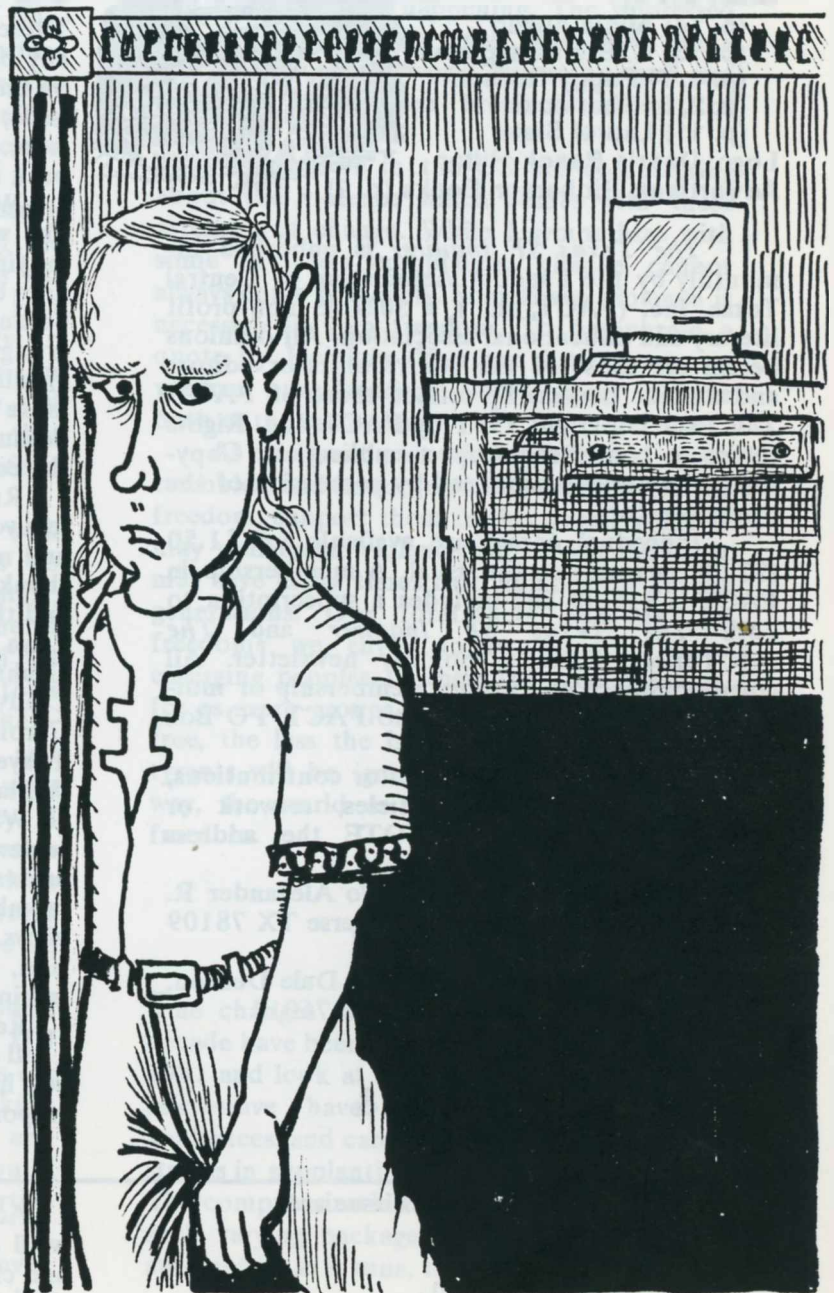
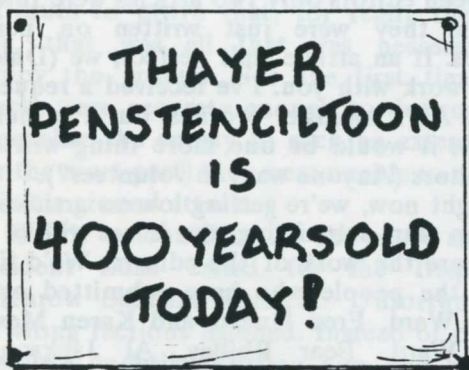


The Texas SF Inquirer

#39



Porto

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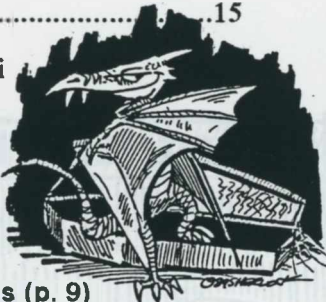
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Howdy!

It's come to my attention that some people are dissatisfied with the *Inquirer*. A major complaint is that too many pages of material are written by the editors. I agree. But, I'm not going to apologize for what's been in the fanzine.



There are three basic controls over what goes in any particular issue. One, what articles we have on hand; two, whether things fit (length) into an issue; and three, whether an article is ready for an issue (for instance, the Cadigan interview came back from being corrected just two weeks ago).

What's the whole point of this? If you don't like what's in the fanzine, why aren't you submitting? Over the past year plus that Dale and I have been editors only two articles were rejected, because they were just written on personal grudges. If an article isn't perfect, we (Dale and I) will work with you. I've received a request for more FACT member profiles, but I've held off because it would be one more thing written by the editors (Anyone want to volunteer?).

Right now, we're getting low on articles. Unless you start submitting, the issues will be more and more the work of the editors. We'd like to thank the people who have submitted articles: Judith Ward, Fred Duarte and Karen Meschke, Lynn Ward, Bear Philley, Al Jackson, Ed Graham, Casey Hamilton, James Vanneman, Cindy Guyton, Dennis Means, Kathy Kimbriel, Carole Nelson Douglass, Bill Hodgson, David Thayer, Richard Brandt, Glen Cox, John O. Williams, Larry Tagrin, and Wendy Wheeler.

What kind of articles? Almost anything; book reviews, media reviews, profiles of authors or artists, science articles, profiles of fellow FACT members, convention reviews, fan history, interviews. It's even possible that we might run fiction, but only if it's very, very good (We're talking pro quality, folks.).

Remember, this is your fanzine, and Dale and I will do all we can to make it what you want. But you have to help! What you see is as much your responsibility as it is ours!

-Alex

Ads should be camera ready (but if y'all want, we'll design something for ya). Please send ads and checks, made out to FACT, Inc., to either of the editors.



Up the Creek

Editorial by Dale Denton

A View of World Happenings

So we won the war. It really is phenomenal what differences in technology can do. It was amazing that we were able to do what we set out to do with so little loss of life on our side. Kind of similar to the Iraqis chemical warfare on the Kurds not too long before, or the battles between the Iraqis and the Kurds after. It's the difference in technology that decided the winner.

Something that has always been a truism is that unless you have the man occupying the ground, you have won nothing. While this war continues to prove that, for really the first time, that was all that was necessary--to occupy the ground. For the first time, air attacks were accurate enough to destroy and demoralize the enemy to such an extent that (for the most part) they were unable to defend against a ground attack.

If only we could handle the peace as well. President Bush called for the Iraqis to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Unfortunately, the wrong factions listened. Instead of one of Hussein's underlings offing him, the Shi'ites to the south and the Kurds in the north took Bush at his word. Even more unfortunately, we were rather slow to come to their aid, and in fact did not do so until their children were starving in the mountains near Turkey. I realize that this was considered a matter internal to Iraq, but they were operating with the understanding that they had world backing, and then it turned out they were all alone.

So now, Saddam Hussein is still in power, albeit a much more limited power, with UN observers all over the place, and the Kurds are getting some support, though not the kind they initially expected. Instead it's food and water and medical supplies so they can rebuild their shattered society after the abortive attempt at freedom.

And now, with the violence in Yugoslavia, the Kurdish problems are fading into the

background. As the USSR, and with it the Warsaw Pact disintegrates, the former nations of almost a century ago are trying to re-establish their individual national identities. Whether it is Slovenia, Croatia, Lithuania or the Kurds, this is happening. The oppressed are finding that they once again have some sort of voice and world sympathy, and are trying to make their break for a sort of freedom.

Many here in the US are complaining about the violence which comes with these attempts at change. While I sympathize with some of their complaints, change cannot always come peaceably. Sometimes, violence is necessary to gain freedom. To paraphrase a quote by Heinlein--You can have peace, or you can have freedom. Never expect to have both at the same time.

As one great part of the old world order crumbles, and its subjugated peoples strive for freedom, support them in this quest. While it may well mean violence and death today, it may save many times that number for future generations. Our forefathers gave us the freedoms we enjoy today. Support these emerging peoples in their trek for freedom, for as more groups within this world become free, the less the injustices of dictators and tyrants will be ignored and allowed. In this way, the world as a whole steps closer to freedom.

Computers

The changes in technology in just the last decade have been phenomenal. Think back to 1981 and look at the changes. The VCR and microwave have become common home appliances, and cable television has made great strides in supplanting the Big Three networks. The computerization of America has come in such varying packages--from fine-tuning the automobile as it runs, to guiding missiles from
(continued on Page 10)

Interview:

Pat Cadigan

Interviewed by Ellen Datlow

*Pat Cadigan, the author of **Mindplayers** and **Synners**, was the Guest of Honor at Armadillo-Con 12. Ellen Datlow is fiction editor of Omni magazine and also the editor of **Allen Sex**. The following is the text of the Guest of Honor interview conducted at ArmadilloCon 12.*

Ellen (E): For people who don't know, where did you grow up and when did you move to Kansas?

Pat (P): Hard to believe. I grew up in Massachusetts, I was actually born in New York, where all good people are born.

E: Yeah.

P: It was a big time in Schenectady in the early fifties with me, John Kessel, Michael Swanwick all born in Schenectady in the early fifties, but we all left, you know, about the same time.

E: How long were you there?

P: Who knows, I was maybe only just three. I grew up in Massachusetts and I came out to Kansas in 1973 with my first husband because he was getting his degree at the University of Kansas and it seemed like a good idea to go along with him, but it didn't save the marriage. You know, once you go somewhere and you kind of get stuck there and the next thing you know it's seventeen years later. I got my degree out there. I got my Bachelors degree at the University of Kansas in 1975. I was there, there's a college there and I finished my degree there. I started (my degree) at the University of Massachusetts.

E: What's your degree in?

P: Nothing. I have a degree in nothing, it's called a Bachelors Degree in General Studies. *[This prompts laughter from the audience]* It seemed like the fastest way to get out of undergraduate school at the time, and I believe I may be the only person in the world whose degree has been recalled. They don't offer this anymore. So, if they were to be retroactive about it they'd take my degree back and I'd probably have to go back and take some boring core requirement of some kind.

E: This isn't actually from the list, but I think it's tangential to this, what kind of background do you have in science? I know you do a lot of



research, but this seems to indicate that you didn't have any background in science.

P: I actually have no background in science. I was a theater major when I was in school.

E: Okay. The question from one person--I went around and asked some people what they'd like to know--what was your life (like) before you became a fabulous sf artifact? *[A lot of laughter]*

P: There was no life, there was only Zuul. *[applause]*

E: Now come on, I know you worked for Hallmark. I don't know what you did before that.

P: Okay. Well, for a while ...

E: The "H" word.

P: I worked at the "H" word. Prior to that, let's see, I was in school for a little while, for a while I worked for a radio station. I was a program director for a closed-circuit radio station for the blind. I used to read aloud for a living. And then for a little while after I left the University of Kansas I worked for Tom Reamy at Nickelodeon Graphic Arts and I was a typesetter. I know that's a machine now, but in those days it wasn't, in the late 70's. I used to set type--I used to have to walk to school through the blowing snow, uphill, both ways--and we used to have to set type on what looked like a glorified IBM selectric typewriter and it had special ribbons and special paper to do this and I did this for a while. And Tom and I did some kind of typesetting/layout job for somebody and he paid us and his check bounced. It didn't bounce for like, three weeks and by then I had paid my rent and I paid my electric bill, and I paid all the utility bills, and then they only charged you like \$10 per returned check so all of my checks bounced at \$10 apiece. So Tom and I found out this person was in town and we went and collected from him. Silly us, we took another check! And it

bounced! [laughter] So that was damn near the check charges. So I went to work for Hallmark in one of their department stores. Now this isn't a card shop, Hallmark doesn't own greeting card end of Nickelodeon Graphic Arts. You know I had to get a different job to pay all those bad stores. Those are like McDonalds, those are independently owned. I went to work in their Kansas City store selling pots and pans, napkins, and registering people for bridal registry and things like that. And then later I scripted for the editorial department, I wrote out bridal cards. So for years and years I worked for Hallmark doing writing to order and that was about the time you found me, Ellen. You picked me up out of the greeting card gutter.

E: No, that's not true. You were publishing before I even knew you.

P: Yes, but not much.

E: Well, okay, next one. What was the first story you sold, and where? What were the circumstances? Actually there are a lot of other questions, but I might as well segue into what seems to be tangential.

P: The first story I sold was a long time in selling. In 1976 I'd written a story and sent it out and it bounced around for like, about three years. It was a story called *Criers and Killers*, it was extremely dirty. It's probably the dirtiest thing I've ever written. Look, the audience just woke up. Everyone who was nodding off just woke up. It went everywhere. And everyone sent it back, "This is really good, but it's really too dirty for me."

E: When was this?

P: This was 1976 through 1979, and in 1979 **New Dimensions** came back. After **New Dimensions 10**, **New Dimensions 11** was soliciting for stories and Marta Randall was co-editing now with Bob Silverberg. So I sent them the story with a cover letter that said, "Everyone says this is too dirty to publish. Is it?" [Ellen laughs] So she wrote back and said no, but the ending's all wrong. I fixed the ending and I sent it back to her and she sent me an acceptance letter. So somewhere, if you ever get hold of a copy of **New Dimensions 11** you can find my first sale which is called *Criers and Killers*. And wouldn't you know, my mother came out to visit me shortly after this anthology was published, and I was so excited. "Mom, mom, I sold my first story and it's in print and everything." And

she said, "I want to read it." [Hits head] Why didn't I think about that. [laughter] So I gave it to my mother and my mother was staying in our spare room and she went in the spare room. She stayed in there a long time. [laughter] She came out and she put the typed script on the table. "Well, Mom?" And she said, "Well, I hope you got a lot of money for that." [laughter]

E: I'd like to backtrack a little. You were living and working with Tom Reamy. I know you were very close to him. I was just wondering, and I know he was an excellent writer who died too young. And I was wondering, did he have any influence on you as a writer? I'd like to know more about your relationship with him.

P: Pinpointing Tom's influence, consciously, would be very hard for me, I think. Because, you know, he was such a close friend and he was--and he is much more an influence on me now, I think, you know, it's like--it's like reading him as a literary source and then making friends with him. Or the other way around. But we sat and talked a lot about writing especially when he was writing **Blind Voices**. We would talk about how to kind of get things across, without having to telegraph it or spell it out in too many words. And Tom was, Tom, I thought was--it seems like Tom was able to glean the right kinds of things from what people said to him about his work. He was able to pick out the things of value and discard anything that really didn't apply to him. And he was able to tell the difference between stuff he should listen to and stuff he shouldn't. But he'd been living in Kansas City for a while and it had been a while since he'd even workshopped with anybody, when I knew him. And so it wasn't really so much that he'd told me a lot directly but that I kind of picked up incidentally from him.

E: Were you writing fiction at the time? Or what galvanized you to start writing fiction?

P: I've always been writing fiction. After I got my degree at the University of Kansas, I went to graduate school for a while, but I dropped out, because it was interfering with my writing. And I eventually dropped everything that interfered with my writing. I was writing fiction because it hadn't been that long since I'd been in college and I'd taken some writing courses with Jim Gunn at the University of Kansas. And Jim taught me a lot, I took a lot of value away from writing with Jim Gunn. I'd taken some independent study courses with him, and I thought it was particularly funny--this was my introduc-

tion to all the myriad ways, so to speak--Jim and Tom liked and disliked exactly the opposite stories that I showed them. All the stories that Jim hated, Tom liked, and all the stories that Tom hated, Jim liked.

E: I think we're getting into some heavy stuff. Let's go with lighter for a while. One question I got was, "where do you buy all your jewelry?" [laughter] I know where actually, I've been with her shopping.

P: Here and there. You know, it's keeping the eyes open. I had a traumatic experience with my jewelry, about nine years ago we got burglarized and all my really fabulous jewelry went in the burglary. And there wasn't a precious metal in the bunch. It was just, you know, junk jewelry that meant something to me, but you couldn't sell for anything. Just things that I'd had since my childhood, odd pieces that I'd picked up here and there and so for a long time I couldn't wear any jewelry at all because I was just too traumatized. I figured if I put any on the burglars would come back and take that, too. So, I still have some good pieces and I have some pieces that are not so good. I still have very few pieces of jewelry that actually have anything even semi-precious about them. I'm a silver person, not a gold person. I don't wear gold color or gold very often, I prefer silver. I like



something like this (holds up the bracelet on Ellen's wrist). If you see something like this--

E: Pick it up for her.

P: Yeah, pick it up.

E: I got this in New York, but it's from Thailand. Well, someone told me this, and I confirmed it with you and I've heard a little about this, I understand when you were five you died. Would you like to talk about this, and do you think it affected your life? [laughter]

P: I think Shelly Long said it best when she said, "hello again." Oh, yeah. Well, when I was five they discovered I had a congenital heart defect. Every baby isn't born with it, but it's not that uncommon. When you're a fetus, your heart is set up to circulate your blood through your mother's body, and after you're born there's a little duct that closes up. And then you start processing your own blood, you purify it, you oxygenate yourself, but every so often that duct doesn't close up in a child. And it makes a distinctive sound--it makes a kind of slurpy sound or something--[sound from the audience]--a lot like that, so that your family physician can figure it out. So I had this heart defect and they said, "well, we'll have to fix it." So they went in with the heart surgery. And there were lot's of drugs and things. Lots of drugs.

E: You probably didn't know the difference, did you?

P: I knew I was high. You can kind of tell, it's a fast education between sober and not-sober. So I had this weird experience and I really didn't know what it was for years. But it is the kind of thing that tends to stick in your mind, although I don't remember a lot of details about it now, it's kind of cloudy. But later on, in reading, I realized I had the legendary NDE, the near-death experience. And so I thought, "Well, that's really interesting. That's one way to get high. I wonder whether you could recreate this without actually having to go." Because I think that gave me a real interest in exploring all the brain states for one thing, just being medicated--being high. But also, exploring where do I come from and what's my significance, and what's next after this? Because I really can't imagine not being alive. I think that probably contributes a lot to our belief in the afterlife. Of course we can't imagine being dead, so obviously there must be something else beyond this. I mean, it's kind of a

logical thing. I don't know if it's actually true or not, this is just a theory and it hasn't been tested.

E: How old were you when you realized that what you had experienced was death?

P: When I was in high school, and of course by then, I was foggy on a lot of the details anyway. But--so I thought, well--for a while you believe in astrology, too. But I kind of spurned the ritual angle and it's like, you know, I went to the afterworld and it's closed. [laughter] I wasn't old enough to get in, sorry kid, under seventeen not admitted. [comment from the audience] Yeah. You have to be as tall as our sign. Sorry, now what was the question? Oh, yeah. So how has it affected my life? Well, it probably led to a lot of drug use, but it's nothing to kid about. I can't explain how it affected my life exactly. You know people who have had more intense near-death experiences at older ages talk about how confident they are that there is an afterlife, and that they're not afraid to die now. They want to spend the rest of their lives doing something worthwhile, because they've had intimations of their own mortality. And I guess maybe I was a little too young to feel that way about spiritual matters. You know, I'm as afraid to die as anybody is, it's not that I'm afraid to die but that I'm booked. I can't die yet, I haven't seen the *Jolson Story* [laughter], I haven't finished my next novel [laughter], my kid's too young, that sort of thing. I'm interested in what your brain does to ease you in and ease you out of this world and ease you in and ease you out of certain brain states. I find it intensely interesting that everyone who's had a near-death experience has had nearly the same experience. And a lot of people see this proves that there's a God, or see this proves there's a Baptist God, or there's a Catholic God, whatever. What it definitely proves is that we're all one, we're all the same species, and we all have the same mechanisms in extreme situations.

E: We're all concerned with death and have the same reactions.

P: And it bothers you.



E: Yeah. Let's talk a little about the creative process. All writers approach the process of writing differently, how do you do it? Can you trace the development of an idea into a story plot, taking one of the ideas that made it into a story or a novel? And tell us about the fragment box, which I think is related.

P: The fragment box. Well, for instance the *Mindplayers* stories, which eventually became the book *Mindplayers*, were a long time in coming. I didn't even really trace those to interest in other brain states, the near-death experience or things like that until I'd already written a few of the stories and then I realized where a lot of that was coming from; the idea of kind of really removing your consciousness from your body and sending it into a machine to communicate with other consciousnesses. And things like that, but it seemed like I was collecting the material for those stories for a long, long time. And I'd read some stuff here and there, that the eyes were really an exposed part of your brain. And I thought, well that's fascinating. And it's not really exactly your eyes, but certainly your retina is the part of your brain that is most exposed. So I thought that's how they used to do lobotomies, bummer.

E: You mean, they did them through the eyes?

P: Yeah, yeah. In the original procedure you went in through the eye sockets. So I thought, "yeah that would be an interesting alternative to feed information in. You know since you take in so much information that way anyhow. And then if you could fix it--fixing the retina somehow so that no one would ever have to be blind, it would be kind of the ideal conduit to put things in and then you wouldn't have to perform brain surgery on people. You could just do eye surgery." So I invented the artificial eyes and I thought, "Well, you knew, it's like buying jewelry. As long as you're going to have artificial eyes you might as well give people a range of choices."

E: Did you love biogems?

P: Yeah, I love biogems. Especially now they have contact lenses.

E: But you still can't get cat eyes.

P: No, no.

E: I'm waiting for that.

(Continued on page 14)

From The Recliner

by Edw. A. Graham, Jr.

Either I'm getting old or global warming is really being felt around here. It's almost 90 degrees outside. Thank Ghu for air-conditioning. Makes everything perfect for a tall, cool Dr. Pepper (not a commercial endorsement, just personal preference) and some really cool books. Know what I mean?

When The Music's Over edited by Lewis Shiner (\$4.99 paper, Bantam Spectra, May 1991) Rating: 3.9

It's fairly difficult to summarize an anthology of short stories by diverse authors, so I'll just repeat what's on the cover: "An anthology of tales against war and violence." And it is that. There are several things that make this a very unique and outstanding book: 1) the quality of writing (with authors like Walter Jon Williams, Nancy Kress, Jack McDevitt, James Blaylock, and just about all the pros that live in Austin, not to mention a "cartoon strip" by Maxine writer/artist Marian Henley), 2) the diversity of stories/styles, 3) the commonality of the themes, and 4) most importantly, **all of the editor's proceeds are being donated to Greenpeace!** Practically every story in this collection is designed to either make you seriously think about non-violence or to hit you at the gut level and inspire an emotional antipathy to violence. This is a prime example of Science/Speculative Fiction striking at the heart of our problems in our current world.

Tom Swift #1: The Black Dragon, Tom Swift #2: The Negative Zone by "Victor Appleton" (house name) (\$2.95 paper, Archway [Simon & Schuster], April 1991) Not rated

Tom Swift, Jr. (those things in the blue or yellow covers) is what introduced me to SF. There was a previous attempt to revive Tom in the 80's, but even though there were several outstanding authors working on the project (Neal Barrett, Jr. comes to mind), it flopped quickly. This series is different: it's set in the here and now, it utilizes the newest breakthroughs in science (e.g. superconductivity), and it has the same adventure "flavor" of the original (1910-1920) and the Jr. series. Best of all, it doesn't appear to be talking "down" to the intended audience (it's labelled "YA" on the spine). I'm assigning "III" to this Tom, because it seems to fit. They are quick reads for adults, albeit fun, and I highly recommend them to younger readers. Okay, it's a personal bias...

Young Bleys by Gordon R. Dickson (\$19.95 hard, Tor, April 1991) Rating: 2.1

In the time before **Final Encyclopedia**, the very young Bleys Ahrens was shipped off by his mother to the Friendlies, the religious splinter-culture groups on the planets Harmony and Association. He tries to fit in with his adopted uncle and cousins, strives to find the peace within religion that they have, only to be disappointed in his quest. Then along comes older brother Dahno to claim him and introduce him to a network of other splinter-culture half-breeds like themselves. It is not long after that Bleys realizes his destiny and embarks upon his personal crusade that will eventually place him in conflict with Hal Mayne.

Another volume in Dickson's Childe Cycle, this book attempts to explain the events and teachings that make Bleys what he is and how he united the Others into a interstellar political force.

The writing is much better than exhibited in his last Childe book (Chantry Guild) and much more coherent. My basic problem with this book was **why?** Most of the people who have been following, in some cases avidly, are ready for the conclusion of the saga that's almost spanned 30 years, real-time. This, and the preceding volume, I think are not necessary to the series and, well, I just plain didn't enjoy getting through this one. I really had no interest in why Bleys Ahrens is the way he is. One final note: this novel ends with the murder of Hal Mayne's tutors.

Rats and Gargoyles by Mary Gentle (\$18.95 hard, Roc [Penguin], April 1991) Rating: 4.1

There is a world where there are five points on the compass, magic and necromancy work, humans have humanoid Rats as masters, and the Gods themselves live among them, in a city called "the Heart of the World." What do you think would happen if one of the Rats decided it would be much better if the Gods left the world and Rats could rule absolutely? Well, killing off one of the Thirty-Six Lords of Heaven was just a start...

Gentle's style of prose was a little difficult to start with, but once into the storyline, the rhythm and pacing becomes almost as important as the tremendous effort spent on weaving a realistic word-picture of the people, Rats, Lords, and surroundings. I felt that, because of the superb imagery, there had to be some place like this. There

is a very skillful blend of "modern" technology, magic, and just plain crazy happenings that kept me pretty engrossed to the very end. Sorry I couldn't give a broader sense of the plot, but it gets so convoluted, I almost had to make a cheat-sheet to tell who was on who's side and where the hell are they now? A very different and fun book.

The Hereafter Gang by Neal Barrett, Jr. (\$25.00 hard [trade], Ziesing, April 1991) Rating: 4.3

Doug Hoover is stuck in a rut. And he's not having a lot of fun, either. He's suffering through an interminable job in advertising, his wife's leaving him for a TV preacher, and basically his whole life is going down the garbage disposal. Then he meets up with Sue Jean, a culmination of his fantasies about mean-eyed Southern car-hops, and Royce, someone whom he would like to get to know better. Things start getting a little strange then, with biplanes buzzing overhead, car chases, Western outlaws, and Huns dropping in for a little trout fishing. Doug just wants to capture lazy Sunday afternoons, building model airplanes from balsa and tissue, and maybe just a friendly little fling in the back seat of a '57 Chevy, the things that made early life golden. Maybe he can find that in all this apparent insanity...

Barrett has crafted a supremely bizarre and yet realistic story of Doug's "rite of passage" towards self-realization that is so entertaining and just plain fun that I whipped through the book in record time. This is one novel where you're just along for the ride, so sit back, relax, and enjoy. The author has captured a snap-shot of life in the south (especially Texas) and has invited everyone to take a closer look at the things that are really important in life. With a wonderful cover by Don Ivan Punchatz and beautiful, long lasting binding from Mark Ziesing, this is a book that you should have on your shelves for a long time.

Okay, here's some "honorable mentions" (so to speak):

Starwolves: Tactical Error Thorarinn Gunnarsson (\$4.95 paper, Questar, April 1991)

A conclusion of the 50,000 year war between the Republic and the Union with lots of decisions to be made by the Starwolves, including whether or not they have the right of self-determination.

Achilles' Choice Larry Niven and Steven Barnes, illus by Boris Vallejo (\$15.95 hard, Tor, March 1991)

I had two reactions to this book: one involves some invective at what I got for my money and really shouldn't be printed where sensibilities might be shocked; the other was something like "These guys can write better than **this!**" It does have some nice looking, if overly athletic, women on the dust jacket.

Divergence: Book Two of the Heritage Universe, Charles Sheffield (\$16.95 hard, Del Rey, February 1991)

This continues the saga of a diverse group thrown into the middle of the Galaxy's most intriguing mysteries: the artifacts of the Builders. Not as good as other Sheffield works, but better than the first installment in the series.

The Mercenaries, Bill Baldwin (\$4.95 paper, Questar, June 1991)

The Helmsman Wilf Brim returns to cause the evil Emperor Nergol Triannic and his cronies as much trouble as he can. This classic Space Opera series is not finished by any stretch of the imagination!

Whew! And you ought to see what's in the next batch to read! Meanwhile, here's my handy-dandy rating scales for those who haven't figured it out:

- 5 - Orgasmic
- 4 - Serious awards contender and pretty damn good
- 3 - Really solid, good work. Enjoyable.
- 2 - I managed to at least finish it. Some redeeming qualities.
- 1 - Waste of trees.
- 0 - File 13 (I wouldn't curse Half-Price with this...)

'Later...

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(continued from Page 3)

hundreds of miles away to hit a precise target, to baking bread where all you do is toss in the ingredients, press a button and let the machine do the rest. It really is amazing. And at the heart of all this is the computer. For the moment, let's just look at the computer, and in particular the microcomputer.

Ten years ago, sixty-four kilobytes of memory was all you would ever need, and hard drives were strictly for main-frames. A floppy disk held all the information you could possibly use (much more data than your computer could use at one time), and there was a plethora of different computer types. IBM was just beginning to get into the personal computer world. The Apple II, Commodore 64, Atari 800, TI-44A, and the TRS-80 were the main players. Most of the computers could be viewed using your television screen, and many of the software companies were being run out of someone's living room or garage.

Now, IBM is the major standard, with the Macintosh being the second of two. All of the other companies mentioned before now will run as IBM compatibles, some exclusively (as in Tandy and TI), or as a second operating system (Atari and Commodore).

These days, ten times the amount of memory that was all you would ever need a decade ago is considered minimal, with multiple megabytes being a good thing to have. And most software expects you to have a hard drive.

And then there's speed. The microprocessors of a decade ago are akin to the proverbial molasses in January compared to today's newest processors with their thirty-three or forty megahertz speeds. The microcomputer of today compares very favorably with the mainframe of those years gone by.

Something that cannot be left out is the cost of these computers. The price has come down tremendously. In 1982, I bought my first computer, an Apple II+, with 48 kilobytes (KB) memory and one floppy drive capable of a whopping 143KB memory storage. I used my television as the monitor. The cost, \$2000.

Today, for that same price, I could get the top-of-the-line computer (a 386 machine running at 40Mhz), with a 70 megabyte hard

drive, a floppy drive which handles ten times the storage of that old Apple, plus a high-resolution monitor, so forget that old tv. Simply amazing the changes in such a short period of time.

But what does future computing hold in store for us? Present electronics already surpasses the level of miniaturization required for computing, doesn't it? I mean, there are computers on the market which when folded up are as small as a VHS video-cassette tape, and weigh in at a pound. All this includes screen and keyboard. Where do we go from here?

The direction is towards a more graphics and picture-oriented viewing environment, which of course requires memory. Already here is the CD-ROM, a compact disc which, instead of holding music, holds close to a gigabyte (a thousand megabytes) of computer data, and which can be removed and replaced.

Soon, there will be a variety of CD which can be written to and read from in a manner similar to the venerable floppy disk, but which will hold enormously more material than even many of the hard drives today. And these will be removable with a flick of the wrist, and another replacing it.

The video screen will continue to become higher in resolution until it rivals the 35mm camera in quality. And maybe, just maybe, some bright person will develop a video screen that truly is as easy to read as a paperback book. It will take something like that to truly make the computer commonplace. Go to your WaldenBooks or Bookstop to buy the latest best-seller on a cartridge or disk, and slip it into your hand-reader. Hmmm. . . now there is a scary thought--the ability to pack an *average* fan's entire book collection into slim cartridges which would fill a shoebox or two. This would be a step toward that Utopian paperless society which we seem actually to be moving further and further away from.

What else is over the horizon? A better way to input to the computer than typing. There has been a some research into using a direct brainwave input to the computer, with quite favorable results. It takes training though (so does typing), so this may be a while in coming, but it may not be too long before you can sit down in front of your computer and literally think about what you want it to do.

Trades Listing

Anvil #53
 Austin Writer 3-5/91
 BCSFAzine #215-217
 Cry Havoc July/Aug 90, Dec-Jan 91, Feb 91,
 May 91
 DASFAx Vol. 23, #3-6
 FACTSheet Five #41, 42
 FOSFAx #154, 155
 FTT #11
 The Insider #163
 The Knarley Knews #27
 Lan's Lantern #39
 NASFA Shuttle 4/91, 5/91, 6/91
 Neology #72
 OASFiS Event Horizon #47-49
 Onstage
 Riverside Quarterly Vol 8, #3
 Scavengers' Newsletter 87, 88
 SFSFS Shuttle #73-75
 Southern Fandom Confed. Newsletter #8
 Stone Hill Launch Times V. 5, #4-6
 The TAFF Door #3
 Transmissions V. 14, #2
 The Nature to Wander #10
 West Wind #156, 157

NEW OR NOTABLE FANZINES

Bruzzfuzzel News #65-67
 ed. Clay Fourrier: Baton Rouge SFL, POB
 14238, Baton Rouge LA 70898-4238. Not a
 new trade, these may be the last issues we see
 for a while. Editor Fourrier has resigned in
 protest of the apathy displayed by the club,
 which appears to be at a crisis point.

Chernobalization #1
 eds. Alexander Vasilkovsky & Boris Sidyuk:
 Zorany Shlyah SF Club, Post Restante,
 General PO 252000 Kiev, Ukraine, USSR.
 A new clubzine from Kiev written in decent
 English on fandom and SF in the USSR.

P.S.F.S. News, May 91
 Philadelphia SF Soci-
 ety, POB 8303, Phila-
 delphia PA 19101.
 Meeting minutes and
 club news with some
 convention news tossed
 in. To wit, a standard
 club newszine.

Pulsar! #17
 ed. Tony Ubelhor,
 POB 886, Evansville IN
 47706-0886. This was
 my #1 nomination for

the 1990 fanzine hugo. Well written articles and
 a lot of fiction (some fan fiction).

Opuntia #1
 Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary AL, Canada
 T2P 2E7. This introductory issue talks about
 what the title means, it introduces a writing
 contest (based on the title), and it talks about
 Canadian SF.

Scribble Unlimited Presents #8
 ed. Miles Polar Bear, PO Box 415, Rutherford
 NJ 07070. A short digest-sized zine that is best
 characterized as very anti-establishment. It uses a
 voice that I find somewhat offensive. The presen-
 tation borders on the sloppy and the profession-
 al, though the mostly primitive graphics keep it
 in the former.

The Shingletown Inquirer #93
 Mark V. Zeising, POB 76, Shingletown CA
 96088. More than just a catalog of books, it also
 contains articles on authors and book reviews.

Shipping Susan (Fictions #4)
 ed. Fran Skene: BCSFA. The fiction
 magazine from the people who bring you
 BCSFAzine. Very sharp looking. Six stories
 and one filk with different themes, yet based
 from a single idea. Five of the six stories are
 pro-quality.
 The best fic-
 tion to date.

CON PROGRESS REPORTS/ PROGRAM BOOKS:

Baycon 91 #2
 (PR)
 Ditto Doings
 #4 (PR)
 OASIS #4
 (PB)
 VikingCon 12
 #2 (PR)

L. SLATE © 1991



Alex on Art

by Alexander R. Slate

The official attendance figures disguise the fact that AggieCon is, in reality, a small regional convention. Considering the actual size of the con it has a decent art show. Among the artists showing works were Keith Berdak, Sam Douglas, Larry Elmore, Danny & Judy Love-Gillies, Keith Parkinson, Laurel Slate, and Randall Spangler. Also showing were two persons on whom this column's critical eye falls, C. Brett Ferguson and Denise Satter-Gore, but more on them below. There was plenty of room in which to view the art, and though the lighting was not the best with which to view art, it wasn't dark, and for the most part was adequate. Warning to artists, they are slow paying out.

C. Brett Ferguson had 9 pieces of art at AggieCon, but 1 sold before I had a chance to make my notes for the column. The works are all done in the three year period of 1988 to 1990, and all are limited edition (runs of 50) black and white prints. Mr Ferguson is graphic artist with an interesting style in which I see the influence of Erte. Which is not to say that the work is derivative, nor is it a complete copy of Erte's style, but rather that there are similarities in the pen work and in certain of the poses displayed.

Given that the works are all black and white, Mr Ferguson shows the ability to get some feel for different textures in two of the works. The best example of this is "Gun Bitch". Though the main figure is done in his usual solid black and whites, there is a strip (in which is depicted a face and head) done in pointalist (with dots) style which has a whole different feel. "Promotional Material" (right) also uses a mix of different pen styles to provide some texture.

Mr Ferguson likes the female figure. Only one piece, "Jack Terminal" (which won 3rd place in the pro print category) depicts a male, though one other, "Wired to Die" depicts an androgynous figure which might be male.

One thing I will say is that the pieces shown are not all repetitions of the same theme. There are differences in texture (mentioned above) and two, "View From Below" and "Improved Suspension", show that Mr Ferguson can inject a touch of humor into his works. One piece that is nicely different from the rest is "Wired to Die" (one of the pieces that really show the Erte influence). The main figure and the plain white background are cocked in relation to a drawn black framing.

I've said a lot of nice things so far, but there is room for improvement. One fault (common in

many artists' work) is that the figures are all too smooth, there is no sense of musculature; though "Jack Terminal" the newest piece does show some improvement in this respect. But this may be because it is the only male figure depicted. There are also almost no background or sense of perspective in these pictures, though again we start to see improvement in "Digital Trephination" and in "Jack Terminal".

One problem in reviewing these pieces is that I can get no feel for what else Mr Ferguson can do outside of B/W work. But even in the only 3 years that these works span we can see some improvement. Though I have some doubts as to whether these works are the type which will sell well at SF conventions (no dragons or ST figures), they are good works which I would recommend seeing (or even buying).

I wish I could say the same about the work of Denise Satter-Gore. She showed nine pieces, all limited edition prints. Some are laser prints and some are hand colored. Most are dated 1991, though some are from 1990.

To me the work looked amateurish. Though the figures aren't badly drawn, they don't convey any sense of reality. For one thing, many are too highly posed. They're not natural. This lack of reality or naturalness might not be bad except that I get the feeling this isn't intentional, but rather lack of practice.

These pictures do almost nothing for me. The overall effect of Ms Gore's work is childishness. Very soft colors, with a lot of pastels. The subject matter in many of the pictures is along the cutesy lines -- mermaids, dragons, cats, and anthropomorphic kitties.

All that nasty commentary said, let me state that two pieces, "All Hallows Eve" and "Peace at Last" show that Ms Gore has some instinct for composition, if only the pieces were executed better. Perhaps 2 or 3 years of work and study may show something different.

POSTSCRIPT: After communicating with Ms. Satter-Gore I learned that she has been an illustrator for 10 years and does work for children's books, records, etc. Because work for children is handled on a different level, much of my criticism (which is aimed at work targeted for adults) doesn't really apply. As children's art it works.



LOCS

Gaithersburg MD
June 6, 1991

Dear Inquirers -

Thanks for
#38- just arrived.

Whew - the
EMSH on pg 5
looks like Freas.
Of course I know
the name Emsh-
willer, but I'm
not a devotee...
yet. Got any sug-
gestions on refer-
ence books (biblio-
graphies not a must,
but samples are) on il-
lustrators/artists in SF
of the _____ (since I
don't have any such
references, any year(s) can be
filled in).

Nice Sherlock, Ranson, Tortorici
(although I'm not certain "nice" applies to Phil's
work) art.

In Alex's article on Westercon - I knew LA,
but decided (albeit with some questions) that SA
must stand for South America. Then, when they
arrived home at 7 AM had to rethink. I checked
out the first page- AH - San Antonio...(Congrat-
ulations to Laurel on the two sales - the market
appears to be rather tight right now!)

The reviews are interesting in that they all ap-
pear to be positive - a rarity these days! Several
of them sounded worth tracking down - thanks.

I REALLY like the art reviews and the Austin
Art (she was just Artist GoH at Disclave here -
and I saw a lot of her American Indian/spirit
work up close). I think several zines have, in the
past, tried art/artist columns, but they never
seemed to stay around very long. The choices for
the article reminded me of the recent Linda
Michael's material I've seen lately.

Thanks also for the NOSF3 insert - very nice
and I appreciated its being there. Lots of info
packed in a small space.

Sorry I'm not a sertling (of 14Kt) loccer - but
I read and appreciated #38 - thanks again-

Sheryl Birkhead

*I'm not too sure about reference material.
Can anyone help Sheryl out with some art book
references?*

The art reviews will stay unless a majority

*complain about them, but the general
feedback so far has been positive.
Being married to an artist I've sort
of got an interest in continuing to
write the articles. I've still got a
few in the pipeline. Linda
Michaels? I know I should
recognize the name, but I
don't.*

*To us you are a
sterling loc'er. Thanks!*

Detroit MI
June 10, 1991

Dear Alexander & Dale,
Thanks for TSFI

#38. I was impressed by
the cover this time, the
more so when it turned
out to be by Alicia Austin.

I hadn't seen her art in a
fanzine in years. Presumably
these are commercial pieces
she's given you permission to re-
print. Alexander's review of her
showing at Soonercon seemed overly
critical, not much credit is given to her

keen sense of anatomy, posture and expression.
With an economy of lines she creates people who
look real, and look natural in that particular
scene. It's sad enough that most current fan
artists can't do that, worse is that some of the
professional guys can't either.

Hindsight is making the Gulf War look less
like an *honorable* or *justifiable* and more like
one big mistake. The Kuwati government who's
restoration has cost so many billions of dollars
and hundreds of thousands of lives, is proving to
be a murderous dictatorship, Saddam remains in
power and now the Kurdish ethnic group lies in
danger of genocide the minute American forces
leave Northern Iraq. Sadly, there's a strong prob-
ability that with a secure sea port, Saddam would
have been content with just Kuwait, a status quo
condition we could have lived with better than
what we ended up with. *sigh*

I loved Al Jackson's paean to EMSH. (Except
I've always considered Freas a johnny-come-
lately, pastiching the more original Emsh &
Cartier styles.) I started reading SF in the early
60's and EMSH was the dominant artist of the
time. Like Paul and Wesso a generation earlier,
Emsh's painting had some indefinable, essence of
science fiction. They defined SF visually; other
artists just followed blindly after them. A large
coffee table book of Emsh's work would be won-
derful. By the way Emsh left illustration to get
into avant garde videos. I saw him and some of



his videos at a talk a few years back. A lot of the computer tricks we take for granted now were inspired by his work.

Regards,
Brian Earl Brown

You are correct, I didn't give Alicia Austin enough credit for some of the things she does right. Overly critical? Maybe.

I still think that the war might have been justifiable. The way we're handling the 'peace' is wrong. The problem is that the Kurdish/Shiite problem is internal to Iraq. The Iraqi grab of Kuwait crossed national boundaries. Would the USSR be correct in sending troops to help Amerind separatists or the IRA? Same type of problem, the difference is only one of magnitude. Then again, isn't protection of human rights everywhere the correct thing to do? This, like any other ethical problem is a sticky wicket. How long would we be justified in occupying Iraqi territory. Can we justify the cost when there are persons here in the US in dire situations? I wish I had the answers. Actually, I wish someone, anyone, had the answers.

Anyway, thanks for the letter. -Alex

Pat Cadigan (Continued from page 7)

P: I am, too. I talked to my eye doctor and he said, you see those funny people with funny contact lenses on television and they got like, silver eyes or you know, strange eyes; those people are blind because, those lenses are opaque. So you only see a short shot of people because they can't make see-through lenses like that yet. But ...

E: We'll get there yet.

P: We're working on it, I'm working on it--so with artificial eyes, people could get them in a whole range of colors and styles. There'd be a market for that certainly. I wrote the first story, and I wrote twelve pages of it and it is part of the book **Mindplayers** that is set--

{Alex} *At this point my batteries gave way and the rest of the interview is lost. Well, if you wanted to hear the whole thing you should have been there and it's your own fault.*

From what I can remember of the rest of the interview, it continued on for a while about how the different parts of the Mindplayers stories continued to develop. Pat also talked about the fragment box, what it is and how she uses it for her writing. The interview also went into what Pat intends for the future, the projects she is current working on and what else she is thinking about. There's a whole lot more that I can't remember, but that's why I tape things.

Upcoming Conventions

July 12-14 **DragonCon '91**

Atlanta Hilton & Towers, Atlanta GA. Guests: Piers Anthony, Phillip Jose Farmer, L. Sprague & Catherine de Camp, Mike Jitlov. Membership: \$30 DragonCon '91, Box 47696, Atlanta GA 30362.

August 29- Sep 2 **Chicon V (Worldcon)**

Hyatt Regency, Chicago IL. Guests: Hal Clement, Martin H. Greenberg, Richard Powers, Jon & Joni Stopa, Marta Randall. Membership: \$125 until 7/15. Chicon V, Attn: Larry Smith, Registrar, PO Box 218121, Upper Arlington OH 43221-8121

Sep 21-22 **Conniption '91**

La Quinta, Arlington TX. Guests: Bob Tucker, Brad Foster, Robert Taylor. Membership: Conniption '91, 2813 Cactus Drive, Irving TX 75060

October 11-13 **ArmadilloCon 13**

Wyndham Southpark, Austin TX. Guests: Dan Simmons, Dell Harris, Amy Stout, Emma Bull. Memberships: \$15, ArmadilloCon 13, PO Box 9612, Austin TX 78766

October 25-27 **World Fantasy Convention 17**

Doubletree Hotel, Tuscon AZ. Guests: Susan & Harlan Ellison, Stephen Donaldson, Arlin Robins. Membership: Attendance limited to 750, \$80, Bruce Far, PO 27201, Tempe AZ 85285, (602)730-8646

November 22-24 **SoonerCon 7**

Central Plaza Hotel, OKC OK. Guests: Tim Powers, Patricia Davis, Mike McQuay, Marty Burke, Curtis & Marilyn Berry. Membership: \$15 until 11/1, SoonerCon, POB 1701, Bethany OK 73008-0701, (405)769-4417 before 10PM

Sep 3-7, 1992 **MagiCon (Worldcon)**

Orlando FL. Guests: Jack Vance, Vincent DiFate, Walter A. Willis, Spider Robinson. Membership: \$65 until 9/30/91, MagiCon, PO Box 621992, Orlando FL 32862-1992

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