

THE TEXAS SF INQUIRER

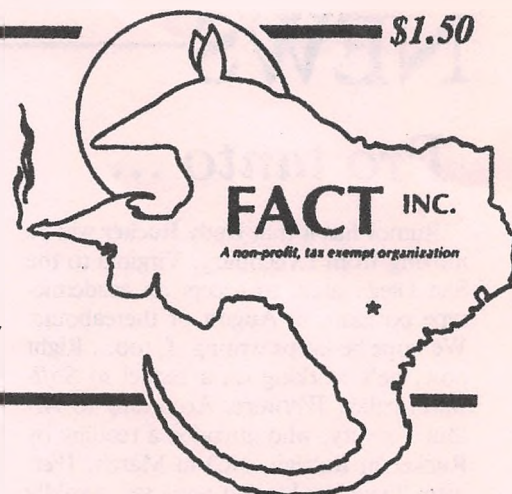
"THE BEST LITTLE NEWSZINE IN TEXAS"

ISSUE 17 — JUNE 1986

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The Texas SF Inquirer is available for "the usual" (artwork, articles, columns, reviews, etc.; arranged trades with other fanzines; letters of comment; news; and useful phone calls) or by subscription.

A six-issue subscription is \$6.00; sample copies are \$1.50 each. (Some back issues are still available, as well.) If you join FACT (\$15/year), a subscription to the *Inquirer* is included with your membership.

The *Texas SF Inquirer* EDITORIAL address is 618 Westridge, Duncanville, TX 75116, phone (214) 780-7662. Please mail all trade 'zines and contributions there!

The main FACT address is P.O. Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766. That's where you should send all FACT-related mail, as well as TSFI subscriptions.

About a week after each issue of the *Inquirer* is published, the main articles and reviews from that issue are posted on the SMOF-BBS, an Austin computer bulletin board system (300/1200 baud) sponsored by FACT. To call the SMOF, dial (512) UFO-SMOF.

Articles, columns and reviews this issue — Craig W. Chrissinger, Houston Travis Crockett, Fred Duarte, Ferk, Al Fitzpatrick, Daramea Godfrey, Edw. A. Graham, Jr., David Herrington, Pat Mueller, Ernie Scrapple, Kris Sellgren, Dennis Virzi.

Art this issue — Brad Foster (pp.7, 15); Alexis Gilliland (p.18); Edw. A. Graham, Jr. (pp.9, 13); Chris Pasanen (p.11); Doug Potter (pp.12, 16); Mel. White (p.2); and Kip Williams (pp.8, 20).

Thanks to David Herrington, for helping mimeo and collate the last issue.

Many, many thanks to Data Base Publications of Austin, Texas, for donating the type for this and previous issues of the *Inquirer*.

"WorldCon," "World Science Fiction Convention," "WSFS," "World Science Fiction Society," and "NASFiC" are service marks of the World Science Fiction Society, an unincorporated literary organization.

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CONVENTION LISTINGS

Coming next issue: More reviews — prozines, small press, fanzines, stage and screen ... plus Hank Graham's review of "The Dark Knight" and "The Shadow" with a consideration of their impact on Western Civilization As We Know It ... an article by Taral on The Huitzilopochtli Effect (after all, he can write about it with impunity ... he lives on the Canadian Shield!) ... a wonderful one-page cartoon from Kip Williams on Joining Fandom ... locs (finally) ... and more! pm

NEWS

Pro tanto ...

Rumor has it that **Rudy Rucker** will be moving from Lynchburg, Virginia to the San Diego area, to accept an academic-type position, in August or thereabouts. We hope he keeps writing sf, too... Right now, he's working on a sequel to *Software*, called *Wetware*. According to Arthur I. Levy, who attended a reading by Rucker in Raleigh (NC) in March, *Wetware* "could be his best book yet, a wildly inventive and hilarious tale of robots impregnating a human female with a new *Übermensch*."

Bruce Sterling is finishing up the copy-editing for his cyberpunk anthology, due out in the late fall this year from Arbor House. Depending on the production schedules, you may even see copies of the anthology, tentatively titled *Islands in the Net* (which includes work by Rudy Rucker, William Gibson, Pat Cadigan, John Shirley, and Lewis Shiner) at this year's Armadillocon. Also, **David Hartwell** just bought Bruce's new novel from Berkley Books for Arbor House.

Speaking of David Hartwell, that illustrious editor has just bought **George Alec Effinger's** "super knock-'em-dead" new novel, *When Gravity Fails*, from Bantam Books. It's rumored to be the best book of Effinger's career, and he'll probably be at Armadillocon this year, politicking for next year's Hugo...

Howard Waldrop reports that when he completes the novella he's working on for Gardner Dozois, he intends to go back to working on his John Mandeville novel. Also, he and **Chad Oliver** are planning a pilgrimage to Little Big Horn late this summer, as Chad is working on a "Custer's Last Stand" western for Bantam Books.

After that — well, maybe a new sf novel, Chad says.

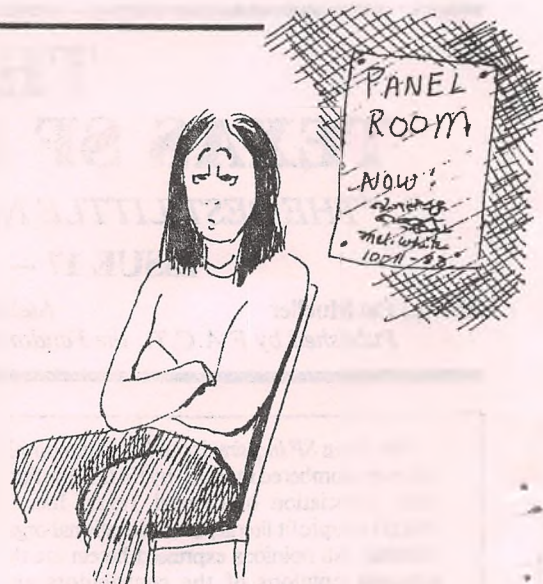
Would you believe that there are over a million copies of *Dhalgren* in print?!!

If you enjoyed **Suzette Haden Elgin's** *Native Tongue* (and are waiting impatiently for the sequel, due out this year), you ought to appreciate this — *A First Dictionary and Grammar of La'adan*, by SHE herself. Elgin is currently director of the Ozark Center for Language Studies in Huntsville, Arkansas; La'adan is a real language she created as background for *Native Tongue*. The *Dictionary* costs \$7 for saddle-stapled, \$8 spiral-bound (plus \$1.50 per order for shipping) from SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701.

Dragalorn is the creation of fantasy artist **P.D. Breeding**, who has won recognition for her unique paintings. The world *Dragalorn* is a place where magic, dragons, and elves — all the familiar trappings of fantasy — are put in a new light and made more realistic. *Dragalorn* the novel is a series of graphic art books, telling of a quest by an unlikely troupe... and now there's the Official *Dragalorn* Fan Club, to keep you informed of the events going on around and involving *Dragalorn*. A membership in the fan club costs \$5; write to them at PO Box 63129, Wetmore, TX 78163.

Good news for **George R.R. Martin**: *Twilight Zone* has been renewed for thirteen more episodes...

An interview with Daryl Lane appeared as a Sunday filler-type article in the February 16 *Dallas Times Herald*. Lane co-produced the "Science Fiction Radio Show" which aired from 1980 to 1983, and heads the English department at Odesa College (where he teaches a course in science fiction). During the course of the interview, Lane states, "Everybody who writes a book these days has got to do a



BORED, BUT ENLIGHTENED

trilogy or something," and "For some reason, New Mexico has more than its share of big names... The whole Southwest is pretty heavy with good science fiction authors." And yes, the *Times Herald* called it "SciFi" in the headline...

Corgi Books is printing Flying Buffalo's solitaire adventures for *Tunnels & Trolls*. **Mike Stackpole** is reading and editing the line here in the U.S., and is asking for submissions (send a 39-cent SASE to P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252).

On other gaming fronts, Andrew Merri-les is editing a new play-by-mail gaming magazine called *Juggernaut*, and is "seeking a new pool of talent to author game reviews, strategy articles, and related material." He can only pay .01/word on publication, but reviewers get to play the pbm games at no cost, and he promises a "top-notch presentation in print (typeset, illustrations, the works). His address is 7322 Kingsgate Way, West Chester, OH, 45069.

(By the way, "pro tanto" is Latin for "for what it's worth." —Pat Mueller)

You've Got To Give Fans Credit ...

...so we can get one of these stefnal charge-cards! Different banks use different artwork laminated onto their MasterCard and VISA cards — and Austin's Lamar Savings has some of the prettiest artwork I've ever seen on their plastic. Last year, Lamar Savings was granted a charter for the first bank branch on the moon, and decorated their bank lobbies appropriately with artists' renditions of what such a branch would look like (up to and including small children playing games with gravity). This year,

they've revamped their charge cards to feature art from a glass painting by Dave Archer of San Raphael, California. The art, a space scene with a large moon, gaseous nebula-like clouds, and several planet(oids), one with rings, is quite impressive. In addition (and along a more mundane vein), there's no annual fee for either card, 24-hour cash availability via ATM, and a 25-day interest-free period on new purchases (their regular interest rate right now is only 14.1%, to boot). For more information, call 1-800-LAMAR88.

An Amazing Snafu

I'm sure some of us have heard the story of how Hugo Gernsback lost control of *Amazing Stories*. Gernsback claimed he was the victim of a conspiracy by Bernarr McFadden, who, through various legal machinations, forced Hugo's publishing empire into bankruptcy. It wasn't until eight years ago, in the May 1978 issue of *Amazing Stories*, that Tom Perry set the record straight. Amazing as it seems, ol' Hugo had his hand in the till. Therefore, I was rather amazed that an article in the May 1986 *Amazing*, written by T.W. Black, repeated the old, discredited conspiracy tale... —David Herrington

Pickersgill Wins TAFF Race

TAFF will be sending Britfan Greg Pickersgill to ConFederation in Atlanta this year.

The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF) was created in 1953, to provide funds to bring well-known and popular fans familiar to those on both sides of the ocean across the Atlantic. Since that time, TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and European fans to North American conventions. TAFF exists solely through the support of fandom, funded by donations and through auctions of donated materials; candidates are voted on by interested fans all over the world.

Voting in this year's race was open to anyone active in fandom prior to September 1984, and a total of 249 fans sent in their votes. TAFF uses a preferential ballot system (aka the "Australian" ballot), which guarantees automatic runoffs until a majority is obtained. Voters ranked the TAFF candidates in order of preference. Also, to win, a candidate must have received at least 20% of the first-ballot first-place votes cast on both sides of the Atlantic, separately. Ballots included an option for "Hold Over Funds" for voters who felt that no TAFF trip should be made this year.

Pickersgill's co-candidates were Simon Ounsley and Judith Hanna. The voting results were as follows:

First Ballot

| | | European | North American | Total |
|-------------|---|----------|----------------|-------|
| Ounsley | 3 | 37 | 44 | 84 |
| Hanna | 5 | 16 | 40 | 61 |
| Pickersgill | 1 | 48 | 49 | 98 |

Hold Over Funds — 2 votes

Write-in Candidates: Yorkshire Ripper — 1 vote, Ken Slater — 1 vote, Terry Jeeves — 1 vote, "Woofie Bear" (a fan artifact belonging to Kate Solomon) — 1 vote.

Second Ballot (condensed)

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Simon Ounsley | 114 votes |
| Greg Pickersgill | 125 votes |
| Hold Over Funds | 7 votes |
| No Preference | 3 votes |

Greg Pickersgill was nominated for TAFF by Mike Glicksohn, Arthur ("ATom") Thomson, Rich Coad, Avedon Carol, and Linda Pickersgill. His TAFF platform, from the TAFF ballot, reads:

"Sometimes I'm not Boring. Occasionally I'm Wonderful. Anyway, you either know who I am and what I've done, or you don't, and don't care. Whatever, since meeting fandom in 1967 I've done a bit of everything. I was even a fanwriter, but now I just, you know, *perform*. So what. I like Guinness, Dos Equis, *Performance*, Anne Warren, Pizza, and Neat Stuff, and I can't stand bullshit about pretension and fandom fans. I have met several Americans and become very attached to them. I will go out looking for a good time and meaningful conversations. 1986, Big Fun and No Sellout."

According to Patrick Nielsen Hayden, North American TAFF administrator, Pickersgill will

be spending at least a month in the U.S. If you'd like to offer your hospitality, drop Greg a line at 7A Lawrence Rd., South Ealing, London, W54XJ, UK. Linda Pickersgill, Greg's wife, will be coming over also to spend part of that month traveling around with Greg. Patrick says Greg is of medium height, a little chubby, and has enough facial hair to "look like a lampshade." Patrick also said that Greg has a "remarkable temperament" and "sure is a rowdy guy." All flippancy aside, however, Greg is a really fun person to be around, and we hope to see him in Texas!

(The above information came from a phone



call from Patrick Nielsen Hayden. He and Teresa Nielsen Hayden are the two North American TAFF administrators. Their address is 75 Fairview #2D, New York, NY 10040.)

DUFF Results Announced

This year's DUFF winner(s) are Lewis Morley, Marilyn Pride, and Nick Stathopoulos, who ran as a combined candidacy. Also on the ballot were Terry Frost, Sally Beasley, and Mark Loney/Michelle Muysert.

The Down Under Fan Fund (DUFF) is a fanish charity supporting visits between fans in North America and those in the Australasian region. This year's winners will attend ConFederation, and will be Australasian DUFF co-administrators for the next two years.

Any fan active in fandom before January, 1985 was eligible to vote in this year's DUFF election; 168 fans voted. DUFF uses the "Australian" preferential system of balloting to guarantee an automatic run-off and a majority win; the following table shows the voting results by geographic area.

Votes by Geographic Area

| | North Amer. | Aust. | Total |
|---|-------------|-------|-------|
| Morley/Pride/Stathopoulos (as of 6th run-through) | 28 | 44 | 72 |
| Frost (as of 6th run-through) | 60 | 7 | 67 |
| Beasley (as of 1st run-through) | 37 | 2 | 39 |
| No Preference (as of 5th run-through) | 29 | 2 | 31 |
| Loney/Muysert (as of 2nd run-through) | 20 | 6 | 26 |
| Hold Over Funds (as of 3rd run-through) | 13 | - | 13 |
| Write-in (Bangsund, as of 1st run-through) | 2 | - | 2 |
| Write-in (Wal' Footrot, as of 1st run-through) | 1 | - | 1 |

On December 29, 1985, Sally Beasley withdrew from the race, and the three DUFF administrators decided in advance that her first place votes would be counted but not the votes in subsequent run-throughs. Beasley withdrew for several reasons — she couldn't afford to take an unpaid vacation for her trip, and she didn't feel that "someone who really can afford to go overseas without DUFF ought to win — let it go to someone more deserving."

Morley, Pride and Stathopoulos were nominated for DUFF by Forrest J. Ackerman, Sally Beasley, Terry Dowling, Van Ikin, Joyce Scrivner and others. Their platform on the DUFF ballot read as follows:

"(Lewis speaks on Nick and Marilyn's behalf) Having been into rubber for some time, I was delighted to find that fandom held a niche in which I could flourish and fester. Together with Nick and Marilyn, I discovered a group of caring and interesting people who encouraged us to always push ourselves further. My personal interests have included regular entries in Masquerades which let me enjoy absurd behavior in complete anonymity. Most importantly, I feel that Nick, Marilyn and I represent a VISUAL face to fandom: while our written contributions have been fairly sparse, in creating a tangible aroma (for want of a better word) in the field of fan Art, we feel 'strong' enough to give fans overseas a good idea of what Australian fans are about. And being VISUAL we promise a trip report with SLIDES!!!"

And now it's time to start thinking about 1987. The deadline for acceptance of nominations for next year's DUFF race is Sunday, August 31, 1986. In this race, the winner will come from the North American continent and will attend CAPCON, the Australian national SF Con (to be held April 25-27, 1987, in Queanbeyan, A.C.T., just outside of Canberra).

To run in this race, a candidate must post a non-refundable \$10 bond, provide written nominations from 3 North Americans and 2 Australasians, a written platform of 100 words or less, and a promise (barring acts of God) to travel to CAPCON in 1987. In case of multiple candidacies, DUFF pays for one set of fares, accommodation and expenses.

(This information was extracted from *Here We Go 'Round The Duffberry Bush #3*, the DUFF newsletter produced by Marty and Robbie Cantor, North American DUFF administrators. Their address is 11565 Archwood St., North Hollywood, CA 91606-1703, phone (818) 982-1746.)

NEWS

1987 NASFiC:

CactusCon May Turn Into Prickly Pair

I've received a copy of the "first occasional" (come on, guys) issue of the Committee and Volunteer Newsletter for the 1987 North American Science Fiction Interim Convention (NASFiC) — CactusCon. It's evidently edited by Eric Hanson — though you have to read it closely to figure that out — and these guys are on the ball here! (Although they probably could use a catchier name for the zine...)

I was a little alarmed when I got this in the mail... um, it was like addressed to *me*, and the colophon stated, "We're sending this newsletter

out to you for one of several reasons. You're a volunteer or committee person for the NASFiC, a person who volunteered for other Arizona cons (and not for CactusCon yet), or you're someone we'd like to see volunteer for the convention and hasn't yet worked on an Arizona convention." I find the word "yet" in that statement a bit scary... so I thought I'd just blithely assume that these guys wanted to be mentioned in the *Inquirer* and leave it at that... at least for now.

Anyway, there's a committee list and meeting

schedule inside, as well as some tentative notes and plans. According to Hanson, CactusCon is aiming for an attendance figure of 5,000 for budgeting, advertising and planning purposes, he says they're anticipating a minimum of 3,000 attendees, and need at least 4,000 attendees to properly use the Civic Plaza. (I think these figures are a *bit* high — after all, this is a NASFiC and not another Worldcon a la Iguanacon — but I could be wrong, what with the population of the Phoenix metroplex and with Los Angeles only being an 8-hour drive or cheap plane ticket away.) On the other hand, if they change their minds on those figures by this August, they'll save as much as \$30,000 by not using the Plaza during the daytime...

CactusCon has almost 1300 hotel rooms available, blocked at the San Carlos, Phoenix Hilton, Hyatt Regency, and the Heritage hotels. The Hyatt is the HQ and party hotel, as well. Room reservation cards will go out in early 1987.

They're also doing some interesting things, organizationally. For instance, memberships for all first- or second-level committee members are complimentary. Volunteers (i.e., non-Committee) are being asked to purchase their memberships, though CactusCon hopes to refund that (as well as a portion of other convention expenses) if funds remain after the convention. The con also plans to try to assist all Committee members with hotel room costs for the con, depending on how the finances are doing. Hanson adds an editorial comment: "And gang, when was the last time you heard of a NASFiC going broke." We clear our throats gently here and mention the Louisville NASFiC (the one before the Austin NASFiC), which, although it didn't go broke, certainly ran *real* close to the wire and didn't end up with a whole lot of money afterwards...

They also plan to print the programming schedule in the committee newsletter before the convention (probably because printing it afterwards wouldn't do much good), so volunteers can work out a tentative availability schedule. This sounds like a great idea to me — let's see if they can get everything to come together in time...

A question that they're kicking around right now is, "How heavily should we emphasize media?" Someone seems to have proposed adding "media guests" to the roster (subject to the convention's being able to pay for them to attend). Sounds dangerous to me... especially since most media guests charge a fairly hefty "speaker's fee" in addition to the usual transportation, hotel costs and per diems that sf guests settle for. What if sf guests start asking for such fees, too? Sounds like trouble... as does the proposal of having a "parallel convention" run at the Hilton as part of the NASFiC, with all the media concentrated there.

Anyway, if you'd like to volunteer, write to Sam Stubbs at P.O. Box 27201, Tempe, AZ 85282 or call him at (602) 838-6873. The convention address is P.O. Box 11743, Phoenix, AZ 85061. The convention dates are September 3-6, 1987; attending memberships are \$30 to 9/15/86 (\$15 for supporting).

—Pat Mueller

As A Matter of F.A.C.T.

News and Notes About the Fandom Association of Central Texas

Renew Those Memberships!

There are a *lot* of people whose FACT memberships expire with this issue. I hope this issue convinces you to re-join! (And you'd better hurry, too — or you'll miss the July issue!)

Speaking of the July Issue

I plan to put it together and print it as soon as I get the computer, light table and mimeos unpacked from my move. It's not going to look as *pretty* as this issue... I mean, I won't have access to free typesetting for a while, so there'll be a mishmash of dot-matrix and typewriter and typesetting. (The editor cringes, but pubs anyway.)

(I know, I know, you didn't really expect another issue until August. But that's tough. I'm the editor, and I say there'll be a July issue, too. So there.)

Meetings/Parties

Saturday, July 12, 1:00 p.m. — ?

party at Fran Booth's new apartment complex, in San Antonio, Info/directions, call 443-3491.

Sunday, July 13, 1:00 p.m.

FACT meeting, ArmadilloCon meeting in the clubhouse at Fran Booth's new apartment complex. See above.

Sunday, August 10, 1:00 p.m.

FACT meeting, ArmadilloCon meeting at the Austin History Center (810 Guadalupe, next to main library), Austin — info/directions, call (512) 443-3491.

Sunday, September 14, 1:00 p.m.

FACT meeting, ArmadilloCon meeting; Austin History Center.

Friday, October 10 – Sunday, Oct. 12

ArmadilloCon

Sunday, November 9, 1:00 p.m.

FACT meeting, location to be announced.

Sunday, December 14, 1:00 p.m.

FACT meeting, location to be announced.

Most of the "location to be announced" meetings will probably be held at the Austin History Center. The room they gave us for the June meeting was really nice (and, after all, we all know that the best things in life are free).

FACT Membership Cards

Well, there was high water. The Membership Cards *were* ready to be printed, but they got revised. Expect them in about two weeks (if you go to the July meeting, you can probably pick yours up there).

T-Shirt Update

Fred Duarte *really* wanted his FACT t-shirt in time to wear at Westercon, but we can't even order the shirts yet — our minimum order is 36, and we aren't even close yet.

(The shirts are \$11.50 plus 50 cents postage for FACT members, and \$27 plus postage to non-FACT members.)

The FACT Membership Directory

Remember, the deadline for returning your membership directory listing form (or a reasonable facsimile thereof) is June 31. I hope to have the directory ready to hand out at the July meeting, but we'll see.

FACT WorldCon Plans

"FACT" will have a single-parlor, two-bedroom suite at the Atlanta Hilton for WorldCon. The room will cost \$275 a night, plus tax, divided among everyone staying in the suite (although FACT will be holding a party there Sunday night, the room will *not* be subsidized by the club). Let us know by August 1 if you want to stay in this suite... (if we don't get enough people, we'll cancel the reservation).

SASFA Plans Writers' Workshop

The San Antonio Science Fiction Association will again sponsor a writer's workshop on June 21 and 22, at the home of Lynn and Judith Ward (9214 Bridlewood, Bldg. 59, #3, San Antonio, TX 78240). Stories for the workshop should be under twenty thousand words, complete — and should not be media-related. (If you don't have a story ready you can still attend, but you can't critique.) There will be a reading session Friday, starting at about 6:30 p.m.; munchies and drinks will be provided. The Saturday session will begin at 9:30 a.m.; both breakfast and lunch are being catered by Judith Ward. Rory Harper of Houston will preside over the workshop; he is expected to arrive about 9:00 Friday night. Lynn and Judith do have extra sleeping space, but would appreciate knowing how many need it (please call them at 512/691-1554).

SF Adventures Available on Tape

We've received an odd catalog from not-for-profit arts organization called the ZBS Foundation... They produce "cassette adventures" which originally aired on the radio — NPR Playhouse and the like. Flipping through the catalog — aha! *Ruby: The Adventures of a Galactic Gunshoe*. How about *The Incredible Adventures of Jack Flanders* ("Wizards, pirates, sorcerers and whizzing cannonballs pursue our hero across yet another realm...") *Stars & Stuff* — which includes stories like "Rocket Pierre, Trapper to the Stars" and "Motorcyclists from Mars". Stephen King's *The Mist*. Karl Edward Wagner's *Sticks*. Stefnal stuff... you could listen to it as you drive to conventions, or something. There's even a "Sampler" tape available that's a complete one-hour radio show, including scenes from all the Flanders series and *Stars & Stuff*, for only \$4... Call them at 800-662-3345 (they take MC and VISA), or get on their mailing list (I've read zines that were less entertaining than this catalog). Their address is RR #1, Box 1201, Fort Edward, NY 12828.

Holland To Bid For 1990 WorldCon

At Aussiecon 2 in Melbourne, Dutch fandom officially announced its intent to bid for the 1990 Worldcon. The bid was quite well-received, and already has more than 170 pre-supporting members. Roelof Goudriaan, editor of the newszine *Shards of Babel*, is vice-chair. For more information (or a pre-supporting membership, which is \$5) write to them at Postbus 95370, 2509 CJ THE HAGUE, The Netherlands. American agents are David Schlosser, 6620 Hazeltine Ave. #9, Van Nuys, CA 91405; Charlotte Proctor, 8325 7th Ave. South, Birmingham, AL 35206, and Neil Belsky, 410 Ocean Parkway 6B, Brooklyn, NY 11218.

About Those Fanzine Hugo Nominations ...

... and the pesky intrusion of, er, non-traditional zines such as *The Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild Newsletter* and *Universal Translator* (a *Star Trek* zine that, according to what I've heard, only lists other media zines available).

Anyway, in the latest issue of *File 770*, Mike Glyer reports that an editorial in the GFCGNGN urged readers to block-vote the zine in Hugo nominations as a method of demonstrating how important costume fandom is. He comments, "Condign revenge will come their way, for this act of hubris. Right after the Perfect Duplicator Chorale (applications now being accepted from fanzine fans) barges into the worldcon filking and performs the tune that Poul Anderson and Jerry Pournelle taught us, we'll get into our Princess Leia wigs and white sheets and form a Flying Wedge into the Masquerade. Hey, we don't get all the attention we think we ought to get, either!"

For those of you who were wondering about the technicalities of the matter... Article II of the WSFS Constitution discusses the Science Fiction Achievement Awards, more popularly known as the Hugos. Section 11 lays down the law about the Hugo for "Best Fanzine": "Any generally available non-professional publication devoted to science fiction, fantasy, or related subjects which has published four (4) or more issues, at least one (1) of which appeared in the previous calendar year, and which does not qualify as a semiprozine."

A semiprozine, according to Section 10, met at least two of the following criteria in the previous calendar year: (1) had an average press run of at least 1000 copies per issue; (2) paid its contributors and/or staff in other than copies of the publication; (3) provided at least half the income of any one person; (4) had at least 15% of its total space occupied by advertising; or (5) announced itself to be a semiprozine.

WorldCon '86 Update

ConFederation, the 44th World Science Fiction Convention, will be held August 28 through September 1 this year in Atlanta, Georgia. Guest of Honor is Ray Bradbury; Fan GoH is Terry Carr; and Bob Shaw is Toastmaster.

Memberships are \$65 until July 15, and higher at the door. Supporting memberships (\$25) are available until 7/15. For more information, etc., write them at 3277 Roswell Road, Suite 1986, Atlanta, GA 30305.

Remember, you have to send in your hotel reservations by August 15 — but sooner is probably better, especially if you want to get into the Hilton (both the party hotel and the main programming hotel). According to reports I've

heard, the Hugo award ceremony, masquerade, art show, and registration will be in the Marriott, across the street. The room rates for the Hilton are \$59/s, \$69/d, \$79/t, \$89/quad; in the Marriott, they're \$76 across the board. Room reservations should be sent to ConFederation Housing, 233 Peachtree St. N.E., Suite 2000, Atlanta, GA 30043 (not the regular ConFederation address!).

Also, the deadline for mailing in your Hugo ballots is July 15. You have to be a member of the convention to vote — this year, you can't join when you vote (sounds like a good ploy to halt any "barbarian invasion" ballot-stuffing at the last minute)...

Dallas Fan News

Dallas fandom is keeping busy! Neil E Kaden is masterminding a series of "First Saturday" parties, hosted by different Dallas fan each month. Unfortunately, these are usually scheduled the same weekends as FACT parties in Austin...

Also, an old Dallas fan social club called the "Loose Confederation" is getting back together again. ("Loose," as their friends call them, used to put together the old "Runaway" relaxacons in the Dallas area.)

On a more disturbing note, evidently a relatively unknown Dallas fan is putting together a 1991 Worldcon bid. I don't have any hard facts right now, but their "coming out" date is July 3rd, when they hit Westercon with flyers.

I've heard from two sources that the committee has blocked the Anatole in Dallas completely for Labor Day weekend in 1991 (room rates have been set at half the Anatole's normal "rack rate" — which is good, since the Anatole is ex-

pensive).

Other reports, which are a bit less reliable (remember, this is hearsay, now) say that the bid chairman has \$10,000 in operating capital, supplied from California movie studios; that the chair has never run a convention himself (major or minor), although he's apparently worked on one or two; that the convention will be run to make a profit, and will emphasize media and comics; and that among the big sf conventions he's hoping to make a bid splash at is this year's Origins — which is actually a big *gaming* convention.

Now, a Dallas Worldcon might not be a bad idea (as long as I don't have to *work* on it)... but handled improperly, this bid could really damage the reputation that Texas fandom — and FACT — has struggled to build up the last few years. I'm withholding judgment until I get something more concrete from this committee, but it doesn't sound promising...

An Open Letter to British Fandom

from Dennis Virzi

Several of us Texans are planning on jumping the big puddle next August (1987, that is) to attend Conspiracy, the UK Worldcon. This will be, for most of us, our first sojourn into a foreign land for the purpose of attending a science fiction convention. (More of us would've gone "down under" to Aussiecon, but there was the small matter of the NASFiC...) Since this is going to be quite a big deal for us — and since I like to plan 'way in advance — I have some questions.

When I discuss attending a US Worldcon, I generally talk about the city, the hotels, the expected attendance, and the fuggheadedness of the concon. The rest I take for granted.

When I talked about the LA Worldcon, I planned on attending Disneyland, didn't concern myself with personal safety and ignored the weather. Baltimore (visit the Washington museums, ignore the weather, be aware of personal safety) was pretty much the same.

What can I expect from Brighton? Charts of mean monthly temperatures and annual rainfall don't tell me a damn thing. How much humidity/heat/cold/rainfall can I expect? Can I wander about alone in relative safety, or are crowds (three or more) advisable? Does fannish attire upset the locals?

I like to stay at the "main" convention hotel — the one with the bulk of programming. This wasn't a problem at Baltimore or LA — all I had to do was return the reservation card promptly to get the hotel I wanted. Will this be the case with the Brighton hotels? Also, the hotel rooms at Worldcons, while expensive, are usually comfortable and more than adequate, with the choice of either two double beds or a king bed, and always with a full bath and daily maid service. Do things work this way in England too?

We always worry about crowding, etc. at Worldcons, and we always complain about the fuggheadedness of the concon. So in these areas I don't anticipate any different answers.

Now comes the part that really concerns me — the stuff I take for granted that

might, at worst, get me into trouble. Or that might, at best, make the trip less than what I expected. I like to have fun.

Disgusting American Habits

I don't know what they are just yet, but I can guess. Foremost, I like to enjoy myself.

I'm concerned about Brit fandom in general. (I hasten to add that I don't know any British fen at all, though I have just sent off for a subscription to *Ansible* in the hopes that it will help. Rumor has it that a British fan comes over here for US Worldcons on some sort of fund that's similar to that wonderful exchange we have with Australia (DUFF). I've met just about every DUFF since '78 and have enjoyed them all. But I must rely on hearsay regarding the actual existence of their British counterparts, TAFfers.)

I'm concerned about British fandom, because I've read British SF. Are you Brit-fen as murky, downbeat and gloomy as your sf? (Not to mention your TV. I'm fervently hoping that you're nothing like the nail-the-camera-to-the-floor stultifying style of "Masterpiece Theatre." Though a Hammer Films-like environment is probably wishful thinking.) Don't get me completely wrong, though — I'll be civil and friendly to Chris Priest and Brian Aldiss (John Brunner is another matter, however, especially after that last piece he wrote for SFR).

Most of us American fans tend to dress casually. Blue jeans, t-shirts and casual footwear are normally worn to all con events. I don't think any of us own tweed coats with leather patches on the elbows (see below). Can we dine and sight-see dressed like this?

The people I know eat between two and four meals a day; we tip 15% of the bill and complain about high prices and/or poor service. Personally, I expect to spend anywhere from \$15/day to \$35/day on meals (see below). This amount translates to the cost of about one hardback US novel on the low end, to either two hardbacks or ten paperbacks on the upper end. (Of course, these figures depend on one's per-

sonal tastes in food and publishers.)

I don't think of the sheep as a food source (and neither do our Aggies), and the only fish I'm likely to eat is the fried cod that goes into fish 'n chips. I have no idea what *basted eggs* consist of. And us Texans drink a lot of iced tea, too. We like hamburgers and steak. Can British food be as *unusual* as I've heard?

I like open room parties, whether giving or attending. One of the primary reasons for having a private bath is to be able to stock the tub with plenty of ice and beverages for the aforementioned party. We share our party supplies (one of the few socialist ideals we approve of). We will have to be *told* that what we see isn't for everyone if that's the British way of partying. Otherwise, I'm going to help myself. (I'm a lot of fun at room parties.)

An Inquiry Into The Estimated Future Levels of Fuel Stock: Newcastle

OK, now this is real important to me. *Femmefans*. What's the scoop?

I, along with everyone else from Texas, am most anxious to meet new people and establish long-term friendships. Will there be enough to go around? Should we bring our own? Would you like for us to bring enough to share? We already know how to successfully meet (etc.) American fans of the opposite sex. Are there any peculiarities (like tweed jackets with leather elbow patches, or buying meals) about meeting (etc.) Brit femmefans that we should know about — and that you're willing to tell me about?

No doubt there will be fans from *The Continent* in attendance as well. Should we concentrate on any of them? If so, which ones? (To draw the U.S. analogy: Mid-western fans — yes, lots of fun; Albuquerque fans — no, sorry.) Remember, we have a double language barrier — we don't speak or understand any other language, and what we do speak is American. We want to make friends so we can return again (and again).

Be seeing you,
Dennis Virzi

Tri-Continental Fandom

by Al Fitzpatrick

The Texas SF Inquirer is gaining quite a reputation as having the best con reports of any fanzine now around. Since conventions outside North America are starting to gain attention, I thought we'd gain some perspective on Tri-Continental fandom from former Brit-fan and former Aussie-fan (and now current Yank-fan) Al Fitzpatrick.
—Neil E Kaden



A short time ago, Neil asked if I could write an article comparing SF cons on three continents. The grounds he quotes for this article: I'm the only fan he knows who has attended several conventions in three principal areas — the USA, the UK and Australia.

Somehow, I don't feel I'm qualified to do this — especially since it's been nearly two years since I attended any conventions at all. However, I'll try to do something constructive, even if I only convey my own personal impressions.

The first point I should make is it has been a long time since I attended an Australian convention — and more's the pity. I attended several conventions in Australia from the early- to mid-'70s. In 1976 I found myself in England, and from that point to 1981 (when I last attended a convention) I mainly confined myself to the UK and USA. Hence, my comments deal with conventions through these periods, and I've no idea just which way conventions have developed in Australia.

An SF con is an SF con, and basically it does not matter where it is held. If you were teleported from a US con to a UK con, for instance, you wouldn't be totally lost. A little bewildered at all the new faces, yes, but you'd fit in.

It's difficult to make any straight three-way comparisons between cons in these countries, so I'll start by comparing, in a very generalized fashion, UK cons with US cons. The UK is smaller than the US, has far fewer fans and holds far fewer conventions annually (though there are more cons now than there were a few years ago). This means you'll usually find the same hardcore sf fans at any UK con you might attend, which makes keeping track of your friends far easier. Programming, as far as I recall (and from what little I saw) is much the same, except you're possibly more apt to find more fannish and trivia items in England.

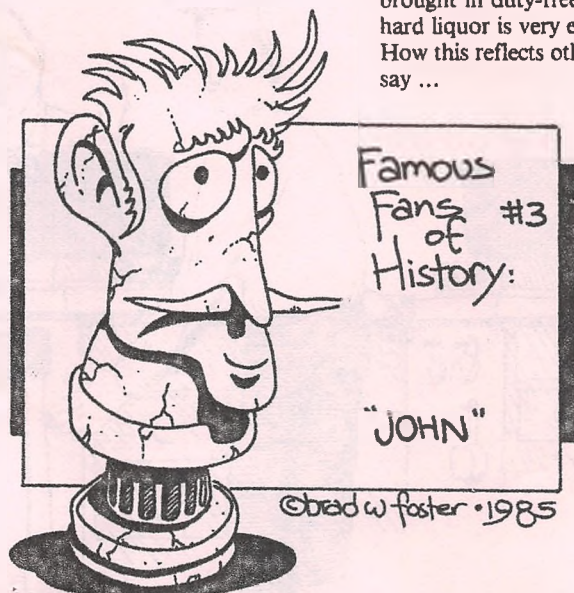
The principal difference between cons in the US and UK is the Bar. In England, the Bar is the main meeting place at the convention, and is in demand from the moment it first opens

(10 a.m. to 11 a.m.) until it finally closes. The Pub in England has always been a meeting place and social club, and this tradition has carried over into sf conventions. Most fannish drinking is done in the bar throughout the day, evening and night — there are very few room parties. What room parties there are tend to be more impromptu than properly organized. In comparison, here in the USA the bar is little used (except by pros and editors), and most drinking and socializing revolves around room parties organized by individual groups or in the con's own hospitality suite (something I don't really recall seeing in the UK). This difference is, in its own way, minor — but it can throw you. A US fan attending a UK con for the first time may wonder where everyone is, not thinking to check the bar. And when first attending a US con, a UK fan is apt to first check the bar and wonder what has happened to everyone. So, if you want to find everyone at a con in the US, hit the room parties in the evening; in England, check the bar any time it's open. And at a UK con, fans are more likely to be interested in the volume of beer consumed than the number of attendees.

Australian cons tend to fall somewhere between the two extremes — or at least they did

when I was attending them. It seems to me there were fewer hard-drinking fans there than you'd find at the average UK con; nonetheless, if there was a bar around I'd find some people there even during the day. Room parties did exist but were again usually more impromptu and usually "Bring Your Own Grog," so more often than not wine was the principal drink available. Not knowing for sure how cons there have developed, I'd have to take a guess and say they tend more toward the US idea of room parties — though, I guess, BYOB as often as not — than toward the UK idea of heavy bar drinking.

I'm really not qualified to talk about mainland European cons. I've only attended two — one in Stockholm in 1976, and one in Copenhagen in 1977. Both cons were very similar in that they were held in university halls, with attendees staying at scattered locales. Most of the attendees seemed to be local fans who arrived in the morning when the programme began, attended all the programmes and promptly went home when the last film concluded. However, it was possible to find a small group of UK/USA con-goers sitting around drinking cafeteria beer and socializing. The occasional room party or two was usually organized by some group from out of the country which had brought in duty-free liquor. (Beer, wine, and hard liquor is very expensive in Scandinavia.) How this reflects other European cons I can't say ...



The Death of Jimmy Fred Jumpball

by Houston Travis Crockett

For about two years now, I've been delivering book reviews to the *Texas SF Inquirer* under the name Jimmy Fred Jumpball. These were remarkable pieces of egoboo that I did primarily to amuse myself and my friends and, vaguely, to see my work in print.

During this period, I did some good humorous writing. I raked some books over the coals for no better reason than they didn't fit what I deemed to be the basic reading of the unwashed hordes. It was fun. People would sit around and we would laugh (or convulse, on a few occasions) over whatever it was that Jimmy Fred was going to review that particular time. Sometimes, I even read the books. But *never*, I repeat NEVER, the John Norman atrocities.

So, you say, why are you writing this true confession for us now? Patience, dear Reader, there is a reason. I'm sitting here

in a motel room in Monroe, LA. The television is hideous and this column is approximately two months late. It's been gnawing in the brain and a tumor has begun to form. What to say; what to do.

I thought of a love letter from Jimmy Fred to the wonderful Sue Denim, but that didn't work. I said I would kill off Jimmy Fred, but that seemed to be a ratings ploy. So, I did what any right-thinking person would do in the situation. I picked up a book and read.

The book was *Speaker for the Dead* by Orson Scott Card. It was brilliant and moving. I wanted to review it even before I finished it. I couldn't. Jimmy Fred would have hated the book.

I could have ignored it, as I have many other important books during the past two years. Did I review James P. Blaylock, Tim Powers, William Gibson (really), or Scott Card. No! I was pandering to mind-

less masses talking about *crap*! Who cares about the latest David Drake or Gordon Dickson?

Folks, we are on the verge of a new Golden Age. In the last five years, we have seen the rise to prominence of the above-mentioned writers and a host of others. Every time I see a new piece by Shepard or Robinson I am reminded of what it was like in the late '60s when there would be a new Ellison, Delaney, or Zelazny. These are the times of Wonders. The Locus Recommended Reading List contained 28 (I believe) stories from the pages of *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*. That's twice as many as the next closest magazine contained (*F&SF*) and more than two per issue published. This is the cutting edge of what, twenty years from now, your children will think of as Science Fiction.

Was it 20 years ago that we saw *Babel-17*? How about *Lord of Light*? What are the books your kids will remember? *Neuromancer*? *Schismatrix*? *Ender's Game*? How about *Memory of Whiteness*? Did you read these books during 1985? Have you read *Speaker for the Dead* or *Count Zero*? Why haven't you? Were you too busy slogging through Drake, Dickson, or the interminable Del Rey fantasy trilogies?

I don't want to be remembered for fostering books that Jimmy Fred liked. I want people to realize that there are wonderful books being published right now. Books that I've got to read. Books that I cannot afford not to try to make you read. So, I slit the throat of the son-of-a-bitch and say, "Good Riddance, Jimmy Fred Jumpball. You were fun, but now you're gone. Thank God!"

I'm going to list some names. These are people who rarely go wrong. I'm sure I'll leave some out that you like, probably some that I like. Sample from the list. Drink the forbidden waters of Knowledge. Bite the goddamned apple!

The names: Gibson, Shiner, Sterling, Powers, Blaylock, Jeter, Walter Jon Williams (not Paul), Milan, Griffin, Wrightman, Shepard, Robinson (not Spider), Sholtz, Card, Lansdale, Barrett, Cadigan, Rucker, Shirley, Kessell, Kelley, Willis, Bear, Waldrop.

Now, for the book review. *Speaker for the Dead*, by Orson Scott Card. Read this book! It will rip out your heart, if you have one. It breaks new ground and will be remembered long after Heinlein is forgotten.



Houston Travis Crockett

At the Launderette

by Ernie Scrapple

It's all a question of timing, really. Sylvia's got it down to a fine art. I mean, I even learned a few things offa her. 'Course, knowing the machines helps — but ya still gotta have the right moves to do it right.

Take the Air Force dude, for instance. He ain't got no notion o' the rhythm involved in doing one's laundry. That guy just dumps all his stuff into the washers and jams in the quarters like it was some kind race. What a waste of time and motion. He's still gotta find and add the soap. Plus, since he didn't bother to scope out the competition, he's gonna have to wait on a dryer.

Sylvia, on the other hand, knows how to play the Maytags. She has a "loss leader" load ready — it's in the first available machine even before the grimy front door is completely shut. That's the load she'll use to snag a good dryer. If things are busy, it won't matter if that load sits a while (it's usually towels, anyway). She ends up cutting her waiting time 'cause the real stuff is still going when that first load stops.

The military dude started all his stuff at once without thinking about the logistics of pullin' three loads of wet laundry outta the Maytags simultaneously. While he's struggling to empty three full machines, Sylvia's pumping her clothes into the dryer he had his eye on. At least he ain't singing like last time.

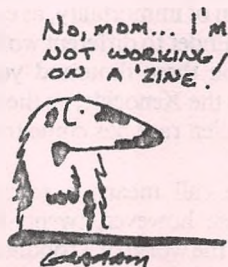
Speaking of timing, I fortuitously discovered a series of *launderette novels* 'cause I had a little extra time at the newsstand the other day. I was browsing around and noticed a paperback sporting the worst cover I've ever seen on a book intended for sale to the general public. In place of the usual little cover illo, it had the flyleaf blurb printed below the title. That's what drew my attention to the book. If I didn't have the spare time, I'd have passed it by. No eye appeal at all. I mean, it was *ugly*.

It turned out to be a *mystery genre* novel by Warren Murphy of the *Destroyer* Murphys. Author recognition made me shell out the three bucks for "Another great Devlin Tracy mystery." Besides, I just hadda see what inspired such an awful cover.

Surprise! The book was real entertaining. It contained all the stuff that makes for a satisfying read: good story, nice pace, interesting characters, tits, decent plotting and the requisite number of clues.

The framework here is a life-insurance claims investigator who checks out the death of clients. You know, the company wants to make sure they have to pay. Trace does the legwork and solves the crime.

Murphy stays true to the genre and plays fair, but you'd have a hard time noticing it. Trace is on the wrong side of forty, he's lazy, he's a heavy drinker, he's a heavy smoker, he doesn't like his boss and can't remember the names of



From the Recliner

by Edw. A. Graham, Jr.

I have finally gotten back into reading just about everything I can get my hands on. Some time last year I got burned out on fantasy — unfortunately. But SF is still first in my heart.

And speaking of heart, Greg Bear's *Blood Music* is on the shelves. I always disliked cover blurbs — and the one on this book claims *Blood Music* is the "Andromeda Strain of the 80's." Bull. The only similarity I can see is that the Andromeda virus and the genetic virus created by Bear's demented genius spread Real Fast and that they melt things. Other than that, they bear (sorry) no relationship.

Blood Music starts off with a pretty hefty premise of "intelligent" cells that, when combined with other genetic material (like you and me, boopsie), form a collective intelligence and absorb the "memories" of whatever or whoever it encounters (how would you like to *really* know what your pet turtle thinks?). These guys have their "daddy" to thank for their freedom (he injects himself) — and there goes the U.S. of A.

Some people are spared (the rest of the world except for some isolated cases) and the big protein glop disappears from this universe/dimension. That's one thing that bothered me about the ending — it's a little too Zen for me, but I try harder. Another factor is that the people encountering the (for lack of a better word) "disease" are either transformed or (rightfully) terrified of it. The people being transformed are scared as hell, and Bear portrays them as such. The rest of the characters — well, they seem a little too shallow. None of them really stick, except for the girl who is given a choice of either being transformed or remaining as she is. But even she is somewhat of a cardboard cut-out. All in all, not a bad book, but there's something a lot bet-

ter his two kids that Jaws (his ex-wife) has custody of. Best of all (for me, anyway), he has a live-in girl friend that's half his age.

Trace drinks, smokes and comments on life in general while he grudgingly but methodically investigates the case. Like the *Destroyer* novels, *Trace* is full of satire and humor. I was genuinely surprised to discover that, at the end, there indeed were clues planted throughout the story.

So it ain't got any space ships or elves in it — read it anyway. It's funny and the lines will give you something new to say at the next room party.

Trace: Once A Mut, by Warren Murphy, is number four in the series and carries an April 1985 copyright notice. The NAL Signet edition is about a penny a page, and worth it. ★

ter out there.

Cobra and *Cobra Strike* by Hugo-winner Tim Zahn are the something. I like reading the "military" sf. Some of it tends towards space-opera, but not these books. I wouldn't even classify them as purely military. You could call them part of the "mirror-shade" or "cyberpunk" or "whatever" genre, since a *Cobra* is a cybernetic-implanted soldier, with servos, bone sheaths, and a computer to control the hidden weaponry (all of which sound logically thought-out). But they don't even really fit there. These two books are solid novels built out of the best parts of cyberpunk, military, and hard-core SF combined with good old-fashioned story-telling.

Small Bits: I'm trying to catch up on the past couple of years' worth of reading, so I keep finding good books that may be out of print. Be that as it may, you may have missed them too.

The "Sten" series of books by Cole and Bunch (*Sten* and *Court of a Thousand Suns*) — militaristic, but the Eternal Emperor is my kind of guy. Good action and adventure, with enough inside the heads of people that they're not two-dimensional.

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card — if this doesn't win a Hugo, I will seriously doubt the sanity of the entire fannish community. This novel can be described in one word: "WOW!"

Nerilka's Story by Anne McCaffrey — I can't believe I paid that much for it. Disappointing.

The Norby Chronicles by Janet and Isaac Asimov — what is it? A juvie or what? The two stories are as mixed up as Norby is. The best it gets at times is cute.

My tacky green-vinyl recliner is calling me. There's twelve books stacked next to it, and I'm in the process of reading all twelve. I love it! ★

OFF THE RACK

Book Reviews

Speaker for the Dead

by Orson Scott Card

TOR Books (hardcover, 415 pages)
reviewed by Fred Duarte

Speaker for the Dead, the sequel to Card's Nebula-nominated *Ender's Game*, evokes even more of the emotion present in the first book. In *Ender's Game*, Andrew ("Ender" — his sister couldn't pronounce "Andrew") Wiggin is recruited by the military academy in charge of training young boys as soldiers in the war against the alien insectoid "buggers". Boys are used because their reflexes are faster than those of adults. Much of the training involves zero-gee battlefield combat against rival troops also in training.

What Ender and the other recruits don't know is that every tactic Ender uses to bring about a victory is carried out in real life, by ansible, to the human fleet fighting the bugged forces. This eventually leads to the ultimate destruction of the buggers, and Ender is hailed as the savior of the human race.

However, none of the buggers wanted to be at war with the humans in the first place. They are (were) a sentient race misunderstood by human paranoia. The truth comes crashing down on Ender: he killed an entire, benevolent, sentient race... all except for a hive queen that makes contact with him. Ender has empathic abilities that border on the telepathic, and the hive queen lets him know that things will be all right as long as she finds a world to renew her race on. The dedication to finding the right planet ends *Ender's Game*.

"Speaker for the Dead" is the only name Ender goes by now. A "Speaker" is someone who gives a kind of requiem for the deceased, telling what the person's life was really like rather than how it appeared to be. Naturally, there is some baring of truth that the living would just as soon do without. But Speakers are so revered that when the call goes out for one, he has almost plenipotentiary powers when he arrives (even though that might not be for years, due to relativistic effects).

Ender receives a call for someone to Speak for a person's death. The call originates from Lusitania, a planet with human colonists as well as a semi-sentient race of

porcine animals nicknamed *pequeninos*, or "piggies". The call is by hologram; the caller is a very young girl with the look of a child who has had to become an adult very prematurely. The stark image moves Ender deeply, reminding him of his own lost childhood, responsible for the death of a race. He decides to take the call, and to take it alone. His sister Valentine has accompanied him on all of his Speakings, creating an illusion of immortality, as each Speaking has led Ender to different worlds by starship. Some three thousand years have passed since the Xenocide, as the destruction of the alien race has come to be known.

Accepting the call means a starship flight of ten days; however, twenty-two years will pass on the world of Trondheim. Leaving Valentine behind is the hardest thing Ender has ever done.

The death that Ender has been asked to Speak at is the demise of one of the Biologists assigned to study the piggies. His name was Pipo (a Portuguese nickname). He and his son Libo were trying to learn about the piggies from a particularly bright specimen they named Rooter. Rooter seemed to find out more about humans than the biologists could learn about the piggies, though. One morning, Rooter is found in a clearing in the jungle; he has been completely eviscerated, with each internal organ laid neatly aside and at least a thread of flesh still connecting it to the trunk. There is also a tree growing from the center of Rooter's corpse.

By law, the biologists can only record events, and not delve into the specifics of *why* something happened. However, it remains very much on their minds.

Pipo is studying the genetic structure of the flora and fauna of Lusitania when a revelation hits him. He runs out to the forest to meet with the piggies, and is gone all night. In the morning, his son Libo and an apprentice xenobiologist, Novinha, go looking for him. They only have to look as far as the clearing. They find Pipo — in the same condition they found Rooter's corpse.

And so begins the saga of *Speaker for the Dead*. Essentially, it is the story of a deeply sensitive man trying to assuage the guilt of the murder of a race, a guilt that has been preying on his mind for over 20

subjective years, but which has had time to fester for over 3,000. Ender will have to solve the puzzle of the *pequeninos* before he can begin to see any hope of peace for himself.

A moving and powerful book, as tightly written as *Ender's Game*, this book is sure to be an award contender next year. ★

Heart of the Comet

by Gregory Benford and David Brin
Bantam Spectra (hardcover, 468 pp., \$17.95)

reviewed by Fred Duarte

This hard-sf novel is a collaboration by two great award-winning storytellers, Benford and Brin. Each added to the novel's scientific realism with their own specialty: Brin with a doctorate in astrophysics, Benford with a doctorate in physics.

Heart of the Comet has three main protagonists: Carl Osborn, troubled leader of the comet expedition; Saul Lintz, gifted genetic biologist; and Virginia Kaninamou Herbert, cybernetics expert who rides the thin line between human and artificial intelligence.

In the 21st century, when Halley's Comet makes its next pass through the solar system, a manned expedition is sent to the comet to turn it into a colony cum research starship. The crew is divided into two factions, the "Percells" and the "orthos". Simon Percell was a geneticist who manipulated human genes to help cure certain inherited diseases. Added benefits to the genetic manipulation included improved health and longer lifespan. Such enhancements were sneered at by those of "orthodox" genes, that is, normal or non-manipulated genes.

A generation of "Percell" children with altered genes died a slow, lingering death due to "unforeseen side effects", and Simon Percell ended his life in a fit of remorse. It is these deaths that linger in the minds of ignorant "orthos".

For the "Percells", the mission is one of potential vindication for those of their kind; for most of the "orthos", the mission is an alternative to political exile and possible death on Earth.

Saul Lintz is the lone "ortho" of the trio, and Virginia is attracted to him. Naturally, Carl is attracted to Virginia. This eternal triangle is different than most in that all three have to work with each other extensively for the duration of the mission.

A skeleton crew was to be a "first watch" for the first sixteen months, with the rest of the crew in semi-suspended ani-

mation. However, the presence of life-forms poisonous to humans alters the schedule drastically. The appearance of a fungus on the walls of the corridors signals the advent of purple worm-like creatures that feast on human flesh.

So begin the trials and tribulations of the comet mission. The expedition also goes through several mutinies and plagues (and mutations of plagues). When news is relayed to Earth that the mission is contaminated by Halley life, steps are taken to prevent the mission's return to the inner solar system.

The novel takes the mission through trial after trial, with decent storytelling; it bogs down slightly halfway through, but that's nothing you can't muddle past.

I found a few things I disagreed with. For instance, the length of the mission (100+ years) seemed a bit long. (Even with suspended animation, anything over 20 years seems too long for me). Also, the possibility of a sequel is left open at the end. (Do we wait another 76 years for it?) ★

Kachina

by Kathryn Ptacek

TOR Books 1986; 306 pp., \$3.95

reviewed by Craig W. Chrissinger

Former New Mexico resident Kathryn Ptacek's latest novel is appropriately dedicated to Albuquerque author Tony Hillerman. In it, she attempts to create the same kind of mood and authenticity as Hillerman did in such novels as *Dance Hall of the Dead*.

Unfortunately, she is not as successful. But then, Hillerman has had more experience with the Pueblo culture and with writing.

This is not to say that *Kachina* is a bad book. On the contrary, it is interesting reading. My complaint is that it reads more like a historical gothic romance than as a horror story exploring Indian myths.

Elizabeth Stephenson is accompanying her anthropologist husband, William, on a trip to the New Mexico Territory in 1880 to study the Konochine, an isolated pueblo tribe. While there, she begins to have strange dreams of a woman in white with a blood-painted face that chases her. The dreams begin to slowly take over her life as she learns the ways of the Konochine people. She is accepted by the tribe while her husband is rejected. Eventually, she learns of the kachina for the Outcast Woman and realizes it is the figure from her dreams.

Ptacek's novel builds slowly to a bloody ending, but manages to hold the reader's

attention. The most horrifying element of the story takes place on the last page.

I was intrigued by a tuckerised version of Albuquerque author Robert Vardeman in chapter nine. He appears as an old man with a burro — a prospector who also delivers mail. During a terrible storm, he says he "holed up in a cave near Cenotaph Mine." I also found myself wondering about the last name of the main character, since Stephen R. Donaldson writes mystery novels under the pen-name Stephenson.

Although I liked *Kachina*, I preferred Ptacek's two earlier horror novels. This is

a novel I would rather have waited a few more years for ... after Ptacek has gained more experience and has done more research. ★

Faces of Fear

by Douglas E. Winter

Berkley Books (\$6.95, 1985)

reviewed by Ferk

Faces of Fear contains seventeen interviews with writers of horror. These are not interviews done in the straight, *Playboy-*



style, question-and-answer format. Quotes from the writers are interspersed among biographical information, bibliographical information, and lots of philosophical editorializing by Winter. There are also appendices containing Winter's guide to the best horror fiction (1951-1985), best horror films (1951-1985), and general reference information regarding horror fiction.

Some of the interviews are hackneyed: Robert Bloch repeats stock lines he usually recites in interviews and speeches, and Stephen King echoes numerous other King interviews. Some writers, such as Clive Barker, speak of intense, enthusiastic love of the genre. Others, such as William Peter Blatty, emphasize that they have no strong preference for the horror genre — it just happens to be where they made their reputations and/or money. The interview with Whitley Strieber is particularly interesting — Strieber dodged Charles Whitman's bullets on the University of Texas campus and lived to describe the experience. ★

Free Amazons of Darkover

by Marion Zimmer Bradley and the Friends of Darkover
(DAW Books, Dec. 1985, \$3.50)
reviewed by Ferk

This is an anthology of eighteen short stories and two versions of the "Oath of Free Amazons." Two of the short stories are by MZB; the rest are by aficionados of this subculture of the Darkover fantasy world, reprints from Darkover fanzines or original to this collection. The stories vary in theme from pseudo-historical sociology to pure adventure tales. Each is introduced by a short MZB essay, usually including a biography of the author and a short description of how the story fits into the Darkover Free Amazon milieu, and, sometimes, the history of the story's creation and/or printing history.

In the book's introduction, Zimmer writes of how the Darkover Amazon fantasy has been taken seriously by some female fans, who have changed their names, formed communes, and taken the aforementioned oath. Surprisingly, women have approached Zimmer at conventions, asking her to accept their oath. These things are done in the name of radical feminism and liberation. This is puzzling: what is radical about submitting to a subculture that defines standards of behavior as rigidly as a nunnery? What is "freedom" if you have to ask someone else for permission to have it? I suppose using catchwords is easier than taking responsibility for one's own

life and decisions. Harlan Ellison has written that, after hydrogen, stupidity is the second most common element in the universe. Self-delusion seems to run a really close third. ★



It's a waste recycling system
I sold to NASA. It still has a
few bugs, but the price was right.

Voyagers II

by Ben Bova
TOR
reviewed by Fred Duarte

This is a sequel to Bova's 1981 novel, *Voyagers*; in that book, renegade NASA astronaut Keith Stoner manipulates the US and USSR into sending a spacecraft to intercept an alien vessel that is making its way into and then out of the solar system. Due to the Russians' sabotage of the fuel tanker, the intercept vessel is only able to meet the alien ship for five minutes. Stoner decides to stay with the alien vessel and make the US come after him by shaming them. The novel ends there.

In *Voyagers II*, 18 years have passed and Stoner becomes the first man to awaken from cryogenic freeze. The alien craft was recovered by Vanguard Industries, whose vice president happens to be an old flame of Stoner's named Jo Camerata. There are no details as to how Stoner was awakened; only now, Stoner is co-inhabited by the alien who was in the craft. Part of the book deals with how various world factions try to gain the knowledge the alien has deposited in Stoner's head. Fusion energy was puzzled out from the propulsion system of the alien craft, as was an energy shield impervious to nuclear attacks (more or less rendering nuclear weapons useless).

Stoner escapes the protective custody of Vanguard Industries, and, with Vanguard's

ex-head of Public Relations, embarks on a trek across Africa to try and stop the one major war left on Earth. In order to do this, Stoner sets up a conference between the heads of the major combatants. The conference is held at Olduvai, a fitting place for modern man to settle disputes.

Stoner manages to bring about a ceasefire. He also learns that the major supplier of arms for the war is none other than ... Vanguard Industries.

The president of Vanguard, who also happens to be Jo's husband, goes to the orbital station containing the alien craft, and orders its destruction. It is there that the real power behind Vanguard Industries is revealed.

Voyagers II is filled with the political intrigue Mr. Bova seems so fond of. Some readers may object to the way the alien reduces humanity to the lowest common denominator — but when thinking on galactic scales, perhaps that's the only way to do it.

A good two or three evenings worth of entertainment, with a slightly mawkish ending. ★

The Cybernetic Samurai

by Victor Milan
(Arbor House (hardcover, 300 pp., \$15.95)
reviewed by Fred Duarte

Victor Milan has made quite a splash with *The Cybernetic Samurai*, billed by Arbor House as his hardcover debut. As the title implies, the focus of the book is the creation of a truly sentient computer that, ignoring such differences as carbon- or silicon-based life, can be called a "person". Naturally, this computer is the best in the world.

The setting for the book is a very near future (20 to 50 years), in post-holocaust Japan. Of the major nations, Japan was the least hit (only a two-megaton blast in Tokyo). As can be expected, the countries remaining have deteriorated into two factions: those that huddle around what technology is left, in hopes of rising from the ashes, and those that wish to return to a hunter-gatherer society.

The head of a major corporation in Japan, Yoshimitsu Akaji, enlists the help of Dr. Elizabeth O'Neill, an American crippled by radioactivity, whose deep involvement with artificial intelligence is, naturally, her main avenue of escape from her handicap.

Much of the book is devoted to the education of the super-computer, together

with the underlying political intrigues in trying to control the computer and the high-tech company that developed it.

This is a fairly strong book, with just enough empathy developed for Dr. O'Neill and her machine. ★

Out of My Head

by Robert Bloch

NESFA Press

reviewed by Ferk

Published in connection with Boskone XXIII, this is a collection of twenty-two articles and stories, mostly on the topic of fandom and mostly from the 1970's and 1980's. Cover and interior illustrations are by Bob Eggleton.

Out of My Head contains observations and memoirs of fannish subculture in general and of particular people whom Bloch cherishes, such as Fritz Long, 4E Ackerman, Bob Tucker, August Derleth, and Carl Jacobi. In his essay, "Oldies But Goodies," Bloch anecdotally reminisces about Worldcons past. He mentions how during Midwestcon, 1953, Arthur C. Clarke modified his presumably dignified, proper image by doing flamingo imitations:

"'Great awkward creatures ... They go like this.' ... Arthur rolled up his trousers to display his legs, stuck his hands under his coat and flapped the sides like wings — and waded into the water, shoes and all, squawking happily."

Most clever of Bloch's numerous efforts at mocking fandom is "The Conventioneer's Prayer," addressed to "Kali ... Guardian of Thieves, Strangers, and Science Fiction Convention Fans!" He repeatedly and specifically begs protection from:

"*Mutants* ... people who are not governed by normal physiological laws ... getting up at 9 or 10 in the morning ... A few are even cheerful."

"*Peas* ... every Convention Banquet includes peas ... On long sea voyages in the days of sailing ships, they used to preserve the bodies of dead officers in rum, and then give the rum to the crew the next voyage out ... those barrels are still in use today, storing Convention peas."

Look-alikes ... Dozens of fans have the same sensitive pointed heads."

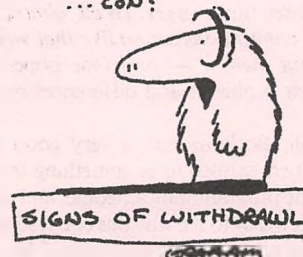
In exchange for the beneficent assistance of the goddess, Bloch offers fair trade sacrifices, including her choice of his slitting the throat of either a black goat or Richard Geis at the crossroads.

Judging by Boskone XXIII, Kali hasn't responded yet. ★

AT THE CONS

Convention Reports

...CON? ...CON?
...CON?



It seems that Dennis Virzi started something with his report of "CarveCon IV" in issue 14. Following is another "con report" from a place even more exotic than Albuquerque ...

PineappleCon 0

report by Kris Sellgren

PineappleCon 0 was a wonderful relaxacon held on a recent weekend in Honolulu, Hawaii. All of known Hawaiian fandom was there, with Eowyn the Cat as GoH (a popular choice due to the predominance of Live Cat Fandom over Dead Cat Fandom on the concom). The con was held at the home of former Madison fan and current Women's Apa member Kris Sellgren, in a cozy two-bedroom cottage nestled between Diamond head and the Ko'olau Mountains.

Unlike most fannish events, sleep was one of the most popular programming items, all other events being postponed until midafternoon. Following a typical Hawaiian breakfast of chocolate milk and leftover mushroom and pineapple pizza, the action moved to a local beach, Ala Moana, for a relaxing afternoon in the tropical sunshine. The water temperature had dropped to a chilly midwinter temperature of 75, discouraging prolonged swimming, but the con attendee was content to lounge on a beach towel, work on her tan, and read *Love and Rockets* comix.

After a gorgeous Hawaiian sunset over the Pacific Ocean, the question of where to hold the banquet was debated. The multi-ethnic nature of Hawaii's culture leads naturally to a wide variety of restaurant choices. Keo's Thai Cuisine, Little Shanghai Chinese restaurant, and Kamigata Japanese restaurant were the clear favorites among the concom, with O-Bok's Korean restaurant and the Indian place on King Street lagging in the voting. Fortunately for the con's finances, tortillas and cheese were discovered in the con suite fridge, and so quesadillas and apple juice were settled on, with a non-vegetarian alternative of Kal Kan Kitty Stew preferred by the GoH.

After the banquet the evening was devoted to the ultimate fannish activity, reading sf. Copies of Pinkwater's *Last Guru*, Liz Lynn's *The Silver Horse*, and a collection of Leigh Brackett short stories were glimpsed in the con suite. The relaxacon broke up the next day with the arrival of Monday morning and mundane job demands. A good time was had by all, and the next PineappleCon is eagerly awaited. ★

Boskone '86

*Texan stranded in Yankeeland
with no iced tea to drink —
imbibes beer to survive!*
report by Fred Duarte

Well, I finally made it to a Winter Worldcon. It was nearly as large as its namesake — total attendance was over 4,000, including three Texans. Perhaps we should have worn cowboy hats to be more conspicuous.

Programming killed my IRS panel, so I decided to work at the convention proper. Three hours after working registration, I was ready to go gonzo. The line I was working started out being "P through Z"; it got so long, we split off a separate "P through R" line.

Registration was very much a controlled panic. For 15 or 20 minutes at a time, the line would be 10 or 20 people long; then it would trickle down to nothing. At various times, there seemed to be too many chiefs and not enough Indians...

I also got "conned" into working the con suite for a couple of hours (2-4 a.m., Saturday morning). The con suite was open the clock 'round, and was dry. There were lots of people watching Bugs Bunny cartoons at 3:00 in the morning...

I managed to gain entrance to the Bluejay Books party through my superior knowledge of American culture. A guy named Gerard was the door guard, and he wouldn't let anyone in unless they sang a few bars of "Kumbaya". Being the well-rounded, educated person that I am, I knew some of the lyrics, hummed them, and was subsequently admitted. Unfortunately, a lot of other people knew the lyrics too, since the party was packed to the gills. Not only that, but all the liquor was gone by that time as well.

By this time, Gerard was getting obnoxious about letting people in. One of the people who couldn't get in was from the hotel's room service, with more ice. This was too much for Jim Frenkel, who had a heart-to-heart talk with Gerard about his expulsion from the party. I left at this point...

The TOR Books party was tame by comparison — not as many people, a larger suite, men

and women trying to become couples by trying to impress each other. Bluejay had run out of booze, and TOR was out of free books ... so there wasn't much point in hanging around...

At the dead dog party, I heard a lot of serious smuffling over the trials and tribulations of the Atlanta Worldcon. It sounded almost like an instant replay of the '85 Austin NASFiC, only on a scale three times larger. [Well, almost all big national conventions sound like that when you talk about them... — pm] One hopes they'll solve their problems and differences by Labor Day.

Overall, Boskone had a very good atmosphere. There seemed to be something for everyone on the programming schedule, and ditto the parties. It's easy to see why this con is so popular on the circuit — almost any type of fan can fit right in. Just don't order iced tea at the restaurants! ★

Boskone XXIII Boston, February 14-16 report by Ferk

Arriving at Boskone Saturday morning, I immediately discovered that pre-registered check-in was divided into two lines, A-L and M-Z — and absolutely everyone trying to go through registration at 10 a.m. was in the first group. Next, I discovered that the women's restroom in the main program area had been designed by a pronouncedly misogynistic engineer: while the temperature was in the 20's outside in Boston that morning, the restroom was air-conditioned and at least 20 degrees colder than that.

Noon Saturday, a pro-space pep-rally/panel "The Shuttle: Looking Forward" was held, featuring head cheerleaders C.J. Cherryh and Ben Bova. Bova offered a few witty comebacks to use on anti-space and anti-manned-flight opponents:

Q: Why put a telescope in space?

A: (Push the objector's head into a swimming pool and ask him to describe the roof of the house across the street.)

Q: Why not use robots in space instead of people?

A: We'll accept using robots in space when professors start using them in their labs to replace graduate students.

The GoH interview of Robert Bloch gave Bloch a chance to exercise his stable of same-old-clever-answers to the same-old-pedestrian-questions. He had opportunity to use such lines as: "Writing is lonely work ... I hope for time to come to conventions and meet real human beings — not to mention the other 95% of fandom." (Mr. Bloch was also passing out well-used wit at the autograph table. While signing my copy of *Out of My Head*, he made eye contact and said, "And haven't I seen you around before? I usually pick out all the beautiful women at a convention immediately.")

The "My Worst Story — And Why I Wrote It" panel, with Hal Clement, Gardner Dozois, David Gerrold, Charles Grant and Joe Halde-

man, initially focussed on Roger Elwood put-downs, and degenerated from there. Grant denied having ever written a bad story and never sold to Elwood. Elwood, however, badgered Grant to ask Grant's father, an Anglican priest, if Kissinger was really the Anti-Christ. Joe Haldeman, introduced by Dozois as "sex king of Mars" and moved to announce his retirement as a writer in order to become a full-time sex king, also had a horror story about a short story so mutilated at the suggestion of several editors that it no longer made sense to Haldeman. Elwood bought it.

Not all bad stories were sold to Roger Elwood, and as the confessions continued, Grant was inspired to comment on how interesting it was to observe that all on the panel had once been younger and starving and were now old and starving. "But plumper!" Gerrold interjected. Grant responded that he had the same weight as in college, only now more comfortably distributed. In response to examining stares, he defended with, "Did you ever try to suck in six inches?" The rest of the panel choked on the double entendre. Dozois was first to recover, addressing the audience: "And, for those of you who would like to practice ..."

This led to Haldeman's tale of what he believed to be truly the worst story ever written, still unpublished. It was written in conjunction with a poker game, played with one chair short and a typewriter; odd man out had to contribute at least one page to the opus "The Trouble With Smegma" before re-entering the game. This gut-pornography is reported to have passed into the hands of Dozois; rumor has it that the manuscript has since crawled off under its own power.

Sunday, while getting Haldeman's autograph, I was greeted by Somtow Sucharitkul, who I am convinced must have a ghost writer since he spends all his time changing into shirts of increasingly more flamboyant prints and couldn't possibly crank out all that fiction that has his name on it. Anyway, Somtow was wearing a shirt of teddy-bear-print calico. I commented that my grandmother used to have curtains that looked like that. Somtow said his mother made the shirt for him. Haldeman looked up and said, "Yes, and she made it with the curtains she stole from your grandmother."

The biggest crowd draw Sunday afternoon was the Lucasfilm presentation. Slides of inside-studio jokes opened the show (for example, a mock movie ad for "Ewoks II: Just When You Thought It Was Safe to Go Back in the Forest"). Most hype was given to "Labyrinth," a coming summer release with sets based on Escher drawings, puppets by Frank Oz, and the villainous lead played by David Bowie. The studio rep insisted it is NOT a musical, despite Bowie's five songs. Concluding the program were slides from the movie, "Howard the Duck," set in Cleveland but filmed in San Francisco, supposedly for casting reasons. One sequence demands a female motorcycle gang. San Francisco has a chapter of Dykes on Bikes; Cleveland doesn't. ★

CONTEX III Houston, February 21-23 report by Ferk

What a weekend to remember — from the con suite overlooking the beautiful Southwest Freeway, with views of Dan's Western Wear and Color Tile Paints, to the mausoleum-like hotel atrium, site of the Wine and Cheese Reception (wine was the consistently flavorless Summit; cheese was dominated by industrial-strength brie). In spite of my aversion to Trekkies and Whovians and my horror that some strange people have dedicated their lives to the worship of *Star Wars* (which I in blissful ignorance believed to be only a movie), it was fun — particularly meeting numerous friendly, very accessible people.

I was even able to occasionally indulge my secret con vice — attending panels. In his mandatory (for him, anyway — most other con members managed to avoid it) toastmaster's speech, Steve Gould revealed why he became a writer: he wanted to be somebody in fandom. He tried:

1. Organizing cons — too much work.
2. Publishing fanzines — too much work.
3. Sleeping with everyone — he decided to "let this one lay" without comment.
4. Being a writer — the easiest way.

Throughout the con, Guest of Honor Barry Longyear repeatedly rehearsed his sordid career as a science-fiction writer. (And his wife seems so nice!) Asked in the con suite about his reaction to the movie "Enemy Mine," he said he was relieved — it wasn't nearly as bad as he thought it would be. Four years ago he saw the screenplay for the movie and he feared the worst. He didn't want to leave the country, and, anyway, they didn't pay him enough money to make it possible to do so. He didn't want to spend his life selling pencils on a street corner in Germany.

Longyear's 4:00 p.m. Friday panel, "Writing SF Stories," initially attracted about a dozen people, including his wife and the ConTex staff people involved in videotaping it. Longyear promoted his instructional manual, *Science Fiction Writer's Workshop*, published by Owlswick Press (1980). He described it as a how-to book of the sort he looked for and couldn't find when he began writing. Longyear spoke of a writing class he taught this past year, which fulfilled a longtime desire of his and which he hopes has it out of his system. He offered a "C" grade for a story publishable anywhere, and the first "C" story he got was suitable for an *Argosy*-type magazine: a barroom tale of a bully who coerces a wino into drinking a spittoon full of spit.

Longyear said he does not write from outlines — once he knows how a story ends, he doesn't want to write it. He was offered \$25,000 for the novelization of "Enemy Mine" and tried for a week, discovering he couldn't write it: "It's my baby; I couldn't mutilate it." Not wanting to resort to drugs and alcohol, he got his agent to find David Gerrold to do the novelization.

Longyear's emotional approach to writing caused him real problems in the past. In the be-

ginning, he never wrote anything he couldn't complete at one sitting. 30,000 words took 3-4 days. He would sleep twelve hours and get up and write another story. This led to alcoholism, drug addiction, and a heart attack at age 36. He does not recommend this approach to writing.

This summer, Longyear's novel *Sea of Glass* will be published. He said it has been a work in progress for nine years and exists in 1-2 million words of drafts. He had difficulty finding a publisher; his agent, after months of effort, could only get a \$5,000 advance. (Longyear said his usual book advance is \$15,000.)

Longyear's current work-in-progress is his "George" book: *St. George meets Santa Claus*. George and Nicolas were imprisoned during the same time period by Emperor Diocletian; George was killed, Nicolas was not released until Constantine became emperor. Others imprisoned during the same period were Valentine, Christopher (of the traveler's medal fame), and Vitus (of the disease, St. Vitus' dance). Longyear apparently intends to introduce them all.

Longyear also made a tongue-in-cheek announcement of a future humor novel, *Naked Came the Robots*, including in its cast of characters a badass robot named Hugo Piss-Off.

Longyear's more heavily attended Saturday afternoon GoH speech was a recitation of how his decision to a writer led to alcoholism, drug addiction, and compulsive eating. He told this bit of personal history with the witty light humor that characterizes all his public speaking, but did not disguise the horror of having almost killed himself several times. He now probably holds some kind of record for abuser-anonymous club memberships.

The Context Saturday night masquerade was small; all the entrants won something. Half-time entertainment was by the Cat Boxe Theatre (Cathy Wosnitzky, Kathy Thornton, and Estelle Spears). They presented "Snow White and the Four Dwarves," grabbing people from the audience to play all the roles, while the theatre troupe's members made catty remarks on the skit's narrative. ★

Lunacon '86 (March 7-9; Tarrytown, NY) report by Ferk

Lunacon — a con as dead as the surface of its namesake. It's billed as the "Dowager of the Eastern Cons"; while it is not immediately clear which is preferable, this dowager needs either 1) a radical facelift, or 2) a decent burial.

The most lasting impression I have of Lunacon is of hundreds of people tramping the hallways of the Marriott looking for something to do. Some were desperate enough to swim in an indoor pool whose chlorine concentration made even the air in the atrium surrounding it corrosive. The hotel bar kept very busy. Many dared arctic weather for the entertainment value of dining out — even at fast-food chains such as Wendy's.

The convention registration opened at 2 p.m.

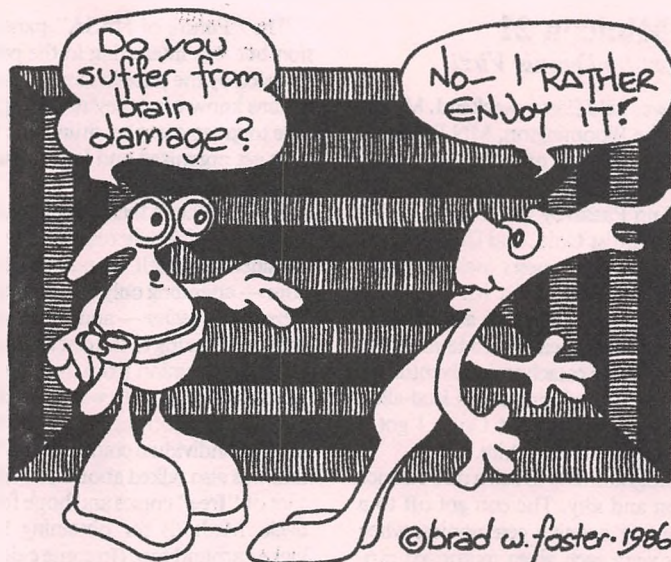
Friday. The con suite opened at 11 a.m. Saturday — and closed two hours for dinner hours, coinciding with the absence of scheduled programming.

Yes. The absence of scheduled programming. Only a "Meet The Pros / Dance" on Friday night; and an average of two tracks of programming, most of it weak, some of it stillborn, on Saturday and Sunday.

The most excitement seemed to be generated by Isaac Asimov, who quickened the pulses of even longtime Brooklyn fen. He was constantly watched by those hoping to observe the "Asimov squeeze" (i.e., "Well, she assumed the hand was going to stop at her shoulder!"). It seems the man does not live up to myth. (Robert Bloch has a *much* better leer!) Asimov seemed a low-key flirt. As he autographed my program, he addressed the neckline of my dress (conveniently located near the waistline of said dress): "That's very lovely. But I'm sure you've been told that before." "Of course, but seldom so suavely or elegantly." "My dear, that's because I'm so much more appreciative." (So much for grandfather lust.)

The Lunarians seem to have forgotten they are throwing a party. Never before have I encountered such member-hostile management. Petty power lust seems to have supplanted hospitality. Members were routinely challenged and frequently stopped to have their badges scrutinized in order to enter the dealers' room to spend their money. A half-dozen people were run out of the con suite by the Con Suite Supervisor for daring to do a tarot reading where it obstructed access to a bowl of peanuts. (Said peanuts could easily have been moved had anyone expressed an interest in them.) A friend's wife was challenged for attempting to leave the con suite with a bagel. (Her husband was a rabid but famished gamer.) I suspect that when she was asked what she was doing with that bagel, new, creative, intimate uses entered her head.

The standard Lunarian response to questions such as why the con suite hours were so limited was: "We don't have enough people to help."



The last Lunacon progress report had a full-page ad soliciting help. I met several folks with long and varied con experience who had volunteered. When they asked why they hadn't been contacted, the response was: "Gee, I never saw any letters." Martyrdom seems a Lunarian goal. Club membership is restrictive: would-be Lunarians must attend ten monthly meetings in a year. (And December's meeting doesn't count — it's a Christmas party.)

The redeeming virtue of Lunacon was the parties. Friday, the NolaCon bid had out good liquor: Irish Mist, etc. Saturday, they served Killer Hurricanes (tastes like Hawaiian punch, but two will blow you over). They sold lots of memberships by the second round of drinks. Cincinnati had an impressive bar Saturday night, with about two dozen fifths in view — Kahlua, Jack Daniels, etc.

Lunacon also had the worst theme party I ever attended — a "Sing-Along With Styx" party, with a ghetto-blasters, a cassette tape, and photocopied sheets of lyrics.

But, on the plus side for amusement, there was David Hartwell's party. As I entered, attempts were being made to create Rastafarian dreadlocks in Gardner Dozois's chest hair, using a spool of thread. These attempts failed. Make-up bags from various purses were then raided; soon Gardner's face had enough sky-blue and bright red spots on it to have enabled him to pass for a Tokay gecko, should he have so desired. But he didn't, instead demonstrating a prolonged fondness for gerbil sex jokes.

Attend another Lunacon? I'd prefer to watch "Leave It To Beaver" reruns — and I didn't even like the show when they weren't reruns and I saw Beaver as a mature older man. The main entertainment provided by Lunacon didn't require the attempted staging of a full convention. Three friends, a bottle of scotch, and a large bed would suffice. Maybe Lunacon should become a relaxacon. Maybe it needs a transfusion of new blood. Maybe a decent burial. ★

Minicon 21

report by Dennis Virzi

Minicon 21 was held Easter weekend, March 28-30, 1986 at the Bloomington, MN Radisson Hotel. Professional Guests of Honor were Kate Wilhelm and Damon Knight; Fan GoH was Denny Lien. Ann Passavoy was musical GoH, Ken Fletcher was artist GoH, and Diane Duane was Toastmaster. Other guests included P.C. Hodgell, Terri Windling, John M. Ford and Phyllis Eisenstein. Over 1500 fans attended.

Registration materials came inside an RPG box (*Mutant*, a "post-cataclysmic adventure in a mutilated world") and included a lead-alloy miniature sculpted by the artist GoH. I got a Jote Stump — pro porter for hire. Gee.

Minicon's programming struck a nice balance between sercon and silly. The con got off to a rather silly start at opening ceremonies, when the pro guests were each given motorized propeller beanies. Damon's aplomb was shaken when, after several attempts to wear it, the propeller would only work when the hat was off his head...

The standing-room-only crowd was then treated to a "radio play". After a required warning that "shots would be fired" a very strange and funny play was acted out. It was a sort of Firesign Theater Home Companion meets Phil Dick.

On the serious side, the panel "SF: The Next Wave" discussed the direction sf was heading. It was the consensus of panelists Eleanor Arneson and John W. Taylor that literary values dominate the current wave. The "old" New Wave was a stylistic one, they said. The mid-seventies saw the emphasis shift to the soft sciences and issues, and now the Neo-Literates are having a go. SF is not just entertainment any more, concluded Professor Taylor. He likes Lucius Shepard and thinks that Heinlein-type fiction contains dangerous ideas. War fiction is bad, meta-fiction is good, was the message.

The "Future of NASA" panel lacked direction but was interesting in the political insights revealed by the panelists and the audience. A lot of fans know what they're talking about and are able to grasp complex situations. Now if they'd only get organized and learn how to effectively work the system...

Ken Fletcher's fanzine panel turned out to be a lively and friendly round table. I went into it considering myself an outsider to fanzine fandom — attending only as a matter of duty to the *Texas SF Inquirer* — and ended up participating and contributing to the discussion, due to extensive indoctrination from the editor of the aforementioned zine... It was agreed that about a two-hundred copy print-run was the upper limit that one individual could handle. Wide distribution was also talked about: you have to send out a lot of "free" copies and hope for locs or trades back. Methods for obtaining hardware were kicked around too. (In some cities the Goodwill stores sell used mimeos, for instance.) One not only has to be able to edit, but if you're going to save money, you're also going to have to be mechanically inclined, and able to rebuild obsolete equipment. Tales of \$15 electrostencillers and \$30 mimeos, akin to fabled elephant graveyard stories, were recounted.

The "It Was A Dark And Stormy Knight" Bad SF Contest" panel was both sercon and silly. Prof. Taylor was on hand to explain what bad sf was (military war stories, again). Other panelists read howlers from the pulp era, and finally Damon Knight read the winning entry in the "write your own bad sf opening line" contest. I, amongst others, lost to Geri Sullivan. ("Thrust, more thrust, dammit," she said to the man behind her.") I think I should be glad I lost...

Minicon's art show exploded this year, with over twice as many entrants as last year. In addition to the "standard stuff" one sees in an art show, my senses were overloaded by over fifty dioramas of Smurf mayhem by Garth Danielson. (Smurf gore isn't a pretty sight.) Next year,

the overworked Art Show organizer, Erin McKee, will be Artist GoH. Minicon 22 will be held April 17-19, 1987 — get there if you can. It's a wonderful convention. ★

Cinclave I

(April 25-27, 1986; Cincinnati, OH)

report by Ferk

Cincinnati is a beautiful, quiet, mid-American city. Cincinnati fandom is impressively warm and friendly. The Clarion, a center-city hotel, is quite comfortable. Intentions were good, efforts were sincere, and Cinclave I was a flop.

At face value, it should have worked. There didn't appear to be any major problems: a few panels started late, a few last-minute substitutions were made in the film program. These problems are common even in cons with long histories, and certainly shouldn't be fatal. Still, attendance was low and many registered attendees spent large chunks of time during the weekend away from the convention. By late Saturday afternoon, chants of "boredom" were common; late-night revelers in the con suite treated the idea of "Cinclave II" as a laughable hoax.

Panel scheduling was somewhat unusual. Cinclave had three writer Guests of Honor: Joan Vinge (she has relatives in the Cincinnati area, and was accompanied by her husband, Jim Frenkel, the publisher of Bluejay Books); Ed Bryant (a longtime acquaintance of con chairman Chris Barkley), and Samuel "Chip" Delany (who, according to Barkley, came "for the money"). Cinclave I was held concurrently with the "Cincinnati Science Fiction Festival" funded by the Ohio Humanities Council, the University of Cincinnati Center for Women's Studies, and the Taft Memorial Fund. The C.S.F.F. paid for Cinclave's three GoHs. The theme of C.S.F.F. was "Artificial Intelligence: By 2086, The Personal Computer May Be More



Oh, ghod! Is it sercon, yet?

Personal Than You Think."

Part of the C.F.S.S. programming was away from Cinclave, but three one-and-one-half-hour panels and a one-hour "Breakout" (a small-group discussion) occupied over half of Cinclave's one track of panel programming.

These panels had several serious flaws. They were large — about eight persons at a time had to share a single microphone, shifting it hand-to-hand to whoever wanted to speak. The panels consisted of the three GoHs plus Frenkel plus a few other writers and a small number of professors from the local universities. The academics presented only very general information about AI and were somewhat overwhelmed by the long-winded SF writers.

The SF writers were presumably there to add imaginative speculation to the hard academic information, but it didn't work that way — the writers quickly admitted to a general ignorance on the subject of AI, but felt compelled to speak at length nonetheless. Joan Vinge revealed that her ex-husband Vernor Vinge, a perpetual doomseeker, has changed his fears from nuclear Armageddon to being eaten alive by sentient microchips within the next thirty years. This comment dominated the first Cinclave AI panel. Members of the audience posed philosophical questions such as "Did God give us an internal control circuit that will prevent us from creating artificial intelligence devices that will destroy us?" (Damn fool apparently never heard of Pandora's box.) These AI panels convinced me that some SF writers should only be permitted to speak publicly on panels within their field of expertise, panels such as "Dreadful Stories I Have Written And Read" and "Embarrassing Moments in Sexual Promiscuity."

Co-sponsorship with C.F.S.S. created a very peculiar situation within Cinclave. Admission to C.F.S.S. was free to the general public; therefore, no con membership was needed for most of the panels. The dealers' room was adjacent to the panel room. Non-convention members attending the C.F.S.S. seminars could not enter the dealers' room to spend their money. Some dealers were a bit perturbed by this.

Video programming for Cinclave I tended towards the trite and overly familiar: the *Star Wars* trilogy, 2001 and 2010, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, etc.

The Masquerade Ball was a disaster. It was scheduled for 11 p.m. By that time, the room was chilled. There was no music until about 12:30 p.m. — broken equipment couldn't be repaired, and finally a con member from Chicago lent the concom his ghetto-blasters so tapes could be played. Parties held by Cincinnati in '88, St. Louis in '88, Nolacon II, and Marcon 21 were pleasant but poorly attended; many con members had decided to go elsewhere for the evening.

Some of the members of the "Eh? Team" (the Cinclave committee) had worked on making it happen for a year. But in spite of their well-intentioned efforts, it just didn't work. ★

TEXARKON 5

Such nice folks, but oh, what a mess!
report by Daramea Godfrey

Now, we all know that most conventions have had problems. Any committee member or conventioneer can tell a tale of terror if pressed. Some will even be able to recount several stories if the convention under consideration has had a few years under its belt. After all, "the best-laid plans..." are subject to the unexpected guest cancellation, the failure of short-sighted or inexperienced help, or personnel problems. These things happen.

What is not expected is that *all* of these things occurred during one weekend at Texarkon — a convention in its fifth year.

In all fairness, a guest cancellation is an unforeseen event. GoH Gordon R. Dickson had to bow out due to an illness in the family. There simply was no time to arrange for a substitute. Artist GoHs Polly and Kelly Freas and Toastmaster Robert Asprin were present and accounted for, though — and in fact, Asprin (at his wiley best) stepped beyond his role as toastmaster to help take up the slack. Steps were taken to substitute programming, too — including a fascinating and detailed slideshow walk through the evolution of a new painting by David Cherry. Another major art plus was the two-hour Kelly Freas portrait study won by a lucky bidder at the art auction. It was a joy to watch.

Not all things went as well. There was, for instance, "the infamous art show meltdown," in which the panels fell down — not once, not twice, but three times. Slight damage was done to several artists' pieces, causing tempers to flare. This could have been entirely avoided; five years of experience should have been sufficient to permit the proper care in setting up this area. If the art show director was inexperienced, then shame on the committee for not checking the structure. If the director was experienced, then shame on her too, and the more so for dissolving in tears. (I may be overly harsh here, but I would like to at least feel — however false the sense of security — that a fully competent person is in charge of each major area.) Once corrected, the matter should have been dropped. Instead, we were treated to countless reminders and apologies for something most did not witness. This was a bit of bad form.

It was also bad form to "upstage" the guests. In their enthusiasm for an "upbeat" start and their desire to honor a friend, the concom crashed their own opening ceremonies. The reasons for a convention — and, in fact, the introductions and the toastmaster's opening remarks — were lost. Instead, we were treated to a birthday celebration for Robert Asprin. While this is delightful for the participants, it would have been better if postponed, and may even have been more meaningful if held privately for those who contributed the lovely gifts in honor of friendship through the years. Asprin was clearly aware of the problem, and tried to draw attention to what they were doing. A professional in the best sense

of the term, he is also a gifted entertainer with both energy and good sense. It was unfortunate that the committee would not be guided by him.

Again, in the "bad form" department, it was felt by many to be extremely callous of all concerned to leave a pregnant woman in charge of the con suite — alone — for the entire convention. Someone without the need of special consideration would have been daunted. Apparently, others on her staff did not show; and though her ill humor was justified, it was still another instance which could have and should have been avoided.

Finally, this convention has also suffered the "unkindest cut" — short attendance. The reasons for this are not clear, but it was apparent that very little advertising was done. This may have been a self-inflicted wound. When budgets are tight, folks, it still pays to advertise.

In all, shades of some of these problems have cropped up at almost every other convention at one time or another. An experienced committee with all these woes must sit down and take a long look at practices and procedures before they begin again.

This is a fine group of people. Past successes prove that they surely have the ability. Let's hope they can pull themselves back up to their former heights. ★

Galacon II

(May 2-4, 1986; Norfolk, Virginia)
report by Ferk

It was strange. I kept reminding myself "Trekkies are people, too" at this media-dominated con. Joe Haldeman was present as a token literary GoH; his speech was shunted into an 11 a.m. Saturday time slot to keep the afternoon open for Grace Lee Whitney of *Star Trek* and Richard Hatch and Ann Lockhart of *Battlestar Galactica*. Haldeman's speech attracted about 30 people, some of whom may have come for the scheduled noon wedding of a couple of the *Battlestar Galactica* crowd. (The wedding was rescheduled. The official reason: "The groom had too much ambrosia at the bachelor party.")

Haldeman gave a professional lecture on "How To Write." (He teaches writing at MIT three months a year.) Speaking on where to get ideas, he described a computer program he has used. Based on a cryptographic frequency of letters in the English language coupled to a random-number generator, the program produces gibberish and occasional words. Haldeman said the first time he used it, it produced the phrase, "Do Ax God." He also stated that drugs are useful and, while, "of course, not advocating illegal drug use," observed "the illegal ones work as well as the legal ones."

The con program package contained a comic book and other literature from the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse. This surprised me; at cons, I've seen lots more abuse of parents by children, particularly the rug rats, than vice versa.

The dealers' room contained lots of *Trek* and

other media memorabilia. There were few real books, mostly stacked under the dealers' tables.

The masquerade had about twenty entries, most carefully prepared. Hall costumes, however, tended towards the seedy. Some floor-length robes inevitably provoked thoughts of, "Somewhere there's a bed in a cheap hotel missing a blanket."

The con suite was stocked with a freezer full of Carvel ice cream sandwiches, in various colors, frozen rock-hard. They were useful both for breakfast and for self-defense.

Galacon II attempted to maintain five video rooms. While these rooms were scheduled for 24-hour showings, the staff lacked sufficient stamina to run them past 4 a.m. Some video rooms were quite well-attended. (How strange to gather in public to watch TV!) Saturday night, a screening of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* was presented, complete with a local live troupe. Attendees were encouraged to yell whatever they wanted, but throwing water, toast, or anything else (except nubile young virgins) was forbidden.

Galacon II worked well as a media-con. Personally, I have a little difficulty finding satisfaction in panels on "How to Be Mum-Ra" and "Dalek Impersonations," but these apparently have their audience. ★

The Official Starlog Festival in New York City (Creation Convention, May 10-11, 1986, Roosevelt Hotel) report by Ferk

It was badly organized; it was boring. This is a commercial con, one of several each year in New York City and the Los Angeles area, promoted by the publisher and editorial staff of *Starlog*, *Fangoria* and *Cinefex*. It's also expensive — \$13 per day — and runs for about eight hours each day, with no con suite. At its opening, it took about a half-hour wait in line for the privilege of paying one's \$13, in return for an ugly black ink stamp on the hand (no badges). Some advance tickets had been sold through Ticketron: the sign indicating the existence of a ticket-holder's line was located about ten feet from the con entrance. This didn't help people entering the general line of both ticket-holders and those paying on-site, a line which extended around a corner, through the mezzanine lobby, and across the balcony. No Creation Conventions staff made any attempt to organize the mess.

Most of the programming consisted of alternating summer-release movie promos and advertising for future Creation Cons. The sound quality of the main ballroom presentations was frequently wretched and often unintelligible. Announced guest Tobe Hooper didn't appear; his absence was attributed to work on *Texas Chainsaw Massacre II*. Probably the most interesting guest was Audrey, the Carnivorous Plant, from the stage production of *The Little Shop of*

Horrors (she's one of the four puppet incarnations that appears in the show). She answered almost an hour of audience questions regarding her diet and her relatives.

The dealers' room was off the main hotel lobby, with an unmarked entrance. It consisted of two rooms: the first was very congested, and groups of more than three potential shoppers at a table created an immobile traffic jam; the second had few tables, some of which had been bought by fan-ac groups that attracted almost no attention at all. Rare *Star Trek* fanzines seemed to be hot items, selling at \$20 plus... ★

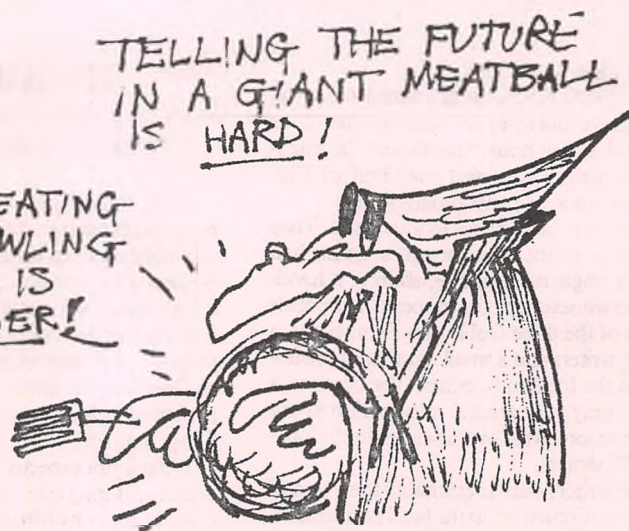
Disclave 1986 (May 23-26, New Carrollton, MD) report by Ferk

It was wonderful! Disclave 1986 was the thirtieth convention in thirty years of the Washington Science Fiction Association. It's part relaxation, part programmed, and it works very well in both capacities. It attracted about a thousand people, but had the ambience of a much smaller gathering. Oddly enough, the weather even cooperated — it was warm and sunny all weekend. (I kept thinking the convention must have been mis-scheduled — aren't cons supposed to be held when it's below 20° or over 90° outside?)

Guest of Honor was William Gibson. Gibson revealed that he got his first personal computer just a few months back. He hooked it up, turned it on, heard a very disturbing clanking and scratching sound, and immediately called his salesman. The disturbing noise was the normal operating sound of the disk drive. Gibson had expected the silent crystal futuristic machines he writes about. He said he was very disappointed to discover he had purchased a television screen with a Victorian mechanism attached to it.

Gibson added that he is trying to adjust to contemporary technology. He is adding a wing to his house and will put his manual typewriter in the foundation.

A fanzine panel, "Fanzines: Threat or Menace?" including Ted White, Arthur Hlavay and others, generally agreed that fanzines are cyclic and this is definitely not a Golden Age.



Referring to Marty and Robbie Cantor's *Holier Than Thou* (one of the Hugo nominees this year), it was mentioned that the fanzine scene is not totally bleak. Ted White commented that *Holier Than Thou* began at a level of absolute putridity, but has, with the exception of the Adrienne Fein "cooking" column, fortunately risen above its initial level. There was some discussion regarding whether computer bulletin boards would replace printed zines; the panel's conclusion was a definite maybe.

The short film programming (about three films per night, starting at 9 p.m.) was quite tastefully scheduled. It included clips from *Rocky* and *Bullwinkle*, *The Red Shoes*, and an early Kurosawa film on the history of the martial arts.

The best of the unscheduled entertainment was the show at the hotel pool. Many people went swimming in clothing not designed for bathing — white danskins, white B.V.D.'s, white panties, etc. These became deliciously revealing when wet.

After having attended a couple of media cons, I found it refreshing to find that books were being sold in plain sight in the dealers' room. What's more, people around the pool and in the hotel hallways were even *reading* in public!

The con suite was in a couple of rooms by the pool and functioned as a nightly party, opening at 8:30 p.m. There were numerous parties each day — public parties for Worldcon bids, Philcon, etc., as well as semi-private and private parties. It was amusing how some folks had a pseudo-authoritative rap about pet subjects (religion, zines, etc.) which they would proclaim in loud conversation at a party. Having said their piece so all present could hear, they would move to another party and repeat the show. It looks like a lot of work, being a celebrity in one's own mind (and usually nowhere else).

Overall, it was a very fun weekend. Next year's Disclave will be held Memorial Day weekend (May 22-25), with Gene Wolfe as GoH. Programming additions will include a masquerade limited to Gene Wolfe character costumes, and a one-shot fanzine. As an added enticement, next year's ABA (American Booksellers' Association Convention) will be held in Washington, D.C. the same weekend. ★

CONVENTION LISTINGS

(When writing to a convention for more information, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.) A ► beside a convention listing indicates that at least one FACT member plans to attend. Special thanks to S.E. Woodard-Vladyka and her "For Your Information" convention listings, which were invaluable in putting together this calendar.)

- June 21-22. **Fourth Street Fantasy Convention.** Minneapolis Plaza Hotel, Mpls., MN. GoH: Roger Zelazny; Guest Editor: Terri Windling; Guest Agent: Valerie Smith; Godfather: David Hartwell. "Definition of fantasy: Well, uh, it isn't hard science fiction, and it isn't horror, so, er, I guess it must be fantasy." \$20 until June 1st, then \$30. Info: 4880 106th Ave. NE, Circle Pines, MN 55014.
- June 26-29. **Midwestcon 37. Relaxacon.** Cincinnati Marriott, Glendale, OH. Banquet \$20, reservations must be made by May 29 (pay at con). Convention membership \$13, payable at the door only. Info & room reservation form: Bill Cavin (513/631-2543) or Jackie Causgrove, 6828 Alpine Ave. #4, Cincinnati OH 45236.
- July 3-6. **Halleycon / Westercon 39. SF convention.** Town and Country Hotel, San Diego. GoH: David Brin; Fan GoH: Karen Turner; TM: Greg Bear. Programming will include sf, fantasy, science and technology, and fannish tracks. Masquerade, fan room, film & video room, authors' readings, large art show, even larger dealers room, and all the other traditional Westercon stuff. ("We also have a few new things planned which defy brief description.") Memberships \$35 through May; higher at-the-door rates to be announced. Supporting membership \$10. Info: Westercon 39, P.O. Box 81285, San Diego, CA 92138.
- July 4-6. **ConZINEence. Media fanzine convention.** Holiday Inn North DFW Airport, Dallas, TX. Panels, dealers' room, art show/auction, banquet, costume ball, more. Info: Jeanine & John Hennig, P.O. Box 166362, Irving, TX 75016.
- July 4-6. **Dallas Fantasy Fair. Media/comics/sf con.** Marriott Park Central, Dallas, TX. Guests: Joe Kubert, Frank Miller, Alex Toth, and more than 60 others. Two video rooms, gaming, masquerade, art show and auction, seminars, QA sessions, panel discussions, workshops, filking, contests, photo sessions, autographing, parties, more. Terry Erdman will give special presentations on two Twentieth Century Fox films (*Alien II* and *Big Trouble in Little China*); he might even do something relating to the Buckaroo Banzai Fan Club. Memberships \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Info: Bulldog Productions, PO Box 820488, Dallas, TX 75382, 214-349-3367.
- July 18-20. **OKon '86. SF convention.** Sheraton Kensington, Tulsa, OK. GoHs: Polly & Kelly Freas; FGoH: Forrest J Ackerman; AGoH: Carl Lundgren; FilkGoH: Julian Ecklar; TM: Glen Cook. Other guests: Lee & Pat Killough, C.J. Cherryh, James P. Hogan. Oklahoma's largest sf con. Profits will benefit the Brass Ring Society of Tulsa. Memberships \$11 to July 1, \$14 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 4229, Tulsa, OK 74159.
- July 25-27. **Dark Shadows Festival. Dark Shadows (tv soap) con.** Marriott Park Central, Dallas, TX. GoH: Jonathan Frid, others tba. Memberships \$18 to May 1, \$20 thereafter; daily rates at the door. Info: P.O. Box 11641, Fort Worth, TX 76109.
- July 25-27. **Rivercon 11. SF convention.** Louisville, KY. GoH: C.J. Cherryh; FGoHs: Dick & Nicki Lynch; TM: Sharon Webb. Varied programming, large dealers' room, classic and current film and video schedule, art show and auction, masquerade, game room, extensive children's programming track, round-the-clock hospitality suite — and, of course, the Sunday afternoon cruise up the Ohio River on the Belle of Louisville. Memberships \$15 to 7/15, \$20 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 58009, Louisville, KY 40258.
- July 25-27. **Archon 10. SF convention.** Clarion Hotel, St. Louis, MO. GoH: Frederik Pohl; AGoH: Dell Harris; TM: Vic Milan. Panels, masquerade, autographs, readings, art show & auction. Memberships \$15 to June 1, \$20 at the door. Info: Box 50125, Clayton, MO 63105.
- July 25-27. **K C Con 5. Star Trek convention.** Hilton Plaza Inn, Kansas City, MO. GoHs: Harve Bennett, Mark Lenard, Eddie Egan, John Tibbetts; FGoH: Judith Ward. A Star Trek 20th anniversary special. Dealers, dinner with the stars, art show, anything auction, scavenger hunt, acting contest, t-shirts, masquerade, trivia contest, filking, gaming, video, handicapped accessible, 3rd Annual Inter-galactic Tribble breeding show. Memberships \$40 at the door. Info: PO Box 33063, Kansas City, MO 64114, 816-363-2819.
- July 25-27. **Atlanta Fantasy Fair. SF convention.** Omni Hotel, Atlanta, GA. Guests: Stan Lee, Jim Shooter, John Romita Sr., Eliot Brown, Boris & Doris Vallejo, Archie Goodwin, Steve Saffel, Greg Hildebrandt, John Varley, Ralph Bakshi, Terry Nation, Allen Hammack, Kelly & Polly Freas, Dennis Mallonee, Diane Duane, Steve Jackson, Richard Pini, Dean Mullaney, John Fischner, Cat Yronwode, David Dorman, Michael N Langford, Tom Deitz, Bob Burden, Brad Strickland, Joseph Phillips, Jack Massa, Steve Haynie, J P Telotte, Earl Leach, Matt Feazell. (Tentative guest: Michael Bishop.) Costume contest, panels, fantasy book cover contest, gaming, dealers, films, art show, movie previews, 1987 poster contest, readings, slide show, autographs, Q&A sessions, 1986 AFF Award, Trivia, auction, amateur film festival, tribute to 75 years of animated cartoons, short story contest, video room, more. Info: P.O. Box 566, Marietta, GA 30061, 404-662-6850.
- August 1-3, 1986. **Tardiscon '86. Doctor Who convention.** Adam's Mark Hotel, St. Louis, MO. Invited guests: Frazer Hines, Mark Strickson, John Nathan-Turner. Dealers, C.I.A. cabaret, banquet, video, art show, masquerade, charity auction, skits & skit competition. Membership \$32 through 6/15, \$36 at the door (checks payable to the Celestial Intervention Agency, Inc.) Info: PO Box 39305, St. Louis, MO 63139.
- August 22-24. **Bubonicon 18. SF convention.** Ramada Inn East, Albuquerque, NM. GoH: George R.R. Martin. Special guests: ASFS founders Jack Spear, Roy Tackett and Robert Vardeman (20 years already!). Also attending will be this year's DUFF winners (Stathopoulos/Morley/Pride). Dealers' room, art show, panels, more. Memberships \$15 to 8/1, \$20 thereafter (make checks payable to New Mexico SF Conference). Info: PO Box 37257, Albuquerque, NM 87176.
- August 28-Sept. 1. **Confederation. The 44th World Science Fiction Convention.** Atlanta, GA. GoH: Ray Bradbury; Fan GoH: Terry Carr; TM: Bob Shaw. \$55 to Feb. 15, more later, much more at the door. Info: 3277 Roswell Road, Suite 1986, Atlanta, GA 30305 (new address).
- September 4-7. **Coppercon 6. SF convention.** Safari Resort Hotel, Scottsdale, AZ. Info: Box 11743, Phoenix, AZ 85061, 602-968-5671.
- September 19-21. **Moscon 8. SF convention.** Cavanaugh's Motor Inn, Moscow, Idaho. GoH: Dean Ing; SGoH: Rob Quigley; AGoH: Michael Goodwin; FGoH: Bryce Walden. Lensman awards, dealers, writers workshops, art show & auction, masquerade, readings, panels, brunch, jacuzzi party, con suite, dances, videos, parties. Art print to first 500 members. Info: Box 8251, Moscow, ID 83843.
- September 26-28. **DeepSouthCon 24. aka L&N DSC. SF convention.** Galt House, Louisville, KY. GoH: David Hartwell; TM: Somtow Sucharitkul; Fan GoH: Ann Layman Chancellor; Featured Artist: Alex Schomberg. Interesting programming, large huckster room, art show and auction, masquerade, 24-hour hospitality suite, game room ("featuring the hearts championship of the known universe"), and a film program. \$15 to Sept. 3; \$20 thereafter. Info: L&N DeepSouthCon, P.O. Box 58009, Louisville, KY 40258.
- October 4-5. **Encounter 10. SF/fantasy/media/gaming con.** Wichita Hilton Inn East, Wichita, KS. Author Guest: Fritz Leiber; Writer/Producer Guest: Gene Roddenberry; Comics guests: Rick Stasi, Steve Lightle, Jan Strnad, John Pocsik, Phil DeWalt; also John Fischner and Michael Kent. Art auction, costume contest, gaming area, D&D tournament, etc. All proceeds benefit the Youth Services Office of the American Red Cross, Midway-Kansas Chapter. Memberships \$12 to July 1, \$15 at the door. Info: FANdom, PO Box 1675, Wichita, KS 67201. (Please include legal-sized SASE).
- October 10-12. **Armadillocon VII. SF convention.** Sheraton Crest & Towers, Austin, TX. GoH: William Gibson; TM: Lewis Shiner; FGoH: Debbie Notkin. It's back — the ArmadilloCon you all know and love. Programming and parties with that special Austin flavor. Panels, discussions, autographing, baaad movies, dealers room, art show and auction, video room, masquerade, pig-out, con suite, parties, more. (Possibly even another round of "SF Family Feud"!) Memberships \$10, \$15 at the door. Info: P.O. Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766.
- October 10-12. **Conclave XI. SF convention.** Hilton Inn, Plymouth, MI. GoH: Greg Bear; FGoHs: John & Joanne Hall. Memberships \$12 to June 30, \$14 to September 26, \$16 at the door (checks payable to Waldo & Magic, Inc.) Info: PO Box 2915, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.
- October 17-19. **Contact. Gaming convention.** Ramada Inn, Evansville, IN. GoH: David Palmer; FGoH: Penny Frierson; Editor GoH: Stanley Schmidt; AGoH: Alan Clarke; FiGoh's: Bill & Judy Sutton; MC: Roger Reynolds. Luna tekite giveaway, RPGA events, pool parties, large-screen tv movies, art show, auction, masquerade, filking, panels, banquet, gaming. Info: RCSFA, Box 3984, Evansville, IN 47737.
- October 24-26. **Icon II. SF convention.** Best Western Longbranch, Iowa City, IA. Panels, films, dealers, art show, parties. Info: PO Box 525, Iowa City, IA 52244.
- October 24-25. **MileHiCon 18. SF convention.** Sheraton Inn-Lakewood, Denver, CO. GoH: Gahan Wilson; Fan Guest: Juanita Coulson; TM: Somtow Sucharitkul; TM general: Ed Bryant. Also attending: Connie Willis, Simon Hawke, L. Neil Smith, others. Memberships \$15 to 9/1, \$20 thereafter. Info: MileHiCon, PO Box 27074, Denver, CO 80227, 303-936-4092 or 979-5802.

October 25-26. **SoonerCon Two**. *SF convention*. Skirvin Plaza Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK. GoH: Glen Cook; AGoH: Brad Foster; Comics GoH: R.A. Jones; Filk GoH: C.J. Cherryh; Fan GoHs: Tom & Lynette Meserole; TM: Steve Gould. Memberships \$10 to 10/1, \$12 at the door. Proceeds benefit the OK Pediatric Cancer Assn. *Info*: Box 1701, Bethany, OK 73008.

October 31-November 2. **World Fantasy Con 12**. Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI. GoHs: Ramsey Campbell, J K Potter, Charles L. Grant, Douglas Winter. Literary gentlemen-type atmosphere (costumes discouraged, etc.) Emphasis this year is on dark fantasy. Membership limited to 750; \$45 to the con, no at-the-door. Supporting membership \$20. *Info*: Box 3551, Darlington Branch PO, Pawtucket, RI 02861.

November 8-10. **TusCon 12** (Dust-ball Con). *SF con* "brought to you by some very weird people and the society for the preservation of fortnight-old casseroles". Executive Inn, Tucson AZ. GoH: Vernor Vinge; FGoHs: Hilde & Bruce D. Arthurs; TM: James Corrick. "Madness and death stalked the World-Con... idle sophistry choked the regional cons... now it's time to pay the piper at TusCon 12!" \$12 through April 7, \$15 till October 1, \$20 at the door. *Info*: P.O. Box 26822, Tucson, AZ 85726.

November 14-16. **Windycon 13**. *SF convention*. Hyatt Regency Woodfield, Schaumburg, IL. GoH: Harry Harrison; Editor GoHs: Donald & Elsie Wollheim; F&AGoH: Arlin Robins; TM: Marta Randall. Dealers, art show, masquerade, novice writers contest. Memberships \$15 to November 1, \$20 at the door. *Info*: PO Box 432, Chicago, IL 60690.

November 28-30. **Contex IV**. *SF convention*. Houston, TX. GoHs: Catherine & L. Sprague de Camp; AGoH: Pat Breeding; FGoH: Carolyn Cooper. Memberships: \$10 now, \$20 at the door. *Info*: Friends of Fandom, P.O. Box 772473, Houston, TX 77215.

November 28-30. **Dallas Fantasy Festival**. *Media/comics/SF convention*. Dallas Marriott Quorum, Dallas, TX. Guests: Larry Niven, 60 others to be announced. Workshops, autographs, seminars, filking, masquerade, photo sessions, dealers, contests, parties, art show, gaming, videos. Memberships \$15 now, \$20 at the door. *Info*: Bulldog Productions, PO Box 820488, Dallas, TX 75382.

December 5-7. **Czarkon 4**. *SF convention*. St. Louis, MO. GoH: Warren Norwood; Fan GoH: Nancy Nutt; Artist GoH: Joan Hanke Woods. Other guests include Glen Cook, Del Harris, Bob Tucker, Robert Daniels, David Lee Anderson. No one under 18 admitted. Slide show, bheer, fun from the sixties, parties, deal-

ers, art-show, body-painting, buns (that's what the flyer said, folks). Membership \$11 to 11/10; \$16 at the door. *Info*: 1156 Remley Court, St. Louis, MO 63130.

March 6-8, 1987. **Futurecon**. *Star Trek/SF convention*. Ramada Inn, Regal Row, Dallas, TX. Guests: Robin Curtis (Saavik), Bruce Hyde (Lt. Ailey), Alan Bean (the astronaut, you know), Bjo Trimble, Real Musgrave, Diane Duane, G. Harry Stine, C.J. Cherryh. Panels, demos, dealers, 24-hour videos, robotics, NASA programming, dance, filking, masquerade. *Info*: Rainbolt Productions, PO Box 291, Lewisville, TX 75067, 214-436-7378.

June 5-7, 1987. **Nexus '87**. *SF convention*. Howard Johnson's, Springfield, MO. Artist GoHs: Keith Berdak, Cat Conrad; Editor: Archie Goodwin; Author: Ben Bova; Fan: David Means; TM: Susan Satterfield. Also Tim Powers, Fred Pohl, Rob Chilson, Suzette Haden Elgin, Lee Killough, Paul O. Williams, Warren Norwood, Dell Harris, David Lee Anderson, J.R. Daniels, Mara Farris, Angela Bostick, Jeff Williams, Marc Shulzinger, R.A. Jones, more. Memberships \$10 to 1/1, \$12.50 to 5/1, \$15 to convention and at the door. *Info*: PO Box 1734, Springfield, MO 65805.

July 3-5, 1987. **Westercon 40**. *SF con*. Hyatt Regency & Oakland Convention Center, Oakland, CA. *Info*: Harrigan, PO Box 28427, San Jose, CA 95159.

July 27-28, 1987. **ReaderCon**. *SF convention*. Hotel Bradford, Boston, MA. GoH: Gene Wolfe; Publisher GoH: Mark Zeising. The sercon without shame. Readercon will sponsor awards for Small Press achievement in the field. Memberships \$8 to October 15, \$10 at the door; \$4 supporting. *Info*: PO Box 6138, Boston, MA 02209.

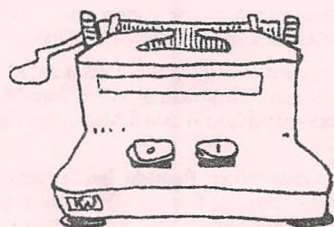
August 27-September 2, 1987. **Conspiracy '87**. *The 45th World Science Fiction Convention*. Brighton Metropole Hotel, Brighton, UK. GoHs: Doris Lessing, Alfred Bester; AGoH: Jim Burns; FGoHs: Joyce & Ken Slater; Special fan guest: Dave Langford; TM: Brian Aldiss. Membership: \$30 to 3/31/86, then more; supporting, \$15. *US agents*: Bill & Mary Burns, 23 Kensington Court, Hempstead, NY 11550. *Info*: Conspiracy '87, PO Box 43, Cambridge, England CB1 3JJ.

September 3-6, 1987. **CactusCon**. *The 1987 NASFiC*. Phoenix Hilton / Civic Plaza Convention Center / Hyatt Regency, Phoenix, AZ. GoH: Hal Clement; FGoH: Marjii Ellers. Memberships: \$15 supporting; \$30 attending to 9/15/85. *Info*: CactusCon, Box 27201, Tempe, AZ 85282, (602) 968-5673.

September 26-28, 1987. **DeepSouthcon 25**. *SF convention*. *Info*: PO Box 4857, Huntsville, AL 35815.

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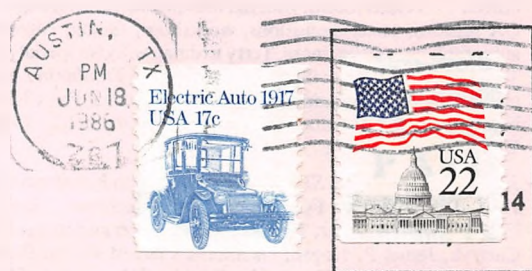
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