

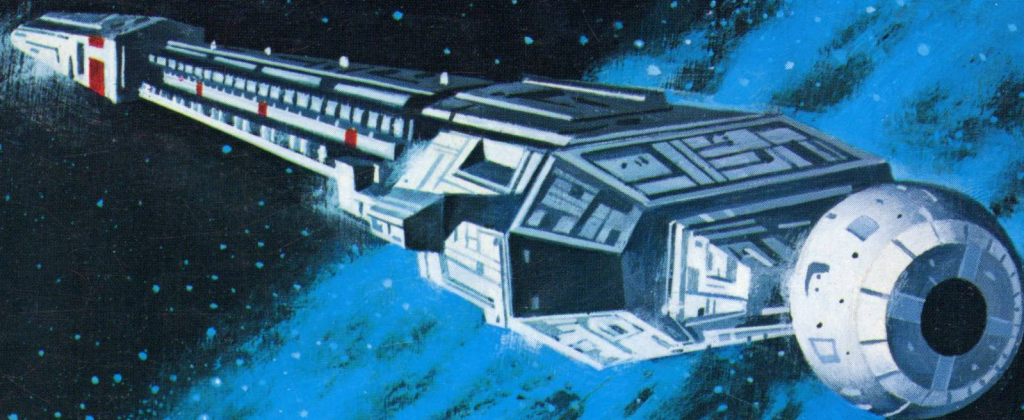
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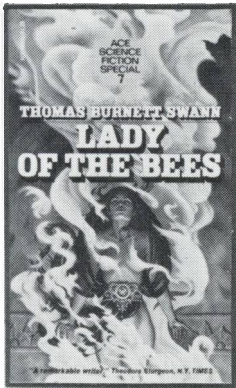
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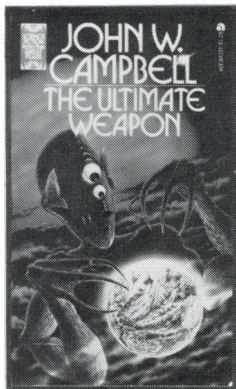
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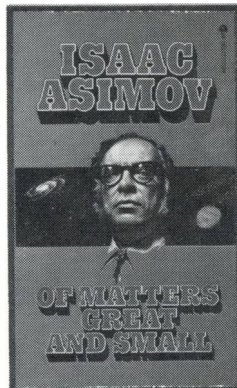
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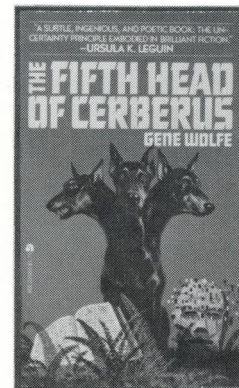


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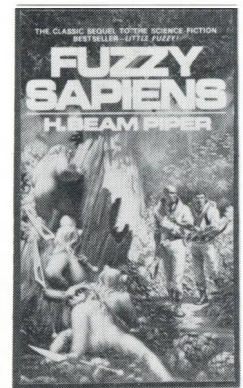
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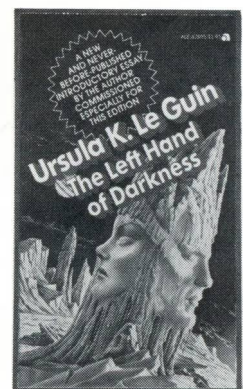
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ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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Propeller Beanie

A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

"Why are you here?" asked Jan Sharpe, the elegant blonde from the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

"We've come for Aussiecon."

"Here" was the State Suite on the 15th floor of the Southern Cross Hotel, Melbourne, Australia, Aug. 14, 1975. Robin Johnson, chairman of Aussiecon, had hauled me away from helping to register convention attendees to attend a press conference where he was introducing convention notables to each other and to assorted reporters.

The basic "why" translated as "What's an Aussiecon?" with faint undertones of "Why here?" (Australians are so used to believing that everything important exists in the places where they're tourists that they find it hard to believe North Americans would want to cross the Pacific and the dateline to see them, their wombats and their Opera House. In fact, they're most courteous, hospitable to visitors, and have an amazing country. This may be the first time ALGOL has given a rave review to a continent.)

Since 1939, we explained, and annually since 1946, science fiction fans have gathered at "world" conventions to talk; swap ideas and fanzines; sell each other old pulp magazines; look at masquerade balls, art shows and, especially of late, movies; meet writers who are meeting editors; give each other awards; eat dinner together; and... anything two fans do together is fanac. This is the 33rd of these "world conventions." Since it is supposed to be a "world" convention, it has been known to move out of North America, to London and Heidelberg, and so an Australian named John Bangsund thought... Well, yes, of course, we hear writers give speeches, but it's not really like an academic conference. No, not like the sheepdip sellers' sales meetings, or the American Legion reunions, either. It's been called a gathering of the tribes, and a family reunion... but they were puzzled already, these people come to interpret us.

Media coverage of science fiction conventions tends to be sensational. The first TORCON in 1948 earned headlines like "Zap! Zap! Atomic Ray is Passé with Fiends," and one of the sensational Melbourne tabloids proved nothing has changed—they concentrated on the scanty skirts of the hired models promoting the WANG computers, loaned to the convention for Star Trek games. "Sci-fi." Sigh.

Most reporters, though, listened with interest as Robin stressed the respectabilities of science fiction, the educational and cultural nature of the convention, the funds from the Literature Board of the Australian Council to run a writers' workshop before the con, the videotaping of the convention for schools and libraries. (If you're interested in sound or video tapes, write to Aussiecon, GPO Box 4039, Melbourne, Vic. 3001, Australia.)

More important, Ursula K. Le Guin emanated, inspired, intelligent interest in this "Aussiecon."

"I have a question, a serious question to ask you. What on earth are we here for?"

"Well, I think we have come to celebrate."—Ursula K. Le Guin, Guest of Honour speech, Aussiecon, Aug. 14, 1975.

Reporters thought they could understand why Ursula Le Guin had come to Aussiecon: for professional reasons. The Guest of Honour was fittingly chosen: an acclaimed writer of science fiction and fantasy, winner of Hugo, Nebula and National Book awards, author of the Hugo-and-Nebula-winning *The Left Hand of Darkness*, the Nebula-winning-and-Hugo-nominated *The Dispossessed*. She must have journeyed half round the world to accept the admiration of her fans.

Admiration, however, makes Ursula Le Guin nervous. She changes the subject. She was lured from Oregon, en route to London the long way, by the chance to lead a writing workshop for

20 aspiring SF writers. She remained after the workshop, not to lecture to fans, but to share with them her delight in SF: to "celebrate" SF.

"SF is pretty well grown up now. We've been through our illiterate stage, and our latent or non-sexual stage, and the stage where you can't think of anything *but* sex, and the rest of them, and we really do seem to be on the verge of maturity now. When I say I'd like SF to be self-critical, I don't mean pedantic or destructively perfectionist; I mean I'd like to see more SF readers judging soundly, dismissing the failures quietly, in order to praise the successes joyfully—and to go on from them, to build upon them. That is maturity, isn't it?—a just assessment of your capacities, and the will to fulfill them. We have plenty to praise, you know, I do think SF during the past ten years has produced some books and stories that will last, that will be meaningful and beautiful many years from now." (Ursula K. Le Guin, GoH speech, Aussiecon.)

Most of us responded enthusiastically; a few people wondered where the fun of reading forbidden trash would go; and the reporters took notes. But Ms. Le Guin had more to say:

"When I say the ghetto walls are down and it behooves us to step over them and be free, I don't mean that the community of SF is breaking up, or should break up... The essential lunacy that unites us will continue to unite us. The one thing that's changed is that we're no longer *forced* together in a mutually defensive posture—like a circle of muskoxen on the Arctic snow, attacked by wolves—by the contempt and arrogance of literary reactionaries. If we meet now and in the future, we writers and readers of SF, to give each other prizes and see each other's faces and renew old feuds and discuss new books and hold our celebration, it will be in entire freedom—because we choose to do so—because, to put it simply, we like each other."

I'm not altogether sure the

reporters (and the attendees) fully understood the uniqueness of that liking.

Thursday, we had panels on "new directions in science fiction" and on science; Friday we talked about art and SF; Saturday found me moderating panels on teaching SF, and on children's fantasy (featuring Ursula Le Guin and Peter Nicholls of England's Science Fiction Foundation—I really enjoyed this one), followed by hardworking Ursula on a panel on myth in SF, then SF criticism, and finally Bob Silverberg reading his own work—a most serious, literary day this, ending with the Hugo banquet; and Sunday had panels on the media in SF, reading SF, and writing SF: it *looked* like a literary conference. (But what was that panel about "fanzines"—and this item, "The Role of Sheep in SF"—and all the announcements of the Test Match scores—and this "business session" where Orlando won the 1977 worldcon? What's this "fandom"?)

So the reporters assumed they'd dropped into a literary gathering, where Ackerman, Bova, Foster, Le Guin, Silverberg and Tucker had flown in to meet their Australian counterparts like Chandler, Harding, Turner and Wilder, their critics like Nicholls and Foyster. Off they went to interview Captain Chandler (and report, with pride, the presentation of an Invisible Little Man award to him at the banquet): a gentleman dignified, courteous, proud of his craft, and as thrilled as any of us to be at Aussiecon. The papers and the radio didn't report on that last trait. We call it Sense of Wonder. It knows no limits of age or distance; and it unites us.

"Why have you come to Aussiecon—from Perth, and Hobart, and Waihere Island, N.Z.?"

"To meet science fiction writers, of course."

Aussiecon was, first of all, a science fiction conference, for writers and readers. As such it attracted 604 attending members, some 500 or whom were Australians who had never heard of worldcons or fandom—who probably didn't understand why some 1,400 other fans, most of them North Americans, paid to become supporting members of a convention they couldn't attend. (Even with this support, Aussiecon may have financial problems, especially since Australian hotels, unlike most North American ones, charge for the use of function space.)

These readers, like the reporters, soon learned that what Ursula Le Guin said held true: "we like each other." The SF world tends *not* to split into an elite of Doers, sitting on platforms lecturing, and a supportive mass of Receivers or fans, sitting adulating.

Convention: from the Latin, to come together: in order to share.

Chorus of voices: "And when I asked for an autograph, he/she *talked* to me! What a nice person!"

(And some are arrogant bastards, too, but they stayed home this time.)

"Why are you here?"

"Because the fans sent me to you."

Bob Tucker, a First Fandomite, legend, Hugo-winning fan-writer, and admirer of Jim Beam and pretty ladies, is also Wilson Tucker, Hugo-nominated SF writer. He flew to Aussiecon because a lot of us in the fan community love him; because a lady named Jackie Franke organized "The Tucker Bag," a special fund which collected some \$2,500 from fans to pay his way. During his first panel, on SF writing, he sat silent and fidgeting under the spotlights, feeling that only a handful of us were responding. "They're a cold audience," he complained to me. Since I was to interview him the next day on the programme, we considered the problem. The spotlights for videotaping panels were too bright, the hall too dark: speakers and audience were cut off. Easily remedied. Vital, though, since we wanted to establish the lack of barriers.

"Bob," I said, "I remember my first worldcon. You were up on a stage trading one-liners about 'Rosebud' and 'Courtney's boat' and picnic tables—and I walked out. People kept talking about fandom; I didn't understand, and I was bored. We've got to introduce you properly—as Wilson the writer (Robin didn't make it clear who you are) and Bob the fan, and talk about why you're both."

Introduce fandom-as-a-Tucker creation in 50 minutes? We tried. Soon Merv Binns of Space Age Books was selling out of hardcover editions of *Ice and Iron* and *Year of the Quiet Sun*; the local bottle shops were selling out of Tucker's elixir, Jim Beam; and Tucker was handing out Rosebud buttons and calling cards to bebies of femmefans. By Sunday, he had a hall full of people on their feet going "smoooooth," an arcane ritual you'll only understand if you attend a con with Bob, Wilson and Jim.

By Sunday, that is, Australia had a lot of people not only delighted to discover somebody else read "That stuff" (remember the thrill?) but also a lot of people happy to discover the subculture of fandom. (A good introduction is Tucker's own *Neofan's Guide*, 25¢ from Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, PA 19076.)

"Why are you here?"

"The fans sent me to keep an eye on Bob, there."

Rusty Hevelin (who drinks milk) travelled with his "son" Bob as the

Down Under Fan Fund winner. The Fund alternately sends Australians up to visit us, us down to them. For information and ballots, contact Rusty Hevelin at 3023 Troy Pike, Dayton, OH 45404. For \$3.00, he'll sell you a copy of *Emu Tracks Over America*, Leigh Edmonds' account of the Epic Journey he and Valma Brown made from Australia to DISCON II—an excellent look at the U.S. and its fan population.

"Why are you here?"

"Because I'm half of the Fan Guest of Honour."

At that press conference, and all through the convention, I was hyper-aware that few people would understand what role Mike Glicksohn and I were playing as "Fan" GoHs. What novel had we written? What had we published? What did we mean, we'd published a fanzine called *Energumen* which won a Hugo, articles from me that won another, and letters from him that made him a legend (though the beard, boa constrictor, bheer and Bill Bowers helped)? What's a "fanzine"? Back to square one.

Mike and I figured that while Ursula represented the professional concerns, and he represented the fans (with a *duty* to sample local brews for them), I was an interface between SF and the subculture of fandom. After organizing a fanhistory display at the Toronto worldcon, I'd had some practice explaining fandom (especially to reporters, with Bob Tucker's help!). Besides—as Robin Johnson and the programme book kept pointing out—I had lovely respectable literary interests, having taught SF and finished off a PhD (now I can go back to reading fanzines). I was able to meet a lot of Australians through that "professional" interest in SF: librarians, teachers, students who wanted to set up SF courses—people like me who wanted to take SF seriously, but not take the joy out of it. (I spent one panel on Sunday trying to have the best of both worlds!)

Yet when I introduced myself, I tried to talk about Susan the fan, about why fandom interests me as much as the SF which lured me into it.

"Why are you here?"

"To have dinner with my friends."

I explained, at the opening ceremonies, that years before when I was a neofan, a friend lent me some amateur SF magazines: fanzines. Most contained discussions of SF, book reviews and such; yet one, *Rataplan*, consisted entirely of someone named Leigh Edmonds in Australia talking about having dinner with someone named John Bangsund, and... "Richard," I complained, "what's going on? This isn't even about SF! Who cares?"

"Oh," he replied. "That's fannish."

You'll understand someday."

So in 1975 I left Regina, Saskatchewan; and I arrived in Melbourne, Australia; and I met Ursula Le Guin at the Nova Mob meeting, and didn't fall at her feet because she said she'd be embarrassed; and the next night I had dinner at Degraives Tavern with Leigh Edmonds, and John Bangsund, and Valma Brown who happens to be a sister of mine, not by birth but by choice and fandom. And I understood: for me, fandom was a communications network that brought me together with my friends.

It was hardly a unique message, but it was as simple, and honest, as I could make it. At the panel following the introductions, "How to Really Enjoy Yourself at This Convention," Mike and Rusty and the Aussiefen repeated the same thing: "Talk to people. That's why we're here. Talk to people." And we did. From platforms and panels; in groups over coffee, supplied by DISCON II, bless 'em, in the lounge outside the meeting room; at the parties by the Magic Pudding Club and the Science Fiction Writers of America (and Australia) and the '77 worldcon bidders; at Leigh Edmonds' pie-and-sauce party, that vast end-of-con tribute to Australian cuisine; in ones and twos and tens: we discussed, debated, disagreed, chattered, gossiped, heavyrapped, and got to know each other. And then we wandered back into the main ballroom to watch Sonar Graphics' unique light-and-sound show, preceding each major programme segment (Aussiecon's most impressive innovation), and listen to someone else talk.

What else is there at a worldcon? There's an art show—Aussiecon's was small but impressive, highlighted by Karel Thole's work—hucksters' tables, selling books and magazines and the like; and auctions of collectable material. There's usually a masquerade, this one capably organized by Shayne McCormack, with your hardworking GoHs to judge the costumes—far simpler than the elaborate North American presentations of late, but fun. A movie programme has become standard; Aussiecon premiered *Solaris* but I was too busy visiting. At larger conventions, there are often two or more concurrent programme items: on SF, fantasy, science, films, writing, editing, fan publishing, anything. Of course, it all leads up to the Hugo banquet, and the presentation of awards voted on by the members of the convention. Some people fall in love at conventions, and some get pros to autograph their books. Lots of things happen at worldcons. The 1976 worldcon, in Kansas City, may be over when you read this, but you can always join the 1977 SUNCON, chaired by Don and Grace Lundry, Box 3427, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034.

Anyway, at *this* convention there was an excellent, smoothly-run programme, organized by Bruce Gillespie and Leigh Edmonds, among others. I enjoyed it, and I rarely get around to attending the formal convention events (though I've never felt that I was on half the programme before, either). Carey Handfield, one of the committee members, set an example of stunning efficiency by day; and then in the evening, everyone relaxed and actually enjoyed their own convention. Remarkable. I just hope they don't all gafiate. (That's "get away from it all," leave fandom, a feeling you understand after running a worldcon.)

Oh yes. A large chunk of my convention was spent talking to reporters. Taping a half-hour programme on Canadian literature (my specialty, one reporter discovered to her delight) was an odd experience, but easier than trying to explain fandom as a subculture to Jan Sharpe for her "New Society" programme.

"But what are you doing here? Talking to your friends—but you're a successful woman, surely you have real friends?"

On Saturday afternoon, I sat trying to tell Jan's tape recorder (because I wasn't reaching Jan) what I valued about fandom: the chance to meet, to become friends (not just acquaintances: friends) with a wide and wonderful circle of people. Look, I said, at the people you found me with today: Bob Tucker, who's a legend, and Jillian Miranda Foyster, who's an Australian schoolgirl, and her mum Elizabeth who teaches and paints lovely watercolours, and John Alderson who raises sheep (and, I thought, I want to get back down to the ballroom and talk to them). But she didn't understand—not even when I turned around and interviewed *her* for an article I'm writing on Australian women (I was busy, this trip, playing pro writer; scholar, too, visiting at University of Melbourne in hopes of coming back).

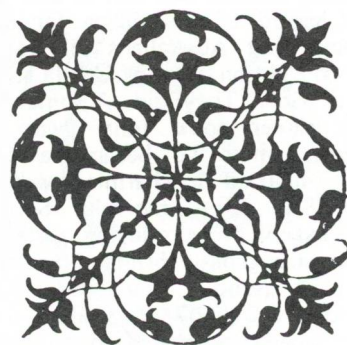
Young, intelligent, hip, a single mother, Jan complained she had no one to *talk* with, could feel at ease only with a small, elite group of people her age who shared her ideas. Yet she couldn't believe that fandom gave me exactly what she lacked, that I had flown here for a sort of giant family reunion. (It has its quarrels, but it's not a bad clan.)

I passed Jan on to Tucker, and went off to interview an advice-to-housewives columnist and the German chambermaid. Not even Mr. Smooth could dent the preconceptions with which she edited me, and Bruce Gillespie, and Eric Lindsay, though. The radio programme presented the stereotype of fans as social misfits, shy, introverted, able to communicate only

on paper (some of my second-year English students should be so handicapped!). Shy? Introverted? That raving bunch of lunatics munching daffodils, waiting for the train to Ballarat, and chattering away?

We come together because we value SF. We stay, because we value each other. We celebrate fandom because it is the bond that holds us together.

Well: when we talked to Malcolm Maiden—frizzyhaired freak, writing for



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by Robert Stead

Introduction by Susan Wood

Robert J.C. Stead was a Manitoba journalist, sometime poet, and novelist familiar to most Canadian readers fifty years ago, mainly because of his lively, detailed accounts of western Canadian life in the early part of the twentieth century. In *THE HOMESTEADERS*, one of Stead's most popular novels, he explores through two conventional love stories two important themes: the pioneer settlement of a typical prairie community and the difficulties encountered in its development, and the ironic impact upon the pioneers of dreamed-of prosperity and civilization.

Susan Wood, Hugo Winner for her fan writing, is on the staff of the University of BC at Vancouver, and publisher of the well-known Canadian journal *Amor*. Ms. Wood is author of a definitive study of Canadian literature, currently in production.

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the Australian edition of *Rolling Stone*—about “tribe” and “celebration” and “communications network,” he understood.

And the latest issue of Leigh Edmonds' *Fanew Sletter* reports that SF clubs and fanzines are mushrooming all over Australia. Fans coming together, talking with their friends.

“Why are you here?”

“Because John Bangsund has a bottle of Kaiser Stuhl Bin J426 in his wine cellar for me.”

Several years ago, John Bangsund, Publishing Jiant, wine critic, and all-round legend of Melbourne fandom, proposed that Australians bid for a world convention, inviting Ursula K. Le Guin as GoH. They did. A somewhat erratic career took John away to Canberra, where he became a civil servant, married a charming woman named Sally, and generally Settled Down—except for producing a steady flow of outrageously brilliant fanzines. (John Bangsund, P.O. Box 434, Norwood, SA 5067, Australia.) The cosmic wheels continued to grind, of

course, and they brought me, one August night, to sit in John and Sally's living room, curled up by the heater with cat Dylan, sharing conversation and wine with them, and Carey Handfield, and three more North Americans: John Berry, Mike Glicksohn, and Sheryl Birkhead.

Now John Bangsund happens to be one of the best personal journalists (synthesizing ideas, emotion, experience, into words—OK, have you got a name for it?) existing today. Not “existing in fandom.” Existing anywhere—though he chooses to distribute his material through fandom's network. Through that writing, its intelligence and insight and quirky humour, he'd earned our admiration; through it, and our writing, and lots of letters, we'd formed a friendship, which gained an extra dimension as we sat talking with him.

John Berry, in San Francisco in July, figured he couldn't go to Aussiecon: he had just enough money to find a place to live, exist til he could live by writing. “Bangsund has that bottle of

Kaiser Stuhl waiting for me,” he explained, as he wrote the cheque to the travel agent. Translation: we have a friendship to confirm in person. This will never happen to any of us again. Translation: impossible in words, possible only in the feeling we share as Bangsund pulls out the July 1972 issue of *Amazing*, with the “Clubhouse” column in which Berry reviews (glowingly) Bangsund's *Scythrop* and incidentally (not so glowingly) Mike's and my *Energumen* #10; and the July 1975 *Amazing* in which I review (glowingly) Bangsund's *Philosophical Gas* and the defunct *Scythrop*. So we sit and praise each other's writing; and we mean more than praise because it touches us, and we wish we'd written it; and we try not to feel silly.

“What is the purpose of your visit?”

“Tourist.”

Sixty of the North Americans (six Canadians, including two GoHs, the TORCON II chairman, and a retired Mountie) went to Aussiecon because of Grace Lundry, who with husband Don organized a group flight and kept us organized. After the con, they'd left us time to play tourist. Genie DiModica saw Ayers Rock. Alan Frisbie was bitten by a wombat. Don and Grace took lots of trains without 58 other fen. I found myself, one chilly spring night in August, in Ken and Marea Ozanne's garden waiting my turn at Ken's 10" telescope. Freesias scented the air, a cat purred in the long grass, a stream chuckled in a vast country silence: and suddenly the normal, lovely scene shifted. Polaris wasn't there in the clear north sky. The stars were strange. On the southern horizon, there at last were the five points of the Southern Cross! Alpha Centauri, nearest neighbour, new. Different stars.

We call it a Sense of Wonder.

Two days later, Australia's fabulous femmefan Shayne McCormack was handing us daffodils in Sydney airport, so we could concentrate on something besides the reality of saying goodbye several months too soon. Fans hugged fans, hiding emotions under the ritual exchange: “See you next year in Kansas City.”

“Where're you from?”

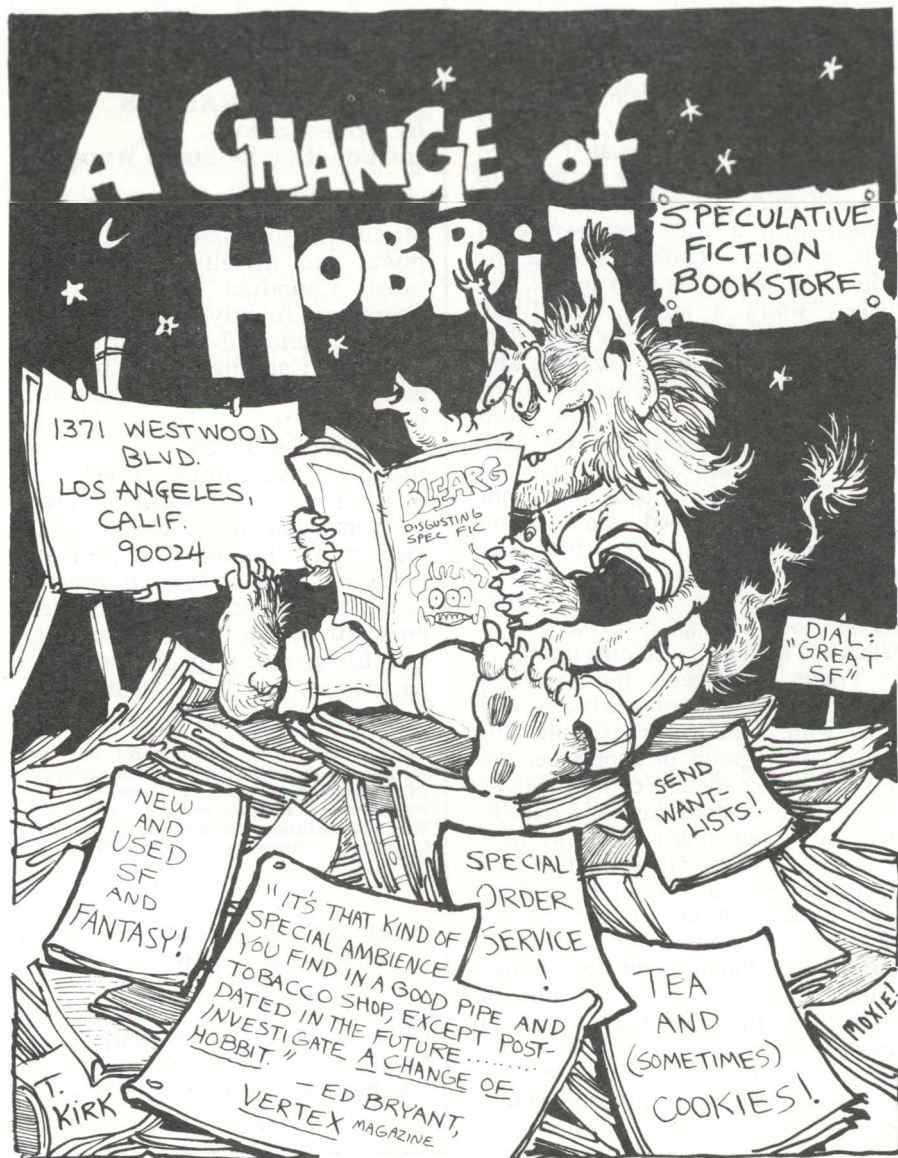
“Australia.”

“Purpose of visit?”

“To have dinner with my friends.”

Oh yes. Eric Lindsay is collecting pre-supporting members (A\$2) for the next Australian worldcon. Sixty or more of us are members already. Sydney Cove in '88? Beaut!

—Susan Wood
University of British Columbia
Dept of English
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver BC
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ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT
SCIENCE FICTION

WINTER 1977

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-EDDIE JONES-



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A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

Several people, including Andy Porter, were surprised when my first column for *ALGOL* showed up simultaneously in *Amazing*.

So was I.

The Aussiecon column was originally written for the special 50th Anniversary issue of *Amazing*. Not incidentally, it was planned as my final column for "The Clubhouse." I had put a good deal of effort into that last column, and was reasonably pleased with it. As you can imagine, I was disappointed when Ted White, *Amazing's* editor, informed me (through a third person, not directly) that it had been squeezed out of the anniversary issue. (Columns were frequently delayed like this.) I wrote to Ted, asking to withdraw the column altogether, and submitting the resignation I'd planned to offer after the annish. I didn't hear from Ted, directly or indirectly, but frankly didn't think this was unusual.

Uh-uh. Mistake. Bad. Slap on wrist, Susan. (Ouch!) Always wait (patiently) until a manuscript is returned.

Andy Porter had asked me for a column. I was marking final exams; writing time just didn't exist. I did, however, have this lovely, unpublished, and (so I assumed) unclaimed manuscript around. I sent a copy off to Andy, telling him its antecedents. I sent it, and Andy accepted it, in good faith.

And then the *Amazing* hit the stands.

I gather that Ted White never received my letter. Certainly he never told Sol Cohen, the magazine's publisher, that I'd withdrawn the column. The latter found that if he cut the column (in the middle of a sentence) he had room to run it after all. Apparently everyone concerned is furious. Certainly, only Andy Porter has contacted me directly to find out what happened. I've apologized to Andy for any problems I may have inadvertently created for him; and I apologize to you-the-reader, to

whom I had no intention of offering the same material twice.

It was only a year ago that Rob Jackson was lamenting in *Maya* that "The entire UK fanzine scene seems to be at a standstill now." Something happened. That scene is now so active that an old fan and tired like myself, balancing my teacup out here in the Last Outpost of Empire, can't even begin to keep up with the new fanzines (sorry, lads).

Recently I assembled a heap of British printed matter from September 1975 through to June 1976. Then I read through it all in two days, without benefit of pie or pint, or even a sup of Pat Charnock's cider. Now Ratfans, the Gannetfather, the Tweed Elephant, the underground Goblin, several persons named Ian, the odd Kittenfan, and Gerry Webb's peke, all drawn by Harry Bell, dance through my fevered brain singing "Britain is fyne in '79!" Occasionally they stop to insult Malcolm Edwards, who replies with polite, devastating polysyllables. It's enough to make a poor North American break out in generalizations. For example:

British fandom certainly is active, these days. I suspect it's a self-reinforcing process, like most waves of fabulous fannish activity. Local groups—the Gannets up around Newcastle, the Kittens in the Kingston area, the Rats infesting south London—hold meetings, publish fanzines, put on conventions, and generally bring people together in an atmosphere of enthusiasm that inspires other people to engage in these fannish activities, putting out yet more fanzines full of yet more letters which in turn. . . . The enthusiasm reminds old gaffiates of why they enjoyed fandom in the first place, and so Peter Weston, Eric Bentcliffe, Terry Jeeves and others start writing and drawing again. Bob Shaw enjoys himself at an Eastercon, writes about it, and keeps on writing. Harry

Bell, drawn back into fanac by Gannet-fandom, starts contributing Hugo-quality cartoons (like the brilliant cover for *Maya* 9) to every fanzine in sight. And after eleven years, Walt Willis is lured back into active fandom—a letter crosses the Atlantic to the Katz's revived *Swoon*, a column is promised for *Maya* 11, where it will join forces with work from Bob Shaw, Pete Weston and Tom Perry.

Meantime, Peter Roberts is maintaining the high standards of fannish writing we expect from The British; and Ian Williams, Pat Charnock, and potentially at least the Skeltons are reaching those exalted standards of excellence. Those people can put you right into their lives . . . marvellous stuff. (Parenthetically, I wonder about the level of Male Chauvinist Piggery among the Rats and their ilk. Pat seems to be attracting criticism for her so-called "strident" feminist views, expressed in her *Wrinkled Shrew* and Ian Williams' *Goblin's Grotto*. Personally, I find what she has to say to be calm in tone, and reasonable, even obvious and familiar, in content. Of course, most other British females seem to be mentioned in terms of their male partners or their breast size; Pat is probably pretty radical just by being herself.)

There are plenty of other good fanwriters; the lettercols are full of familiar names and new ones; the fanzine review columns list dozens of titles besides those I've collected here. And obviously, all this fanzine activity is only the foaming crest of a large wave of British activity. When it breaks over British Columbia, though, after three months or more crossing the Atlantic, it still carries a tremendous sense of excitement and involvement.

British fandom is varied, though at first it may not seem that way. Several overseas fans have pointed out, in locs I've just been reading, that it's unfair to

compare "British fandom" with the much larger "North American fandom" and expect the same level of activity from both. Yes, but British fandom isn't comparable to a single city's fandom, either, though it shares some characteristics. Notably, there's the inevitable in-groupishness which occurs when friends write to and for each other's zines, about the same conventions and personalities, sharing the same feuds or jokes. Eric Bentcliffe, in his entertaining fanzine column in *Egg* 10, reviews *Maya* 9 and *Goblin's Grotto*. Malcolm Edwards, in his excellent (translation, wish I'd written it) fanzine column in *Maya* 10, reviews the Charnox' personalzines, Ian Maule's *Checkpoint* and . . . *Egg* 10, commenting in passing on John Brosnan's insults. Brosnan and Greg Pickersgill, in their personalzines, deliver the (apparently) obligatory insults to everyone in British fandom, and especially Malcolm. So it goes.

(Those insults disturb me, rather. As Jerry Kaufman points out in *Maya* 10, British fans actually print gossip and personal comments which North American fans only speak. The "serious and steady invective" of John Brosnan, Greg Pickersgill, and to a lesser extent the other Ratfen—and retaliating Gannets and such—just isn't common, over here. Or if it is, it's part of a Deadly Feud. It took me awhile to realize, and longer to accept, that their crude and constant nastiness was serious. I dunno—Brosnan especially puts so much effort into being Vile that he fills me with unholy fascination.)

(There's also an anti-intellectualism which labels anything above its own level "pseud," for pseudo. Shows the unity of British fandom, I guess, that such people feel moved to insult; over here, I expect the book review or whatever would just be ignored.)

Despite the apparent insularity, there's really a wide range of interests covered by the fanzines I have here. At one extreme there's the scholarly journal *Foundation* and the serious SF-reader oriented *Vector* maintaining a high standard of interesting discussion and reviews. The major Gannetzines, *Goblin's Grotto* and *Maya*, are solid genzines. I'm not the only reader who believes that, in just a year, Rob Jackson has turned *Maya* into a Hugo-quality fanzine. In fact, it's characteristic of North American insularity that so few zines and writers outside this continent ever get recognition; *Maya*, Harry Bell, Peter Roberts and of course Bob Shaw are notably missing from this year's Hugo ballot, as are Australian writers like John Bangsund. Like other genzines—Eric Bentcliffe's revived *Triode*, Bernie Peek and Dave Rowe's *K*—the Gannetzines dispel the ingroup image with contributors and loc-writers

from North and South America. Maybe this column will help increase the communication.

Finally, shading into the lunatic fringe come the fannish genzines like Peter Roberts' inestimable *Egg*, the fabulous Ratzines, and a whole crop of fascinating, if ephemeral, personalzines, which their perpetrators would prefer not to have mentioned, since they are Not Generally Available. (But thank you, people. You write so well, I really feel I know you. And I'm looking forward to meeting you. Even Brosnan.)

The only other generalization I have to make is that the new breed of British fanzines are better reproduced than those of 6 or 8 years ago. There's more artwork (and, luckily, Terry Jeeves and ATom are still contributing their embellishments), and a greater concern with layout and legibility. *Triode*, for example, is a most attractive mimeod zine, proving that you don't have to lash out £80, as Rob Jackson claims to have done on *Maya* 9, for a good-looking fanzine. (Rob also claims to work 87 hours a week as a paediatrician, on top of which he edits, writes articles, is co-authoring a novel, chairs a fan group, and works on the '79 committee. And he apologizes to me for not writing letters! Personally, I think he must be a millionaire android.)

Rob invests the money and the time, he says, purely for "response"—communication and egoboo. On that basis, he certainly succeeds, as do the more modest zines. They're all mad, in the British rather than American sense—insane, silly, fabulously fannishly crazy, resolutely not serious-dull even on serious topics. They're very, very enjoyable.

The following list, though incomplete, may help your personal trans-Atlantic crossing. Send a money order or bank draft in either US dollars or British pounds; do not send US cash or stamps (yes, I do have to keep reminding people, like the ones who think Canadians can use US stamps.) Be patient while the fanzine travels round Cape Horn on a slow windjammer. And enjoy all those Harry Bell creatures jumping through the pages crying "Britain in '79!"

After the Flood. David Griffin, 83 Maple Rd., Horfield, Bristol BS7 8RF, U.K. American agent, Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Dr., Providence, RI 02914. The usual (that is, contribution, trade, letter of comment), 25 p., 60¢. Serious genzine (reviews, etc.) with emphasis on Scandinavian material. Nice Steve Fabian and Terry Jeeves artwork.

Checkpoint. Ian Maule, 8 Hillcroft Cres., Ealing, London W5 2SG, U.K. The usual or 5/40 p. Regular, if thin, newsletter of British prodrom, British and overseas fandom. Malcolm Edwards

complains there's "no decent gossip" and I agree I'd like more personality.

Egg 10. Peter Roberts, 6 Westbourne Park Villas, London W2, U.K. The usual, not available for cash. Rave, rave, rave. *Egg* is fascinating, fannish, miscellaneous, ATom-illustrated and fun. Highlight of this issue is Peter writing about crudzines, and the "fascination of the naively atrocious." Roberts for TAFF!

Fanzine Fanatique 2. Keith Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quernmore Rd., Lancaster, Lancs., U.K. The usual, 10 p., request. British and overseas fanzine reviews.

Foundation 9. Peter Nicholls for The Science Fiction Foundation, North East London Polytechnic, Longbridge Rd., Essex RM8 2AS, U.K. 3/£2.55, 3/\$7.50 surface to US and Canada. Richard Cowper on writing SF, Peter Nicholls on *New Worlds* and the death of James Blish, J.G. Ballard on *Crash!*, reviews, etc.

Goblin's Grotto 2. Ian Williams, 6 Greta Terrace, Chester Rd., Sunderland SR4 7RD, Tyne and Wear, U.K. The usual, 35 p. or \$1.00. Harry Bell art, Rob Jackson on being a doctor (this needed editing, Ian), various people being serious about *Dhalgren*, a good lettercol, and the highlight—Pat Charnock's "Second Generation Woman."

Gunputty, "the fanzine of mince fandom." Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, FL 32925, USA. The usual or show of interest ("a quarter or two.") Fannish/personal token-British fanzine, with a Harry Bell cover, Terry Jeeves artwork, photos from the 1975 British Eastercon and the like. Sam recently married British fan Mary Reed, thus demonstrating the advantages of trans-Atlantic contact.

Maya 10. Rob Jackson, 21 Lyndhurst Rd., Benton, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE12 9NT, U.K. US agents, Sam Long and Mary Reed, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, FL 32925, USA. The usual, 40 p. or 3/£1.00 UK, \$1.00 or 4/\$3.00 US and Canada.

Scabby Tales. John Brosnan, 4 Lothair Rd., South Ealing, London W5, U.K. Personalzine.

SPI 4. Graham Poole, 23 Russet Rd., Cheltenham, Glos. GL51 7LN, U.K. The usual, "suggestions, \$ bill or by jumping up and down shouting 'Are you going to give me one then?'" News, reviews, articles highlighted by James White's Beneluxcon GoH speech, and an active lettercolumn, all in half-size faded offset. My latest copy is September 1975 (it's been awhile since I cleared up the mail) so I hope *SPI* is still going!

Stop Breaking Down. Greg Pickersgill, 4 Lothair Rd., South Ealing, London W5, U.K. The usual, show of interest, or 20 p. in British stamps. Graham Charnock talks about sex and sharing a room with Chris Priest (separate activities, I hasten

to add); Peter Roberts reminisces about his first fanzine; Simone Walsh longs for friendly, atmospheric con hotels of a kind unknown in North America. Rattannish personalzine, fannish and enjoyable.

Triode 22. Eric Bentcliffe, 17 Riverside Cres., Holmes Chapel, Cheshire CW4 7NR, U.K. Whim, or 3/£1.00, 3/\$2.50. The leader of revived oldtime British fandom. Eric writes well about touring the Balkans; Irish fan John Berry fingerprints monkeys; and Terry Jeeves asks that "heaven preserve us from the teachers of s-f." (Speaking as one myself, I'd have to agree.) Jeeves, who's also listed as "producer," illustrates the lot. It's fabulous, fannish, and good reading; I'm glad you're all back.

Vector 71, 72, 73-74. Journal of the British Science Fiction Association, edited by Chris Fowler, 72 Kenilworth Ave., Southcote, Reading RG3 3DN, U.K. Free to members of the BSFA. 6/£3.30, 6/\$6.—overseas subs "please send sterling cheques or money orders payable to *Vector*, or, failing that, cash in US dollars." A serious-but-not-dull magazine, valuable to the SF reader. The (appallingly regular) issues here contain such goodies as Ursula Le Guin's Aussiecon GoH speech; interviews with Robert Silverberg and J.G. Ballard; and lots of reviews. I wish Chris would stop being so defensive about the fact that he took over *Vector* from Malcolm Edwards; and I also wish he'd exercise a little more editorial ruthlessness on the reviews and letters. Those quibbles aside, I think he's doing a fine job.

Wrinkled Shrew 5. Pat and Graham Charnock, 70 Ledbury Rd., London W11, U.K. *Shrew* has a small print run, and Pat warns that some nameless recipients have found it "repulsive, filthy and loathsome." I dunno why; the double-entendres shouldn't shock anyone over the age of 6 (and the "Inside Shrew" section is brilliant.) This issue has a good lettercol, a fannish board-game, Roy Kettle's memoirs, Tad Lawrence on "Black Holes in Space and the Woolwich Work Camp." Above all, it has Pat's writing, cut-and-pasted together by Graham. A thoroughly enjoyable fannish personalzine. Ask politely and send a loc, fanzine, or contribution.

If I've covered half the current British fanzines, I'll be surprised. There certainly are a lot of them, aren't there? With that banal observation, I'll leave you to buy sterling money orders, after these few addenda.

* * * *

I've just received the third issue of New Zealand's only fanzine, *Noumenon*. It's edited by Brian Thurogood, with the assistance of Deborah Knapp, at: Wilma Rd., Ostend, Waiheke Island, Hauraki Gulf, New Zealand. It's pub-

lished monthly, neatly offset, and a year's sub costs \$5.50 N.Z., \$6.00 US/Canada seaimail. It will mostly be of interest to Kiwi and Aussie SF readers, for whom a basic fan glossary is supplied; it contains reviews, letters, articles about SF, lists of SF books available Down Under and so on. Brian, and a good many isolated readers like him, first made person-to-person contact with fandom at Aussiecon; I'm glad that fine fanish enthusiasm is still being generated, to power projects like *Noumenon*.

South of the Moon, the amateur press association directory, is now being edited by Andrew Sigel, 424 Greenleaf

St., Evanston, IL 60202, USA. It's available for information on apas, or 25¢

Apple is a new apa "for lovers of food, gardening and handcrafts" to exchange recipes, patterns and how-to hints. There are no dues, and the OE can run stencils for you. Information: Sheila D'Ammassa, 19 Angell Dr., E. Providence, RI 02914, USA.

Fanzines for review should be sent to Susan Wood, Department of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1T6, Canada, where Susan regrets that she is rather too busy working to respond to every fanzine properly. ■

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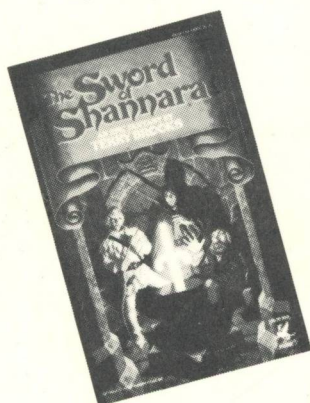


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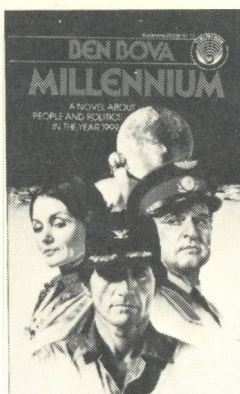
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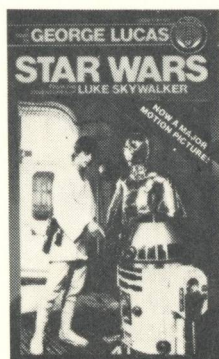
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ALGOL

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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Propeller Beanie

A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

I won't be 30 for another 21 months, but already I'm a victim on the wrong side of the generation gap. Today, in my English 100 class, we were talking about aid to third world countries; the short-haired, clean-cut, job-hungry young people in front of me dismissed it as an ideal of "those hippies, way back there in the '60's." And here I am this evening, reading through Joe D. Siclari's *Fanhistorica*, a fannish zine reprinting such historical gems of fannish writing as Jack Speer's "After 1939—What?" and Ginjer Buchanan's WPSFA Baycon report, "I've Had No Sleep and I Must Giggle," and . . . What? Wait a minute! I remember that piece; it came out only a few years ago, in *Granfalloon* #5. I was a neofan, trying hard to be a real published fan, and Ginjer's account of WPSFA's descent on the Baycon made me feel that I'd been there too. It's not historical; it was only published . . . back in . . . 1968?

Fannish generations succeed each other even faster than student ones: once every two years, it's estimated. In the three and a half years since I've left Toronto fandom, there have been, now that I think of it, at least two new, distinct fandoms, as neos arrive, feud, form new groups, burn out, gafiate. There's a whole new WPSFA; I don't know the new BNFs on that vast new Midwest convention circuit; the names on all the fanzines are new: what's going on here?

In my mailbox, though, fanzine fandom still seems the same. Arnie Katz with his fannish humor, Joyce Katz with her fine writing, are active again with *Swoon*: a comfortable 30 pages or so of wit and chatter, columns, letters and Ross Chamberlain hand-stencilled cartoons, all mimeographed on twiltone, folded over, stapled into the neat, traditional fannish package that arrives in my mailbox. Terry Hughes' *Mota* is even more timebinding. Trufen reprint Walt Willis columns; superfan Hughes recently printed a new Willis column presenting the Irish Legend's return to fandom, at the 1976 British Eastercon,

after an 11-year gafiation. Then, to top that feat, he published fan Tom Perry's account of *his* return to fandom after an equal absence: a long, personal article in which Perry gives his view of the same Eastercon, and his search there for his former *Quark* columnist—the legendary Willis, of course.

There is no generation gap, in fannish fandom; the good writing keeps its human interest, and, in the originals or in the continual flow of reprints, finds its way into neofans' hands to give them a sense of their family history. At MidAmeriCon this year, for instance, I was able to give Tom Perry—who gafiated a couple of generations before I discovered fandom—some instant ego-boo for his fanzine reviews in Norm Clarke's *Honque* #2, which Norm had given me the previous week. Tom thanked me, asked if the Clarkes were coming to worldcon, and mentioned that he'd started publishing again, as casually as though he'd only been out of touch for two months—when in fact he'd never met me, and had published those reviews in 1965.

Time seems to stand still, in fannish fandom, because fans keep their past alive in the present. I can tell Baycon stories about the pillars in the banquet hall with the best of them, or joke about sliding down the laundry chutes—which Ginjer doesn't even mention, being too busy looking for food.

The real signs of change are in the genzines—the general interest fanzines. Oh, their publishing format doesn't seem to change: the editor takes whatever he/she can get—poetry, fan-fiction, a couple of articles (an essay on Russian SF, or SF poetry, submitted by the school club's English major), some skritchy doodles by whoever has some artistic talent, a Harry Warner letter and a Rotsler cartoon or two—wraps it all round with an editorial pleading for contributions, in a graphics package best called functional, and calls it a magazine (calls it, in fact, *Starfire* or *Dark Star* or, unless he/she's been around fandom long enough to know better, *Spaceship*).

Magazines last an issue or two, die, are reborn interchangeably. The only new content wrinkle seems to be the proliferation of unimaginative interviews with SF pros, probably corralled by the editor at one of the equally proliferating regional conventions.

The success of the motley collection still depends entirely on the editor: on his/her ability to attract talented contributors, select good contributions, produce the magazine regularly and legibly, and above all, infuse the package with personality—in short, to edit.

Inflation, though, has hit the genzine. The lovingly, badly mimeographed magazine of "my" fandom is now a lavishly offset product. The uninspired words are jazzed up with Selectric typefaces. The covers are slick. (Think of it wearing a stylish long velvet skirt, and suede boots, instead of hippie blue jeans.)

I used to associate these expensive, impersonal, generally empty graphics packages only with 12-year-old comics fans from wealthy Texas families, and the occasional would-be-prozine editor; now they arrive in my mailbox at the rate of one or two a day. The personal labour of love, once traded for another badly-mimeographed fanzine or sold for a sticky quarter, now demands a dollar or \$1.50, has a print run of 1,000 copies, needs 500 subscribers to break even, and may have semi-pro pretensions. Ironically enough, its faults were summed up nicely by Tom Perry, in that Winter 1965 issue of *Honque*, when he reviewed the (quite beautiful) first issue of Tom Reamy's *Trumpet* (from Texas, offset, costing 50¢) in these words:

"Looking through these fullsize pages with their beautiful layouts, multiplicity of type styles, and painstakingly justified double columns, one cannot avoid the thought that the outlay of time, effort and especially money is just too lavish for the quality of the material."

Yes. And there are more of them

around—innumerable titles—just as there are more fans; the family has grown exponentially. There may be more really good editors and contributors around (I have mercifully forgotten the *Osfans* of my youth, though I treasure my *Hugin and Munins* and *Kevas and Trilliums*); but, by the law of averages, there are also far more inept people producing genzines. I actually read, perhaps two, of these fanzines a week. I skim the rest, looking for some spark, some personality, some brilliant new writer or fanartist, an editor who can define the gestalt of a fan community (the way Linda Bushyager's *Granfalloon* became the center of WPSFA, and perhaps created its center, by commissioning and then providing a forum for pieces like Ginjer's which defined that community at that place and time). Then I put the zine on the pile to be donated to the Vancouver SF club (because contact with other fans, with models, is essential for defining yourself). I know I should spend two hours on each of those two-fanzines-per-day, writing long, helpful, encouraging letters. I mark termpapers instead (trying to give them the encouraging words)—130 more to go before term ends in 2 weeks, if you want to know. (I have had no sleep, and I must scribble...)

The genzines listed at the end of this column are all, in some way, notable; and each would probably interest a reader new to fandom. Only a few stand out, though: *Anduril* for its artwork, *Knights and Scintillation* for infusing standard material with personality, *Simulacrum* especially for its sheer excellence.

Quietly, though, a real, positive change has taken place, in fandom and fanzines: a broadening of the community and of its approaches, not primarily to SF, but to living.

The stereotyped fan, in my generation, was still the bespectacled young, white, middleclass male, highly intellectual and socially inept. Some notable women, "femme" fans (as distinct from real fans?) (boyfen, anyone?), published, wrote, ran conventions: Lee Hoffman had gafiated, but Bjo Trimble was involved with artshows and the *ST Concordance*, Juanita Coulson and Elinor Busby were coediting notable fanzines, as was Joyce Katz, then Fisher, whose woman-produced *What About Us Grils?* directly inspired my own first fanzine, several years later. Still, women were accepted mostly as appendages to notable fans, or as Token Men, at least until the WPSFA Phenomenon which was, as Joe Siclari notes, "the largest invasion of single females ever to hit fandom til the Star Trek Eruption."

As for the men, if they were gay, or

if they had strong emotions (like love for others of either sex) other than childish anger in one or another of the constant feuds, we never heard about it. (At this point, Harry Warner is going to submit several paragraphs of names and dates. This is subjective fanhistory: how it felt. My point is that deeply personal writing, like that of Don Thompson in his Hugo-nominated *Don-O-Saur*, and unlike, say, Laney's "Ah, Sweet Idiocy!", was unknown in my generation. Personal fannish writing was the sort of witty fannish chatter, which Arnie Katz and others still do so well, in which the emphasis is not on how you felt about some incident, but on how cleverly you can retell it.)

Today, I think the fanzines with the strongest and most interesting identities are those produced by people—mostly female people—in the process of defining strong identities for themselves, seeking mutual support and validation for their efforts within the fannish subculture. They're not "ideal" fanzines by any means. One's writing isn't necessarily "better" because one is a feminist or a gay liberationist. Certainly, some of them will bore, enrage or offend you with their political or social stances. What they do have is energy. Enthusiasm. Distinct personalities.

Perhaps the most open and challenging of the new fanzines is *Women and Men*, an anti-sexist fanzine and letterforum. Editor Denys Howard is a self-styled "faggot"—an "effeminist," also a pagan, a comics fan, an interesting human being, and a writer who communicates. And much more, I gather. His sexual preferences are not his definition, but are part of it. He began publishing *WaM* "because I heard virtually no one else speaking with my voice. I had no assurance that criticism of sexism in sf and comics would be welcomed by fen, so the safest thing to do was to start from my own territory." He did; it was; and the discussion and mutual questioning/support of the *WaM* letterzine is the result.

Denys' MidAmeriCon trip report, *Wandering About From Place to Place Without Apparent Reason*, is more personal, quite indescribable. From a less intelligent or self-aware person, it would be an embarrassing or self-indulgent emotional striptease. As Denys writes it, it's a revelation. He, and his correspondents in *WaM*, have the sheer courage to be vulnerable, to live on the edge of lifestyles, exploring sex roles and everything else relevant to being human right now. You may feel threatened, or offended, I warn you. Me, I like and admire the process tremendously.

(One passing quibble: Denys, please stop using "real" as an adverb!)

Orca is also a personalzine, edited by

feminist, lawschool-graduate, SCA fighter, Star Trek fan Jennifer Bankier, to reflect these and other interests (like a fascination with killer whales, the Orcas of the title). She wants to publish "items with a feminist, socialist-anarchist ... humanist, or atheistic persuasion," or well-written opposition. Much of Jennifer's writing is rather self-conscious and stilted, overly controlled; but the first issue is interesting and the zine has potential to become a first-class discussion forum.

Equally distinctive, sister Amanda Bankier's *The Witch and the Chameleon* has quickly established itself as an excellent feminist genzine. For many of us, it's become indispensable: a rap group with friends, a support system, a source of laughter, insight and ideas. And—I suppose I have to say this—I am recommending it equally for its fine writing, graphics and such, and its approach, its politics, its community of interest: women, and the few men joining with us, concerned with sexism in the supposedly visionary SF world.

Janus, the two-headed, Jan-and-Jeanne edited fanzine, is an increasingly personable, interesting genzine, with the usual articles, fiction and reviews. The editorials, a running dialogue between Janice Bogstadt and John Bartelt, and Jeanne Gomol's artwork, are helping to create *Janus'* personality: relaxed, perceptive, humorous. Issue #3's triple review of *Aurora: Beyond Equality* is particularly fine; it's like hearing an informal discussion between three intelligent, aware people whom I'd enjoy meeting.

Simulacrum #3 is more formal: impeccable mimeo (including some colour work), beautiful artwork, and attractive graphics. Victoria Vayne's high production values enhance a package of uniformly good, varied writing, everything from the fannish "what shall I write about" column (a tradition well-handled by Janet Small), gamesplaying by Mike Carlson, and conreports, through doug barbour on Canadian SF poetry, to Victoria in a sad editorial examining herself and her split with Toronto Derelict Fandom. A good lettercolumn augurs well for the genzine's future. And it all gells.

Simulacrum is, already, a monolithic, near-perfect example of my fandom's Perfect Genzine. In fact, it looks like *Energumen* reincarnated, and better-typed. It reads, however, like itself: *Simulacrum*, with distinct concerns and personality, its own community producing subzines full of fascinating letters, and an eclectic appeal.

Simulacrum is curiously reassuring. Not all that much has changed in fandom—even the level of excellence a fanzine can hope to attain. It's added some new people, some welcome new

ideas, a whole new subculture of the becoming-more-fully-human fanzines; but it's still my family.

THE FANNISH FANZINES:

Fanhistorica (JoeD Siclari, P.O. Box 1343, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10019. Irregular, mimeo with hand-colored illustrations; available for "the usual"—contributions, letters of comment, or trades—old fanzines, or 50¢ for #1, 75¢ for #2.) Gary Farber, Joe's co-editor (who contributes a brilliant editorial about, and illustrating, trufannish writing traditions) has left the magazine; Joe has married co-publisher Karina Girsdanský, they've moved apartments, and undertaken the massive task of publishing Harry Warner's second volume of fanhistory, *A Wealth of Fable*. Still, I am told, we can expect #2 Real Soon Now. This, too, is a fannish tradition.

Mota (Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22205. Monthly, sort of, mimeo; the usual or old fannish fanzines.) The best fannish fanzine around. Earn your place on the mailing list.

Swoon (Arnie and Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St., #6B, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Irregular, mimeo; the usual or \$1.)

THE GENZINES:

Anduril #6, August 1976 (John Martin, 101 Eskdale, Tanhouse 5, Skelmersdale, Lancs. WN8 6EB, England. Irregular, offset; 47 pp., 50p. or US\$1.50.) Excellent fantasy genzine with articles, reviews, mediocre fiction, enjoyable fiction by Pat McIntosh, and lots of impressive artwork by Russ Nicholson.

Antares #1 (David H. Vereschagin, Paranoid Publishing RR#2, New Sarepta, Alta., Canada TOB 3MO. Quarterly, faded mimeo; 39 pp., \$1.25 or 4/Can. \$4.) David intends "to make *Antares* the best damn fanzine I know." I wish you luck, but what you really need is better reproduction (if you don't go offset, correction fluid will take out the paste-up lines on the Gestefax stencil). You also need more contact with general fandom, for inspiration and contributions. Edmonton may be at the end of the fannish universe, but so was Ottawa when *Energumen* got started; and it does have mail service, at least when the rest of Canada does. Push the local fans to improve their contributions, too. Despite a striking (editor-drawn) two-color cover, this is a stereotyped, anonymous first fanzine: essays on "man's quest for himself" in SF, on Van Vogt, and on Delany's "dialectical versus ... linear process" in writing which read like termpapers; attempted Star Trek humor; mediocre poetry; filler art; and an enthusiastic review of *Logan's Run*. There's a lot of energy at work here; I hope David harnesses and

directs it towards producing the ideal fanzine he wants.

Harbinger #3, Summer 1976 (Reed S. Andrus, 1717 Blaine Ave., Salt Lake City, Utah 84108. Quarterly, mimeo?; 38 pp., \$1.25) Distinguished only by a striking Mike Orton cover.

The Hunting of the Snark #10, Sept. 1976 (Robert J.R. Whitaker, P.O. Box 7649, Newark, Delaware 19711. Quarterly, offset; 56 pp., \$1 or the usual.) The usual genzine contents, highlighted by a Lafferty section (including an interview), enlivened by humor, a good eye for layout, and distinctive graphics by Carol Ann Craddock.

Knights #16, June 1976 (Mike Bracken, P.O. Box 7157, Tacoma, WA 98407. Irregular, mimeo; 65 pp., \$1.25, 4/\$4 or the usual.) Issue #17 will be Mike's third annish of this increasingly interesting genzine; and obviously, perseverance has furthered. Sercon and fannish material, some good artwork, and an impressive cover by Thomas Canty.

Scintillation #10, September 1976 (Carl Eugene Bennett, Box 8502, Portland, OR 97207. Quarterly, offset on newsprint; 40 pp., \$1.25, 4/\$3.50, the usual.) Another steadily-improving genzine for the serious SF reader. This issue has an awful Sirois cover, interviews

Continued on page 68

in the dawnline there was

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with Frank Herbert and the Galileo editors, letters, masses of reviews and a report on a Milford writers' conference which proves that John Shirley should work on developing his writing skills and his senses of humor and human perception. Bennett's print run is now a mind-boggling 1,000 copies... *Tangent* #5, Summer 1976 (David A. Truesdale, 611-A Division St., Oshkosh, WI 54901. Quarterly, offset; \$1.50 or 4/\$5.) A monstrous 96 pages of the usual forgettable poetry, fiction and awful artwork, plus interviews (with Leigh Brackett and Edmond Hamilton, Jack Williamson, and Ray Bradbury)

and articles (on feminism and SF, and Ray Bradbury being interesting on the theatre of the future.) There's good material, a lot of garbage, and a dearth of personality and direction. Truesdale needs to edit, not just assemble. That could sum up the problem of most genres.

THE INDIVIDUALS:

Janus vol.2, no.2, September 1976 (Janice Bogstad and Jeanne Gomoll, 143 W. Gilman #303, Madison, WI 53703. Irregular, mimeo; 48 pp., 75¢ or the usual.)

Orca (Jennifer Bankier, 485 Huron St. #406, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5R 2R5. Irregular, mimeo; 41 pp., \$1 or the usual.)

Simulacrum #3, October 1976 (Victoria

Vayne, P.O. Box 156, Station D, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6P 3J8. Irregular, mimeo; 80 pp., the usual, or, "reluctantly," Can\$2.50.)

The Witch and the Chameleon #5-6 (Amanda Bankier, 2 Paisley Ave. S. #6, Hamilton, Ont., Canada. Irregular, offset; 32 pp., the usual or Can.\$1.50, 3/\$4.)

Women and Men #6, May 1976 (Denys Howard, Box 8975, Portland, OR 97208. Irregular, mimeo; 38 pp., available "for a wide variety of absurd excuses" including trade, request, contribution, or 50¢ and up.)●

—Susan Wood, Department of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1W5

LUPOFF'S BOOK WEEK Continued from page 58

pieces about Howard, along with a very useful bibliography. Probably the best piece ever written about Howard is "A Memory" by E. Hoffmann Price. This was written long ago, first published in a fanzine in 1945, revised for the Arkham House omnibus *Skull-Face and Others*, the following year, and is to be a chapter, eventually, in Price's volume on his fellow pulp practitioners, *The Book of the Dead*.

Of all these appearances, only the version in *The Last Celt* is readily available, and it is must reading for anyone interested in Howard.

There are other very worthwhile pieces by Harold Preece, Lovecraft (who survived the younger Howard by just over a year), Alvin Perry, and Lord himself. And, of course, there are five pieces by Howard, all more or less autobiographical.

The Howard bibliography occupies almost 250 of this book's 416 pages, and it is a most commendable piece of work. Howard's writings are listed and cross-listed, by books, short fiction, verse, non-fiction; cross-indexed by title of periodical in which he appeared; translations, unpublished works, series, "unborn" works, adaptations, and associational matter.

Finally there is a section of miscellanea including Howard holograph pages, amateur publications, maps, cartoons, book and magazine covers illustrating Howard stories, "The Battle That Ended the Century" (an anonymous short story, generally attributed to Lovecraft, in which Howard appears as a character) ... and at the end, Howard's obituary.

An outstanding reference work.

The Annotated Guide to Robert E. Howard's Sword & Sorcery is of narrower interest than the Lord volume, but does not substantially overlap it in content, and will be of interest to the more advanced reader. Weinberg is a

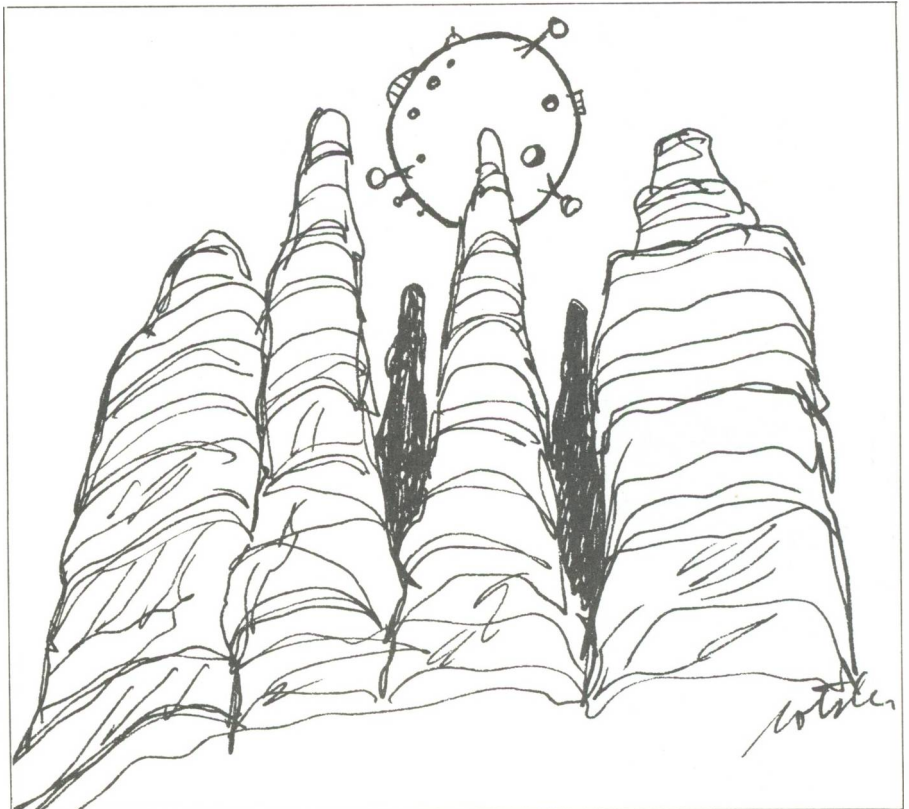
young Chicagoan with a passion for the old pulps, who in the past few years has established himself as a fine editor, commentator, and re-publisher.

In the *Guide* Weinberg provides character-lists, series guides, plot summaries and critical commentary on Howard's major heroic fantasy series figures (Conan the Barbarian, King Kull, Solomon Kane) and a few similar though unconnected stories. I do not recommend this book (or any of its sort) as a substitute for reading the stories themselves, but it is a very useful roadmap for finding one's way among them, and offers excellent reference material for the person seeking specific data concerning Howard's works without actually reading them through.

The major shortcoming of the

Weinberg is its lack of coverage of Howard's works outside the heroic fantasy area; in this regard, however, the *Weinberg* can be used in conjunction with the Lord to good advantage. The books are very valuable treated in tandem; far more so than they would be taken singly.

(A note on physical production: *The Last Celt* is printed on heavy paper, hardbound, heavily illustrated in black-and-white, and furnished in a colorful, pictorial jacket. *The Annotated Guide* is also very nicely produced; i.e., it is attractively printed on good paper. It is, however, paperbound, and the only illustration is a black-and-white pictorial cover. These differences in production account for the difference in price between the books.)●



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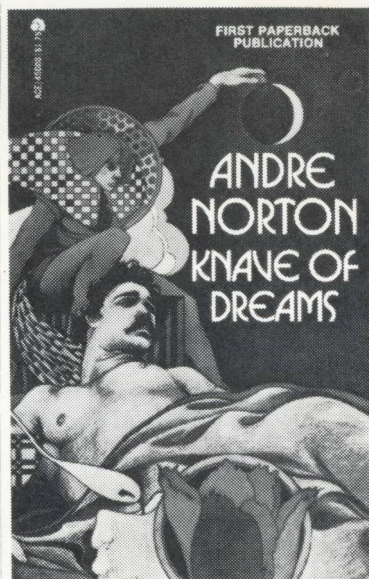
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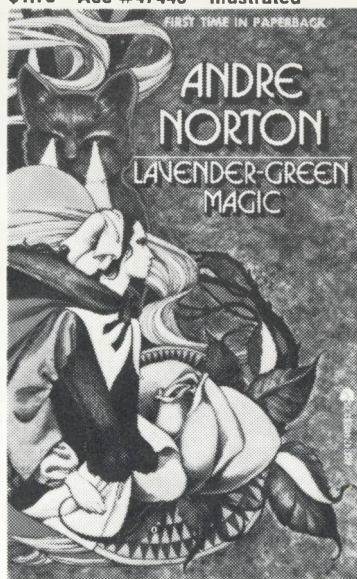


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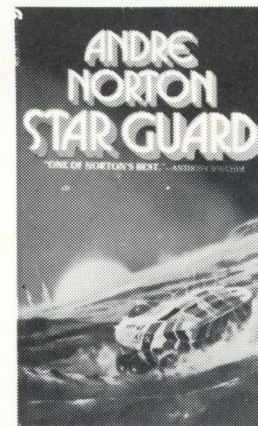
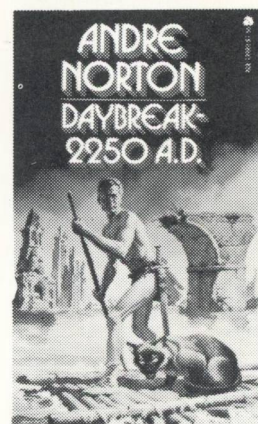
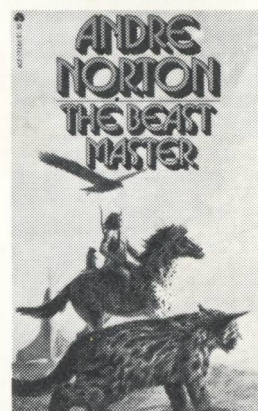
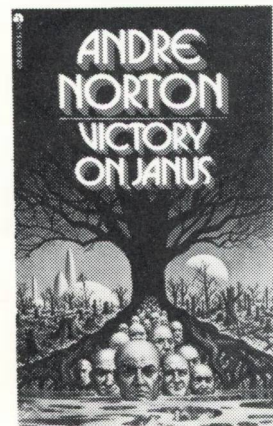
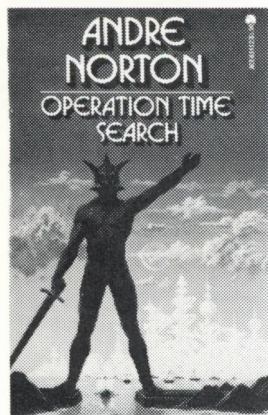
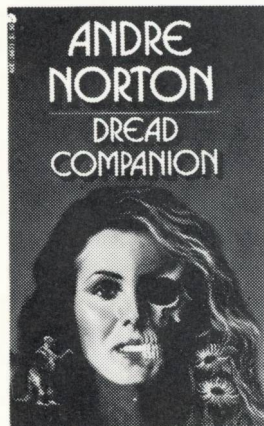
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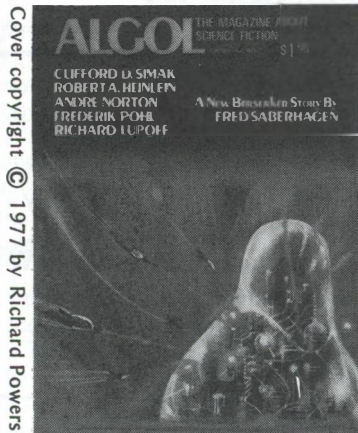
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Propeller Beanie

A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

Critics are sometimes called upon to prove they know what they're talking about, and that can be dangerous. While writing my last column about genzines (the care, feeding, and ideal qualities of), I began boring my local fannish friends with my views on The Need For More Good General-Interest Fanzines. To prove my points, I lent them copies of *Maya*, *Janus*, *The Witch and the Chameleon*, some old *Energumens* and a *Cry*, various *Granfalloon*s and a *Warhoon* or two. At the BC club Christmas party, sitting next to Allyn Cadogan, our information officer and newsletter-editor, I rhapsodized about the fannish immortality awaiting the capable editor who could fill the fanzine void with a regular, attractive, intelligent genzine, full of personality, witty commentary and the sense of fannish community.

"Yeah. I guess a good fanzine would be a way of making contact with people. Communicating. Getting known," said Allyn, who wants to be an SF writer.

"Yeah," said Bill Gibson. Bill, who is tall and lean, rather like my pet avocado plant, is another would-be SF writer; in fact he had just sold his first story, one he'd written for my SF class. (Luckily, I had given him an A.) "It would be neat to do a good fanzine like *Maya*. We could talk about SF, and stuff."

"Practice writing? Sounds ok. But what's a genzine?" said John Park, who is also tall and thin, has an English accent, and...guess what...is a would-be SF writer. John distinguished himself by finishing his doctorate in physical chemistry, and having his first story published in *Galaxy* in the same week.

"Yeah, and it's fun, too," I said, starting reminiscently into my glass of BC Rotgut Red. "That moment when you staple the first copy, and it's yours, and beautiful...the first loc, praising your writing...the first unsolicited contributions..." Me, I'm Susan, Old Fan and Tired, local gafiate. I'm the short one with glasses, who has no ambition to write SF. Allyn's the slim woman with the high cheekbones and the gap between her teeth. That's the cast of Birth of a Genzine. I was catalysing something.

Allyn borrowed more fanzines. Bill, who'd been a 15-year-old actifan at Chicon III, ungafiated and started drawing cartoons. John began muttering about the price of paper. Then suddenly, one evening at Allyn's place with the kids put to bed, Barney purring in my lap and the Canadian wine affecting my more-gafia-than-thou pose once more, Allyn uttered the fateful words:

"Let's start a genzine!"

"Great! I, uh, I just happened to do this cover," said Bill, producing a superb collage.

"Hey, yeah. May I write a column?" my voice said. (It wasn't me. I had four hundred papers to mark that term, and was already running short on sleep.)

"What's a genzine?" asked John Park.

"What are you going to call the baby?" I asked. "You can either pick a really serious stfnal name like, oh, *Starship* or *Science Fiction Essays* and go the semi-prozine route, or you can pick an off-the-wall name and be crazy-fannish. Call it *Fred*. Or *Genre Plat*."

"Yeah," said Allyn and Bill.

"What's a Genre Plat?" asked John.

"Now, for the first issue, we'll need..." said Allyn; and by the time we all left at 4 am, Vancouver had itself an embryo genzine.

It's really easy to start a genzine. All you need are a couple of neos with lots of time and enthusiasm; a couple of older fen with experience and enthusiasm (not to mention enough fannish contacts to make up a mailing list); and a certain amount of mood-enhancers and sheer lunacy to get you to the point at which the thing stops being a great idea for Real Soon Now, and starts being a reality. A lot of crudzines are born that way. Most die after the first issue. *Genre Plat* should be a strong survivor.

First off, the would-be editor of a successful fanzine has to have some idea of what he/she is doing, or wants to do. I get a couple of dozen "fanzines" every month that are just assemblages of material that the editor had lying around, stencilled, and mailed out. Allyn and Bill actually sat down and

read a lot of fanzines, decided which ones they liked, and then figured out why: it boiled down to *Maya* and the like, for the balance of serious and fannish material, the informal tone, the artwork, and the sense of a fannish community. They also knew *why* they wanted to publish: to communicate with other fans, to—in Bill's case at least—apply his English major skills to debating ideas about SF in a non-academic way, perhaps to create and maintain a fannish community: genzines are great focal points for loose energy, and there seems to be a lot of that in Vancouver/Seattle just now.

A word here about co-editing: generally, I don't think it works. In your heart, you know you could've done it better if you hadn't compromised about that illo on page 13, right? Well, Allyn and Bill, the Official Editors (John and I became Surrogate Godparents) have worked out areas of responsibility: he the artwork, she the written material, both alternating editorials. Also, and I think this is a big factor in a successful magazine: we may be Silly, but we're mostly Grown Up. We're all in our late 20's, with Careers and Relationships and Life Experiences and all that. We're not dependent on fandom for all our egoboo, so the chances of petty feuds ("That's *my* trade-zine!" "No, mine!" "Paste those e-stencils in *my* way, or I quit!!") are going to be minimal. I hope.

Genre Plat knows what it wants to be. It also has the courage to go after The Ideal Fanzine, even if it means rejecting material, bruising feelings...or, more important, having the patience to sit down with contributors and Get It Right. (The lack of real help to do better-than-adequate work is something of a problem, in fandom. You get a lot of feedback on content, very little on technique.)

"We want to infuriate and amuse," said Bill, asked to define his aims.]

The planning also took money into account. Allyn did a cost analysis: reproduction methods, paper costs, envelopes, postage, electrostencils...all part of knowing what you're doing.

Mimeography is informal, "fannish," and a community project. Also a pain, when you have to slipsheet and when you have Allyn's two- and five-year-olds to "help." Also much, much cheaper than offset. Also available, since they... we (you don't get out that easily, Susan) have access to both the BC club mimeo, and mine. (But I've done enough slipsheeting to last a lifetime...)

"What's a slipsheet?"

"We'll show you, John."

Planning. Direction. Enthusiasm. (I'm actually quite excited about this whole thing, which is ridiculous for an Old Fan and Tired. I keep volunteering to do things; I even wrote a column for the first issue and a reprint-introduction for the second, while marking exams. That's enthusiasm.) The final ingredient needed to lift the zine out of the ordinary, though, is talent.

Of course, yes, you're a great writer. Well, a good one. Well, that essay on 1984 got an A in Grade 11 English. And your friend's cartoons are sort of like Rotsler's, sure. But: are you going to be embarrassed when the first issue of *Purple Ditto Monster* turns up for the neos to snicker at in a fanhistory room ten worldcons from now?

I don't think anyone will snicker at *Genre Plat*. Dena Brown read Bill Gibson's essay on SF criticism, and immediately asked to reprint it in *Locus*. We passed around Bill's cartoons, and giggled. Allyn's piece on Harlan Ellison is a really fine piece of personal journalism, and her editorial... Well, look, send for the fanzine, and judge. I think it has a nice community feel about it, the layouts look attractive, and Allyn has, I discovered, an enviable fannish talent: she can lay down presstype straight, a useful gift unless you have a tame calligrapher in the basement.

Get the best contents you can, for whatever type of fanzine you want: if it's a reviewzine, make them good reviews (*Genre Plat*'s by Doug Barbour and Bill Beard discuss books and films, instead of just summarizing plots.) If it's a personalzine, make us care about your life... and write about it in literate English. Don't print crud, just because it's yours.

Reproduce each issue as well as time and money allow. I get a lot of fanzines. I simply do not bother reading the ones typed with dirty typewriter keys, with fuzzy printing, crowded and messy pages, faded-to-nothing ink. If you expect anyone to care about your words and art, make them legible.

Bill and Allyn are going to spend a fair amount of money for good mimeo bond, ink and electrostencils. We all are going to spend many, many hours running off pages and collating. We will complain, loudly. We will hold an artifact that is as good as we can make it, and beam, eventually.

OK. You have a pile of lovely, expensive (nobody does this to make money, *nobody*; there are easier ways to get rich and famous) fanzines waiting for an audience. Mail them out. (There are piles of unmailed issues in closets from Brooklyn to Seattle. There are piles of unpublished material all over fandom. Whatever happened to the Willis issue of *Warhoon?* to *Innuendo*?) Borrow mailing lists from a friend, from a club. Read lots of fanzines, noting the mistakes, so you don't make them. Copy down the addresses of the faithful contributors and letterhacks, neatly, each onto its own filecard on which you may note issues sent and response received. Send your zine to fanzine reviewers; the reviewers, inundated, will not respond, but will feel Terribly Guilty, and may mention you.

As a personal piece of advice, try *not* to hand your zine out at a large convention. I invariably leave them at parties, resent dragging them around, and dump them unread at home with the dirty laundry. I once distributed a fanzine at a Lunacon, and it got the least response of any issue we'd published.

Personally, I think the first issue of *Genre Plat* has as much going for it as any firstish could have: brains, good looks, loving parents, contacts in the great world. It needs two more things to succeed. It needs a good lettercolumn. For that, all Bill and Allyn can do is to rely on the overall appearance to convince people to read it, the material to provoke comment hooks, and their own skill to edit and balance a healthy exchange-of-ideas lettercol that's the heart of any successful genzine.

The second factor in making a good genzine into a potentially great one is, I think, regularity. I think people are more inclined to contribute when they know that the zine will really, honestly appear—preferably soon, so they get the egoboo of seeing their work in print, and the double egoboo of response. Fans write and draw for pleasure, but also for feedback and praise, not for your inactive file. Keeping a regular schedule—quarterly isn't impossible, for a small zine—shows a certain commitment on the editor's part. It also means you don't get stuck producing those two-years-in-the-making hundred-page monsters which destroy your fannish enthusiasm, destroy your finances when you mail them out three years later, and which no-one ever finishes reading anyway.

Starting a fanzine is easy. You need some friends, a bottle of wine, a bottle of corflu, and some stencils. Keeping a fanzine going is harder. Stick around and see what happens with *Genre Plat*.

Meanwhile, *Hedgehog* No. 1 from Seattle fan Jeff Frane is a prototypical Good First Genzine. There's a smatter-

ing of artwork: a Jim McLeod cover and two interior illos, plus some fillos by Seattle fringe-fan Gene Perkins. The main emphasis, though, is on words, by Jeff and his friends. Jeff, like Allyn Cadogan, is a grown-up neo, who's been reading SF and fantasy for years, mixing in the fan community for awhile, writing for other people's fanzines, until, one day... on the highway between Flagstaff and Seattle, coming home from Big MAC... he decided to start his own fanzine. It would be about SF and fantasy: "a serious look at the field" but not a pseudo-scholarly one. "I personally have no interest in articles such as 'Sociothermodynamics in John Norman.' I am interested in the views of those people who consider literature in general, and SF in particular, to be a viable, vivacious art. An entertainment form that can excite the emotions and the intellect. Fun."

At this point I decided I was going to like *Hedgehog*. I was right. The main focus of the first issue is provided by Jeff's intelligent interview with Kate Wilhelm. For once, instead of transcribing a taped excursion into trivial chitter-chatter, the interviewer has asked the apt questions, and the interviewee has provided lucid and interesting answers: about Clarion, about professional relationships with husband/editor Damon Knight, about being a woman writer.

"Q. 'Are you a feminist?'"

"WILHELM: 'A feminist? I think that any woman who is aware has to be a feminist...'"

Jeff has also compiled a Wilhelm bibliography which I, for one, am going to find useful as I track down the earlier, and neglected, work of the woman who, with *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang* and *The Clewiston Test*, may well become the SF field's next superstar: ironic, that, since neither *Clewiston Test* nor her new novel, *Faultlines* is being marketed as SF, her non-SF has always sold better than her genre-labelled material, and she herself enjoys being "hard to categorize."

The other major articles fulfil Jeff's criteria, by examining SF with the emotions and the intellect. Loren MacGregor's "Things Change" is a personal reaction to the disappearance of The Expository Lump in modern SF; it's informal, chatty, and makes a serious literary point in an entertaining way. Denys Howard's article on "Love and MZB" is equally personal, more impassioned: as a gay man, he details his evolving reactions to Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The World Wreckers* and *The Heritage of Hastur*, with a synthesis of self/society/art that lit-crit-at-school just never even hints at. I read fanzines for material like this.

Hedgehog concludes with 11 pages of reviews (more than a third of its length.) One is four years old but still important:

Ursula Le Guin on *Watership Down*. The others are longish discussions of current books. Jeff and his reviewers (Debbie Notkin, Frank Denton, Mary Kay Jackson) stay this side of major essays, without falling into the trap of most reviewers, who give "I-enjoyed-this-because" plot-outlines which are only a biased buyer's guide, useless three months after the book is released. The commentary is intelligent; and Debbie Notkin's long examination of *The Crystal Ship* is a model of what a good long appraisal should be.

OK. I enjoyed *Hedgehog*, and wish it well. I wish it a good lettercol; the Wilhelm interview and the Howard piece should provide adequate comment hooks. I wish it a few more fannish touches, though editor Jeff's editorial ramblings set the informal tone quite nicely. In fact, one of the things I like most about the zine is its sense of a Pacific Northwest fannish community from Vancouver to Berkeley. (Even the books reviewed tend to be by West-coast authors: Ursula Le Guin, Terry Carr, Vonda McIntyre, Marta Randall...hmm.) This "community" isn't emphasized, or really even mentioned; there's no claustrophobic ingroupness; but I do get a sense of people carrying on a discussion with their friends, and inviting each reader into the conversation. I like that.

The other thing I wish Jeff is better reproduction. The informality of mimeo on twiltone paper is nice, Jeff, but you're getting a lot of setoff. And set the striking pressure on Father Frank's typer higher, if you can; or use pliofilm; or something. The stencils don't seem to be cut clearly, the printing is spotty, and the result, after 32 pages of almost unbroken type, is incipient eyestrain. Don't put up barriers between the words and us.

Addresses: *Genre Plat*, Allyn Cado-gan, 1916 W. 15th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. Canada. The usual, or \$1. a sample; no longterm subscriptions.

Maya, Rob Jackson, 71 King John St., Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE6 5XR, U.K. US/Can. \$1.00, 4/\$3.

Hedgehog, Jeff Frane, P.O. Box 1923, Seattle, WA 98111. The usual or \$1.

Other Stuff: I'd like to recommend two very different projects. *New Venture* No. 5 is described as a "special art issue." In fact, it's a 118-page art folio, spiral-bound, offset, with a colour cover by Kelly Freas. Artists include Freas, George Barr, Eddie Jones, Ed Emshwiller, Stephen Fabian, John Schoenherr, Tim Kirk, Roy Krenkel, Rick Sternbach, Vincent Di Fate, and the best of the fanartists, including Harry Bell, Grant Canfield, Terry Austin and Randy Mohr. Selections and repro vary from fair to !!wow!! with the emphasis on the latter. As a bonus, there are autobiographies by most of the artists, and a long interview with George Barr. It's a gorgeous

collector's item, for only \$2., from Jon Gustafson, NW 440 Windus St., Pullman, WA 99163.

Apple is "a journal of women's sexuality and erotica" edited by Jessica Salmonson for S.I.S.T.E.R., the Seattle Institute of Sex Therapy, Education and Research, 100 NE 56th Ave, Seattle, WA (offset, \$1.) Jessica's multipartite editorial, a reprinted column from Phyllis Ann Carr, personal articles, fiction and attractive artwork and graphics make this a feminist magazine remarkably akin to those fanzines I reviewed last column. A lettercol in No. 2 should increase this feeling, and *Apple's* value as a forum for sharing experiences and energy.

I only read English and French, alas, so most foreign fanzines are inaccessible to me. You might be interested in some of these, though:

Omega, a Dutch genzine, edited and published by Zacharias L. A. Nuninga, Westersingel 1, GRONINGEN 8009, The Netherlands; f. 3.50/BF 55.

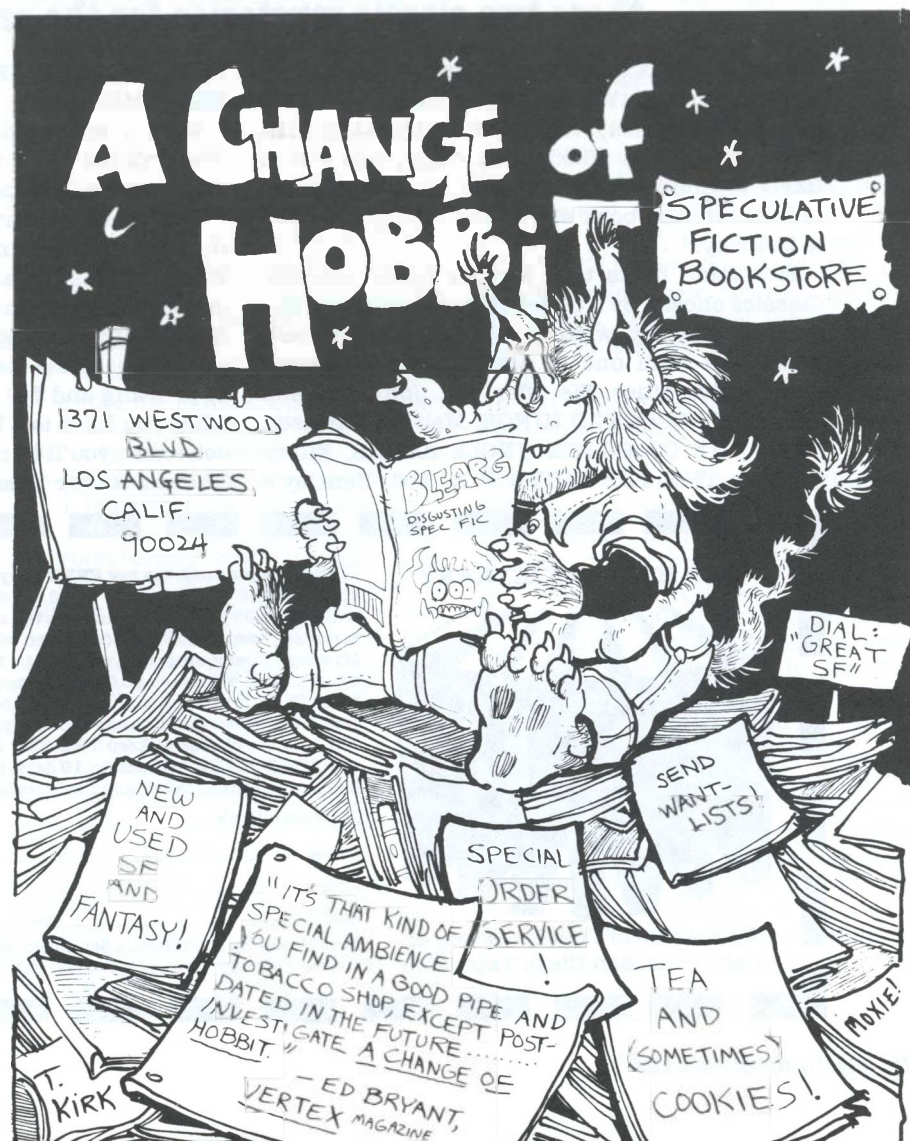
Munich Round Up, a German genzine with an English summary: con-reports, stories, reviews, and stunning covers, from Waldemar Kumping, Herzogspitalstrasse 5, 8000 Munchen 2, W. Germany; DM 2, or 80c, 4/\$3, from US agent Andy Porter.

Cahier is Flemish, an English/French/Belgian annual "devoted to the famous Flemish writer Jean Ray-John Flanders...the greatest author of fantastic literature in Belgium," and to SF and fantasy-related articles, bibliographies and such. It costs 200 BF, 220 BF overseas or 250 BF airmail from Josef Peeters, Loburgenbos 27, 3200 Kessel-bo, Belgium—who also wants to trade with foreign fanzines. Send him yours.

For English-language fans, an indispensable introduction to overseas fandom is *The Spang Blah*, from Jan Howard Finder, P.O. Box 9163, Ft. Riley, KS 66442. It's quarterly, offset, and 75c. Metamorphosing from a European newszine, *Spang Blah* No. 13 has become an international genzine featuring, among others, Marion Zimmer Bradley (US), Cherry Wilder (Australia, now in Germany), Bert Chandler and Dennis Stocks (Australia), Eric Bentcliffe and Ian Watson (Britain) and Annemarie Kindt (Netherlands) with artwork by Harry Bell and Terry Jeeves (U.K.), Bill Rotsler (US), etc. etc. . . This should become quite fascinating.

Keep those fanzines coming! ■

—Susan Wood, Dept. of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1W5



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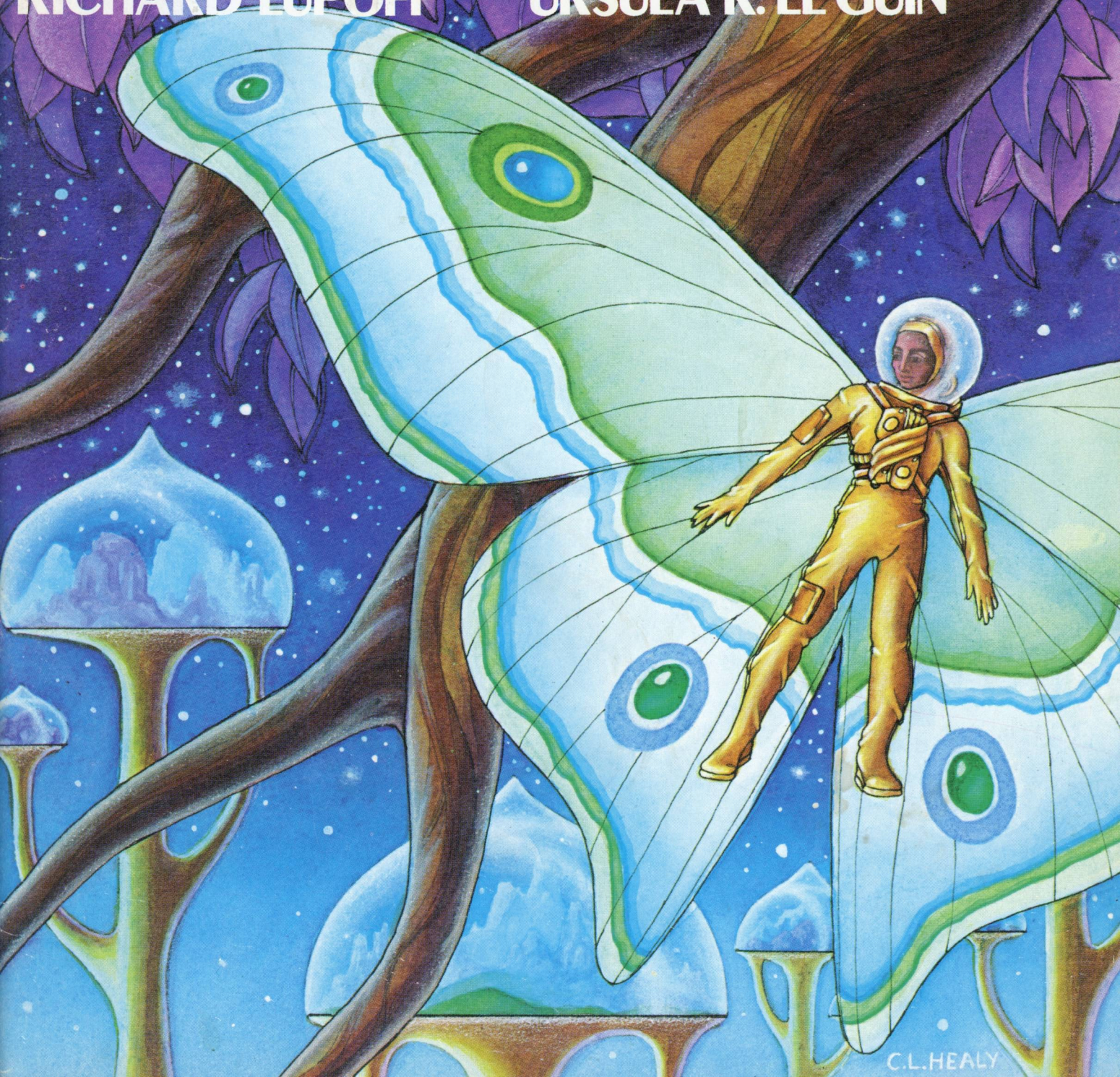
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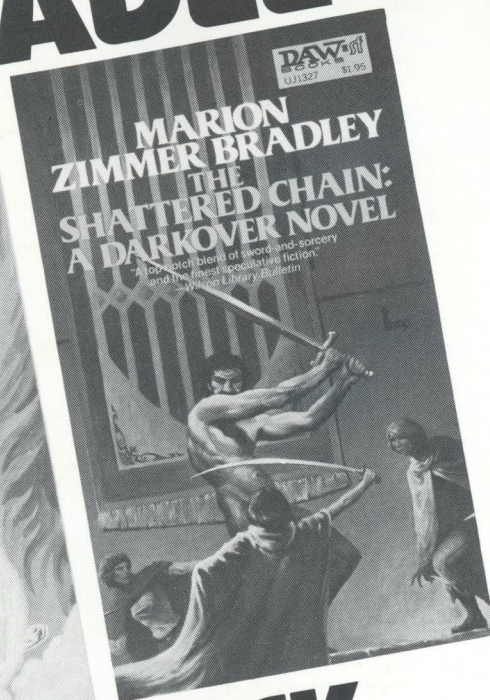
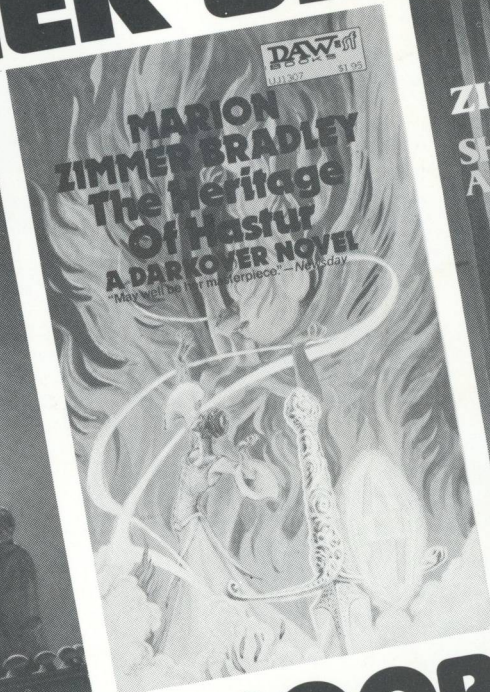
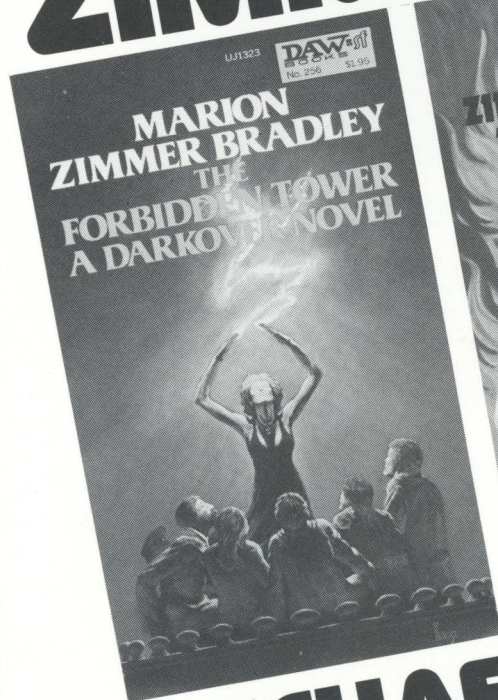
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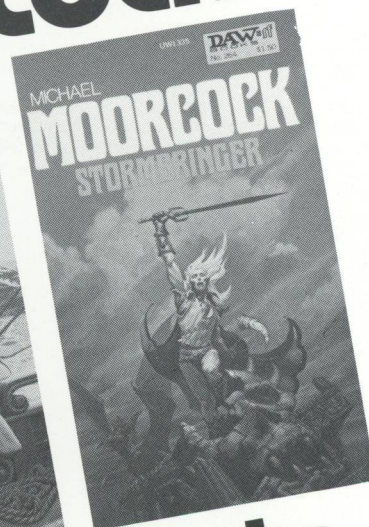
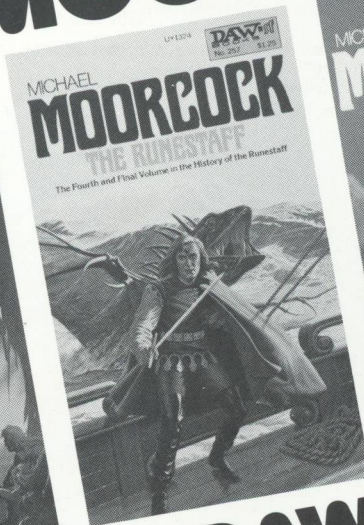
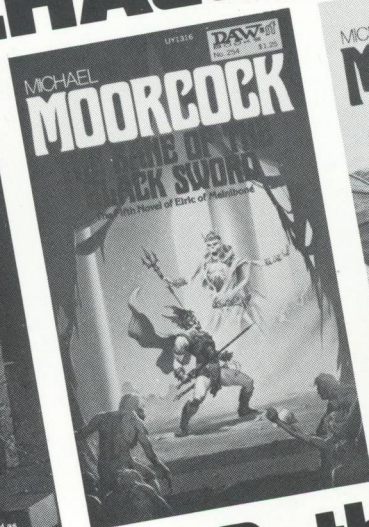
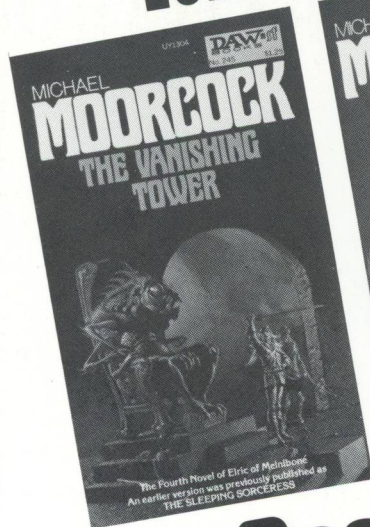
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Propellor Beanie

A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

Back in the 1940's, before many of us were born, that small group of odd-ball talents who were coalescing into science fiction "fandom" began developing traditions. Every society needs them, to define the group and set it apart. The trufannish image of Joe Fann (Tucker's term, modified to Jophan by Willis) was (and still is) one of an adolescent, white male social misfit, who is bright, unconventional, joyfully superior to dull "mundanes." Fans are slans. Fans, starting at Torcon in 1948, carry zapguns. And fans, in their selfimage, wear propellor beanies, as token of their proud, self-congratulatory silliness. Harry Warner Jr. writes in *All Our Yesterdays* that: "Cartoons...helped to solidify the beanie as a symbol of fandom, always possessed of a propellor at its apex. Ray Nelson purchased the first helicopter beanie in a dime store at Cadillac, Michigan, and George Young became the first to wear one at a convention when he attended the Torcon. *Spacewarp* and other Michigan fanzines immediately put helicopter beanies atop all the fans in cartoons, and Cincinnati merchants suffered mightily during the Invention next year, as delegates sought for fresh variants and extra-luxuriant models of the headwear for prestige purposes."

The wearing of propellor beanies has gone out of fashion—they, like dime stores, are hard to find—but someone (Bob Tucker?) provided Ursula Le Guin with one for her Guest of Honour speech at Aussiecon. It seemed appropriate to the occasion.

That fannish pride in absurdity, in silliness and light-heartedness, is the most infuriating, endearing "tradition" of this tradition-bound inner circle we call fandom. It seemed an apt title for a column, appearing in a *Serious Glossy Magazine About SF*, but devoted, not to scholarship or interviews with pros, but to a celebration of fans themselves—ourselves—and our world. What could be sillier and more self-indulgent than a serious discussion of smudgy little magazines, mimeoed for a hundred readers,

wherein the editor and friends praise each other, draw in-group cartoons, and become, briefly, the centre of the universe? What could be more gloriously fun?

Fandom is propellor beanies. I wouldn't have it any other way.

The most gloriously silly thing of all is the fact that the Harry Warner quotation about helicopter beanies comes from a whole, actual, real book about fandom: *All Our Yesterdays*, published by Advent, a Chicago specialty press, in 1969. My experience with that book shows my gradual progression from SF reader to trufan. Ten years ago, I discovered other people who read SF: marvellous, a chance to talk seriously about SF books! But what's this "fanzine" full of stuff that has nothing to do with SF? It's a lot of in jokes about people I don't know. They're fans? Oh. And they're putting on a World Science Fiction Convention? Oh!

Two years later, I finally attended a worldcon, met some of the people, had a few of the jokes explained. I also discovered, in the Huckster Room, Advent Publishers selling Alex Panshin's book on Heinlein, Damon Knight's book on SF, Harry Warner's book on...fandom? Walt Liebscher telling me the "Rosebud" story was one thing; but who could possibly want a whole book full of such...family history?

Four years later, I was preparing the All Our Yesterdays Room, a fanhistory display/meeting room for TorCon 2. I was reading Harry's book for the second and third time, admiring the patience with which he'd assembled so much material and the skill with which he'd woven it into a coherent story of fandom's development as a unique subculture. Something else came through, in Harry's dry wit and warm concern for the people and events he described: the importance of fandom to him, his reasons for undertaking this labour of love. It was my tribal history, too, and Harry made it matter to me.

All Our Yesterdays chronicles fandom's development to 1949. In my re-

search for Torcon, I was frequently frustrated because little information was readily available on the Fifties. They were the Golden Years of trufandom, when people were friendlier and writing was wittier—or so nostalgic fans assured those of us doomed to live in the Fallen Age of the 1970's. But what *happened*? "Oh, nothing much," Ted White told me. "We discovered that Lee Hoffman was a girl..."

Many of us were delighted to learn that Harry Warner planned to embark on a second volume of fanhistory, to cover the 1950's. In honor of the Fabulous Fannishness of that decade, it would be called *A Wealth of Fable*.

Then the project went sour. Harry's research was slowed by illness, and he seemed weary of his self-appointed task. Then Advent raised objections to the completed manuscript, demanding revisions and additions, for example, of more material on regional fandom. A flurry of acrimonious letters between Ed Wood of Advent, and Harry Warner, appeared in the fan press, followed by the announcement that Harry had withdrawn the book and was looking for a fannish publisher. Several months later, Joe D. Siclari announced that he and Karina Girsdanský would bring out the original manuscript in a mimeographed special edition, in the tradition of such fannish projects as *Fancyclopedia*, *The Incomplete Burbee*, and *A Sense of Fapa*.

Joe and Karina typed stencils. We waited. The first volume appeared at MidAmeriCon. Joe and Karina moved twice, got married, and became involved in the programming for Suncon, the 1977 worldcon, somewhere in there. Every so often, those of us who'd paid out our \$8.75 for the complete *A Wealth of Fable* would get a flier urging patience. I thought of Joe and Karina typing 233 pages (plus introductions), mimeographing and collating 1,000 copies, and waited.

This summer, to my amazement, I actually received volumes 2 and 3 of *A Wealth of Fable*, "the history of science

fiction fandom in the 1950's," by Harry Warner Jr., with an introduction by Wilson Tucker.

It's an impressive-looking publication, nicely produced by Joe and Karina, with Ross Chamberlain covers and illustrations by fandom's leading cartoonists. It's an impressive project to contemplate, too: an enormous compendium of names, facts, dates, about fans, their publications, their conventions.

And that's the problem. *A Wealth of Fable* is just a collection of facts. Unlike *All Our Yesterdays*, I don't think it will help you, a reader of SF, to understand the spirit behind such a massive undertaking. It didn't help me, a fan of ten years' standing with an interest in fan-history, to understand the spirit of the Fabulous Fifties.

Harry's introduction to *A Wealth of Fable* begins: "Like *All Our Yesterdays*, this new fan history book is a narrative, not a reference work. It is meant to convey something of the flavor of fandom during the 1950's, it is not intended as a source of eternal verities. Just as in the other book, I have done some anti-scholarly things in the interest of reading pleasure."

What is the source of my dissatisfaction with this book, whose publication I anticipated so much?

First, it *isn't* a narrative. Its structure is awkward and confused, moving jerkily between a chronological account of the high points of fannish development in the east, midwest and San Francisco Bay Areas of the United States, and individual accounts of people and events. Thus Chapter 5, "The Audabon of the Id," opens with a focus on Bill Rotsler as a fan artist. It quickly turns into a series of short accounts of Charles Burbee, Redd Boggs, Ray Nelson, Pete Vorzimer, Robert Bloch and others, with no unifying connections, no sense of why these fans belong together, or why they are outstanding or representative fans. You have to already know Burbee's writings, and their importance; Harry just reminds you that he existed. The rest of the chapter contains brief paragraphs on Kuttner, Kornbluth, Laney, Vernon McCain, and E. E. Evans, who are lumped together with some obscure fans just because they all happened to die in 1958-59. Chapter 6 doesn't follow chronologically, but it is more unified, and interesting to the non-50's fan, because Harry does attempt to discuss some specific trends in fan publishing. Yet an account of the origin of the custom of sending a fanzine free in return for a letter of comment begs more questions than it answers. For Harry, it's significant only that no-one knows where the custom began. For me, what's interesting is the fannish spirit represented by the custom, the development of fannish fanzines in this decade, the purpose and meaning of fanzines to the people

who produced them. Instead of pulling back to examine the whole phenomenon, Harry gets bogged down in specifics about individual, and not really representative, fanzines: their cost, frequency, editorship. For example, he mentions, as representative of a "special venture into printing," an elaborate fanzine called *Nekromantik*, which focussed on fiction by fannish unknowns. Its five issues "must have approached all-time records for the amount of editorial work that went into them," handset type, half-toned illustrations, and multi-colour covers. We learn that its editor, Manley Bannister, was a 36-year-old war veteran and professional writer, who ran 200 copies of the magazine while estimating he needed to sell 10,000 to break even. He discontinued the magazine when the workload got too heavy, and donated his mimeograph to the 1952 Willis Fund. "It was raffled off, won by Nan Gerding, and she named it the Iron Maiden." Well, I'd have cheerfully sacrificed whole chapters of such essentially meaningless details if only Harry had actually discussed the fan phenomenon which Bannister represented, or had elaborated on Bannister's final comments on *Nekromantik*: "It has been fun. It has also been a lot of work. The work and the time required have finally outweighed the fun involved. I have met a lot of mighty nice people since I started this publication. It has, therefore, been worth to me many times its cost in time, labor, and money." Now that comment tells me more about the lure of fandom than all of Harry's painfully-accumulated details.

And why discuss *Nekromantik* and *Science Fiction Times* in this chapter on fanzines, but not discuss *Hyphen*, or other fannish fanzines here? Harry says, several times, that fandom of the 1950's "was a happier, friendlier thing, overall, than before or maybe since," that it was characterized by wackiness, fun, and a general tendency towards legend-making. He says things like this, but doesn't prove or even discuss them. Instead, he goes on, for example, to tell us which specific rare prozines were for sale in 1952. I can give a page of examples, of trends which Harry identifies briefly, of generalizations he makes, that aren't followed up or supported as he plunges back into his accumulation of detail. But there's no point in my offering you a list of such specifics; you'll find them, alas—conclusions and generalizations which are too rare, not supported, not developed enough, and not integrated into the mass of detail he offers. What was fandom like in the 1950's? What was its spirit? After 233 pages, I still don't really know; and all the scholarship, in the end, really goes to waste.

A Wealth of Fable is many things; but it isn't a narrative. It doesn't have a natural "plot" as *All Our Yesterdays* did

in the gradual evolution of fandom; and Harry hasn't been able to find a focus in any of the trends he mentions briefly, such as the growing size of fandom, its influence on prodrom, or the fannish spirit which fans remember with such fondness. That last trait, in particular, just isn't developed satisfactorily. Even the chapter on Walt Willis contains as much information about G.M. Carr and her stupid attacks on him as it does about Willis the man, Willis the writer, Willis the legend or the feelings of the fans who organized the landmark 1952 special fund to bring him to North America. And then G.M. Carr's fugg-headedness is dealt with in yet another chapter!

This lack of unity and coherence is evident in individual chapters, too. A discussion of Lee Hoffman does identify her as an important example of "the fan who is a fan for the sake of fandom." Yet then, instead of discussing this concept or LeeH's influence, Harry moves on to this crashingly awkward transition: "Lee was pretty much the same fan at the beginning that she was at the end of the decade. That is one of the many ways in which she differed from another conspicuous fan of the 1950's, Harlan Ellison." And we're into a two-page outline of Harlan's fannish activities—a bare mention of "the Midwestcon Door excitement" for example—which really fails to tell us how he "changed, developed, and was almost as complex a personality as a fan as he is today as a professional."

Such jerky and awkward transitions are typical: between chapters, between sections of chapters, even between sentences. Organization is minimal (LeeH and Harlan are followed by Bob Silverberg as a fellow pro, then by Grennell, Tucker, Bjo Trimble, G.M. Carr and others, with nothing in common except involvement in very different aspects of fandom. Again, there's no development of the fannishness which LeeH epitomized, and which is Harry's ostensible theme.) Moreover, the prose itself is flat and awkward, rarely leavened by Harry's humour. It really seems as if, overwhelmed by his material, he just assembled vast numbers of notes on file cards; propped a card beside his typewriter; typed the information out in more-or-less full run-on sentences; and then picked up another filecard full of details. Put down "Hoffman, Lee." Pick up "Ellison, Harlan." Assume your readers will *know* what Harlan's personality is like. . . I can sense Harry's growing lack of enthusiasm for his monster project in every paragraph break.

If the book isn't engrossing as a narrative, is it useful as a reference work? Could someone use Harry's impressive research, and focus in on those "fabulous" fans of 1950? Here, the book is seriously weakened not only by the lack of organization (material about Willis,

say, crops up all over) but by the lack of an index. Joe and Karina explain that they did not compile one in order to get the book out quickly, but they do plan to publish one "in *Fanhistorica* 5, due out in Spring, 1977." It's September, 1977, and the *second* issue of this fan-history publication hasn't appeared. Meantime, if I want a specific piece of information, I'm reduced to flipping pages, hoping that Harry included it and that I can find it somehow. Or recognize it. A minor irritant is Harry's decision to refer to women fans by the names under which they're known in 1977, without any indication of previous surnames. "In Calgary, the most notable fan was Georgina Clarke, famous far and wide for her fanzines. . ." but if you find one, it's published by Georgina Ellis, "Dutch" Ellis, first Duchess of Canadian fandom. You just might get confused, if you aren't a '50's fan.

Moreover, how reliable is Harry's scholarship? "This book is as accurate as I could make it within human limitations." Interpretations of people and events differ, of course, but matters of fact don't. Yet I opened one of the volumes at random, to discover that Bill Rotsler "scored his first big success as a fiction writer with a novel, *Master of the Arts*." Well, Bill was nominated in 1973, the year he was Fan Guest of Honour at TorCon 2, for a Hugo for his novelette, "Patron of the Arts," later expanded into a novel. . . It's only a detail, but how many other details are wrong?

I asked Terry Carr, a Fabulous Fifties Fan who figures prominently in volume 2, how accurate *A Wealth of Fable* was. On pages 74-75: "I wasn't in the Golden Gate Futurian Society in 1949, so I couldn't withdraw; with *Innuendo*, I said the time was right for a *monthly* fanzine, which is different; that's Miriam Knight, not 'Mirian,' he mentions her twice and gets it wrong both times. . ." Between pages 91 and 94, he discovered at least half a dozen errors of fact before breakfast, on a superficial reading, keeping up a running commentary of "No . . . that's wrong . . . I don't know where he got *that* idea . . . this is all in fanzines I know Harry has available . . . no."

Well, it's trivia. Do you care that Parker L. Schaeffer was not "another Carr-Graham concoction" but an invention of Pete Vorzimer? But trivial details which matter to fans are what *A Wealth of Fable* is all about, and I want them to be reliable. Still, Joe and Karina published the book in its mimeographed format so that it could be flexible; they ask that fans send corrections for the second edition.

OK. *A Wealth of Fable* isn't really a narrative, and isn't meant to be a reference work. Frankly, I don't think it succeeds in conveying "something of the

flavor of fandom during the 1950's." Facts, yes. Flavor? Only sometimes, as in the ingroup jokes and traditions of Chapter 10, "The Father of Invention," or the account of Nolacon's Room 770. In part, the project lacks impact because Harry doesn't generalize enough, doesn't pull his mass of details into some sort of meaningful pattern. In part, too, it's weakened by Harry's ambitions and his self-imposed restrictions. It was marginally possible to write a coherent history of fandom in North America to 1949. Fandom in the 1950's was bigger, more diverse. Harry promises an account of one aspect of that fandom the "fabulous" fannish spirit, but then he traps himself by trying to cover too much—even while admitting he left out many more people and events.

He also left out the personalities. . . the gossip. Harry is limited by his own sense of decency, his decision to leave out "the seamier aspects of fans," the "human faults." Harry Warner is a nice person, who can find something positive to say about every abysmal neofannish crudzine. . . but niceness does not make for an interesting fanhistory.

So, gentle reader of ALGOL, bookstore browser, SF reader discovering fandom: *A Wealth of Fable* is not meant for you. You will learn that Harlan Ellison was once a fan, that Robert Silverberg, Terry Carr, Bob Shaw, Marion Zimmer Bradley and other published undistinguished amateur magazines when they were pubescent. You will not learn the Harlan Ellison Stories which fostered the love-hate relationship between that individual and fandom. You will not learn why Silverberg and Carr to this day publish amateur magazines, at no-cents-a-word, for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. You will not learn how fandom has influenced prodrom, influenced what you are given to read today.

(For Gossip and Personalities, fan feuds and emerging prodrom, go to Damon Knight's *The Futurians*, just released by John Day. This account of feuds, affairs, friendships and professional successes in one New York fan group in the 1940's is mostly notable because the community included Cyril Kornbluth, Judith Merril, James Blish, Virginia Kidd, Fred Pohl, Lester del Rey, Knight himself and other novelists, editors and agents. It's also notable because its tone is lively and, frankly, gossipy. It reveals more than discretion would approve about people's affairs, though less than curiosity would demand. What was in Kornbluth's trunk—whips, black lace panties, manuscripts? Why mention it, if you won't tell? The book is meant as a tribute to a time, a place and a group of friends, but you know that's not why Day is publishing it in hardcover. It'll sell because it contains gossip about pros. I'll let Dick Lupoff review it,

though.)

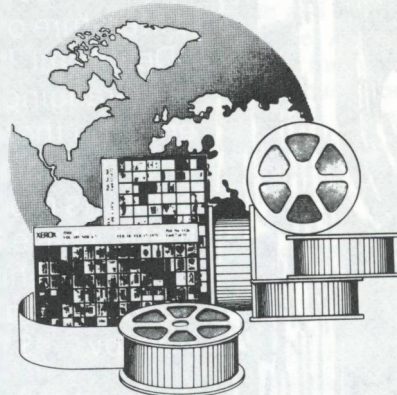
A Wealth of Fable is really for 1950's fans, who'll read it nostalgically, look for their names, and write Harry chiding letters correcting his facts. It's also sort-of-for convinced (convicted?) fans like me, who'll read it looking for legends. . . but only find, if we're lucky, facts to do our own digging. Perhaps it's for fans like Joe and Karina Siclari, who can use it to trace fannish fanzines, to find articles to reprint in *Fanhistorica* so that we can experience that golden age glow for ourselves.

In sum, then, *A Wealth of Fable* is an impressive piece of research by the one person qualified to undertake it. It's not, however, an entertaining or enlightening narrative. In the end, I think the task simply defeated the writer.

A WEALTH OF FABLE, by Harry Warner, Jr. Published by Joe and Karina Siclari, Fanhistorica Press, 2201 N.E. 45 St., Lighthouse Point, FL 33064. Mimeographed; 3 volumes, 233 pages. Copyrighted 1969, 1977. Originally the book was offered for \$8.75 after publication, but I think the price must have gone up by now; write to the publishers for details. ■

—Susan Wood, Dept. of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1W5

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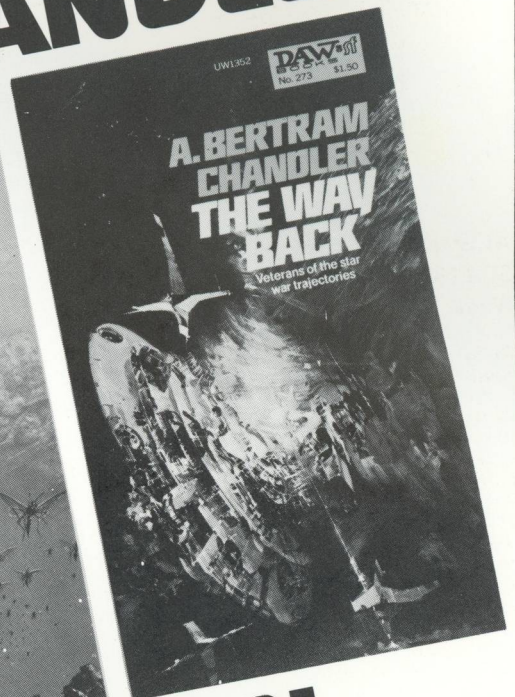
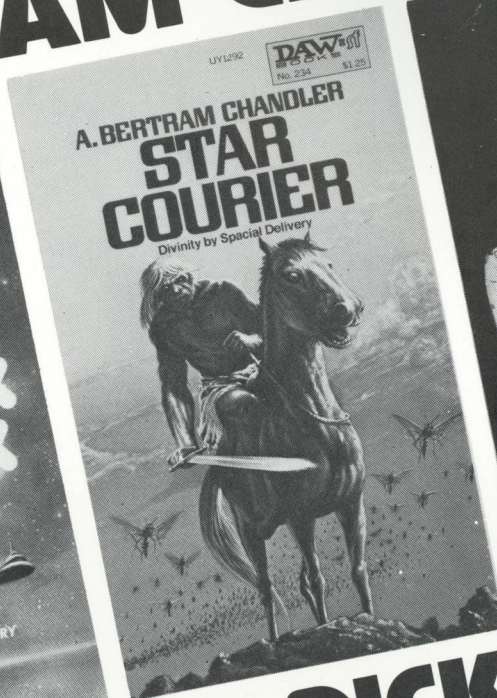
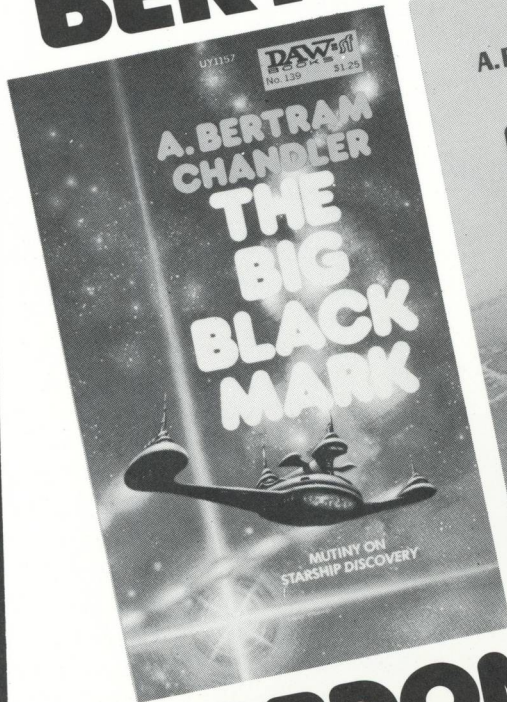
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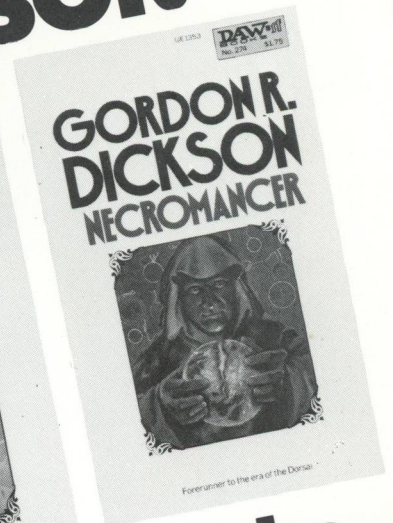
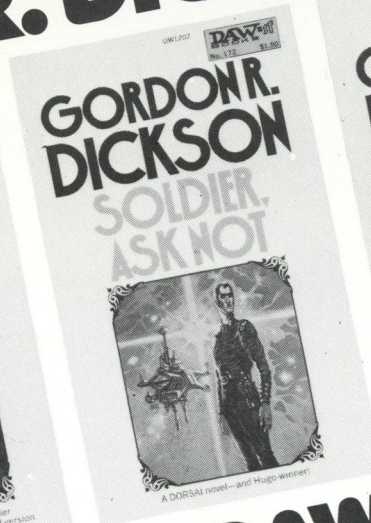
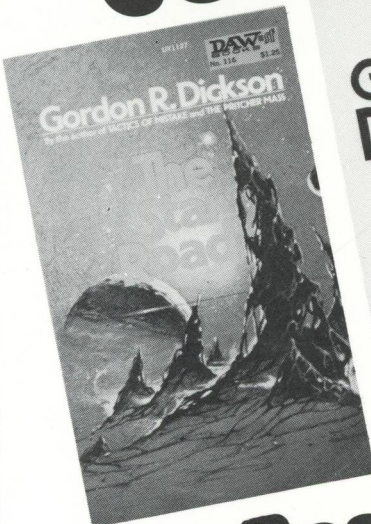
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Propellor Beanie

A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

Andy Porter, the man who introduced me to bagels, called me on Christmas night. I was in Ottawa at the time, somewhat closer to New York than I am now, but it was still a Nice Thing To Do, Longdistance. After exchanging greetings and felicitations, Andy got down to business.

"About your column..."

"Yes, Andy. I meant to do it the weekend before I left, but, well, on that Friday I did administration, marked some late papers, set up an 8-week Canadian film festival for the English department, had a long discussion with my M.A. student, drew up a 3-page proposal for a new graduate class in Canadian Lit., supervised my second-year class's exam, and stayed in my office from 6 pm til 11, marking part of the exam. On Saturday, I cleaned the house, did the laundry, and finished my marking; then Eli and I went out to celebrate the end of term. On Sunday, I actually had time to visit with my weekend houseguest, then I wrote half a dozen or so urgent letters, wrapped my Christmas presents, and packed to go East. On Monday, I marked a 48-page handwritten draft of an honours thesis from one of my students, supervised another exam, saw students, did a whole lot more administration, handed in my grades, and caught the plane that afternoon. I'll get the column done as soon as I go home, really."

DIGRESSION: the above Typical Weekend (it's *real*, people, and typical) has been described for the benefit of readers who may be wondering why I haven't answered their letters. From September to May, I'm a full-time teacher and sometimes writer. Any mail which isn't urgent and personal tends to get put in successive layers into the large cardboard box on my desk, in which... following my New Year's resolution to Catch Up... I have just worked my way down to a stratum dating from February, 1977. Eeep... In the summer, I'm writing, travelling, preparing courses, supervising graduate work, administering, ordering textbooks, helping with conventions, host-

ing fans, or any combination of the above. My first set of 1978 term papers comes in two days from now; if I haven't answered YOUR letter about how to start a genzine, forgive me, please? We now end the digression, and return you to our conversation in progress...

"Um," said Andy. "Yes. Well, if you're too *busy*, I mean, you don't *have* to write a column." He sounded relieved. I reassured him I'd have something done by the deadline. He ummed and ahed a little more until I finally let him off the hook by asking if he really wanted a "Propellor" installment.

"Uh... well, I guess. I mean, *yes*, of *course*. It's just that, well, the next issue has turned into an Ellish, I have 50,000 words at least from Harlan, and all sorts of ads, and..."

"Yes, Andy. I understand. You want it short."

"Yes. Merry Christmas."

Instead of discussing the individual, separate, created-with-love contents of the 32-cm.-high stack of fan publications here, I'm going to look at two digests, for this digest-sized column. The idea of creating a "fanthology" isn't new; there have been numerous anthologies of specific writers' works (Burbee, Carr, Tucker, etc. and etc.) as well as theme-collections like *A Sense of FAPA*, selections from the Fantasy Amateur Press Association mailings. My friend Bill Gibson recently found a fanthology of "the best of 1956" in a used bookstore, for \$3.00. He described it as "pretty bad... full of bad artwork by people who've since become famous, but not as artists. Most of it was terrible, but there was a piece by Bloch, and one by Eric Bentcliffe..." Alas for immortality, it was printed in multi-coloured ditto, with the headings, by-lines and much artwork faded to indistinguishable shadows, and the text vanishing. Ditto is not a medium which endures for the ages, which is why it's sometimes cynically recommended for new faneds, to save them potential embarrassment 20 years later.*

The fanthology concept is all part of

fandom's love affair with itself, or its sense of history and identity, depending on your viewpoint this particular rainy morning. Certainly, there is a good deal of interesting writing produced in those ephemeral, poorly-distributed fanzines; and, recently, new impetus has been given to the fanthology tradition which tries to sift out the semi-precious from the dross in a year's writing, preserve it a little longer, and distribute it a little more widely.

Fanthology '75, edited by Bruce D. Arthurs, is unpaginated, nearly a centimetre thick, and ideosyncratic. Bruce introduces it as a collection "of some of my favorite pieces of fanwriting from 1975... My favorite pieces of fanwriting, the ones that stick in my memory, tend to be humorous, particularly in the personal-experience school of fanwriting... There are no book reviews or literary studies in this collection... My choices are highly subjective ones, and I never hope to pretend otherwise."

Fanthology '75, then, is a "fannish" collection: in content (21 pieces, plus 2 cartoon strips and Bruce's introduction and "recommended reading" lists), and presentation (mimeo on twiltone, with simple, basic layout.) It's enhanced by Alexis Gilliland's cartoons, cleverly illustrating/commenting on specific pieces—a nice touch. As to the contents, well, Bruce's sense of humour isn't mine. I found several pieces unfunny, and two (John Kusske's "Secretary's Report..." and "Dave Jenrette's Practical Guide to the Male Anatomy") downright offensive. On the other hand, I enjoyed a high proportion of the assembled work even more the second time around: Dainis Bisenieks' "The Truthful Distorting Mirror" on cartoonists, Mike Glicksohn's "The Voice of the Turtle," (and how is Hilary?), Jeff Schalles'

*[Your not-so-humble editor hastens to add that this is not necessarily true. He has dittoed fanzines from more than 35 years ago which are still bright and readable. In ditto, the print fades with the addition of sunlight; in mimeo, the words remain clear while the paper crumbles to dust. At least with ditto you can re-use the paper... Ed.]

"Orgonomy and the Cat," Bloch on Tucker, Gene Wolfe as a chicken, "Book Revues" by Mike O'Brien, "Why There is No Wyoming" by Henry Holtzman, and especially the last piece, James White's "The Exorcists of If." Bill (the Galactic) Fesselmeyer's "How the Grinch Stole Worldcon" is a potential classic, not only summing up large-worldcon problems for future fan historians, but revealing the trend of convention progress reports and programme books to turn into fanzines, these days. (Any non-attending members get their Suncon programme books yet?) (No, they're with the Hugo ballots and site-selection ballots we didn't get either...)

Besides, Bruce reprints an article of mine, plus one I originally published ("Citizen David vs the Northwest Mounted," by David Miller) so I can't criticize his taste too much, can I? I wish he'd reprinted one of Grant Canfield's pieces from the "recommended" list, though. Or Bob Tucker's Aussiecon trip report. And I remember that "James Tiptree" has a travel piece in one of Jeff Smith's fanzines in 1975 or 76 that deserves wider circulation, as does, indeed, much of the more serious material that Smith has published. And... and... how about some British and/or Australian material... and... and...

Fanthology '75 is representative, then, of only one aspect of writing in the SF amateur press: North-American-published fannishness. Nevertheless, I did find it entertaining, certainly worth the \$2.00 Bruce is charging for this labour of love.

Victoria Vayne's *Fanthology 76* is something else again: an elaborate package, a monument to a year, justifying, perhaps, Harry Warner's claim that by 1976 "fandom had become one of the fine arts," increasingly "baroque," di-

verse and specialized. Victoria has attempted to encapsulate not only the extreme diversity, but also the technological sophistication and graphic complexity of the contemporary fanzine scene. As a result, what you're likely to notice first is the *package*. Impeccable mimeography. Lavish use of electrostencilled artwork. Careful layouts, and an extreme concern with visual style: hand-cut fancy numbers on each of the 98 pages, boxes and borders, an elaborate table of contents page, fancy press-type headings—the works. Simple, clean cover on lovely cover stock, 24-pound blue paper inside. (Why do Canadian fanzines use blue mimeo paper?) Quality, fans. There's no doubt about it; Victoria is a good graphic designer, and a painstaking printer.

Fanthology 76 involved Victoria in a lot of work, and a lot of expense. (Once costs are covered, any profits are to go to fan funds: TAFF, DUFF, and the FAAN awards.) Fancy graphics and repro are Victoria's fannish craft, and she's certainly done a beautiful job. But: but: I don't think the contents meet the high standards of the packaging, though I'm not sure why. Maybe 1976 was a rather dull year?

Certainly Victoria tries to cover the full range of fanzine material: humour, personal writing, serious discussion of SF and film, fan history and artwork... the reproduced artwork, especially for Grant Canfield's marvellous "Report from Point 30" (Canfield for Best Fan Writer as well as Fan Artist!) is her most notable contribution to the fanthology genre. There's British material. The quality of writing, to be expected from the likes of Harry Warner Jr., Bob Shaw, Mae Strelkov, Tom Perry and Bob Tucker, is high. The only piece I actively object to is David Emerson's fanzine review, "Crudnet." I agree that it's

clever, but I have serious moral objections to reviewers whose sole aim is to show how clever and superior they are, at some fan's expense—even a sitting duck like a crudzine editor. Particularly memorable, for me, on second reading, were "A Travelling Giant Calls" by Lee Hoffman; "History and Biology in Poul Anderson's *Fire Time*" by Mark Keller (though I can think of other, shorter serious pieces which might have been more effective), and "Conversational Fannish" by Aljo Svoboda.

In conclusion, I found *Fanthology '75* enjoyable to re-read, and *Fanthology 76* awe-inspiring as a project and as a package. (Victoria's inclusion of year-in-review material, such as Hugo, Nebula, Ditmar and FAAN award winners, in little boxes to fill empty spaces, is a particularly useful touch, as well as a neat layout trick.) If you're new to fanzine fandom, both would be good introductions, with the 1976 volume covering a wider range of material. Both certainly prove that fandom these days is huge and diverse, and becoming more so; but that it also continues to attract extremely skilled and devoted people who pour a lot of love and effort into amateur publications. If you can sense why these anthologies came to be... then you're a fan.

Fanthology '75: \$2.00 from Bruce D. Arthurs, 4522 E. Bowker, Phoenix, AZ 85040.

Fanthology 76: \$3.00 US, \$3.50 overseas, from Victoria Vayne, P.O. Box 156, Station D, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6P 3J8.

Fanzines for review: Susan Wood, Department of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1W5. □

—Susan Wood

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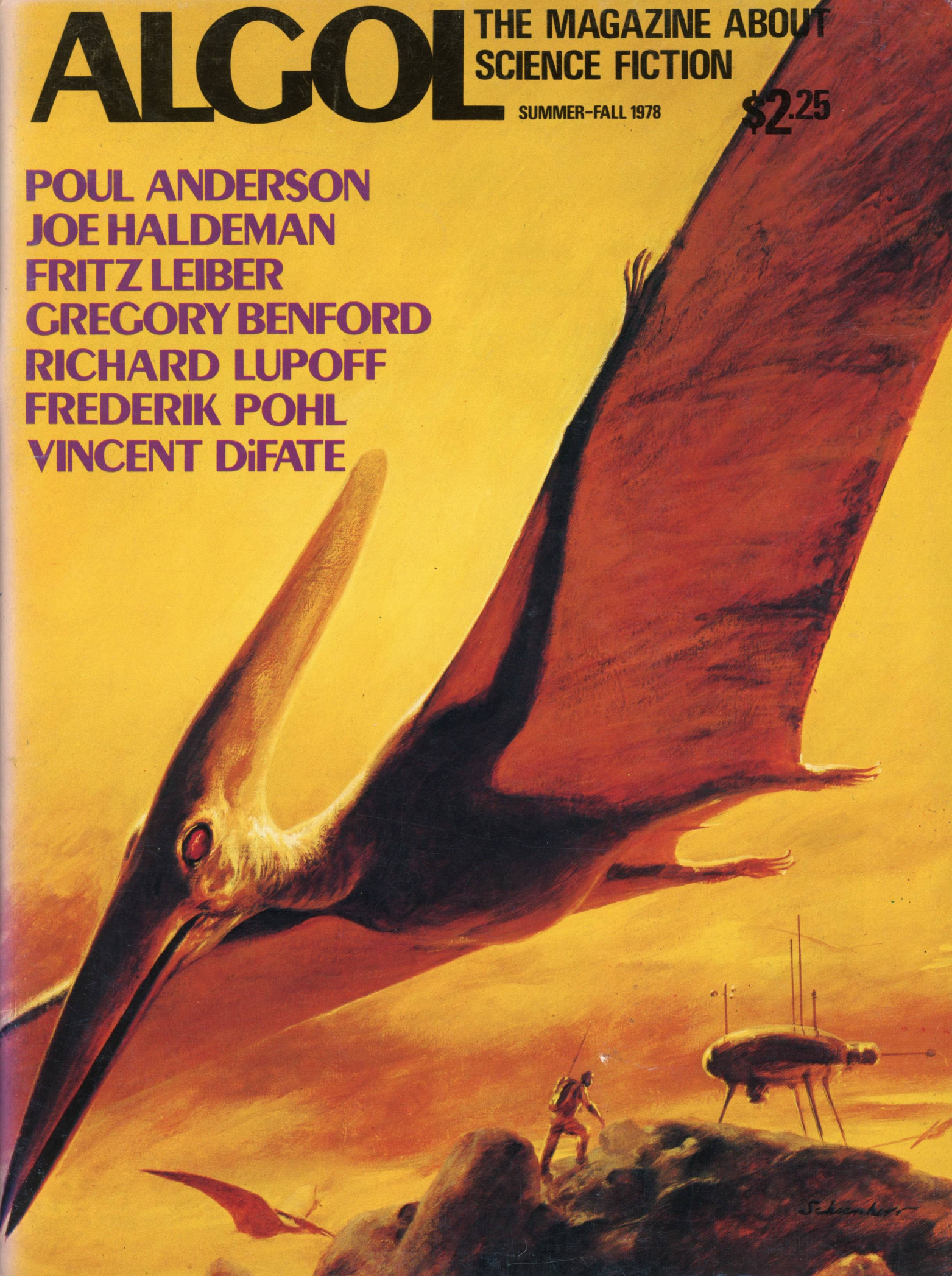
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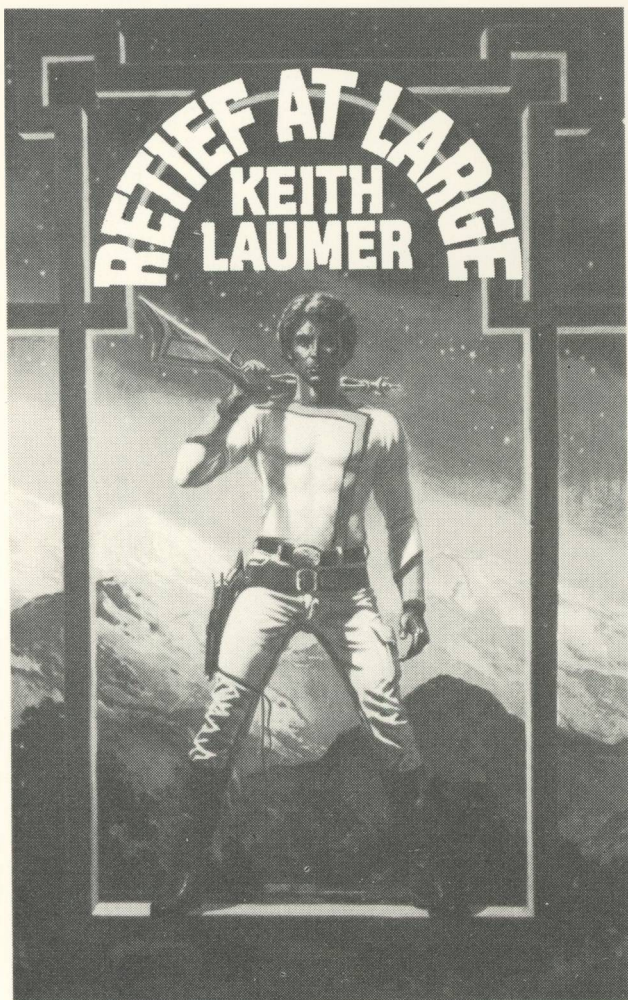
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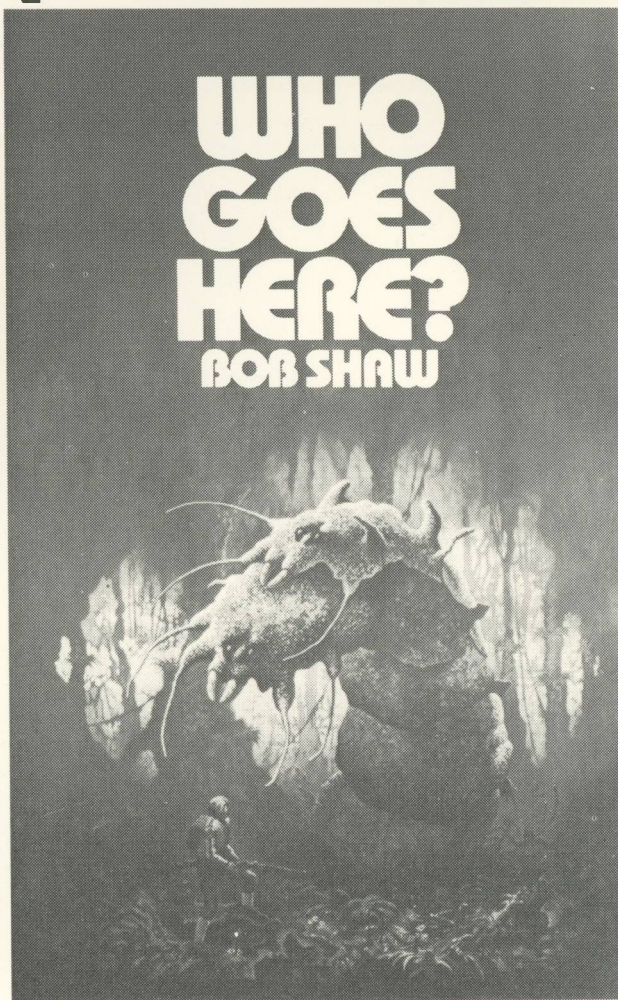
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A COLUMN by SUSAN WOOD

ROSS C.

"Gafia," said fanwriter Aljo Svoboda, "is just a part-time death hoax."

Gafia is also a fannish term, an acronym for "get away from it all." Originally it meant getting away from the mundane world into the glorious realms of SF and fandom, but it quickly shifted 180° to mean getting away from fandom. Its cousin is "fafia," the state of being "forced away from it all" by outside pressures.

To *gafiate* is the verb meaning "to enter a state of gafiation," as in "Susan is gafiating."

In the past four years, I've said everything I want to say about fanzines. Instead of just writing reviews, I've tried to talk about the different kinds of fanzines and fan activities, from starting a general-interest fanzine to participating in an amateur press association to attending a world science fiction convention. I'm about to start repeating myself.

In the past four years, too, I've been forced away from fandom: first by the pressures of teaching full-time while completing a dissertation; now by the pressures of teaching bigger classes at a bigger university, with responsibilities for developing new classes and supervising graduate work, while administering an 18-section course *and* trying to write criticism. My fan activities, these days, seem to centre around a couple of apas, regular trips to visit the Western Pennsylvania SF Association Northwest branch in Seattle, and convention activities, especially organizing panels and discussions on nonsexist futures and the like.

My writing activity, and a good deal of organizing time, is going into *The Pacific Northwest Review of Books*, a monthly 20-pages-plus newsprint tabloid that has singlehandedly destroyed the fannish careers of John D. Berry, Loren MacGregor, Paul Novitski, Suzle Tompkins and Jerry Kaufman. (Like vampires, we seek to infect others, and have gotten people like Aljo Svoboda, Eli Cohen, JoAnne McBride, Elinor Busby, Bill Gibson, Doug Barbour and

Jeanne Gomoll involved too.) Because so many of us are fans, we review a lot of SF; and our lead article in the first issue was Kate Wilhelm's "Relative Truths," a discussion of SF. We run book reviews, and book related features centring on, but not limited to, the Canadian West and the US Pacific Northwest; and I thought that, if you like books, you might like to know about us. Free plug. Besides, I have to explain why I've gafiated. I handle all the contacts with Canadian publishers for PNRB, assign review books from Canadian publishers (I got 24 books in the mail today), send out tear-sheets of reviews, do publicity, dig up facts and photos—and do a LOT of writing, about 10,000 words for the coming issue. I've been reading books, again, instead of fanzines! Still, PNRB is in some sense a fanzine, produced for love and not for money (we do pay contributors 1¢ a word, but editors get nothing but glory and headaches), by people enthusiastic about books. Subscriptions are \$7.50 a year from The Pacific Northwest Review of Books, P.O. Box 21566, Seattle, WA 98111, for anyone who wants to find out what happened to a large chunk of west coast fandom.

I started writing about fanzines by reviewing the "sercon" magazines which review and discuss SF and fantasy. I'm still reading some of those, or have returned to them—magazines that might interest the SF-reader audience that buys ALGOL. (I hope, by the way, to continue to write for ALGOL about SF rather than fandom. Maybe I haven't gafiated so much as shifted interests slightly, away from fanzine fandom to other activities.)

For me, the four most interesting serious, *non-academic* magazines of SF criticism are: *Janus*, a relatively new magazine from the US; the established, though infrequent, *SF Commentary* from Australia; the recently-revived *Khatru* from the US; and the also-revived *Foundation* from Britain (with Quebec's *Requiem* right up there if you

read French.) (*Mythologies* also contains Meaty Articles and Lots of Discussion, but it seems to be getting less and less frequent; I hope editor Don D'Amassa isn't burning himself out with all those hefty issues.)

Janus, which was nominated for a 1978 Fanzine Hugo, is one of the most regular, attractively produced, and interesting of the new fanzines I've seen. Its feminist orientation makes it stand out—but so does its crazy-Madison-fandom humour, and the experimental graphics of art editor Jeanne Gomoll (also nominated for a Hugo for the first time this year.)

The current issue, #11, served as the Wiscon programme book, and hence contains a great deal of material about Wiscon pro GoH Vonda McIntyre (including reviews/analyses of her new novel *Dreamsnake* by Jeanne Gomoll and *Janus* editor Jan Bogstad, emerging as a Marxist-oriented critic of considerable insight.) There's also, amazingly enough, a piece by the Wiscon Fan GoH, who happened to be me (and that's another reason I didn't answer my mail in February). There's fiction and poetry, artwork and cartoons, the usual interesting film reviews by Diane Martin and Richard S. Russell, and a long, interesting critical article on John Varley by John Bartelt, who has emerged in *Janus* as an excellent new critic. I sometimes find Jeanne's layouts a little cluttered; but the magazine is always fun, and stimulating to the mind and eye.

SF Commentary, edited by Bruce Gillespie, has acquired a little more visual pizzazz by going offset; but unfortunately it's become less frequent. A former Hugo nominee, it used to be a prime intellectual forum in the SF field. Editor Bruce Gillespie forfeited that position to some extent by getting a job, which cut down his busy publishing schedule. The difficulties of carrying on a discussion/debate in print, over a novel by Philip K. Dick, a pronouncement by Stanislaw Lem, or an interpretation by George Turner, are exacerbated when that debate is being

assembled and published in Australia, and shipped to the debaters by sea mail. A gap of 9 or 10 months between issues makes the whole thing next to impossible. Lately, I hear that Bruce has resigned from his job, in favour of enduring free-lance poverty and publishing a mimeographed *S F Commentary*. Issues 51 (March 1977) and 52 (June 1977) were expensively offset, and concentrated on single authors (Silverberg and the neglected Compton) in an attempt to attract more bookstore sales. I'm not sure the experiment worked, financially or otherwise; I still believe that regular appearance, and legible but not Extremely Fancy reproduction, combined of course with intelligent writing and editing, are what attract and hold good writers and responsible readers. Still, the Compton issue, a year old as I write this, won't "date." The issue also contains George Turner on the 1977 writers' workshop held in Melbourne (led by Turner, Christopher Priest and Vonda McIntyre), with interesting observations on the art of SF writing and the teaching of same; lots of reviews; and the heart of *S F Commentary*, "I Must Be Talking to My Friends," the lettercolumn interspersed with Gillespie's life and thoughts. I hope the magazine can get back on a regular schedule without bankrupting or exhausting its editor; nothing else has taken its place, with its strange mixture of passionate critical discourse and personal writing.

... except, perhaps, *Khatru*. For as long as I've been in fandom, it seems, Jeff Smith of Baltimore has been editing or co-editing fine genzines, folding them, gaffiating, returning, starting something more-or-less the same under a new title, suspending publication, returning, falling silent ... After burning himself out on the giant Women in Science Fiction symposium, *Khatru* 3-4, he published two more issues at lengthy intervals, and vanished. But he had good material, good letters, and a long history of publishing "James Tiptree, Jr." 's witty, observant and quite wonderful fanwriting. So when Alice Sheldon revealed that she was, among other personas, the mysterious Tip, *Khatru* was reborn. Issue 7 is centred around "Everything But the Signature is Me," by James Tiptree, Jr., which begins: "How great. At last it's out." Alice Sheldon describes the birth and life of Tip with the warmth and humour we've come to expect; when she talks about "this business of really loving the SF world," that love comes across. This is one nice person, whatever the pronoun; and I hope the hints of—possibly—more writing come true. Complementing this account are Jeff Smith's fine article, "The Short Happy Life of James Tiptree, Jr.," and a Tiptree/Sheldon bibliography; and a real find, "The Lucky

Ones," an account by Alice Bradley (Sheldon) of DPs in Germany in 1946: powerful, personal writing about pain and helplessness.

For the rest of the issue, more praise: a fascinating Freff interview with Jon Anderson of Yes, *Khatru*'s patron saints; average-to-very-good reviews; and a short but weighty lettercolumn. Jeff Smith has acquired a new co-editor to share the load: Jeffrey Frane—of Seattle—a move that indicates a touching faith in the North American postal service. I sure hope transcontinental editing proves possible, because I'd like to see slimmer issues of *Khatru* more often.

Foundation, the journal of The Science Fiction Foundation, is a somewhat more scholarly publication than the preceding fanzines. It's not "academic" in the pejorative sense, since the British seem less afraid than North Americans to admit that they care about books and ideas, and less prone to separate criticism off in universities, away from writing. It does, however, contain less reader-and-editor presence, and more critical theory, than fanzines. *Foundation* 13 is something of an exception, in that outgoing editor Peter Nicholls goes into the details of why the issue is so late, which centre around problems with the Science Fiction Foundation which resulted in his resignation; these have been resolved, and *Foundation* will (everyone hopes) appear more regularly under its new editor, well-known British fan Malcolm Edwards.

Foundation 13 features a special section on the late James Blish, including "William Atheling, Jr." theorizing maddeningly on SF, Brian Stableford offering a thoughtful discussion of Blish's ideas as evident in his fiction. The rest of the issue has Christopher Priest's personal account of his career (the latest of *Foundation*'s valuable personal-account series, "The Profession of Science Fiction"); Aldiss, Cowper and Disch on "Problems of Creativeness" in the useful "Forum" section; some letters; and lots and lots of reviews in tiny-but-legible type. *Foundation* is not only thought-provoking in itself: it offers North Americans a useful contact with the British SF world.

Finally, there are some regularly-appearing newsletters I'd like to recommend. *Locus* bills itself "the newspaper of the science fiction field." If you're a would-be SF writer, you'll find it indispensable for the market news. If you're a reader, you'll enjoy the people-news in our little field, news of books and movies, reviews (which seem to get squeezed out a lot), columns (currently "On Writing" by Algis Budrys) and convention listings. A first-class subscription is worth the money.

Locus covers the professional SF

world; it hasn't carried fan news as such for some time. The latest attempt to fill this gap is *File 770* from Mike Glyer, who seems to be putting out a readable, regular publication—and who needs fan news from you-out-there. In his first issue, Mike also mentions something called *Fan Art Review*; I don't know anything more about it, but a fanzine for artists, which seems to be concerned with the treatment of artists by faneds (a sore point a couple of years ago) would fill quite a gap. Also in the category of things-I've-had-recommended is *Fantasy Newsletter*, a new publication emphasizing books available in the field. I am familiar with, and recommend, *Fantasiae*, the monthly newsletter of the Fantasy Association, which features reviews of new books, and excellent articles on various fantasy-related topics. Where else would you find a detailed, and interesting, comparison of various editions and translations of the *Mabinogion*, a kind of buyers' guide?

I'd like to end this column with a couple of quotations I've had kicking around in my files. The first is from a critical book called *Science and Fiction* by Patrick Moore, published in London by Harrap in 1957. It typifies perfectly the outsider's bemused (and a little bit condescending) attitude towards fandom. (He didn't like space opera and adventure SF in the magazines, either.) Moore's chapter on "The Modern Magazines" includes fanzines, which he considers to be largely training grounds for would-be SF writers (as indeed they have been and are, though Clarion and similar writing workshops have taken over a large part of that function in North America, at least). He explains, to his non-fan audience:

Readers of [pulp] science fiction are, above all, clannish. They meet, they talk, they exchange ideas and publications, and now and then a new fanzine is born. What generally happens is that it is launched on the crest of a wave of enthusiasm, survives for a few issues, becomes irregular in appearance, and then dies. The career of a fanzine is not unlike that of a may-bug, which has its period of underground preparation, enjoys its brief hour of glory, and suffers a speedy decease. Each fanzine depends largely upon its editor, partly because he alone is the selector of material, and partly because he usually ends up by writing most of the fanzine himself.

As usual, the standard is variable. I recently read through one fanzine, published in Gateshead, and came to the last page without having gathered the faintest notion of what it was all about. On the other hand, fanzines sometimes discover a new, young, and potentially first-class writer, and for this reason they are always worth looking at. Moreover, they are harmless. There may be offensive fanzines, but I have not encountered them myself.

... Of a dozen fanzines sent to me recently, four were practically illegible, while the rest included a number of typing mistakes, mis-spellings, and other obvious faults. Yet the standard of literature in at least three of them was remarkably high, and the stories

were more original than in the average professional publication.

As I say, I rather bristle at Moore's tone; but his observations, especially about fanzines being born out of enthusiasm, seem valid enough. (I have encountered offensive fanzines, as well as illegible ones; I give both kinds to the BC Science Fiction Association, as negative examples for would-be faneds.)

Moore was an outsider; and what he only suspected about fanzines, the enthusiasm and good nature that goes into them, is evident to an insider like Creath Thorne. He produces *The Hog on Ice* for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, and a few friends; my room-mate got a copy of issue 6, August 1976, and I latched onto it for some enjoyable personal writing, and a section which began "Why write a fanzine?" Creath Thorne came up with four answers:

1) It's fun. Or should be. Which is not to say that writing is always a totally pleasurable process. Putting the right words in the right places can be a torturous process. But if one doesn't take pleasure in constructing a firm argument, in capturing a scene or person in a telling bit of description—then, one probably shouldn't be writing fanzines.

2) It can be a means of guiding one's thoughts. As with most people, an internal dialogue (or, at times, an internal monologue speaking to my receptive self) is often going on inside my head. When I transfer those words to paper, the very nature of that internal speech seems to change. It's guided and shaped by its objective representation which lies on the page before me. Writing, then, can be a means of meditation.

3) In writing a fanzine one creates an artifact. As Samuel Delany has said, one can write to create those books (or fanzines) that one wants to read but cannot find. One of the particular virtues of fanzines is that they are so clearly artifacts created by one person, down to their design and production. . . .

4) Writing a fanzine can be a means of self-expression. By this I don't mean anything as trite as expressing one's inner self—which seems to be the rationale lying behind, for instance, the "creative writing" courses one continually runs across. Rather, I mean that it is a means of expressing one's public self. In fact, for introverted and shy people, it can be a more satisfactory means of such expression, for it's both detached from the kinesics and paralanguage that accompany face-to-face encounters, and also can be composed quietly at one's leisure, thereby diminishing the necessity of quick response and self-composure necessary in everyday encounters.

Creath Thorne lives at Rt. 3, Box 202, Savannah MO 64485, and would like comments on, or additions to, his list. Actually, I think "It's fun" sums up just about everything I've been trying to say about fanzines . . . so now I can wrap up this column. □

—Susan Wood

EDITORS AND ADDRESSES:

Fan Art Review, ed. Allen J. Desmaretz and Terry Whittier, 307 Tradewinds #3, San Jose, CA 95123, USA. Glycer says

"send two stamps . . ." so I suppose a couple of quarters and a request would be fine too.

Fantasiae, ed. Ian M. Slater, The Fantasy Association, P.O. Box 24560, Los Angeles, CA 90024; monthly; \$6/yr US, \$8 Canada, \$10 elsewhere.

Fantasy Newsletter, ed. Paul C. Allen, 1015 W. 36th St., Loveland, CO 80537; 50¢/copy.

File 770, ed. Mike Glycer, 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, CA 91342; 4/1.50.

Foundation: The Review of Science Fiction, ed. Malcolm Edwards, The Science Fiction Foundation, North East London Polytechnic, Longbridge Rd., Dagenham, Essex RM8 2AS, U.K. 3 issues (1 year): UK£3, US/Canada surface \$7.50, airmail \$12.00

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