but also pipe-bombed a house, maiming a woman in the process, and beat a man's head in with a ball peen hammer. The violent seize whatever tool is available; guns are simply most efficient.

Harry B. Warner, Jr. [On Chall #12]

I think "Lovecraft's Dick" mixes the creator and creations too badly. L. Sprague deCamp ruined a carefully researched and accurate biography of H.P. Lovecraft by bitching about the ways in which the writer's way of life and thinking differed from his own, and the people who revere the writings of Philip K. Dick seem to be as interested in him as a person as in his work. We can lament or glory in the fact that this or that author was an unpleasant person or was heroic in his personal life but it's hardly fair to examine his fiction for these characteristics, approve the elements that we consider

socially acceptable and say nasty things about the person for things he put into his fiction. The fiction may be made up of his thinking and personality but it may also be evidence that he thought this or that plot element or incident would persuade an editor to buy it.

Just about the time I read Richard Dengrove's latest Faust essay, I acquired another musical work based on that gentleman (Faust, not Richard). It is **Doktor Faust**, an opera by Busoni. I have other Faust compositions by such as Mahler, Schumann, Boito, Liszt, Gounod, Wagner, Berlioz and probably several others I've forgotten for the moment. Busoni's differs in two ways from the others. It shows Faust as magician, something Richard writes about, and it gives him a different fate. He either goes to Hell or is saved for Heaven by Gretchen in the other compositions, but in this one he dies and immediately is transformed into a 12-year-old boy who walks away to goodness knows what sort of fate.

Having wasted my life, I know pitifully little about classical music, and know only the most famous theme from the most famous Faust - Gretchen's rather martial-sounding aria, if that's what it is. But that I love. Can you tell us something about it?

I've always been careful not to bother celebrities unless circumstances force it. I met quite a few of the things during my journalism years but I never asked for an interview unless prodded by a boss. The only times I've asked an author for autograph were when an author came to the newspaper office to present me with a review copy of his new book and I sensed he was waiting for me to ask him. My only regret involves the time the great pianist, Artur Schnabel, came to Hagerstown to play a recital. I later learned that he had sat all afternoon in his hotel room with no visitors and he would have been supremely happy to have had me spend several hours with him to break the monotony.

It was a major joy to find your article on the encounter with the astronauts. I could forget all my vision problems if all fanzines were produced with [legible] typewriter and mimeo. Curiously, I was having a slightly related problem at about the same time as your mixed emotions about these astronauts. I was fan guest of honor at the first worldcon in Boston. I wanted to devote my banquet talk to the need for fandom and prodom to support the space program, which had a great many critics in the science fiction world, as it did in mundania. But I was half-afraid to do so. My previous experiences in public speaking had been before guaranteed friendly audiences on non-controversial matters. But I sensed that feelings about the space program might be strong enough to result in my getting heckled during that speech and I didn't think my nerves and intellect would enable me to survive in an honorable



and competent manner.

Before leaving, I wrote the speech I wanted to make, but also prepared another on a completely safe topic, the parallel between the movies and science fiction in their similar date of coming into popularity, the radical change that struck both of them almost simultaneously with the first prozines and the first sound films, and the fact that they were just about the only art forms young enough that we could see people around from the start and the latest generation of creators. Until the morning of the talk, I didn't know which I would use. Somehow I got up the courage to use the space program theme and I didn't hear any disapproving noises much less heckling.

It is sad to re-read the Ken Cheslin LOC in this issue. However, I can take some solace in the fact that a good fan like him was spared extended and painful illness. I hope I go all at once just like him.

I was happy to find *Spacewarp* among the fanzines reviewed in this issue. Alas, Art Rapp is either unable or unwilling to continue its publication for the time being. I'm sure many fans assume it ceased publication decades ago, but he continued to produce fine issues in SAPS until a short time ago.

I have no reservations about Mike Resnick's adventures in France as narrated in this issue. Although some of the prices quoted are staggering, I'm almost inured to such things by now. Just recently I learned that many of the rooms at the New York City YMCA cost more than \$100 per day. A year ago, several ballplayers on arrival at the Tokyo airport decided to take a cab into the city. The fare was \$250. I won't go into my reactions to the recent changes in postage rates for letters to Canada and England.

Ideally, the cost problem for mailing fanzines across oceans would consist of one devoted fan in each nation who would accept just one copy of a fanzine meant for distribution in his land, then run off enough copies for the purpose and receive compensation for his expenses from the publisher, who would be spared the huge bill involved in either mailing individual copies across the ocean or sending them in bulk to an agent.

Roger Waddington
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It must take something major for an issue dated Summer 2000 to arrive here just before Xmas; and you list proves just how major. I wouldn't want one of them in a decade, let alone all in a year; would be nice to have "changed jobs" – in my case, from unemployment – but then when would I find time for fanac? It still baffles me as to how anyone can hold down a full-time job, publish

a fanzine, and still have leisure time left over.

Also just before Xmas, there was a belated BSFA mailing which included the Chicon Hugo results. Alas, nothing for *Challenger* this time around; but there is some justice left in the world, with the Hugo for Joe Mayhew. Richly deserved, but just too late, wouldn't you agree?

If it had been his only Hugo, I would agree ... but Joe was there to receive his first award in Baltimore. I look on this trophy as a tribute, and worthy.

Unfortunately it's the way of the world, but it seems to me there's been too many obituaries lately, and they're all of fan and writers that have made a far greater contribution to the field than we can even imagine doing ... Truly, as Isaac Newton once wrote, we are standing on the shoulders of giants.

Think I might have a case of the Gillilands with this copy of *Challenger*, though mine seems to be more of a case of the printer's devil or the gremlins than the collating department. In fact I'm wondering, how about setting up an exchange department for the missing pages of *Challenger* as a public service? I'd like to start the ball rolling by offering duplicates of pages 43, 47, 51, 55, 59, 63, 67, 71, 75 and 79 in exchange for pages 41, 45, 45, 49, 53, 57, 61, 65, 69, 73, 77 and 81.

No need ... I replaced your entire issue, after personally verifying that every damned page was there in the new copy. See your next LOC.



Thankfully, all the rest is intact, including one of the high points for me, "Going Native". C.J. Cherryh is one of the writers I've been tending to neglect. In mitigation, that could be said of a legion of them, but then my slogan must be "So much to read, so little time."

I have a memory of **The Faded Sun: Kesrith** as a serial in **Galaxy**, which perhaps led to my buying **Downbelow Station**, my personal sticking point. I think it was the politics and interplay of Alliance, Company and Union that proved my downfall. I've never been one for complexity, even two sides can be confusing, but add to that her masterly, densely-woven prose where every word counts and if you miss one, you've lost a whole paragraph's meaning ... it was just too rich a reading experience for me. (If memory serves me right, I retreated into Perry Rhodan.) However, [Ms. Stinson's article] has given me a new optimism and a determination to seek out Cherryh's novels, instead of running away from them.

Teri Sanitoro's cover has given me another memory-jogger, of reading the serial version of **People of the Wind** by Poul Anderson back in 1973; it must be the best depiction of an Ythrian since the original Leo Summers illustrations.

On the historical Faust, I'm irresistibly reminded of the line from **The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance**, to the effect that "When the facts conflict with the legend, print the legend." There's surely a basic deed, some moment in history behind most of our legends, from King Arthur and Robin Hood to Jason and the Argonauts; but it's the embellishing that's made them what they are. Even as an amateur historian, I can say that it would be a poor lookout if all we had were "just the facts, ma'am." We need the inventiveness, the imagination that turns these basic facts into something rich and strange.

John Ford, maker of Liberty Valance, promoted that philosophy of movie- and culture-making throughout his magnificent career - most effectively, I think, in Fort Apache. By the way, apropos of nothing, Liberty and Valance Streets intersect here in New Orleans.

Roger Waddington
address *infra*

Many thanks for the time and trouble of sending me a *complete* copy of **Challenger**; now I can put names on LOCs. Browsing through, I caught your query about King George VI and can confirm that he stuttered. In fact, looking up his entry in my one-stop reference book of British history, it includes "... *George performed his royal duties with great conscientiousness (overcoming the handicap of a severe stammer) and became a symbol of British resistance during World War II.*" Amen to that; I think it was the sight of a man pitchforked into a job he never wanted to do, rising above his handicaps (he had therapy which reduced his stammer to a stutter) that saved the monarchy, where the fallout from the Abdication might have turned us into a republic. Of

course, that's the biggest problem for our current elected dictatorship, how do they get rid of the monarchy when it's still held in such high esteem. They must be cursing George VI.

I can't quite lay claim to be one of the New Elizabethans, part of the upsurge of feeling when our present queen came to the throne. My date of birth makes me firmly Georgian; but I can remember being fascinated by the manner of his death at the country estate of Sandringham. Not that I was a morbid child, either; but I had the picture of the deaths of kings being attended with as much ceremony as their coronations. Something like the bulletins that were issued during the illness of George V, the well-remembered "*The King's life is drawing peacefully to its close.*" (Only now are we told his death may have been induced, so that it could first be reported in the responsible and upper-class morning journals such as *The Times* rather than the trashy evening papers of the *hoi polloi*.)

But George VI died without a fuss; unnoticed, and alone, and unexpectedly. Apparently the last person to see the King alive was a guard patrolling the grounds who saw him closing his bedroom window in the early hours. And when his valet came in as usual with his morning tea, he found he's died in his sleep. As the poet says elsewhere, "*God grant us all such an easy death.*"

Roger goes on to exult over seeing another Nash Metropolitan in a movie. Who has photos of that classic auto to send to him?

Now ... we're up to date (and Challenger #13)!

Terry Jeeves

I just received the wonderful issue of **Challenger** #13 and have been enjoying every moment of reading it. Your report on visiting a shuttle launch was superb and really recreated the wonder and power of that event. I must also offer you my congratulations on your engagement and may your married life be both long and happy. Some great photos of the pair of you as well as all the other pics.

Election comment ... as a Limey, I'll refrain other than to say it's incredible how a nation can put men on the moon, but can't sort out an election. Better luck in four years' time.

In the meantime, do you think the Queen will take us back?

Pamela Boal
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Well there is a coincidence: our youngest at the age of 40 has at last found his life partner and they are

getting married this June. We think she is well worth waiting for. I do hope you still have family alive to be as pleased for you as we are for our son.

*My mother and great-aunt are in nursing homes and not really cognizant, but I have a brother, a sister-in-law, two nephews and a raft of California cousins who are tickled **infrapink** about it.*

Yes this ish is a bit of a mixed bag but why the heck shouldn't it be? It's your zine and there ain't no statute on the books prohibiting zines which have no theme. In fact if the articles had all been about preferential voting and setting up computer programmes to count those votes I wouldn't have bothered reading it. I didn't think this particular presentation of well known political facts was very interesting and how the authors arrived at a computer voting programme rather than use variations on the market didn't grab me either.

Just about everything else did grab me though. Loved the photos of Chicon and really must congratulate you on their clarity. Both the photos and your prose on the Cape visit are stunning. I felt I was there.

Thank the skillful staff of Tom's Printing ... who undercharged me for years for those halftones.

"The Pounding" is a delightful tale. Charles Williams really captured the essence of his ancestors' lives. I confess to slight envy, I don't even know my grandparents.

I'm glad that you dedicated your zine reviews to Ken Cheslin. Although we never met in person we have been paper friends for so long it is good to know that others also hold him in high esteem.

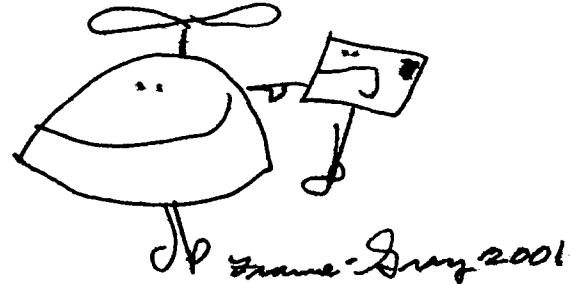
Joseph L. Green
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One of the pleasures of opening **Challenger** is that you never quite know what to expect inside.

I suppose "Bon Chance" should have been my favorite in No. 13, since I'm mentioned, and it concerns your trip here with my daughter Rosie to see a space shuttle launch, up close and personal (a truly great experience; I've now seen well over 100 manned launches and some 400 unmanned, and the awe never goes away). And your initiation into the Fellowship of the Talisker – ahem! – was a lot of fun (for me, anyway; fortunately, you passed, so you *do!* get to marry my daughter). But this wasn't my selection for "best."

Greg Benford's "Waiting for Shakespeare" was also interesting, as are most of his thoughtful articles (think I'll check out his website for more). Russell Blackford's immediate response in the next article was a very good counterpoint, amplifying rather than disagreeing with Benford's basic conclusions (as I read it). Which led me into some thoughts on how the AC

media, particularly television, have become by far the dominant venue for short science fiction, historically the field's major "idea generator"; in the process, reducing the importance of the magazines and dumbing down the



field. It's sad, but I think SF magazines published strictly as a profit-making business are doomed. Television and the Internet offer too much competition, and both are close to free. Those with a strong personal involvement by the owners, such as Gordon Van Gelder with his recent purchase of **F&SF**, or Warren Lapine with his four fiction and one fact set of magazines, may survive. They seem to be working for love of the field, not just the "bottom line." I hope someone with a similar approach will purchase the two remaining leaders, **Analog** and **Asimov's**. Otherwise I fear the day will soon come when they can no longer be printed on paper at a profit, and they will follow **Omni**, **Amazing**, and **Galaxy** to the Internet, with problematic chances of surviving even in that format.

I've checked out some of the on-line free fiction sites lately, from interest and also for marketing potential. They vary from quite good and fully professional to very personal and low quality, which is the range you would expect. The one characteristic they all seem to share is being either entirely free or very inexpensive.

But neither of these fine articles rose to the top of my personal preferences list.

Nor did the article on the letters of Phil Dick, yours on the American election (I would have cared a lot more if I could like or admire Al Gore; I voted for Nader, and hence, because I vote in Florida, helped elect Bush), John Berry's current one on crime scene investigations (a popular field these days), or the one voting analysis. I don't usually read travel articles at all, unless they are by Mike Resnick. Travel, like good wine, stimulating conversation, SF conventions, sex and sunsets, should be enjoyed in person, not second-hand. And in this case, even Mike's didn't hold that much appeal. Your Chicon report via photos was good, having the great advantage of few words. But none of these rise to the top.

No, my favorite without a doubt was "The



Pounding”, by Charles Williams. I can’t see that it has much to do with SF, but I don’t really care. This was an extremely well done, moving account of a time and place now in our past, and the people who lived and loved there. I think it should have been published in one of the genealogical magazines (web-based or print), where it could be read by millions of readers. I don’t know what the professional genealogists think of the idea of creating dialogue, setting scenes, carrying forward a plotline—the basic techniques of fiction that Charles Williams used – but I thought it made what in lesser hands might have been a dry and dull story come alive on the page and in the mind. (I’ll check that out with wife Patti, who is

a very knowledgeable genealogist; is it verboten to use fiction techniques to make factual material more interesting? I hope not.) I’m doing a presentation to the local genealogical society, and I’ve asked for and received permission to reprint and pass out copies of “The Pounding”. My topic is “How to make your Articles More Interesting.”

Sorry you didn’t win the Hugo; if you keep **Challenger** up to its current quality, I’m sure it will happen.

I’ll never argue with my (soon-to-be) father-in-law!

Gary Brown
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Liked “The Zine Dump”. I recently ran across an article on a website that dealt with creating a fanzine in this day and age. The author had done several music zines and complained about not having enough memory on his computer, printer woes and so forth. The wimp. He should have cleaned up after running a mimeo zine or turning the handle on a ditto for three hours.

David Schlosser
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Russell Blackford’s followup article on a SciFi Shakespeare was on the right track in looking to the

video field, but methinks that the movies are the wrong field. Why not TV? Specifically I’d suggest **The Twilight Zone** and Rod Serling for the breadth of topics and styles.

Of course if you want to stay in the written field there aren’t too many with that width of material. Asimov had that width, but may or may not have the depth needed. I’ll leave that for others to debate.

Interesting debate Greg and Russell have spawned. If I had to venture an opinion, I’d concede Greg’s point that the “author” of SF’s greatest work could be considered its greatest figure – but Kubrick’s influence on the field is surely less than Wells’

Lloyd Penney

The cover is very LaraCroftian (as opposed to Lovecraftian, I guess). I guess anti-gravity does exist. Or, are those propellers? She looks like a brunette version of Helen, sweetheart of the Internet. (It’s a rather strange comic strip.)

Rose-Marie and Guy ... I know not more than this zine has told me, and what Guy has sent out on the Internet, but our very best to both of you, and congratulations. Welcome to the League of Great, Silly Fools, of which Yvonne and I [have been] members for 18 years.

Canadians have had lots to be pleased about with the [latest] shuttle mission ... Chris Hadfield became the first Canadian to walk in space, and did it twice, too. He installed the Canadarm 2, and it will be the single tool that will allow the rest of the space station to be built. Hadfield’s performance was flawless, and he joins Marc Garneau, Julie Payette and others among Canada’s space heroes.

Who is SF’s Shakespeare ... Sir Arthur’s as good a choice as any, and I’d even thought of Robert Silverberg, but if you want to identify our Will as someone who has enthralled us with not only ideas but words, as did Shakespeare, then my vote would go to Ray Bradbury, mainly because of wonderful short stories that not only entranced with ideas, but with beautiful prose that made me dream and shed a tear.

I actually dreamed about Sir Arthur recently – that I helped him down a staircase at the worldcon. Who else thinks he deserves the Nobel Prize?

Dubya got a qualified approval for his first 100 days in office. I guess he got over-confident with that ... now he is announcing that he will pull the USA out of the 1972 ABM treaty, and will start funding “Son of Star Wars.” Which will probably bring about “Son of Cold War.” Senior US military types have already threatened to leave selected countries (like Canada) out from under the protective umbrella they say the revived SDI will

provide if they do not support American actions with ABM and SDI immediately. Four years of George Jr. may be more than the world can take. I wouldn't count Al Gore out. I think he may run for the presidency the next time, especially when Bush does his damage, and America could easily vote Gore in next time. I am hopeful that's what will happen.

W has revealed his true colors in recent weeks, seizing on the California power shortage – aggravated, if not outright caused, by Texas gas companies – to promote less restricted oil exploration and drilling. He even justified his tax cut because it would help Americans pay rising fuel costs. He's an energy industry stooge.

Zine List ... Chicon's **Chicago Moon-Times** was a good con-zine, with lots of news and fun. I certainly liked the idea of placing on the back of the Hugos issue all those who were nominated for various categories, but didn't receive enough to get on the final ballot. That certainly made my day, and I hope the Philadelphia conzine will follow suit.

A small follow-up on Linda Michaels for Henry Welch ... both she and Joe Maraglino attended Eeriecon 3 in Niagara Falls, New York.

Now I wish I had!

Norm Metcalf
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Greg Benford's essay "Waiting for Shakespeare" makes an interesting nomination of Stanley Kubrick as science fiction's answer to William Shakespeare, rather than some practitioner of prose. Not having seen any of Kubrick's movies I can't offer my opinion as to the validity of the idea, except to note that movies aren't science fiction, they can only adapt science fictional ideas.

You have very certainly lost me there. Are you saying that an SF movie can't be made? What's Metropolis? Forbidden Planet? 2001? Fire Maidens from Outer Space?

Russell Blackford's [essay] is an excellent corollary to Benford's. Blackford makes three excellent main points: 1) what about Kubrick's collaborators such as scriptwriters, actors and special effects personnel? 2) that science fictional movie emphasize special effects aimed at children, that they [therefore] don't have the broad, in-depth appeal of Shakespeare's plays and 3) the most successful science fiction books are movie tie-ins.

I think points 1 and 2 are valid, however I wonder about 3. I don't have all-time sales figures handy but I suspect that Robert A. Heinlein, for example, has outsold **Star Trek** novelizations. Has the movie of

Starship Troopers boosted sales of the novel? A rare book dealer told me that the price of the first edition has been boosted by the movie.

Gene Stewart's "Anti-Android Therapy – Reading Phil Dick's Letters" is an interesting summation and commentary upon three of Philip K. Dick's letters.

Milt Stevens wonders about Dick and his wives. I never met #1, that marriage was shortly annulled. He seemed happily married to Kleo. I was a guest in their homes a number of times. (Dick did get help from family and friends. He, his second wife Kleo and I used to sit around discussing ideas for stories. One tongue-in-cheek novel that he considered for Horace L. Gold was "The Revolt of the Garbage Men" where in typical **Galaxy** fashion garbage men take over the world.) I was present when Anne knocked on the door, introduced herself and told Phil "I hear you're a famous science fiction writer" and went on vamping him while Kleo sat there glowering. Phil divorced Kleo to marry Anne and then realized he had made a mistake and divorced Anne. Calling Anne "dreadful" is in line with the dedication to Anne of **The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch**. Phil introduced me to Nancy, who seemed to be a very nice lady. I never met any of the others.

Uh, guys ... why don't we talk about Phil Dick's books? They can't sue me!

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My thanks for #13. Another great issue.

You and Rose-Marie Donovan only knew each other for 24 years before making a very big decision. Are you certain you haven't acted precipitately? Perhaps you should give it a bit more time to get to know each other better. ☺ Anyway, congratulations!

Your commentary about the space shuttle **Endeavour** (STS-97) left me green with envy. I was at the Kennedy Space Center in 1996 prior to my navy ship (USS **Worcester** [CL-144]) reunion in Pensacola Beach. It was a most enjoyable time and I took one of the bus tours. No launch however, and that is something I still would like to see. I'll be in Daytona Beach in 2002 for another of my ship reunions and very much plan to again tour the space center and take more of the bus tours. Oh, by the way, one of my shipmates lives in Merritt Island.

I normally leave my political comments for **Fosfax**. But your commentary concerning what happened in Florida calls for a response. First of all, the popular vote is not a factor in presidential elections. In any event, no one received a majority of the popular vote,

only a plurality. The whole thing started with the national news media attempting to influence the rest of the country toward Al Gore. by announcing that he had carried Florida before the polls closed in the state. When it became apparent that George W. Bush actually carried the state, Gore's people sprung into immediate action (led by William son of Richard) demanding recounts only in heavily Democratic counties. They obviously prepared well in advance of the election.

Yes, there was an attempt (with the whole world watching) to steal the election. But Al Gore was the thief. (Perhaps it was an attempted payback for the election of 1876.) As I'm sure you know, a Democrat designed the infamous "Butterfly Ballot." In a test, the ballot did not present any problem for six-year olds. If people cannot follow arrows, perhaps they should not be voting. The whole thing regarding "chads" would have been ludicrous if it were not for it being so disgusting. Trying to determine "voter intent" is ridiculous and purely subjective. Are we to believe the people reviewing the ballots are clairvoyant? But as far as I am concerned, the final straw was Gore shitting on the military.

If Gore was so anti-military, why did he volunteer to go to Vietnam, while his opponent flaked out in – and out of – the Air National Guard?

There were some people who stood tall and did their job honestly and legally. Katherine Harris (yes she did), at least two lower court Florida judges, three Florida Supreme Court Justices (finally), and five Federal Supreme Court Justices. We may not like the politics of some of these people, but that doesn't change the fact that they did the right and legal thing.

The Electoral College worked exactly as it is supposed to work. The electoral vote is to protect the smaller states from being overwhelmed by a few large states (like California and New York). In the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag we pledge "to the Republic for which it stands," not the "Democracy," which clearly indicates that we are a Republic, not a Democracy. We are a nation of States, not of political subdivisions called states.

You mean the South won the Civil War??? The civic situation you describe in the United States hasn't existed since the XIV Amendment was ratified.

George W. Bush carried some 2,434 counties covering 2.4 million square miles with 143 million people. Al Gore carried some 677 counties covering 580,000 square miles with 127 million people.

And one country. In America, the people are supposed to rule ...and in 2000, the clear will of the plurality of voting people was that Al Gore be President of the United States. That judgment has been circumvented

by an irrelevant political antiquary, the electoral college, which has been tolerated to date because, with few exceptions, it followed the vote of the people. It is a rank obsolescence and it has got to go.

Albert Arnold Gore, Jr. finally found his "controlling legal authority." George Walker Bush won the election fairly and honestly. Get over it.

Sure ... when W leaves the White House in favor of someone honestly elected to the presidency.

By the way, I am a registered Democrat, which doesn't, of course, mean that I voted for either of them.

OK—now to the SF related contents. Most enjoyable as usual. We again have **Gene Stewart** with his interesting commentary concerning Philip K. Dick. "Safe Hands" by **John Berry** continues his fascinating articles about his experiences with fingerprinting. I did read through "Gernsback meets Aristotle" by **Jeff Copeland** and **Jeff Haemer**. Does that make me a "nerd?" Well, I didn't understand a lot of it, so maybe not, or maybe I'm just stupid. Mention must always be made of your massive "The Zine Dump."

Richard Dengrove: Sidney Biddle Barrows impressed me greatly in her book, **Mayflower Madame**. I found her to have outstanding managerial skills. But, then, I favor decriminalizing prostitution, or at least making it legal. One would think that politicians should consider making it legal since they then would be able to tax it. (Business tax, sales tax [maybe not since they would be sex care providers], income tax, I'm sure they could think of more taxes with which to hit them.)

Henry Welch: Every year I nominate Sheryl Birkhead for Best Fan Artist and Best Fan Writer. As you indicate, she almost made it on the ballot for best Fan Artist last year. Maybe this year will be the charm. [*It was, huzzah!*] But, I also nominate Julia Morgan-Scott for Best Fan Artist and she doesn't even receive an Honorable Mention. [*Not yet, but there is always next year. And don't forget Marc Schirmeister or ...*]

I'll be adding **Charles Williams** for Best Fan Artist, not just because of Guy's recommendation, but because of the fine work with his article "The Pounding" which I found quite moving and enjoyable.

Guy Lillian: Fantastic photos. Thank you!
I look forward to *Challenger* #14.

Jon D. Swartz
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Just finished **Challenger** #13 and wanted to relate a few comments.

First of all, if "Lucky 13" is at all representative of your previous issues, you certainly deserved a Hugo. Everything about this issue was first rate: the cover art,

features, photography, calligraphy, format, etc. My only gripe is that there wasn't more to read and peruse.

I do have a few back issues available ...

All your features were worth reading. I especially enjoyed Gene Stewart's "Anti-Android Therapy", interesting indeed for a long-time Philip K. Dick fan. Although, as a former director of a university library (one that prided itself on the acquisition, handling, and exhibition of its special collections), I found myself cringing a bit at the idea of Dick's widow giving his correspondence to anyone who sent her an SASE!

The next most enjoyable feature to this reader was your coverage of Chicon; the pictures made me feel (almost) as if I'd been able to attend. My only real complaint about your con report is that you didn't include more pictures of your lovely wife!

"The Zine Dump" was very helpful. I like to read descriptions of zines I've never seen, especially when the descriptions include detailed information on how one goes about obtaining them.

Are you the Guy Lillian who wrote all the LOCs to comic books back in the 1960's? I wrote mine under pseudonyms because I'd begun publishing in the psychology literature and thought of myself as a serious academic. Now I regret not signing my real name to everything I wrote.

Yeah, that was me, beginning in 1961, my first fan activity, my first taste of "fame", and my introduction to the universe of fandom and one of its founders, Julius Schwartz. The child is indeed father to the man.

E.B. Frohvet

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Since you ask, I guess that no household in America is any better off for having to encounter a likeness of me. Or half of me. *[In the photo pages of Challenger #13.]* Better that you should have included another picture of the amazingly cute Rose-Marie. Even though I count at least nine of those. *[I make it 14, counting the Freas caricature.]* I especially fancied the one on the back cover.

That photo is on my office wall. Would you believe she doesn't like it?

I deduce that the wedding will not be delayed until next August. (If I had the good fortune to be engaged to someone like Rose-Marie, I would hustle her into the church before she came to her senses.) However, perhaps you might consider re-staging the happy even at the next worldcon. A thousand or so of your closest friends will line up to kiss the bride.

Proceeding from the front of **Challenger #13** and blathering on till someone applies ether: Nice to see

the ubiquitous Steve Stiles on the cover. As #13 did not hit the mails until January, that counts for 2001 and gives us a fair excuse to nominate Steve again next year for the Fan Artist Hugo for which he is desperately overdue.

Your account of the shuttle launch is a textbook example of why **Chall** is the best American genzine: your own passion and enthusiasm reminds me that what we have come to take as routine is still a *big deal*. Damn, I wish I could write like that.

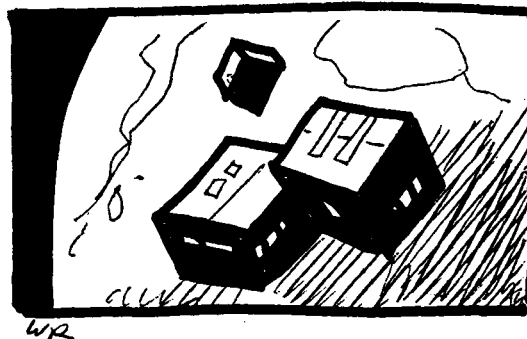
Thanks, but I left out some important details – the Mercury 7 monument, the scrub palmetto, the swirling vultures (although I did mention the bald eagle). An incredible experience at an incredible place.

It seems superfluous to argue who is the Shakespeare of SF, as does Greg Benford: I thought Heinlein had that title sewed up. Dr. Benford would rather Sir Arthur Clarke than Ray Bradbury. My taste would run the other way: Shakespeare showed us his heart, which is something that Clarke never has done in 50 years.

"Zine Dump" – On third thought I'm not sure I care for that title; though given the title of *my* zine review column, I'm not in much position to complain. Re: your review of **Timebound**, "It's a nice thing about fandom that it so movingly mourns its own." Yes, okay, fine. But it might be nicer if fandom gave some of its own attention and recognition while they were still alive to enjoy it. Only Tom Sawyer got to attend his own funeral ...

Yes, it was a treat for me to meet the famous Guy Lillian at Chicago. I notice you neglect to mention I chased you up an escalator, leaving aggravated fans strewn in my wake ...

I apologize to Irvin Koch and the Charlotte bid committee. I drew the inference that the Charlotte bid avoided Labor Day so as not to clash with the huge mediacon, DragonCon; Mr. Koch asserts they would have gone head-to-head with DragonCon but the facilities were just not available that weekend. Please make allowances for my ignorance. There was a time, back in the Stone Age, when I majorly cared about bid politics.



Apropos of nothing, what's with the "B" substituted at various places for, evidently, punctuation? *That was a scanner foul-up that I should have caught ... and did not. No scanners used this issue.*

I most humbly thank you, Guy, for your kind thought that my fanzine *Twink* deserves a Hugo nomination. Although this is not likely to happen, if by some fluke it did, I would accept on the grounds of being a token figure for the excluded majority. As to what we can do about imposing term limits on the Hugos – I honestly don't think there's anything we *can* do. Acknowledge that the system is hopelessly debased, and move on.

Joseph Major speaks in favor of taking up the role of family historian: "Your nieces and nephews will appreciate, someday, the trivial things that you saved of their ancestors." I suspect not, based on my own experience. Herewith I propose Frohvet's Third Generation Theory of Family Anthropology: Anything which goes further back than individuals remember, will not be cherished. Thus I recall my grandparents; but the next generation (my niece, my cousins' children) to whom these are only names, are not interested.

Best tennis match I ever saw? A toss-up. Connors and Aaron Krickstein slugging at each other for about five hours in the round of 16 at the, I think, '91 U.S. Open. It had everything except the stress of a final. Or the underrated '92 Wimbledon final between Agassi and Ivanisevic, a match that could have turned on a dime: after five sets and four hours, the difference in total points won by each was something like *five*.



Alexis A. Gilliland
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Challenger #13 arrived yesterday, and you will be gratified to hear that it was properly collated. See, practice *does* make perfect! Nice to see you again at Chicon 2000, and a pleasure to meet your fiancée, Rose Marie. One must say she photographs a whole lot better than you do. I've seen two launches; both were impressive, thunderously loud, bright as the sun and totally awe-inspiring. The first was Skylab 1, back in '73, from the reviewing stand, the second was a military spy satellite, in early '90, from a motel across the bayou, a

serendipitous event, the bird going up in the very last minute of the mid-morning launch window.

Greg Benford looks for a Shakespeare in the SF genre? Greg casts his net too narrowly. The Man was nonpareil. "I once called Bernard Shaw in rhyme/ The greatest playwright of his time/ Next day Shaw cabled: 'Incorrect.'/ For 'his' read 'all,' signed Shaw, collect." A mocking assessment that has not stood the test of time, and in the 20th Century was as good as it got in English. It may be that the English language doesn't need another Shakespeare at this point, or perhaps is not given to the present to see with the eyes of the future. Certainly much popular writing is so time-bound that when times change the writing dies. Benford says: "SF has become the preeminent genre, emerging from lowly pulp origins to rule the visual media." This is not all that remarkable; in their day, "the pulps" served as entertainment for the masses in lieu of the still-uninvented television. Technology has put "Thrilling Misogynist Stories" on a DVD instead of the cheapest grade of paper, and the net result is that the masses no longer need to read to be entertained – they can sit back to watch special effects and naked ladies to their hearts' content. Any writing involved in these efforts is basically product, being commercial, derivative and edited by committee. The run of this particularly mill is garbage, but even the best of it is merely transient.

Blackford, commenting on Benford, observes that most writers have been aware of their contemporaries, and influenced by what they wrote. Well, yes, but ... Science fiction is trying to make sense of a rapidly changing society, so that the trope: "If this goes on" is really an attempt to hit the target by shooting where it is expected to go. When society stabilizes, and stops changing, writers of talent can go back to writing novels that describe society as it is, and SF will be extinct.

Your take on the election may, perhaps, be just a tad overwrought. Even though it could turn out that the one vote which elected Dubyah was that of the truly undistinguished Clarence Thomas, there is a difference between stealing an election and breaking a tie in your favor with a little help from your lawyers and your family. ... Under the circumstances, even a president *with* a mandate would have a hard time getting anything done. Especially anything controversial. Far from taking that tide in the affairs of men at its flood, Bush is likely to be bound in shallows and in miseries. [I]n the meantime coalitions of centrists will be necessary to get anything done, and that isn't a bad thing for the country.

Few citizens seem to take notice that W is only the fourth executive in national history to take office having earned fewer votes than his opponent. His

repellant ascent to power will just as easily be forgotten. Needless to say, I find this reprehensible – but all too common

William Lott

address withheld by request

If I may touch on just a few matters in massive **Challenger #13** ... such as the superb cover. Steve Stiles is highly skilled and clever ... and I like the calligraphy by Tim Marion. Your interior illustrations are apt, too, a nice mixture of styles, and I am wild about the exceptional repro you get with your photos!

Reading through your “Zine Dump”, I note a reference which escapes me. **Frau im Mond**: I missed that one at the multiplex. It apparently carries some special resonance for you. What?

Fritz Lang's other silent science fiction film is flawed by atrocious science – the first manned expedition to the moon finds a breathable atmosphere, for instance – but Lang's true study was the human heart, and the movie's closing sequence squeezes mine. As I recall, the spaceship is damaged before it can return to Earth, and one of the explorers must remain behind for years until rescued. The hero volunteers, for the sake of the others and especially for the sake of the female crew member he has come to love. He retires to a distance and watches the rocket take off safely for its return voyage. His elation deflates as he realizes that he is now utterly Alone. In growing despair, he turns ... and there she stands. The film ends with the instant closeup of their embrace. That sums up the true desire of the human male, I think: not to be alone, to have someone with him, through all, despite all. Knocks me out.

Your comments on the election are mostly apt, but I wish you'd lay off the name-calling. I realize that the GOP has been insulting liberals and Bill Clinton in particular for years, but surely the fact that Al Gore won more people to his cause than did George W. Bush proves that nastiness is a failed political tactic. The high road works ... a better ballot design in one county in Florida, and it would have elected a fine President. Bush won only because of a technicality, not because his campaign enjoyed majority support. People will not forget that.

I would avoid the ugly rhetoric, then, if it's important to you to stay friends with these “wingers” you so disparage. Or is that important to you?

It's damned important to me, and damned difficult, since I regard Bush's theft of the American government as the worst public crime – aside from the assassinations – of my lifetime. The fraudulent election and the coup which followed it are a criminal

disgrace. But friends are friends and I would be heartbroken if Bush's calumny cost us good humor as well as good government.

From your worldcon photos I see you have an eye for beauty. I salute your choice in wives in that regard, and hope that I can someday meet Alice Naomi Lewis. Harvard girl or not, she's righteously cute.

Not even a benighted Yalie would disagree. Look at those pictures of you wailing for the Hugo. What a ham!

On rye with mustard! Second helping coming up!

In brief, **Challenger** strikes me as huge – perhaps over-huge – and exuberant, good-natured and generous. It could probably stand some disciplined pruning, if you don't mind a mixed metaphor, but not *too* much: pare it down too drastically and the exuberance would suffer. Never lose that! Enjoy!

Susan R. Higgins

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First, let me congratulate you on your marriage to Rosy! I'm so happy for you both!

I want to thank you for your kind comments and my listing of **Rag Soup**. I now have a web domain name – which will make it a lot easier to type than the long http home page address. The new address is www.ragsoup.com. Also, although the price you put in the magazine is correct, it's only for mail orders – otherwise – it's *free* on-line!

I loved your “Bon Chance!” It reminded me of my own visit to Cape Canaveral and Kennedy Space Center when my son was young. On display, there on my visit, they had the space buggy, and my son was able to sit in the seat next to the astronaut – with the lunar background. He loved it! He was about 8 then – he's 30 now!

You just made me feel very, very, very, very old.

I also enjoyed your Chicon report. I loved the photo of you wrestling or trying to wrestle the Hugo from Mike Glycer. You should have won! I also liked you holding the Hugo spaceship sign with caption – “Hey, just a suggestion.” You think they'll get it?

I also liked the “Shakespeare, Science Fiction and All that Jazz” by Russell Blackford, “Waiting for Shakespeare” by Greg Benford. I really love this guy! I also loved – and cried when I read – “Anti-Android Therapy” re: Philip K. Dick's letters by Gene Stewart. Thanks Gene for sharing these letters with us – they were very moving and gave an insight to a person I wish I had known. It was very touching.

And my favorite – “The Pounding”. Now – that's history! Thank you Charles Williams for sharing

this story with us.

Barry Hunter
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Congrats on the terrific [engagement] news. It should be a terrific match and should last a lifetime. Kathy and I have made it 32 years so far and she doesn't do conventions, cause she says I hang around weird folks. She did make DSC in Birmingham in 1977 and Atlanta in 1978. I wish you both many happy years together.

Nice to see you at the 2001 DSC, where you were a featured guest!

Challenger should surely be a regular Hugo nominee from now on. You are doing a marvelous job with it with an enormous amount of talented help. I wish I could get it together like you do, but I guess I've got my own niche here. Prolly never get a Rebel or Phoenix or even be a footnote in Southern fandom history, but I've had a lot of fun and made a lot of friends and went to a bunch of fun conventions.

Who needs more than that?!?

Keep up the good work. Charlotte in 2004!

Rodney Leighton
R.R. #3

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It is rather amusing to me that while I truly am unconcerned if anything I write sees print, the first thing I look for in any fanzine is what the editor did with what I wrote. Went to "Epistles" in **Challenger** #13; short WAHF, no Leighton, scanned the LOCs, still no Leighton, went over it all again; "Hey, I know I sent him two or maybe three mailings and there must have been something vaguely resembling a letter in one or two of those", looked it all over again, no mention of me. Sigh. All that stuff just have gotten lost.

How in the hell did a fat, bald, ugly old goat like you hook a lovely young lady like that?

Remember that I met Rose-Marie when I was young, hirsute and svelte. First impressions do matter!

Do you mean to say you actually wanted Tipper Gore in the White House?

Absolutely! She may make it yet.

Great expansive "Zine Dump". I dunno if I like this "Guy likes everybody, even Ted White" mode. On the other hand, if Knarley [*Henry Welch, in The Knarley News*] allows the White-Leighton contretemps to continue for awhile, I may receive a fanzine from Seattle or some such unheard-of event. I do agree that KTF reviews suck.

I'll have to see something nasty in a fanzine before I

get nasty in "Zine Dump". Till then, I'll note the contents, praise the praiseworthy, not praise the non-praiseworthy, and move on to the next one.

I do a little writing of essays. And reviews. Many of them appear in **Fosfax**. I am amazed when I see someone dismiss the entire fanzine due to disagreements on the politics. Interestingly, to me, is that while I don't concern myself too much with whether anything I write is printed, it never fails that when someone dismisses **Fosfax** as unread, I say: "But, you missed my stuff!" Maybe I do have an ego.

I read every issue of Fosfax, cover to cover, and like and admire the editors. But such was my disgust at the outright chicanery on the part of the conservatives in the 2000 election that I could barely stand to be in the same room as those supporting t'other side. Unfair, but it's what happens when everything you hope is true about your country is revealed to be false.

Thanks for the extensive Chicon photo report. Many people fail – and some refuse – to understand that my interest in seeing photos of fans is so that I can have a face and maybe a figure to attach to names of people whom I will never meet in person. Two of my best, longest-running friendships are with guys I wouldn't know if I fell over them. But it is always a pleasure for me to see photos and especially of people I have had some contact with. I now have a face and a body to go with John Hertz, who disagrees with my definition of wealth; of Ed Meskys; Lloyd Penney and a bit of the man of mystery, E.B. Frohvet.

Looking again at the dozen or so photos of your lady, I realize that not only do they indicate that she is attractive but they show that she is a *nice* lady. I hope that is a true interpretation.

I'll bet my life on it.

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Challenger 13 read & enjoyed.

Thanks for running the Benford/Blackford dialog. It's interesting that they say SF is an art form like jazz that doesn't need a major Shakespeare-like figure just as ken Burns does a Public TV series telling us that jazz had such a figure: Duke Ellington. (I wouldn't quite call him a Shakespeare, but the TV series may be a sign that we're finally getting over the racism that kept the Duke out of discussions of comparable modernist giants like Eliot and Picasso.)

Duke Ellington was once tapped for a special Pulitzer Prize in Music, an honor scotched by Columbia University's conservative trustees. I'm not sure racism was at fault, but rather a snobbish

establishment fantasy that jazz was popular music and therefore beneath serious cultural notice.

Anyway, I basically agree with Blackford, but I'd go further. Shakespeare did indeed work in a visual medium, but his work came down to us, and has had its influence, as words on page. If all that survived of a Kubrick movie (particularly **2001**) was the screenplay, most of the experience would be gone. In general, I'd say that SF movies are a different art form from SF books – not better, not worse, but different, just as no one can say that opera is the same sort of thing as poetry.

Thanks to Gene Stewart for showing us some of the human side of Phil Dick. I've been fascinated by mathematics all my life. To me, there is real beauty in the way mathematical concepts like the Fibonacci series and the binomial expansion can be entirely specified by simple rules, yet they comprise all sorts of subtle and unobvious relationships of numbers. Nice to see one of my favorite writers reveling in it too.

You and I are in general agreement about the Theft of Florida, but I'm not so sure the Electoral College is part of the problem. I agree with Jon Carroll: if we switch to majority vote for the presidency, then the next time there is a close election, there'll be 50 Floridas, complete with hanging chads, pregnant chads, chads belonging to the emperor, chads that resemble flies from a distance – sorry, got carried away. I really began to sympathize with Gore after the first debate, which he lost by being more qualified than son-of-a-Bush and admitting that he knew it. But too many of the voters perceived him as being androidal. I wouldn't despair, though: 12 years ago Bush *aine* beat a better man through somewhat subtler forms of fraud than his son's team was to use. He seemed settled for the long haul too, but we didn't realize that down in Arkansas there was a horny horn player who'd beat Bush in the very next election.

As always, an excellent and thorough zine review column, but I fear you grossly misjudge the slash fiction genre, which strikes me as much less based on the hostility you suggest than on genuine affection and desire. If nothing else, some of it resembles the pleasure males get from lesbian porn/erotica, imagining themselves joining in, or watching, or even being one of the participants.

"Peddle that poop in some other pasture, people" is almost Agnewesque in its alliteration, but I would suggest, "Peddle that poop in a parallel pasture, people." Always happy to help.

Analog may be the prozine with rivets, but now **Challenger** is the fanzine with a Perl program in it. Clearly, this is a breakthrough, but I'm not sure to what.



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Thanks for **Challenger**; it blends nicely with **Mimosa** in the very same mail because John Hertz has an article there about Regency dress, and **Challenger** has a photo of him clad in the manner! There are two Hugo-worthies in tune! How about a twin Hugo? This #13 is characteristically good (far too generous to my zine, but thank you, anyway. It is always nice to be praised by a worthy friend.)

Oh do I envy you that Canaveral glory! I have always wanted to experience this. My son-in-law is with NASA (not an astronaut) and I always tease him about getting me on a flight; however, just seeing a lift-off would be enough. In lieu, however, we are scheduled to take a tour of Thailand and I do look forward to this, but a moment such as you lived through, that is the equal, superior, of anything.

Proposing to Rosy Donovan, and being accepted, was better.

Robert Lichtman
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I've had **Challenger** #13 around for quite some

time, but it had fallen victim to my being seriously behind in reading fanzines since last Thanksgiving. By virtue of being grounded since late February with a broken right ankle (now mostly healed), I did get it read a few weeks ago ...

Good to see the reference to "on demand publishing" in Greg Benford's article, "Waiting for Shakespeare", but the truth of the matter is that some publisher has to want to republish an out-of-print book via this medium for it to happen. At the recent Potlatch in San Francisco, Ray Nelson proudly showed me a number of his long unavailable titles that have recently been "on-demanded." Paul Williams got into the initial wave of this new venue and has brought *all* of his own books back into print. (If you've never read his *Time Between*, by all means get a copy.)

I don't get it ... who demands what of whom to get an out-of-print book brought back to the shelves?



I don't know if I agree with Greg's thought that perhaps Stanley Kubrick is SF's Shakespeare, but I definitely disagree with Russell Blackford's seeming equation of the *Star Wars* movies as "the most prominent SF." In this case, "prominent" doesn't equate with "good." There are any number of *writers* of SF (I won't make the obvious list) whose work is incredibly better than Lucas' films.

But not more influential, which was, I think, Blackford's point. Lucas, and Kubrick before him, and Roddenberry before him, and Rod Serling before him, and George Pal before him, may have spoiled SF in the eyes of the multitudes, but they all popularized the genre, making it possible for SF-minded writers to

get their stories published ... and move the field forward.

I remember Knott's Berry Farm, like Phil Dick, "before they improved it." well before Disneyland opened in the mid-'50's, my parent used to take me and my brother to the earlier iteration of Knott's for a dusty day of sightseeing and "rides," and of course a slice of their marvelous berry pie.

Gene Stewart is incorrect that Anne was Phil Dick's first wife. That, er, honor goes to Kleo, whom he left to get together with Anne. She wrote a book, *Search for Philip K. Dick*, which was published in the mid '90s by an academic press and lists for \$100. Through some fancy footwork I managed to get a copy for *only* \$80, and it's a hoot to read. I knew of it originally as an incomplete manuscript that she brought around to Glen Ellen in the '80s to lend Paul. We both read it and thought it had only a slim chance of being published, but here it is ... full of interesting insights and *dirt* about Phil that you can find nowhere else: the viewpoint of the Dumped Wife.

I agree with your assessment of last November's election, but not with your conclusion that Bush might be popular enough by 2004 to win re-election. His administration is already an almost unmitigated disaster, and one can only hope the country will come to its senses buy the midterm congressional elections and vote majorities back into both houses.

But the country didn't lose its senses in 2000 ... or at least, the people didn't. More of them voted for Gore than for the oil industry toady who says he won. Bush is President only because of flukes and technicalities – the will of the people was thwarted and denied.

I've seldom run into celebrities by accident but when I do, like Martin Morse Wooster, I don't get up into their faces. The earliest star-sighting I can remember was when I was around ten years old and with my father at Fedco, an early membership department store. There we spotted Edward G. Robinson having a cup of coffee at the snack bar. In more recent times (but not that recent: the '80s) I ran into Robin Williams at the Glen Ellen elementary school Halloween carnival. At that time his son Zack was young and although he didn't attend that school Williams had brought him around for the carnival. Our point of intersection was the exit of the haunted house, out of which Williams came clutching his nose. "Zack got scared and bit my nose!" he was exclaiming. Several of us other parents commiserated.

Charles Williams' "The Pounding" was an entertaining read, and I liked the heading illustration and appreciated the genealogy table. The latter helped me track the various characters in a way I wouldn't have been able to do with out it.

As always, and in closing, I cast many an appreciative eyetrack on your Chicon photo coverage.

Don't blame you; I keep looking at those pages myself, particularly the picture of Rosy taken either 30 minutes before or 30 minutes after – we can't remember – I asked her to marry me, and she said yes. Seldom do we have photographic records of life's best moments; this one, I do.

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Cover: I like the young lady even though her fans seem to be at cross-purposes.

"Bon Chance": Mission Commander Brent Jett, Pilot Michael Bloomfield, Mission Specialist Joseph Tanner, Mission Specialist Carlos Noriega, Mission Specialist Marc Gameau. And by checking the NASA web site (specifically www.spaceflight.nasa.gov/shuttle/archives/sts-97/crew) you can learn what they ate every day of the mission.

George Mallory climbed Mount Everest. In 1995 of course: the namesake grandson. Another filial Everestian story: Setting – a typical day in the office of Sir Edmund Hillary, K.G., Conqueror of Mount Everest. The explorer working at his desk. The phone rings:

"Hello, pater." It is his son, Peter.

"Hello, Peter. How is the expedition going?"

"I'm on top of Everest."

Think about that. Communication has so radically advanced that within the lifetime of one of the first men to climb the world's highest mountain (Tenzing has, alas, gone on to his next reincarnation, though one hopes he will achieve Nirvana soon) he can get a telephone call from its summit. This is utterly science-fictional.

And so beautifully human. Check out the last moments of the great IMAX film, Everest, documenting Tenzing's son on his conquest of Chomolungma. In them the young man reflects unforgettably on the challenge and faith of fathers – an immaculate moment of sincere and affirmative emotion.

Just consider that as recently as the nineties the Mallory-Irvine question was one of the great unsolved mysteries of mountaineering. Now they have Mallory's watch.

A Chinese climber on a sixties expedition claimed to have seen the body of a white man. Unfortunately, he died before getting off the mountain – and in fact, the only details we have are from a Japanese climber from that same expedition, who did not speak

any Chinese language, and the Chinese climber spoke no Japanese. He wrote it down, however.

That could have been Mallory whom he saw, but on t'other hand it might have been Sandy Irvine. The Chinese guy described a body in a sitting position – Mallory was prone – beside a boulder – Mallory was on a slope. Everest is a "biiiiigg hill," so there are an infinite lot of nooks and crannies left to explore.

Waiting for Shakespeare: Ah, but did Will so invert the meaning of his original sources as Kubrick did with *A Clockwork Orange*? Following the original American edition of the book, as Kubrick did with the movie, produces a story that radically deviates from Burgess's concept. And Kubrick stressed the ultra-violence and downplayed the dreadful irony of Alex being banned from the one human facet of his personality.



Slovakia Safari: Mike has certainly raised his credibility with my wife. Gosh, he actually associated with Ted Raimi. More generally, it shows how, to use the current form of expression, "Media roolz!!" We are just going to have to live with the prospect of CreationWorldCon alternating with Dragon*World*Con and there being maybe one literary track, in the back rooms.

Epistles: Tim Marion: Esters (which by the way is also a chemical term) learn to be very patient. After all, in an Est seminar they won't let you go to the bathroom all day. You learn the true inner meaning of the Est expression "You're an asshole."

Kate Yule: You don't understand. Mike is planning to go back and clean out that store "that has Paris's best selection of out-of-print English-language science fiction," in order to pay for that trip. He just has to schedule it.

Robert Kennedy: My ancestors did not come over on the *Mayflower*, but they did get to the Virginia Colony thirteen years later. As opposed to some of Lisa's, who took the Siberia-Alaska route and got there several thousand years earlier.

Janine G. Stinson: No, I am talking about police

raids on unarmed citizens. When "the confidential informant" fingers the wrong place, through ignorance, malice, or whatever (how many embittered ex-spouses have turned in their former marital partners on trumped-up drug charges?) the police make a forced entry, pointing guns everywhere, smashing anything that looks as if it might contain drugs, roughing up the "perps," and acting like this is a major bust about to be reacted to with blasts of automatic gunfire. Of course, when it is revealed to have been a false bust, there are no apologies or compensation.

The besetting philosophical attitude of law enforcement is the division of the world into cops and scum. Because there are cops and scum, it becomes acceptable to treat scum like, well, scum; to probe their recti using high-impact methods, for example.

While there was a high-profile case of bounty hunters in the Southwest who were actually thieves, the "posing as lawmen" case I was thinking of had to do with a gang in Tennessee in the nineteen-eighties. They specialized in robbing drug dealers (who were not going to complain to the officials, after all) and got along quite well until they hit someone who wasn't; a physician, in Eastern Kentucky, who did not believe in banks and had over a million dollars in cash in his house. He survived the robbery; his daughter did not.

Editorial response: I see what you mean about Plaquemines Parish. *Yog-Sothoth Neblod Zin.*

Martin Morse Wooster: I don't think my Boss from Hell was a former Marine. He did, however, fire me for wearing out-of-style shirts.

Steven H. Silver: But for every proposal to go back into space there is a more-than-equal and opposite counterproposal from all the others who want to go back into space by their own, right, way. Most of them are (to boot) from people who work on the "distinguished scientist, his beautiful daughter, the hunky assistant, and the 'ethnic' assistant build a ship in the back yard and go to the Moon" business plan. Why should anyone take such ideas seriously?

Tom Feller: Who gets arrested in domestic violence cases? If what I have seen is any guide, it will inevitably be the man, even though around thirty percent of domestic violence cases are woman batters man and about a third are mutual violence.

Henry Welch: Valentina V. Tereshkova-Nikolayeva (Vostok 6, call sign "Sea Gull") is still alive, at last report, and took part in the 1998 dinner at the National Air and Space Museum, where Sally Ride was also a guest, so they probably met.

I want to see a picture of that!

Congratulations on you and Rose-Marie. It strikes me as significant how many people in our fanzine

cohort went to MidAmeriCon.
ANGOLA IN 2006!

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Thanks for another excellent **Challenger**, and belated congratulations on the changes in your life! It couldn't happen to a nicer Guy.

I loved the picture of you and Mike Glycer fighting over the Hugo Award. [*Already a classic. We must have held that pose for a full minute while Rosy fought with her camera.*] Include me among those people who are happy when anybody other than Dave Langford wins either the Best Fanzine or Best Fan Writer award. Nobody deserves to win that many awards in a row, and I find it incredibly arrogant that he along with Charlie Brown and Gardner Dozois refuse to withdraw their names from the list so that some other deserving candidates can win an award.

Their attitude seems to be that the decision on who wins the Hugo should be left up to the voters. Okay, let's work on the voters, to do the right thing and spread the wealth.

Since I write this letter on Inauguration Day, I cannot help but agree with you on the legitimacy of *Dubya's* presidency. It's disgusting and unethical, but it is certainly not surprising, considering the moral state of America (or, unfortunately, the entire world!). The Republican power brokers are little better than Nazi stormtroopers who stole the German election of 1932; however, I am a bit more cynical than you are so that I don't consider the Democratic power brokers much better, only being a more liberal version of their GOP peers.

However, I do agree that Al Gore devoted his life to public service and would certainly have brought the proper dedication, intelligence and attitude to the presidency. However – and this is a fairly big however – I have noticed in my lifetime that intelligence and ethics are necessarily the proper requirements for a successful president. Could there possibly have been a better human being in the White House than Jimmy Carter? Moral, brilliant, dedicated to the people he served, yet totally lacking in the type of leadership and consensus-making required of a successful

On the other hand, Bill Clinton is a sleazy politician, prone to taking advantage of people and lying whenever and wherever necessary, yet he was easily the best president I've seen in my lifetime. That's why when there were originally four candidates for the presidency, I rated Al Gore third overall as most likely to be a

successful candidate. I rated Bill Bradley as the candidate having the finest personal qualities which I would like to have seen in the presidency, but I think John McCain had the best combination of talents likely to make him succeed as president.

Yes, I rated *Dubya* dead last in every possible litmus test I could devise for a president, including intelligence, morals, experience, overall success in life, and overall views. So how is it he is now president, if only through misuse of the system? *sigh*

The Republicans, to be fair, didn't institute pogroms or smash windows – they just threw law and fairness to the winds in order to put their corporate flunky in the White House. Filthy behavior, indeed, but hardly on a par with the Nazis. That Americans are by and large turning a deaf, stupefied and indifferent ear to this horror is the true disgrace of the 2000 election.

I really enjoyed Greg Benford's article "Waiting for Shakespeare" and Russell Blackford's reply to it. As talented and important as Stanley Kubrick was, I don't agree with him as a possible science fictional Shakespeare, if only because a movie director is a different breed of artist than a writer. The fact that Shakespeare wrote plays does not take away from the fact that his plays are read and qualify totally as "literature," while nothing Kubrick has ever done could qualify as such.

"Literature" being writing that touches compelling, universal and lasting issues and emotions in humanity. So call them, simply, Art, which encompasses all phyla of creative endeavor.

I don't know if science fiction will ever have a Shakespeare, since how many other genres ever have, if any? But at this point I tend to agree with Blackford that we are too close to its history to be able to make such a judgment. Were I forced to pick somebody, it would definitely have to be H.G. Wells since I agree with Brian W. Aldiss that he not only defined the genre's parameters but, all things considered, was its finest writer as well.

Martin Morse Wooster
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Many thanks for *Challenger* 13. I think it's great that you and Rose-Marie Donovan are engaged, and I hope you have a long and happy marriage.

I agree with Guy about the limits of e-mail that he mentions in his fanzine reviews. E-mail seems to me to be a fine way to quickly convey short bits of information; it supercedes the short letter and the quick telephone call. But it's a very bad way to transmit something lengthy. Sure, a fan can put his zine up on the Web, but readers will have to want the zine enough to

take the time to print it out and collate it. Moreover, paper fanzines are handmade, limited-edition artifacts that are expressions of the editor's personality and taste, and are worth saving and collecting. The Web strips away many of the quirks that make fanzines interesting. And getting the best fanzines unexpectedly in your mailbox provides a satisfaction the Web cannot match; I've been writing for fanzines for 26 years, but I don't think I'd get a treat from electronic media comparable to going to my mailbox and finding that I had gotten *Mimosa and Challenger and SF Commentary* all on the same day. It was more fun than Christmas!

I first encountered Gregory Benford's comparison of SF to jazz in an introduction to *Foundation's Fear*. Here he takes the idea in a somewhat different direction. I agree that Stanley Kubrick is not the "author" of *2001* and his other films, but he certainly produced them, in that these films would not exist in the way that they do had Kubrick not been around.

They would not have existed at all. I note that Steven Spielberg has completed Kubrick's last project, A.I., and that the film will appear this summer. I quake with anxious expectation. Surely two more dissimilar film makers never lived than Kubrick and Spielberg. The former had a style and a perspective as cold as interstellar space. The latter is as sentimental as raw goo. Will Spielberg's A.I. do honor to Kubrick's themes, or bowdlerize them past recognition?

I also agree with Benford and Russell Blackford that Kubrick and George Lucas (and for that matter, Gene Roddenberry) have had more influence in shaping post-1975 SF than any SF writer. But the answer to the question, "Who is the science fiction Shakespeare?" is – we don't know. This SF writer would be someone who,

Yup,
for those unbelievers in the
audience,
I am aerodynamically sound!



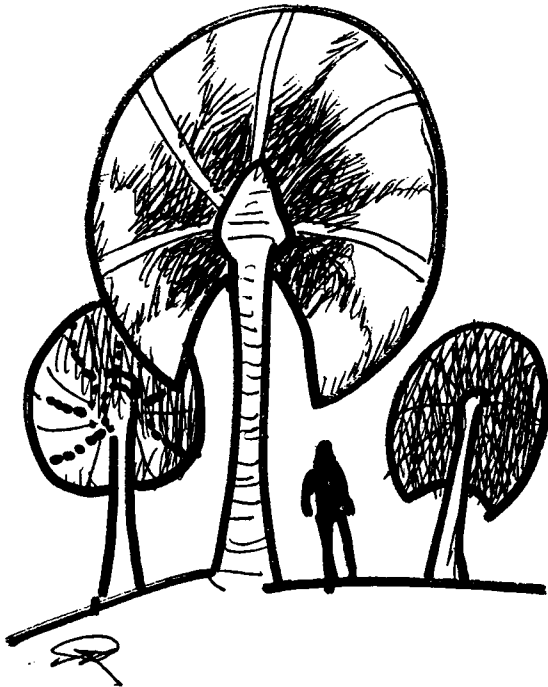
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100 years from now, would be clearly recognized as

being far superior to anyone else of his time. Since we aren't living in 2050, we don't have the distance to answer the question as definitively as we can say, "H.G. Wells was the most important SF writer of 1900." (And given how badly Bradbury's stories have dated, will anyone be reading him 25 years from now – or think he was important?)

I would certainly think so – they're personality-based fiction, using SF as a backdrop on which to project their human stories. Bradbury has a quality 99% of published science fiction cannot claim: he's a wordsmith who uses language evocatively and effectively. The science in his stories is fantasy-based, but their resonance is real.

I always enjoy reading Mike Resnick's articles, but his report on his Slovakia adventure was depressing: Ted Raimi, a good character actor in a series that's winding down, is treated like royalty. Mike Resnick, a major SF writer, is treated like luggage. That distinction says a lot about the tastes of less literate fans.



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Richard A. Dengrove
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Great trip to Cape Canaveral. I know about the Viking Lander on Mars; the Apollo Moon Landing; and

the Redstone with the Mercury capsule, our first manned satellite. But there is a greater achievement than any of these. A Corporal rocket on top of a V-2 were launched sometime in the late '40s. And, boosted by the V-2, you know how high the Corporal went? All of 250 miles up. That it was ballyhooed as a great achievement during my childhood in the '50s makes it so great an achievement today – for me, that is – even though we've been to the Moon and back. And we've even been to Mars.

Greg Benford talks about the Shakespeare of Science Fiction. Wouldn't he be something like "the Shakespeare of crime," a phrase that people have parodied mysteries with for decades? Still, science fiction has its Shakespeare-like authors. Greg mentions H.G. Wells. Some might regard Jules Verne as a better candidate, but I will stick with Wells. He better portrays the liberties that science fiction writers have taken with the science of their time. Greg got it right originally. No, it is not like Jazz where people jam without a codex. Is Jazz even like that? Science fiction certainly has its traditions, its assumptions, its folkways, its byways. Science fiction writers may not do what Medieval writers did, openly: use some famous writer as an inspiration for their writing. But I bet they do it. It's not a coincidence that so many New Wave novels came out at the same time. And so many Cyberpunk novels.

From Gene Stewart's account, Philip K. Dick was hanging onto reality for dear life. I know from his novels he had a fantastic imagination. I know from later reading he had problems with reality. I hear a paranoia crept in. But I didn't know how large his problems with reality loomed until I read those letters. They show he is hanging onto reality for dear life. The irony is because he talks so much of business and practical matters. Is he ever trying to be so practical! And yet he doesn't succeed. What hit me in particular was when he was writing to his kid. He wants a house so the kid can visit him. And his kid story of a rabbit that ate a telephone. A story designed for a kid. Designed so that he could be a father. So that he could live a normal life. But too imaginative for that.

About the John Berry's giveaway safecracker, he was put away under Preventive Detention in Northern Ireland. It sounds like he would have gotten more time if he had been tried with all due procedure like we do in the States. Berry seemed to have the evidence to put him away for a long time. But with Preventive Detention he was in and out of jail.

About Mike Resnick's trip to Bratislava, if Joxer, Xena's second fiddle, is that big a deal in Slovakia, I wonder how big a deal the first fiddle, Xena, would be? Or how about the knockout who plays Venus?

About Charles Williams "The Pounding," I

don't have that clear and well-documented view of my Russian Jewish ancestry as he of his ancestry in the States. I did some research on my mother's side of the family and I know. Apparently my grandmother came over in 1905 and over the years lost contact with her Russian relatives. It wasn't safe to have contact with them for many years. Especially under Stalin, but it wasn't all that great under Khrushchev, Brezhnev, etc. either. It may still not be. As far as I can tell, we only have a photo from a relative with writing in back from the 1920s. And we have memories.

The memories are not reliable. For example, my mother's family came from Vitebsk. Some family members say that is in Lithuania in the old Russian Empire. Others Latvia. The map says it's in Belarus, the old Byelorussia. Somewhere is supposed to be a newspaper clipping of my great grandfather's death. At 118? At 112? At 108? Is the clipping from the **Philadelphia Inquirer** and in English? Or the daily **Forward** in Yiddish?

Under the impact of all this, our ancestry is becoming mythical. I have heard more than once that we have noble blood. Jewish nobles in the Czar's state? How can that be? The Czar's state was among the most anti-Semitic. Fiddler on the Roof was right. Except they often didn't give you the option of immigrating; they often slaughtered you on sight. Then there was my great grandfather. He died at 118? He spent 55 years impressed in the Russian Army? The Czar gave him a medal for sticking to his Jewish faith under torture? He was a holy man? He was the mayor of Vitebsk?

It won't be the first time that an undocumented ancestry became myth. All the ancient Greek lineages started with a God. All the earliest Chinese emperors taught the people everything they knew. One of them invented agriculture. The first ten Babylonian kings reigned about 400,000 years.

Come to think of it, there may be advantages in having a mythical ancestry over a documented one.

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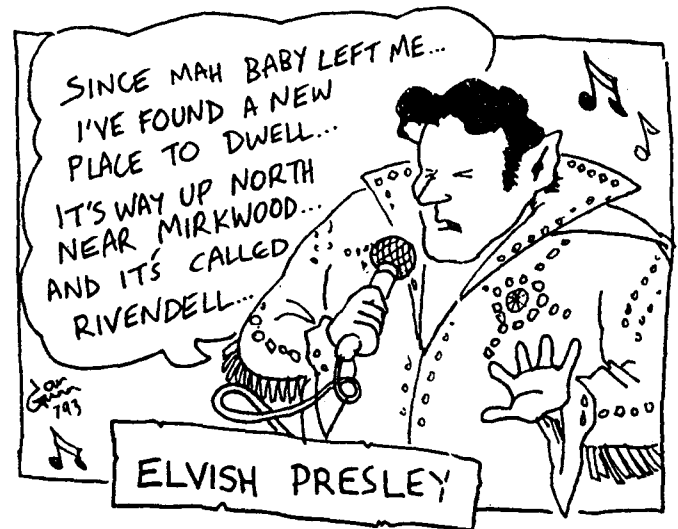
Thanks for **Challenger #13** and definite congratulations on the engagement. Rose-Marie must be truly special. (And I think the back cover picture is exceedingly cute. And for those who know me; if I notice cuteness it must be quite extraordinary.)

You did a fine job conveying your sensawunda about the shuttle launch. I have never had the

opportunity to see anything other than a small 12-foot rocket launch (0 to Gone in less than 2 seconds). I recall fervently watching Apollo-Soyuz back in the '70s and the first few shuttle launches and then it became too routine until your namesake's disaster.

I'm glad that at least one person used the Hugo Alien [cutout] for its intended purpose [see "**Challenger at Chicon**"]. I was a bit disappointed that it was in the back corner, but Philadelphia has taken it and is considering displaying it again. I cannot recall how you knew I was one of the constructors; was it the sign on the back side of the alien [What are you suggesting?] or did I say something to you? BTW: That is also the alien used as the primary mascot for the First Contact conventions here in Milwaukee.

I should also comment that Wawa is located in Ontario, not Wisconsin. I only wish it were that close sometimes.



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In **Challenger #13**, both Greg Benford and Russ Blackford discuss whether SF will ever have a talent comparable to William Shakespeare. Personally, I rather doubt it. Shakespeare wrote about universal aspects of human character which existed centuries ago and which will exist centuries from now. By nature, science fiction concerns itself with things which can change. On the basis of today, futures are postulated. Yesterday's future will soon look rather antiquated. Old science fiction will

always be part of the history of ideas, but isn't likely to interest the vast majority of people.

If we aren't going to have our own Shakespeare, will we ever have people who are sort of in that direction? Shakespeare was the master of human psychology and his use of language was without equal. His plots weren't necessarily original, and they weren't necessarily very good. He took old material and did it better than anyone had done it before. Looking at it from that viewpoint, George Lucas might be considered a sort of Shakespeare like person. Lucas certainly didn't invent space opera. He added a mythic layer to a common type of SF and did space opera better than it had ever been done before. He gained a very wide audience even among people who didn't generally like SF at all. Will people watch *Star Wars* a hundred years from now? They might. People are still watching *Gone with the Wind* sixty years after it was made. Good entertainment seems to have a very long shelf life.

In "The Zine Dump", you review a couple of punkzines. I've seen some of those reviewed in *Opuntia* also. The idea of a punkzine seems quite incongruous to me. Punks are a bunch of dumb rednecks. It's hard to imagine them engaging in any literary activity beyond spraying a few dirty words on available walls. I imagine the people who become Punks have serious identity problems. If they didn't look stranger and menacing, they might not be anybody at all.

No redneck could publish a zine as literate as Angry Thoreauan. "Punk" is a word to which I ascribe not only youth but thuggish brutality, but it's a name for themselves they've embraced, themselves. Whatever floats their boat.

John Berry's article on the careless safe burglar makes me realize how much things have changed even in the world of crime. Today, not one burglar in a thousand could go up against a safe. Criminal expertise just ain't what it used to be. Of course, it may be that safes have gotten better over the years as well. When a safe burglar does hit he is likely to hit over a wide area and maybe even over the entire country.

Until I read "Gernsback Meets Aristotle", I hadn't thought much about the problems of writing a program to count Hugo ballots. On thinking about it, the problem becomes very complicated very rapidly. I'm not familiar with Perl, but it looks like it has some very useful features for this sort of job. If I were to try doing the same thing in Visual Basic, it would probably take me a couple of thousand lines of code and entire bottle of Excedrin. Of course, the code I usually write usually falls into one of two categories: *cheesy* and *extra cheesy*. If I really knew what I was doing, I might be dangerous.

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It's obvious why *Challenger* was nominated for a Hugo. Plenty of thoughtful sercon material, attractive layout, and a heaping helping of your *joie de vivre* combine to create a pleasurable package. Somehow, it's not surprising that Jeff Copeland became a Perl programmer. Even though I now make my living as a programmer, I know nothing about Perl except the snippets that co-workers have shown me. It looks like this project could also be written in Visual Basic or Java but would require a lot more code in either one, especially for the validation and error routines it would need. As to "Who is SF's Shakespeare?", the fact that we cannot agree on who it is leads to the suspicion that we have not seen our Shakespeare yet. Which is not surprising - the field is still young. In terms of impact on the overall culture, I'd give the nod to Wells and Clarke with Asimov close behind for the laws of robotics. Heinlein had a major influence on science fiction, but nowhere else. (Where was his name on the *Starship Troopers* movie?) One author who could have been our Shakespeare was Ursula LeGuin. Her best work (*The Left Hand of Darkness*, *The Dispossessed*) had incredible richness, even if you did not agree with her politics. But then she stopped writing, which was a real shame. I'm so out of touch with the field, she may be writing again for all I know. As long as our dreamers continue to tell interesting stories, the field will prosper. And when SF's Shakespeare shows up, we'll all know it.

I did not see the previous articles and letters about police brutality, but here are a few thoughts. Ms.



Stinson is completely correct about the dangers the police face every day. They deserve our strong support. But ... it is also quite clear that some of our police, even a few of the good ones, misuse the authority we vest in them. We hear too many stories about suspects being abused to believe all of the stories are false. What scares me is that many of our police seem to believe they can ignore the Constitution and stop anyone at any time, as happened in Indianapolis when they put a roadblock around a ghetto neighborhood and stopped everybody going in or out. Even I thought that was way over the line. For that matter, even though I am no fan of drunk driving I tend to believe that random sobriety checkpoints violate the prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure. If drivers are seen driving erratically, by all means test them and throw them in jail if intoxicated. But let's give a little bit of respect to the words "probable cause".

Heartiest congratulations on your engagement and the best of wishes for married life. Love is not always easy to find in this time and place, so we should celebrate whenever we find it. Also enjoyed your description of the shuttle launch. Have always wanted to see one, but the chance has never been there. Your words brought the *POWER* of the rockets home in a way few others have. Speaking of which, the cultural ministers at Fox did another of their conspiracy shows recently, this one about the moon landings being faked. Strangely enough, they managed to raise a few interesting questions that seemed to defy analysis, mainly about lighting angles and waving flags in no wind. Surely there are reasonable answers to these questions, and I would not put it past the producers to concoct inflammatory material out of whole cloth. On the other hand, has anyone else heard these questions and answers to same?

Finally, Harry Warner turns his attention on the last Challenger to date ...

Harry B. Warner, Jr.

I can't remember any previous fanzine that caused me to want to throw it on the floor and stamp on it, time after time, like the 13th issue of *Challenger*. I must hasten to assure you that this did not result from any of the words or the illustrations in this issue. I don't know how many times I was reading a page and saw out of the corner of my eye a large bug crawling up a margin and had the urge to kill it. Fortunately, I remembered the thalamic pause that general semantics advised everyone to adopt and before acting, I looked straight at the source of the trouble and saw it was nothing but extra-large, extra-boldface page numbers which my phobia against insects had translated into animate creatures.

"Bon Chance" was excellent. I only wish you'd been close enough to the man calling off the countdown

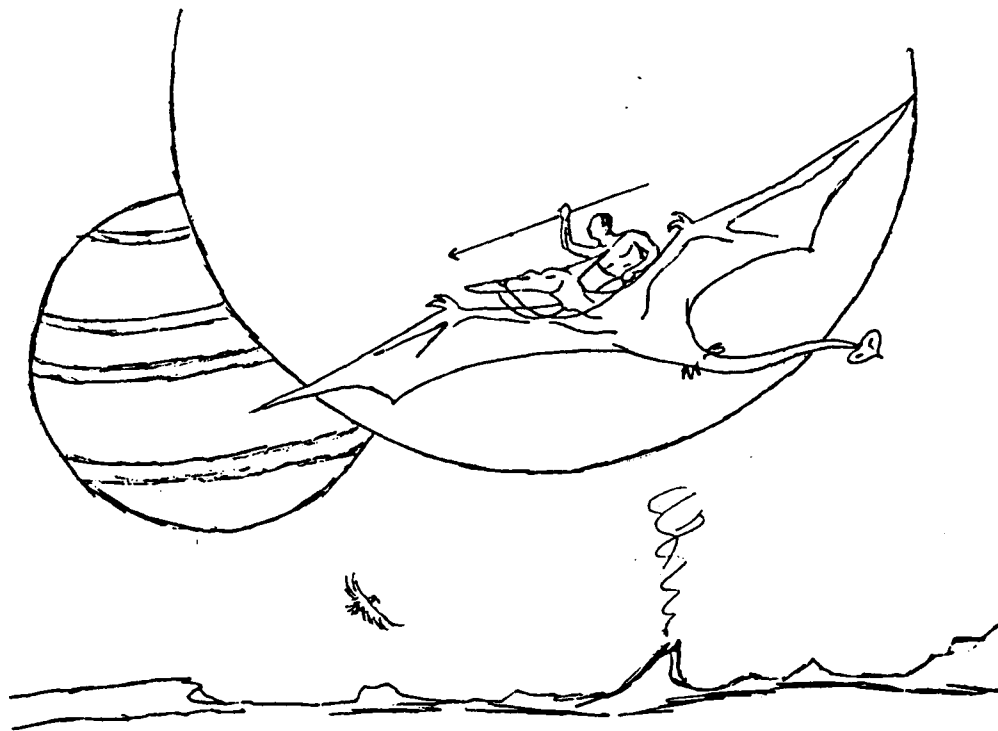
seconds to be able to tell me something I've always wondered about. Does he have a teleprompter, or a prompt card, or a prompter's voice in his ears as he intones ten, nine and so on? If not, does he sweat and fume for fear he'll get rattled and forget what comes next as he approaches zero? I don't suppose his voice is needed for launching but it would be terribly embarrassing if he dried up before he got to zero.

It seems wrong somehow to expect a Shakespeare for science fiction. We know so little about him, except for his supernal ability as a playwright, and so much about the individuals who might qualify for his counterpart in the world of science fiction. Was Shakespeare as good an actor as a writer? How much influence did he have on the staging and acting of his plays? Are the play texts as we have them accurate with a trivial exception or two, or are they seriously garbled in spots and do they contain interpolations by others? There is also the fact that Shakespeare, as far as we know, was wholly or almost wholly responsible for his texts while Stanley Kubrick had much of his work done by other people under his direction. I don't think the future will ever put the screenplay for *2001* into the same literary Valhalla as *Hamlet*, but without time travel we'll never know how an Elizabethan audience reacted to a performance in which a lot of other actors and extras and other participants did their part, like the Clarke book and the FX technicians and the cameramen and the cutters and so on did for the film.

We seem to share an opinion about **Dhalgren**. Delany had the material for a novelette. Why he decided to spend months or years padding it into a novel, I'll never know. Your fanzine reviews in general must be the best in fandom, in the sense that they give the essential information on everything and add to it extra notations where they are needed and they cover virtually the whole fanzine field plus a sliver of the much larger zine output. They also are terribly hard on my guilt complex, because so many of the publications reviewed this time have, like yours, been sitting around this house for many months, awaiting a LOC.

Mike Resnick pops up in yet another part of the world, this time in Slovakia, where happenings are hard to learn about. It was just a couple of weeks ago that I finally learned who won the Slovakian World Series, for instance, in the pages of *Baseball Weekly*. I haven't seen much in fanzines in recent months from the Balkan fans who used to show up with an occasional letter or article. I hope they are all right.

In the letter section, I was glad to read Janice Stinson's opinions on policemen. I would have today an absolutely clean driving record after 50 ½ years if a sheriff's deputy hadn't claimed I was exceeding 25 mph in Gaithersburg, a totally fraudulent accusation, but I've



always remembered that nobody since Christ has been totally sin-free and I've felt outraged every time a newspaper or broadcaster attacks police behavior. I think every announcer or writer who speaks or writes about police brutality during the arrest of a handcuffed man should be required to demonstrate how it should be done by being forced to subdue a normally strong man who is handcuffed, without clouting over the head or choking him or doing anything similarly naughty. A healthy handcuffed male can cause enough damage by biting, head butting, kicking and elbowing.

Perhaps every one who criticizes those who criticize police misbehavior should be tear-gassed or clouted with a billy, just so they'll know what it feels like.

Maybe they wouldn't be so quick to forgive unprofessional police conduct in the name of their own precious and largely imaginary safety.

Charles Williams' "The Pounding" might be the first good evidence of the year that fiction belongs in fanzines occasionally. He seems to have the background material for a much longer version of this story.

All those Chicon photographs are wonderful to look at. I hope some day they will lead off a coffee table-sized book about fandom in the 2000s.

Bill Rotsler seems never to have drawn a cartoon that is appropriate to a LOC of this length and this lateness. Tell me, now that I'm finally finished, why do I feel as if I'd just completed writing the mailing comments section of one of my apazines?

110 *And finally, after an earthquake in the Seattle area ...*

After fielding several panicked phone calls last evening from friends and relatives, I can tell you there's no truth to the rumor that Microsoft is testing nuclear weapons in case the appeals decision goes badly. This was a

run-of-the-mill earthquake – at least for folks who've logged as much time in California as we have. We're fine, with no damage to house or contents or residents (of either the two or four-legged variety). No books leapt off their shelves, no chrome rockets launched themselves from the mantle, no pictures fell off the walls.

Almost certainly everyone else you know in Seattle is fine, too. All the news photos you've seen were of the unreinforced masonry buildings in the old part of downtown Seattle. The area of Seattle around Pioneer Square – where the Starbucks and Amazon offices are – is essentially built on stilts to compensate for flooding from the Sound at the end of the 19th century. That just made things worse.

Two entertaining notes: [Our daughter] Alexandra Katherine – who rode out her first earthquake in Los Angeles at 5:45 one morning in my arms and who after the third aftershock in an hour looked up at me and proudly declared "I know this game now, Daddy! When they move the room, we see who can make it to the doorway first!" – was the last person in her physics class to take cover under her desk. MSNBC is showing some footage of a computer lab on the Microsoft campus during the earthquake. The media devices folks were testing a new digital video camera, and turned it on at 10:53 in a lab exactly two floors above my head and across the hall.

Shaken but not stirred,
Liz and Jeff Copeland
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ILLUSTRATING THIS SECTION

William Rotsler, Terry Jeeves, Scott Patri, Nola Frame-Gray, Charlie Williams, Ruth Shields, Steve Stiles, Kay Stauder, Sheryl Birkhead, Ian Gunn, Joe Mayhew, Teri Sanitorio.

THE PETER'S PENCIL PRINCIPLE

It's June 13, 2001, and life is changing, and about to change even more. This third part of **Challenger #14** is the shortest, but it is by far the most significant.

Over the last few weeks I've been engaged – heh, that too – in moving, and like all moves it's a wake-up-hyperventilating nightmare. I'd lived in my three-room apartment on Fontainebleau Drive for 17 years. While small, my place was a labyrinth of cabinets and cubbyholes, and as I began to clean it out in early May I found junk packed into every cubic centimeter. No, you can bag junk without compunction and pile it by the curb. The stuff I found was *interesting*, it was *precious*, it deserved inspection and contemplation and evaluation and categorization: trash or treasure? I found very little trash. My brother knows. When he moved me from Greensboro, he found in my stuff a Little Golden Book without the cover and covered with pencilled scrawl. It was from his childhood. **Peter's Pencil**.

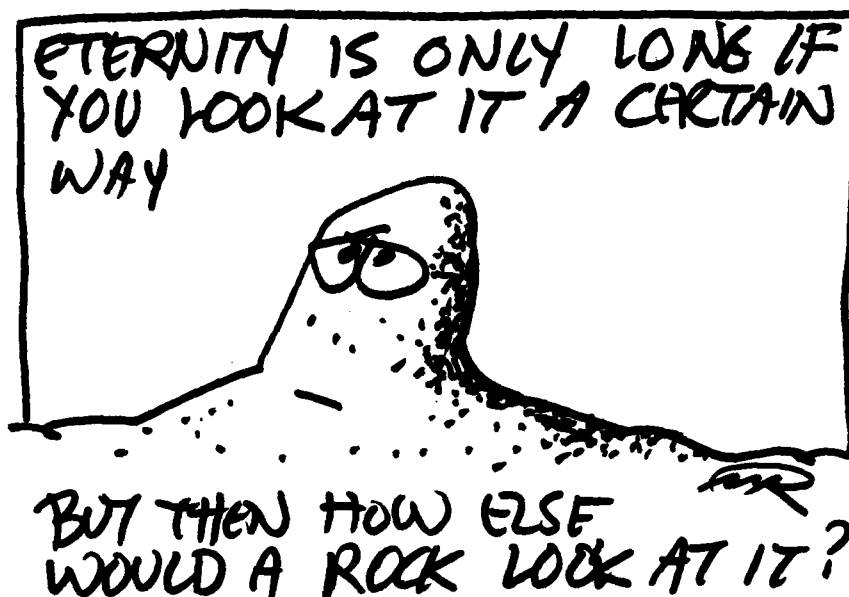
"Aw, isn't that sweet," he said. Then his face twisted into a rictus mixing anguish and disgust. "I'm busting my ass moving **Peter's Pencil** to New Orleans." And he hurled the book into the junk pile. The insensitive beast! Fortunately he was not around to dump the treasures I uncovered in this move.

I found books – tons of books, tons of tons of books – and apa mailings – *why* did I choose to save all my disties when I joined the Southern Fandom Press Alliance in 1971? (Is there anyplace to send that stuff where I can count on it being preserved?) Photos from the past – as precious as the books. The original masters for the Nolacon II souvenir book – where is Dell Harris these days? – and ah! Ned Dameron's original cover. Old letters I found – souvenirs of past relationships and discarded hopes. Old check registers from Greensboro and my first marriage, saved when I moved as hymns to my own bitterness. All (but one) went into the trash. Preserved most everything else.

I rented a storage locker and a U-Haul and moved much, straining my right arm in the process, not to mention the patience of the kind souls who helped me. 30 years of the GHLIII Press in a trunk. 36 years of my journal, in another. Mib and Tony and Susie in a box marked "Precious". What did not go there came here.

"Here" is a huge apartment on a beautiful, tree-shaded street short blocks from New Orleans' City Park. Compared to what I've known, it's a gigantic place – three big rooms, two bedrooms, two baths, a kitchen. Three rooms sport ceiling fans, and we have beautiful stained wooden doors and molding. Spoiled by 17 years without a rent increase, I suffered severe sticker shock when the cost of this place was revealed, but Rosy and I talked it over, and she has no worries, and so here I am. (So is my special neighbor Cindy, until her own new apartment opens up, but that's another story.)

I will miss 4217E Fontainebleau Drive, the pretty parquet ceiling in the living room, the wood paneling, even the crummy wallpaper in the bathroom which I never bothered to replace. I'll miss Archie, the pooch next door, and the pretty chimes from the church around the corner. But there's a reason for this move, a reason founded in faith and hope, and so *you* say goodbye. I'll say hello.





*Rose-Marie & me at Confederation, 1986
Photograph by Jay Kay Klein*

Hello!

By the time you receive this issue Rose-Marie Green and I will either be married, or short days from it. It's to happen June 30th, 2001, at the Porcher House in Cocoa, Florida, scant hours after the launch of a Delta rocket from nearby Cape Canaveral. (Like Joe Major says, what's a good wedding without fireworks?)

I never expected this, you know. I had resigned myself to a life alone. I thought that love was a noble, failed experiment, and that dreams were just dreams. I thought I'd live out my span doing about what I was doing now, and that I would age alone. Not so bad, I told myself; most of the lifelong bachelors I've known have been solid guys whose lives seemed fulfilling. Besides which, I was 50 – even if I didn't feel it, I looked it, and by the half-century mark, the things we've tried and the mistakes we've made have formed a caul of possibility and impossibility around us. I thought life was a *decided* thing. That's true, isn't it? Life is *decided*. This is the way it is; the immutable, finished, concrete way it *is*. Isn't it?

It isn't. However short, life is too big to be written off. Especially because there are other lives involved, lives that resurface suddenly ... and change everything. That's what happened to me. Life has revealed itself anew.

At the end of this month, June, 2001, the beautiful lady I met at MidAmeriCon – a quarter of a century, half of my life ago – will take my hand, and for however long we have together, we will be together, and surprising, challenging, rewarding Life will surprise, challenge and reward us in ways I cannot even imagine.

Unexpected possibilities thrive in life's shadow, surprises lurk beyond fear and hope. You can never tell what will happen next, and it could be wonderful. It could save your life.

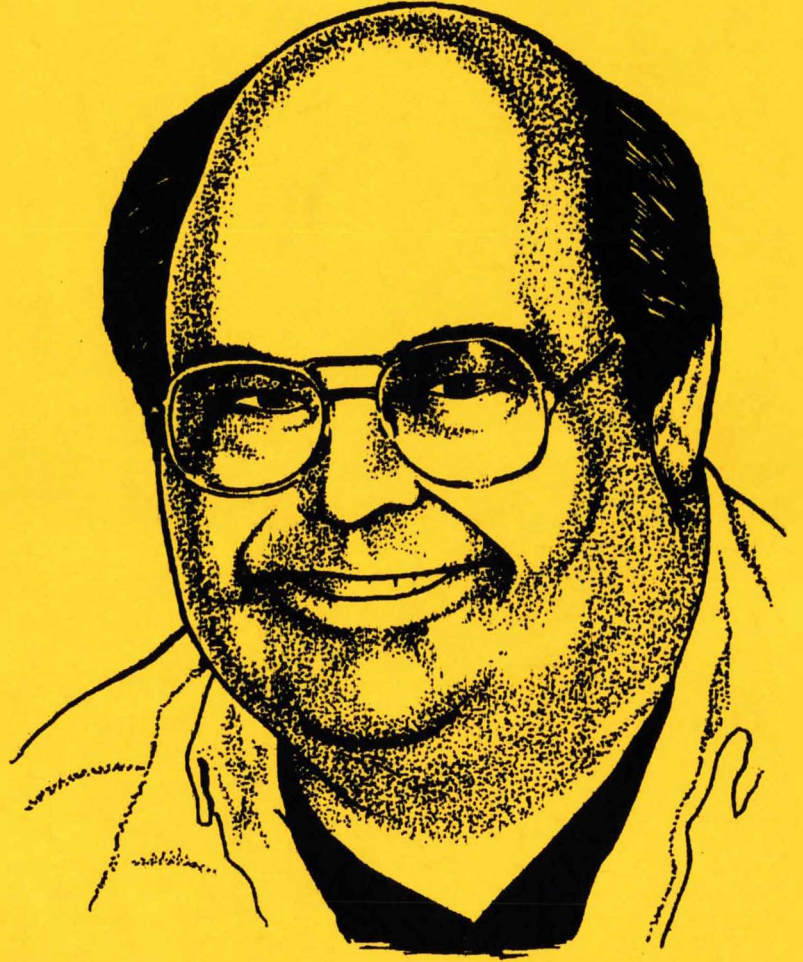
From Camp Concentration:

Much that is terrible we do not know.

Much that is beautiful we shall yet discover. Let's sail till we come to the edge.

Science fiction.

Charlie Williams



RAMPART ST



HE WANTS TO
GET A JOB
INNA ROCK
N'N ROLL BAND
... THE SAG!