

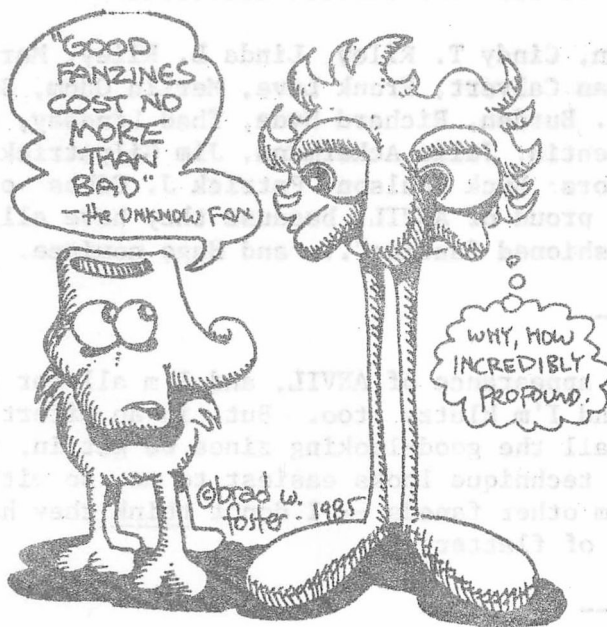


ANVIL 40



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ANVIL 40 - 1986 Hugo Nominee for Best Fanzine, Charlotte Proctor, Editor
ANVIL 40 - is available for the usual, or for \$6.00 per year, sent to:
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ANVIL 40 - a Genzine underwritten by members of BSFC, published 5/20/86



CHARLOTTE'S WEB

CHARLOTTE PROCTOR

Will wonders never cease!???
ANVIL - a Best Fanzine HUGO
nominee for 1986! Of course,
we had to have a party to cele-
brate. It was the regular club
meeting night. Meade Frierson
had printed out, and Penny
brought, a computer banner
that read:

CONGRATULATIONS ANVIL STAFF

We taped it to the wall, and I toasted "The Birmingham Mafia and Mafiaettes, the ANVIL staff who made this nomination possible". The wine we toasted with was from Australia, bought on a fannish trip, and saved for a special occasion. This was it.

The occasion was unusual in more ways than one... it soon became apparent that the topic of discussion for the evening was (are you ready for this?) Science Fiction. So often it has been noted that our SF club talks about anything but. Tonight, however, we had the recent visit of Harlan Ellison to rehash. I had stopped by to talk with him a few minutes before his book-signing, and Penny and Dan had been to his talk that night at the University. The uppermost thing on Harlan's mind both that afternoon and evening seemed to be that no one would honor his request to not link his name with Science Fiction. It seems the man has forgotten his roots. This led to a comparative analysis of science fiction then and now which, while interesting at the time, doesn't lend itself to repetition here.

I told how I had realized that ANVIL was nominated: Jeff Copeland (who is in charge of the balloting) had called me Wednesday night. He identified himself, and we said hello, and how are you? He then asked how many issues of ANVIL had been published. I said thirty-nine, and he said thank you, and we said good-by. As my son and I left the house a few minutes after this brief conversation, he asked "Why are you smiling, Mom?" The official phone call later that evening was an anticlimax -- I already knew.

It is an honor that we had not expected, and of which everyone in the club can be proud. Wade Gilbreath, as I have said before, was the founder and first editor of ANVIL. All members of the club have paid dues to support ANVIL, and nearly everyone has been cajoled into attending collating parties. Some members contribute art, feghoots or whatever, and some do something sufficiently silly to be recounted in

the pages of ANVIL, but for the record I will list the current membership:

Wade & Andrea Gilbreath, Bill & Nancy Brown, Cindy T. Riley, Linda L. Riley, Marie Harrell, Stuart Herring, Penny Frierson, Dan Calvert, Frank Love, Merlin Odom, Steve Bullock, Warren Overton, Jim Phillips, D.L. Burden, Richard Hyde, Thad Lindsay, Conus Fleming, Charlotte Proctor: members in absentia: Julie Ackermann, Jim Gilpatrick, Jane Gray, and Bob Shaw; regular contributors: Buck Coulson, Patrick J. Gibbs: our subscribers and loccers -- they can all be proud of ANVIL, because they have all helped make it what it is: "a good, old-fashioned fanzine"... and Hugo nominee.

Wade has been leaning on me to improve the appearance of ANVIL, and I'm all for it, but haven't a creative bone in my body. And I'm klutzy, too. But, in an effort to upgrade the product, I have been perusing all the good-looking zines we get in, to see what tips I could pick up. Typewriter technique looks easiest to me, so with this issue I am 'borrowing' some ideas from other faneds -- I don't think they have patents. (Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.)

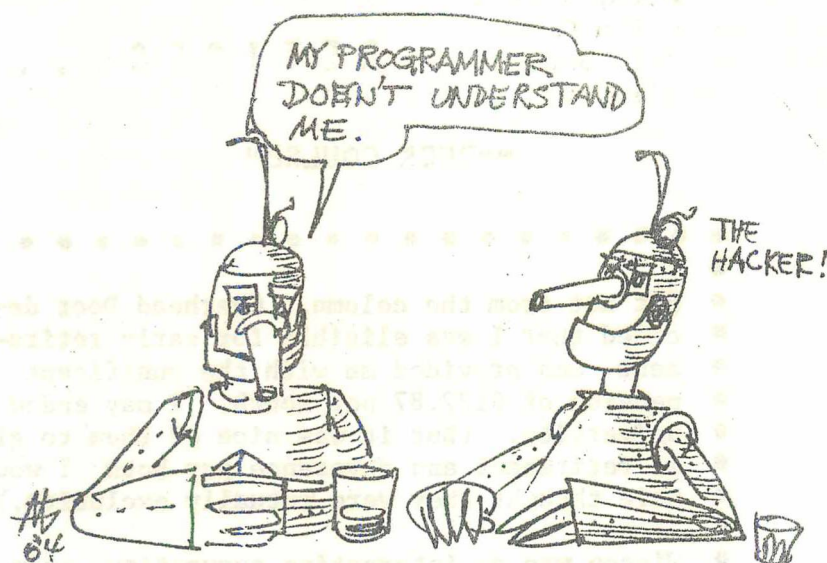
Beauregard O. Possum returns to the pages of ANVIL after a goodly absence. We hear he has been in Australia, visiting relatives. Welcome back, Beau, and we hope you "hang around awhile"!

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: I am giving up the post office box, as it seems I spend half my time driving between Homewood and East Lake. The box will be open until the end of the year, but thought I had better tell you now, knowing how long it takes some fans to update their mailing lists. Are You Ready? Here is ANVIL's new address:

c/o Charlotte Proctor, 8325 7th Avenue So., Birmingham, Alabama 35206 USA

If that looks familiar, it's because it is my home address. Some of you write to me there anyway, so I might as well get the ANVIL mail at home, too.





THE NEWEST FANEDS

MEADE
FRIERSON
III

Whereas fanzines got their start in the 1930s, the more recent phenomena I have studied are microcomputer networks which date only from the last few years. Linked by phone lines and electronics gadgets instead of by mail and clanking mimeo/ditto machines, these newest faneds bear a striking resemblance to their fannish counterparts. I was struck by the many parallels and will bore you with only a few.

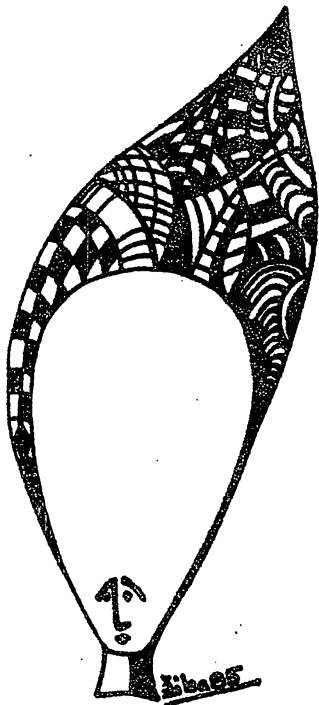
The faneds are System Operators (SysOps - see, they even like abbreviations, though only two that I know of have fannish ties). They can start their fanzines (Rbbs - remote bulletin board systems) for a minor investment in equipment (a 10+ meg hard disk microcomputer - IBM preferred - and a U.S. Robotics - no kidding! - modem) and Time. The artistic ones get to embellish their zines (programs) with color graphics and music so that their readers (registered callers) can appreciate the aesthetics. Some, like my friend Irv Koch, use a crowded, cluttered format - called FIDO for the dog it is, I suppose - and seem to value content over form.

Readers (users) leave LOCs (comments, messages) giving opinions, reviews (of software and hardware usually), asking questions of other readers, etc. Few are adequately recompensed for their public service, although to avoid pranksters and neos who would write for a free copy of a zine, there is increasing use of a sticky quarter (\$10 per year registration fee). But the main coin of both realms is, of course, egoboo and, though it is only a program, your screen is personalized ("Thanks for calling, Meade: please call again!") which the best faneds seem to communicate to their own readership (even if only with a WAHF).

I literally could detain the parallels for several pages. The difference is only that common interest, whether it be SF, fantasy, comics or cons, in the one field; or in the other, high tech discussions, sharing computer tips, collecting (programs, not books or zines), showing your own handiwork (public domain programming) or just nattering. But beyond that the "experience" is the same: the human warmth of communication and it is worth the cost of purple/inky fingers or cathode-ray-bombarded retinae. "Share and Enjoy!" is the motto of Rbbs communication. Imagine that, Doug Adams!!

THE OLD IRONMASTER RETIRES...

--BUCK COULSON



But not from the column. Overhead Door decided that I was eligible for early retirement, and provided me with the munificent pension of \$122.87 per month. I may endow a university. (But it was nice of them to give me retirement and severance pay both; I would have thought they were mutually exclusive.)

Wiscon was an interesting convention, only partly because of my having three panels and a reading, while Juanita had only one panel, at this supposedly feminist con. It became even more interesting when I discovered that my panel on alternate history was scheduled for two hours, and the second hour overlapped my panel on reviewing. I solved the problem by spending an hour on history and then announcing that I had another panel to attend,

and leaving. Phil Kaveny, who was also on the panel, said he had books to sell, and left with me, and that's how we held the shortest two-hour panel on record. A couple of people afterward said it "went well": I can only guarantee that it went rapidly.

Even with the best of con committees, this sort of thing happens now and then. At the 1982 Worldcon in Chicago, Juanita and I were waked up one morning by a phone call which informed her that her discussion group would be ready in 5 minutes. This was the first time she'd heard about any discussion group. (She arrived only 3 minutes late.)

Generally, Wiscon was a good con. I had a lot of enjoyable conversations, huckstering went well, and, wonder of wonders, the hotel restaurant served excellent food at reasonable prices. My only bad experience came when my tape recorder refused to work during a filksing. I must have shown mild displeasure. Suzette Elgin had been up front with the singers, and next morning she asked if I was mad at her, because I'd been scowling so horribly at her the night before. An exaggeration, I'm sure.

Inci dentally, I note that Suzette's book on verbal self-defense is getting full-page ads in various magazines. Some of my friends have said it's an excellent book, but as I'm such a meek person I'd hate to offend anyone by any self-defense tactics.

My problems with the unemployment office came both before and after Wiscon. I can now guarantee that Indiana is not paying out government money to bums and loafers. Or to anyone else, if it can be helped. But persistence pays; after five trips to the office (which is 15 miles away), I got everything settled, more or less. They keep insisting that I try to get a job; what's the world coming to?

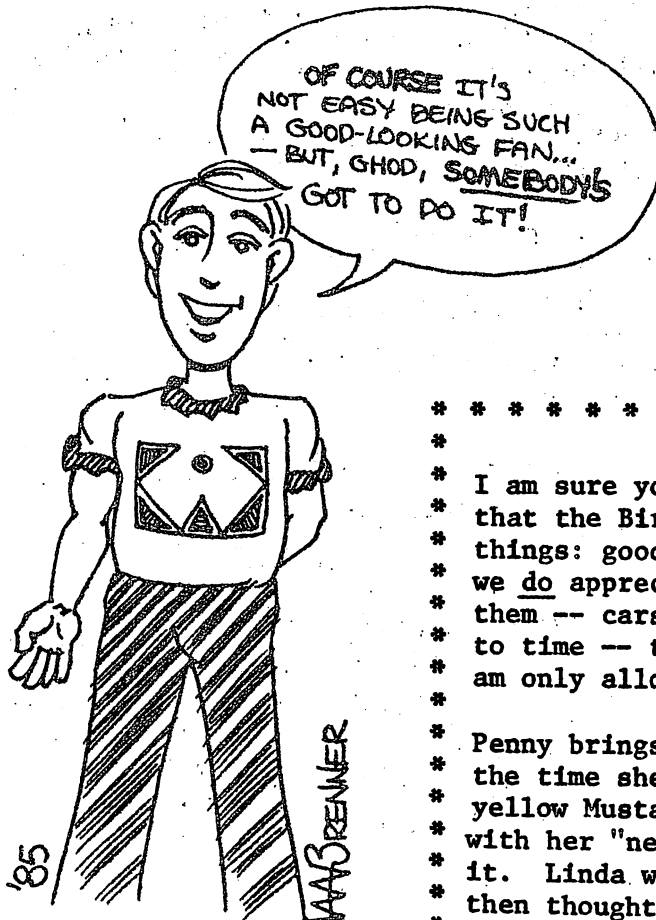
Eric Mayer, in the latest GROGGY, asked his readers if they'd gotten what they wanted out of fandom. I can reply affirmatively: I've got things I didn't even know I wanted. Like being ordained a minister. Like acquiring a niece; since I have no siblings, the idea never occurred to me, but it's rather nice. (Fans can do anything.) Like receiving a doormat that said "GO AWAY". Like having a short bio in the book LEADERS OF BLACK AMERICA. Like discovering that the unexpected can be fun.

Of course, the major advantage of fandom is friends. During the 44 years I've worked at 7 different places of employment, I acquired 4 friends: that is, people I was interested in seeing on my own time. (I was friendly enough with most of my coworkers; even reasonably popular. But they weren't friends.) None of the four friendships lasted much beyond my term of employment. In 34 years of fandom, I've acquired more friends than I can easily count. Some of them drifted away, too, but most haven't.

I was writing to one fan friend recently and mentioned the 1953 worldcon. Six of us drove there, in my car. (Technically, five of us drove there: Bob Briney had never learned to drive, and went strictly as a passenger.) One of the women I'd never met before -- it was a friend of a friend sort of deal -- and I saw only once afterward. I wasn't all that well acquainted with the other four at the time, but I'm still in contact with all of them. Not a bad record, considering that fandom is supposed to be a group whose members outgrow it and leave. (Actually, one of that group has grown up and left fandom, but I'm still in touch anyway.) And now I'm considering the possibility of driving down to Atlanta with another 6-person group -- which of course will include Juanita, who was along on that 1953 trip. Incidentally, after the Philadelphia con in 1953, two of our group came back a different way, and we picked up another fan for the return trip -- who I'm also still in touch with.

Midwestern fandom, at least, is a lot more stable than you might think.





THE MAFIAETTES RIDE AGAIN!!

-- CHARLOTTE PROCTOR

I am sure you remember from earlier discussions that the Birmingham Mafiaettes think highly of two things: good-looking men and fast cars... While we do appreciate them, not all of us can afford them -- cars or men. I have been known, from time to time -- to bring home a good-looking man... but am only allowed to keep him for a few days.

Penny brings home fast cars. I shall never forget the time she and Conus showed up at my house in a yellow Mustang convertible. Penny was so pleased with her "new" car, she wanted everyone to ride in it. Linda was visiting me, so we joined them, and then thought "why should Nancy miss out?" We cruised by Bill and Nancy's and whisked her away. Bill noticed later she was gone, but (they had company) one of his visitors said Charlotte had come

by, so Bill thought that was all right. Nancy did not suffer from these feelings of trust and security. We were so excited we just stuffed her in the back seat and took off. It was a good while later that she got up the nerve to quaver "W-w-where are you taking m-m-me...??"

Mafiaette gatherings are informal affairs, often materializing out of seemingly thin air. Recently, Cindy and I agreed to meet at Linda's to discuss some BoShCon II business. After we had arranged this meeting, I told Conus to come by. Later Penny called. She was having trouble with one of her fast cars, so I told her to come by Linda's and we would take care of it. Rather belatedly Cindy told Linda that she and I were coming to her house, so Linda called me and said to bring a steak, we would eat together. I didn't have the heart to tell her just how many people were coming. I brought a bunch of steaks, just in case. Sure enough, just as we sat down to eat, here came Conus. "Cook a steak" we said... "we saved you some salad."

Penny arrived later and told us her tale of woe. It seems she sold one of her fast cars, and was now bitterly regretting it. The buyer had not paid for it, nor yet bought collision insurance. It was undeniably a breach of contract and she wanted her car back before he wrecked it and/or took off for parts unknown. Clearly, as much as we appreciate fast cars, it was our duty to help "save" the black Thunderbird from a fate worse than death, i.e., not being loved. We were all on standby, and Friday night as I was painting the woodwork, the call came through.

-30-



CHINESE FOOD... IN YUGOSLAVIA

KRSTO MAZURANIC

(Second in a series of articles on
Food: Fast and Otherwise...
Around the world...)

During the World SF General Meeting in Zagreb in 1983, Wang Fengzhen from Shanghai, China, learned somehow of a Chinese restaurant in Zagreb. Immediately he pounced upon the idea of inviting a few friends to have dinner there. I tried to sober him up out of the idea, but he was adamant. So we went there.

Right after entering, upon seeing lots of tiny tables for two, Fengzhen started wailing in dismal horror, "This is not a Chinese restaurant." Sure it wasn't: in China, eating is a community affair not done in private. The tiny tables looked as if they were brought over from a Turkish coffee-house -- which they probably were, for the proprietor was an Albanian. I was clumsy (or honest?) enough to inform Fengzhen of the last fact. He went absolutely white in his face.

Be it as it may, we insinuated ourselves behind two of the tables in a booth, and no small feat that, for neither Josef Nesvadba from Czechoslovakia, nor Brian Aldiss, Sam Lundwall, yours truly, nor Wang Fengzhen himself are what you'd call small and agile people. Fengzhen kept wailing, "This is not..." etc.

He lost the power of speech altogether when the waiter arrived. He was the proverbial big, burly Bosnian (I think the equivalent with you would be a big, burly Swede from Minnesota) who posed us a regular no-nonsense question, "What'll be yours?"

Fengzhen bravely did not faint from horror. But the waiter almost did when I told him that we had a genuine Chinaman among us. The man probably never saw a Chinaman before. The coloration of his face was an absolute spectacle: the left side paled to sickly white while the right went deep crimson. The left side turned emerald green... and he simply vanished into thin air.

A second later, the cook appeared in front of us. Tiny, yellow, slanted eyes, nervously smiling: everything you can expect from a Vietnamese -- for that is what he was!

Well, the cook spoke good Chinese so Fengzhen and he got along quite well. The cook even managed to place all the regular five hundred dishes and plates on the tiny tables. We had a great meal and generally had great fun listening to Fengzhen's repeated wailings, "This is not..." etc.

Afterwards, I nerved myself to ask Fengzhen how did he like the food cooked by a Vietnamese, served by a Bosnian, in a place owned by an Albanian, and called a "Chinese" restaurant?

He said, "It was the best meal I have had in years! Only, back home in Shanghai, if I wanted to eat food like that, I'd go to a Thai restaurant."

Three months later the "Chinese" restaurant was turned into an "Argentinian" one: the same proprietor, the same waiter, the same cook. It's still there, doing business. I have witnesses.

A word to the wise: when in YU, avoid "exotic restaurants" (Chinese, Indian...). Home cuisine is such a multitude of various doctrines and influences that you can eat for a fortnight and never repeat the experience.



ART CREDITS -- Brad Foster (Hugo Nominee), Cover, p.2 -- Tim A. Cooper, p.3
 Alexis Gilliland (Hugo Winner) p.4, 25 -- Zika, p.5
 Krys Fluker, p.6 -- Wayne Brenner, p. 7, 22
 Wade Gilbreath, p.9, 10 -- Cindy T. Riley, p.1, 10, 11
 William Rotsler (Hugo winner), p.17
 Steve Fox (Hugo Nominee), bacover

SPRING PAPERBACKS

-- PATRICK J. CIBBS

CRITIC-IN-RESIDENCE



My Summer Reading and Year in Review Columns were so successful (at least with the one just obeyed, a/k/a our editor), that I am going to experiment with a column that discusses as many books as I can do justice to. Usually they will not be related to each other, but just what I have picked up lately from the piles of books that collect around my apartment.

I'll start in chronological order with a book that came out in March with too little attention being given to it, in my opinion. **SANTIAGO** by Mike Resnick (TOR Books 376 pp. \$3.50) is one of those books that very few people can write. The subtitle of the novel is "A Myth of the Far Future." Resnick sets out to create a story of mythic proportions spread across the frontier worlds of the galactic rim.

The universe he uses is one that has appeared in several other novels of his. However, he is concerned with the Outer Frontier worlds in **SANTIAGO** and the story is very straightforward. There is an outlaw who has been terrorizing the frontier worlds of the all-powerful Democracy for years. A price on his head attracts several of the best bounty hunters around and a woman reporter who is desperate to get Santiago's story in order to save her failing career. We follow each of them as they take separate paths to arrive at the same destination and a confrontation with Santiago.

This is more than a Western set in the far future. The characters here are real for us and larger than life at the same time. Through his prose styling, pacing, characterizations and plotting Resnick succeeds wonderfully in his myth-making. There is the ring of truth to this novel that is found only in those stories that have lives of their own. **THE LORD OF THE RINGS** is the most frequently cited example. Julian May's **MANY COLORED LAND** series achieves the same effect. By careful handling of archetypal characters the author can make many philosophical points about humanity without ever preaching or stooping to allegory. When people call Resnick a fabulist, that is what they are referring to. **SANTIAGO** is a fabulous book and easily one of the best novels of 1986.

BRIGHTNESS FALLS FROM THE AIR by James Tiptree, Jr. (TOR Books 382 pp. \$3.50) has finally come out in paperback. This is the first Tiptree novel I have read but I am told that, without exception, her books are dark with very little relief. This book is no different. There is a sense of impending doom from the very beginning. At about the same time the reader notices that the entire

novel is written in the present tense. That does get distracting, but the story is so interesting that it is tolerable.

Damien is a restricted planet. Because of monstrous crimes committed by humans against the innocent, Fairie-like creatures, it is protected as a government preserve with visits only by small groups of carefully screened tourists. That rule is broken when a ship lands with a group of tourists there to see the extraordinary light show from the wave front of a nearby star that was artificially induced during a recent war to turn nova -- the Murdered Star. No one is sure what strange effects might occur when the wave front passes. But there are two passengers dropped off on Damien by "mistake" and without proper security clearances. It does not take anything to suspect that murder is in the office.

I do not recall ever reading such a depressing exploration of evil, guilt, vengeance, justice and love. There is only the glimmer of humanity shining through from the heroes. I kept on waiting for signs of hope. It was not to happen in the tolerant, humanistic, free-thinking society Tiptree creates. All that was possible was dignity in death and bravery in the face of danger. The relief of any religious dimension to life was left out in this book. In WWII there was the saying "There are no atheists in foxholes." In Tiptree's book it's "No one but us agnostics here." With any other writer and with any other novel these questions would not even arise. Tiptree just tries to do so much, and writes so well in the process, that more is expected of her. The book is a marvel, but don't read it while depressed.

John Maddox Roberts is one of many pros living and writing in the South. He gained notoriety doing a Conan novel for TOR Books and with his novel, CESTUS DEI. His publisher has finally seen the light and brought out a paperback edition of his 1983 alternate universe novel, KING OF THE WOOD (TOR Books 253 pp. \$2.95). The premise is that North America is settled in another universe by Norsemen fleeing a Christianized Norway, Saxons in exile after the Norman Conquest and a colony in Florida from a Muslim Spain in 1125 A.D. The hero, Hring Kristjanson, is cast out of the Nordic colony of Treeland for kinslaying. His adventures take him all over the North American continent of his 15th century. He fights his way through Aztec Mexico, encounters an invading Mongol horde and thrives on danger.

Roberts has done his homework. The historical detail is fascinating and, if you have ever had any interest in any of the three cultures, you will love this book. I have rarely had so much fun with a sword & sorcery novel, although the emphasis is definitely on the sword part of the equation. By the way, the book was dedicated to Ulric Greywolf, a/k/a Hank Reinhardt. Need I say more?

Lastly, there is a first novel from Brad Strickland of Gainesville, Georgia. Although a pro, Brad is active in Atlanta fandom. TO STAND BENEATH THE SUN (Signet 256 pp. \$2.75) is a great start. The premise is that a colony ship malfunctions in its encounter with the planet Kalea. The genetic engineering designed to give the landed colony a predominantly female population (to facilitate population growth) is not reversed, as originally planned, and after 1700 years the world has an 8:1 female to male ratio. Tom Perion, a geologist on the ship wakes from stasis to find himself floating in an escape pod in the ocean that covers most of Kalea. The novel is the story of his adventure to survive in the strange society so he can reach a command module that may activate the dormant systems aboard the orbiting colony ship and save the few remaining colonists still in stasis.

From the cover illo one would think that this is a cross between the Grimes books by the late A. Bertran Chandler and a female version of John Norman's Gor Novels. Fortunately that

is not the case. This is a good "soft" SF story. The science involved is creating the world and a society dominated by women, where men are prized for their ability to father large clans. The sex role reversal is pulled off without any coyness or contrivance. Kalea holds together as a believable world. I enjoyed this book as I raced to finish it and see how the plot resolved. Although he did not leave any loose ends, there is room left for a sequel, which Brad unfortunately has no present interest in doing. "Always leave them asking for more" is an old show business saying and it was true here.

*
* BIRD OF ANOTHER COLOR *
*
* --CINDY T. RILEY *
*

Inspector Ian McLaird surveyed the crime scene with something approaching resignation. The same MO, the same destruction of property, the same dead being. An Avian this time, he noted with some detachment. There were blue feathers strewn from one end of the shop to the other. The fellow had evidently put up quite a battle trying to protect his goods.

He shook his head at the futility. They'd have a time cleaning up the shop. The Avian's religion dictated that he be buried with all his feathers. "Sir?" He looked up. "Sargeant Inspector Ho'un reporting, sir." McLaird looked the being up and down. Ho'un? Very aptly named. Looked like a bloodhound more than anything else. He returned the sargeant's smart salute. "Very well, Sargeant. Do we have anything new here?" Ho'un turned away, toward the forensics people who were busily going over the overturned shop with their fine-tuned robots. "Well, sir, not really. Usual thing. The surveillance systems were turned off with a fiendish competence. The yo-dawgs were drugged with something--Euphoria would be my guess, they appeared to be grinning. Locks weren't forced; they were either expertly picked or the proprietor knew the being and let him in as it was before hours."

"I see." Something crunched underfoot. McLaird stooped to pick it up. A multi-chained necklace from one of the shattered show-cases. The purple stones glittered in the light that filtered in from the glass-steel street windows. Terran amethyst he thought--worth a small fortune. He handed the bit of jewelry to one of the hovering clue-bots for numbering and inter-relation computations. The 'bot hummed happily to itself as it filed the trinket away somewhere within its innumerable storage spaces. McLaird looked around, taking in the remnants of the shop's inventory...what the criminal had not gotten away with. A few purple jewelry trinkets, woven tapestries of the rare lavender gliidrian, bits of esoteric pottery, broken and cracked, by the famous but eccentric artisan Fred Redd, who despite his name always used violet glazes.

"What's the name of this shop, Sargeant?" Ho'un replied thoughtfully... "I believe it translates as something like 'The Lavendar Shoppe', sir."

McLaird signed. "I thought so." He has done it again."

"You mean....?"

"Yes, I'm afraid The Killer Purple has struck again."

THE MEANING OF FANZINE

— CHARLOTTE PROCTOR

Alphabetizing zines in order to make a proper list always takes longer than it should, as one is always stopping to re-read favorites, and to scan those one hasn't read. Then there you are; first thing you know, reading zines instead of working. Here's a little zine from Patrick Nielsen Hayden -- no illos, no coverart, all content! There IS a cute little red sticker between the title and date, tho. This is an infrequently produced zine, available only by whim. Patrick and his loccers continue their discussion of, among other things, "the ongoing conversational community" of fanzine fandom -- Corflu -- "intellectualism" in fandom -- and Iconography. // In her loc, Avedon Carol said "...the biggest mistake fandom ever made was to let the idea of Party Land overtake the image", which thought puts some of my misgivings in a nutshell. If fandom is diluted to extinction with mundane party-fans, where does that leave us? In a closed-door party of our own? // Patrick also gives us a peek into his TAFF report, which only whets our appetite for more. // I forgot to tell you the name of this zine -- it's FLASHPOINT 8.

STRUMPET is a little blue zine from England (Pam Wells) in which Linda Pickersgill writes about "Slow sweet honey...", a delightfully wicked takeoff on P.L. Caruthers-Montgomery's tongue-in-cheek article in ConFederation's PR#3. Linda knows whereof she speaks, as she was, before she went to England, met and married Greg Pickersgill, a Southern Belle from Nawlins.

NEWTOY #1, from Taral, is a beautiful zine, but then it would be. It's a showcase for Taral's talents. He doesn't intend to print "a bloated lettercol", but he likes to be reviewed (!!!). Not everyone has the resources to draw upon to fill a zine with their own work, but Taral is exceptional. I was fascinated with the eerie tale entitled "Mything Persons." Lest you think this is a spin-off of Yang the Nauseating's "Mythconceptions" et al., let me assure you it is not. It is the story of an all night party, the kind where you and your buddies run everyone else off and close the door... in the wee hours of the morning when everything gets weird. In our loose-knit "family of fans" we feel that we 'know' a lot of people we've never met... and so I felt right at home in this story... I have met Lise Eisenberg, in fact we shared a room at the Ortlieb Fan Hotel... Patrick and Teresa were there, Moshe, Stu... The Mything Persons were not all known to me before the evening began, but by the time the sun rose, they were. Yes, I think Taral has enough to say, and says it well enough, to carry it off.

RATS ON FIRE is a real fanzine, messy in appearance, fun to read, and put out for, by and about Detroit fans. You know, I'll bet one could put out one humdinger of a zine if one just read all these "little" zines and culled the really great (clever, intelligent, silly or whatever) articles and published them for a wider audience (with the originators' permission, of course. The article which prompts this remark is Keir Santanos' letter in "Rats". (Have you ever noticed that sometimes locs are articles in disguise?) He tells of his new church of Scientifictionology. He has motivational tapes, which have been selling well, he reports, proving that fans everywhere need help. He feels that all of man's ills (and some of women's) are caused by society's denial of our innate need to read scientifiction. There is no way I can continue this except through direct quotes, so here goes, and I hope Detroit fandom doesn't sue me.

"The tapes include the popular Seven Keys to Better Feudmanship... SMOffing as a Full Body Contact Sport has proved popular in numerous groups on either coast, tho some seem to be disappointed that the tape discusses techniques of smoffing--like how to manipulate Robert's Rules of Order to your advantage, dropping the left-handed compliment and the pre-emptive press leak. Apparently some people were looking for actual ways to beat up Craig Miller, Mark Evans and/or Ben Yalow. I was shocked that anyone would think that I would advocate physical violence against another fan. As I make clear in "Seven Keys..." Rule #1 is "No Hitting." Physical assault, no matter how emotionally satisfying, can have unsatisfactory repercussions, such as arrest for assault and battery, time in slam, or getting the crap kicked out of you when your opponent turns out to be bigger than you are. Feudmanship is a strictly non-violent way to screw the bastard.

In planning is "Tunes in a Bucket" a collection of filksongs that can be sung by anyone, even people who can't carry a tune youknowwhere. Filking has become such an important aspect of fandom and so competitive that a lot of people are getting squeezed out for the flimiest of reasons, like the fact they can't sing. This is an area where fans need a lot of help and I'm willing to let them pay me to give it."

On to MAINSTREAM #11 (Jerry Kaufman/Suzle Tompkins) is a beautiful zine, good art, cute cover ("The Rat Stuff"), good layout, etc. etc. etc. In it, Art Widner (whom I also met in Australia) wrote "The Word for World is Fandom" in which he tells of his reemergence into fandom, after an umpteenth year absence. He says: "In 'The Word for World is Forest', Ursula LeGuin writes about 'world time' and 'dream time'. In a sense, Fandom exists in dream time and mundania in world time..."

"Harry Warner, Jr. need never die" says Gary Farber, and while I don't even want to think about it (and neither does Harry), since Gary brought up the subject, I read on... about how one could program a computer... type in the tens of thousands of letters Harry has written over the years, code paragraphs by subject, adapt a few of Harry's patented transition phrases ("...that reminds me of the time I went to Fenway Park and..."), write a program to package it... The Harry Warner Software Package will live as long as there are computers and fans..."

Looking back over what I've written, one notices that all the zines seem to be about the Nature of Fandom. Surely this is not so. Aha! Here's a piece in MAINSTREAM: "Harping on the Subject" by Mike O'Brien, about Irish harps...(I know a harper who builds her own from scratch). And here is RUNE #74. (I certainly am sorry Digre and Biever have come to the end of their term as editors of RUNE. The next editor(s) have a hard act to follow.) "Thrilling Hot Water Stories" is a gripping saga of interest to every fan who is also a homeowner, an object lesson of what NOT to do when you replace your hot water heater, even if that means having one less story to tell next time you pub your ish. (After all, it's already been done...)

I could go on all day, and all night, as you faneds know who have tons and tons of zines, but one must stop somewhere and this is it.

Alpha Centura Communicator #101, SUB Box 120, U.N.M., Albuquerque, N.M. 87131
 B'ham SF Group Newsletter #172-175, C&T Morton, 45 Grosvenor Way, Quarry Bank,
 Brierley Hill, West Midlands, U.K.
 Bcsfazine #152-155, P.O.Box 35577 St. E., Vancouver, B.C. V6M 4G9 Canada
 BRSFL Newsletter #41, P.O. Box 14238, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4238
 Come Hold the Moon #3, David Gordon-MacDonald, Box 5609, Sta.B, Vict.B.C. V8R 6S4 CAN
 Confessions of a Failed Yuppie, Neil Kaden, P.O. Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766
 Crank #4,5, Ted White et.al., 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, VA 22046
 DeProfundus #168-170, Tim Merrigan, LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., N. Hollywood CA 91601
 Desk Set Gazette, (Corflu zine), Box 409, Falls Church, VA 22046
 The Dillinger Relic #44,45, Arthur D. Hlavaty, 819 W. Markham Ave., Durham, NC 27701
 Flash Point 8, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, 75 Fairview #2D, New York, NY 10040
 Fosfax #99-102, c/o FOSFA, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281
 File 770, #57,58, Mike Glyer, 5828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401 *HUGO WINNER*
 Fanzine Fanatique, K&R Walker, 6 vine street, Greaves, Lancaster, Lancs. LA 4UF UK
 Great Wall #186 (apazine) George Inzer, P.O.Box 2381, U.M., Montevallo, AL 35115
 Holier Than Thou #23, Robbie & Marty Cantor, 11565 Archwood St., N. Hollywood, CA
 91606-1703. ***HUGO Nominee***
 Lan's Lantern #18, 19, George Laskowski, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI
 48013 ***HUGO Nominee***
 The Mad 3 Party #10,11, Mass.Con.Fandom, P.O.Box 46, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge,
 Massachusetts 02139
 Mainstream #11, Tompkins & Kaufman, 4326 Winslow Place N., Seattle WA 98103
 The NASFA Shuttle, Feb-Apr, c/o PLGM, 2629 Norwood Ave., Anniston AL 36201
 Newtoy #1, Taral Wayne, 1812-415 Willowdale Ave., Willowdale, Ont M2N 5B4 Canada
 Pyrotechnics #37, Gail&Jamie Hanrahan, P.O.Box 26187, San Diego, CA 92126-0998
 Rats on Fire #52, c/o beb, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224
 Rebel Yells, Vol 2, #5 (SFC newsletter) 4217E Fontainebleau Dr., NOLA 70125
 Ron's Raygun #4, Gemmell, 79 Mansfield Cl., Birchwood, Warrington, Ches.WA3 6RN UK
 Rune #74, P.O. Box 2128, Loop Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402
 Scavenger's Newsletter #25,26, Janet Fox, 519 Ellinwood, Osage City, KS 66523
 Strumpet, Pam Wells, 24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London, N11 2DA, U.K.
 SFSFS Shuttle, P.O. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307
 Stormhold Newsletter (SCAzone) Steve Roylance, 1592 Malvern Rd, Glen Iris 3146 AUS
 Sikander #11, Irwin Hirsh, 2/416 Dandenong Rd., Caulfield North, Vict. 3161 AUS
 SF Truth #2, Rod Kearins & Terry Frost, Sydney Fans, Box 272, Wentworth Bldg.,
 Sydney University 2006 AUS
 Smart-Ash #31,32, CFSFS, 1410 McDowell Road, Jackson, MS 39204
 Transmissions #201-207, P.O. Box 1534, Panama City, FL 32402-0123
 Thyme #48-51, Roger Weddall, P.O.Box 273, Fitzroy 3065 AUS
 Timbre #3, Tim Jones, 20 Gillespie St., Dunedin, Aotearoa, New Zealand
 Texas SF Inquirer #14, 15, FACT, Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766
 Tigger #16,17, G'Nel 51, Beagle's World Revisited, Albert Says I Can't and He's
 Right, all from Cath & Marc Ortlieb, P.O.Box 215, Forest Hill, Vict. 3131 AUS
 World According to Garth #13, Spencer, 1296 Richardson St., Victoria BC V8V 3E1 CAN
 Wallbanger 12, Eve Harvey, 43 Harrow Rd, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 3QH, U.K.
 WARP, N'al Assn. for SF, P.O.Box 6655, Wellington 6001 New Zealand
 Wait for the Ricochet #8, Pascal Thomas, P.O.Box 24495, Los Angeles, CA 90024
 Westwind #102-105, Northwest SF Society, P.O.Box 24207, Seattle, WA 98124
 Xenium #14, Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ont M6S 3L6 Canada
 HUGO WINNER



THE ANVIL CHORUS

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS.....

Gene Wolfe Quick! Start the World Wars
P.O. Box 69 over again. We were fighting
Barrington on the wrong side!
IL 60010

((Gene's comment is in reaction to my typo
in his loc in #39, which had the British
burning Washington D.C. in 1914 rather than
1814. The medium he used to send this
message was a picture post-card, depicting
a WWII tank. Not content with that, Gene

rummaged through his desk drawers until he found an unused postage stamp (3-cent)
showing the victory parade in Paris. The stamp is in sepia tone, and I would guess
the vintage is 1945. Neat.))

Roy Tackett That ANVIL is one of the more important fanzines around
915 Green Valley Rd NW these days is, I think, borne out by the fact that Zdenek
Albuquerque, NM 87107 Rampas chose it for his report on Czechoslovak fandom. That
was the highlight of #39.

All things considered, I must admit to considerable surprise that science fiction fandom seems to have blossomed in Czechoslovakia. A speaker from UNM who addressed the Albuquerque SF Society about three years ago left us with the impression that things of that sort would not find favor with the government. He had gone on a lecture tour of Europe -- reported that his lecture in Prague was not too well attended and that everyone who did come to listen to him was duly recorded by the police.

In any event science fiction fandom in Czechoslovakia seems to follow the pattern of other communist countries by being concentrated in clubs organized at a university or other recognized institution. Any publication is done through the parent organization. Which means it gets the official stamp of approval or else it does not get published. I doubt that we will ever see any individual type fanzines from any of the communist bloc countries. Publishing equipment in the hands of an individual is strictly a no-no. Even so, it is encouraging to know that the weed of fandom struggles along. Who knows what may eventually result?

Gene Wolfe's letter -- there are invasions and there are invasions. Shortly before World War I Pancho Villa and his gang swept north into New Mexico and shot up the town of Columbus killing a number of citizens. Not really an invasion, just a bandit raid, but it gave the US Army an excuse to charge around northern Mexico for a number of months. Amusingly enough, there is now a state park at Columbus called Pancho Villa State Park.

Correction to Garth Spencer's missive -- a "fanzine" is an amateur publication with a tie to science fiction. See Webster's International Dictionary.

Michael

Rogers' letter -- I dunno. There is, somehow, something attractive about the thought of sitting back and watching the English getting nuked.

brian earl brown It's good seeing; a new issue of ANVIL. The cover art wasn't 11675 Beaconsfield exactly earthshaking but the "Style/Model/Type" caption was a Detroit, MI 48224 nice touch. The art on p.22 was interesting because the e-stenciler had died. ((beb goes on to tell me my stylus is burned up -- I called the school that owns the machine and they said nobody uses it anymore but me, and no, they won't sell it to me, and no, they don't know where the styli are. I bought a package and put one in and this ish we should have better quality e-stencils.))

Since I've always considered ANVIL more of a genzine than a clubzine the loss of the small amount of club business hardly matters. I consider a genzine to be a fanzine filled with articles, reviews, columns, and letters on previous issues. A clubzine generally doesn't publish articles, reviews, etc., publishing instead news about club happenings and member news. This news is the major purpose behind publishing a clubzine.

So often the pun incorporated into the punchline of a feghoot is so obscure that I slip right past it without ever noticing. Congrats to Merlin Odom for a feghoot with a decent pun. I'm sure those killer grapes would have produced a fine wine noted for its aggressive bouquet, razorsharp taste and mule-like kick.

Zdenek Rampas' history of Czech SF clubs was interesting. It's always amazing to discover SF behind the Iron Curtain because a literature which assumes a future of change seems at odds with a basic tenet of communism, namely that communism is the best of all possible worlds and the end to change.

It is also interesting that Soviet bloc SF clubs tend to form national affiliations and even divide up project assignments. Perhaps the most obvious thing about American fans is the difficulty of getting them to do anything in concert. Fans are more independent minded than mules.

As a country boy, I guess Marc must be going in for a little exaggeration. City boys are like that. Managing grass is easy -- just get a couple of sheep. Within days they'll have the grass cropped to ground level, and pounded into dust to boot--likewise, flowers, vegetables and shrubs. With sheep there's no need to play Rambo with a weedeater (whipper-snipper to Marc unless in Australia one can buy Smartalecky young boys to pull weeds...) Of course you do have to live with quackgrass - or call in a preemptory nuclear strike, but by and large a couple of sheep will turn any lush green yard into a replica of the Mohave desert in no time at all.

Just last weekend I discovered one of those TSR interactive novels that Buck Coulson mentions. It carried a big "Amazing Stories" blurb ('see the television series...') but was neither reprints from the mag or novelizations of Spielberg's chronically weak scripts. It was another choose-your-own-adventure book. I don't think it was Captive Universe tho I really didn't look that closely. TSR has a major distribution problem. I never see Amazing on the newstands anymore. How's it going to build sales if it can't get display space?

Well, Ol' L. Ron's gone off to that great typewriter in the sky. I wonder if he's sitting around in his dirty old underwear?

I also wonder what Miss Manners would say about people who make a point of saying how pedestrian or mediocre another's work is. It seems to be a lapse in good taste because most people's work - be it writing, drawing, or what have you - tends to be very ordinary. Few people have the gift for writing of a Willis or a Shaw. That's why they are noted writers. They have a flair that few of us can hope to aspire to. So it seems rude to me to point out that one's writing is no better than anyone else's. It's like cursing the sunrise because it's "just another sunrise."

I'm not saying that one should falsely praise writing that isn't praiseworthy. False praise is just as bad as undue criticism. Rather it seems that unless there's an important issue at stake one should save one's criticisms. If Glicksohn thought your writing was flat he should have said he liked your report for its immediacy and for bringing back old memories - what, in fact, he did like about your report. I think the reason there have been so few TAFF and DUFF reports written is that so many delegates were so afraid that they might write a dull report that they wrote none at all! It's hard to be so dull that some flavor of the experience won't come thru.

((Thanks for taking up for me. I wrote the trip up as soon as I could, as I knew if I didn't do it right away, it would never get done, and it would not improve any by waiting. As for criticism, in ANVIL #16, Skel referred to my writing as "a complete waste of time". I seem to have come up in the world, as now according to Glicksohn, it is only "pedestrian"))

Harry Warner forgot that the issue of MSD of mine that you reviewed appeared a year ago in FAPA. I've just been a bit slow in getting the rest of the copies mailed out. I'm not frightened by his threat to send xerox reductions of his letters to faneds who reduce the text in their zines. I have a magnifying lens for the "Compact OED" and nobody prints a zine with type smaller than that. (Tho Greg Calkins came close in the last FAPA mailing when he double-reduced some locs to "The Rambling Fop." At one-fourth original size that was too small.)

Collene Drippe' I have not been involved in official "fan" activities before,
22 Lisa Street though some of my friends are. I find your adventures, dis-
Cullman, AL 35055 cussions etc. both interesting and a bit mind boggling. When
do you find time to read any SF? Come to think of it, the
ANVIL letters are at least as good as some of the stories I've read lately....

I was interested to read your tradezines list. Recognised some. Now I wonder where does fanzine (dom) leave off and small press (dom) begin? By the way, if you know any other small press writers in B'ham, I would be delighted to hear from them and maybe swap ideas and market news.



Janet Fox I was interested in Brian Earl Brown's comments on fanzines de-
519 Ellinwood St. voted to amateur fiction and while I can't really disagree with
Osage City, KS 66523 anything he said and don't have anything against the word "fan-
 zine", the term "amateur fiction magazine" sounds rather limp-wristed
and somewhat of a misnomer.

 In that case the well-known amateur writer Stephen King
wrote a story so substandard it appeared in the amateur fiction magazine WEIRDBOOK.
We all saw the adaption (by that rank neo Harlan Ellison) a couple of weeks ago on
the amateur theatrical The Twilight Zone.

 I do admit this is an extreme example. I
prefer the term "small press sf" to "semiprozines" as I consider the latter a stu-
pid sounding word, but sometimes a stupid sounding word takes root and flourishes--
scifi will be with us always, I think.

 Trying to categorize the small press movement
will make you crazy, so fanzine is a good all-purpose term, as long as one realizes
it covers lots of territory. Scavenger's Newsletter is a fanzine, too, sort of.
It's not a leisurely pursuit in which I meander off in search of my soul, however,
but was meant as a networking tool for writers and artists with an interest in the
small press. It seems to have some benefits for small press editors as well. I
don't run it as a hobby because I can't afford hobbies. I'm not crowing about pro-
fits but the minute it begins to lose money on a regular basis, out it goes. On
the other hand I don't have a "money-only" policy--I'm always glad to trade on a
one-for-one (or 2 for one--Scav is small) basis or to send a freebie to anyone who
sends me a SASE.

Mike Glicksohn
508 Windermere Av.
Toronto Ont M6S 3L6
Canada

 Thanks for ANVIL 39 which arrived yesterday and was read to-
day. No long loc this time as I'm busy publishing a fanzine
of my own (I'll send you a copy as soon as I get the cover
I'm waiting for) but I had to comment on one remark you made,
namely your decision that you were "going to do something that
no fanned had done before" and include samples of toilet paper in ANVIL. When I
published Xenium 2.4 in December 1974 each copy contained a tipped in sheet of
official British toilet paper (each politely marked "Government Property"). In
the lettercolumn of #2.5 Sam Long commented that the legendary Peter Roberts had
done a similar thing in EGG #1 which dates back to the mid-to-late 60's. So
toilet paper in fanzines is a long-established fannish tradition. (In that same
loc Sam said that in his loc in EGG #2 [someone named] Cruttenden pointed out that
"a serious hobby based on toilet paper actually exists under the lovely name of
Cloacapyrology." How's that for fannishness? Now you can quote a letter that
quotes a letter that quotes a letter from 20 years ago!) In my own AUSSIECON trip
report from 1976 I pasted in a variety of Australian souvenirs including Alka Selt-
zer packages from the Southern Cross Hotel (there was a damn good reason for that)
so I'm afraid that even having Australian mementos in your fanzine can't be said
to be original with ANVIL. (I didn't invent the idea of pasting things into my
fanzine but I'm damn sure nobody else in fandom has ever collected two hundred
Alka Seltzer packages or mailed out two hundred squares of snakeskin in a fanzine.
Start thinking now of what ANVIL will contain in the issue with your Atlanta world-
con report in it!)

((How about a lock of Glicksohn's hair? No? Ah, well.))

Skel, 25 Bowland Close A laid-back LoC this... and an interesting experiment. Can Offerton, Stockport I type in bed? Hey, it wobbles! Serves me right I suppose Cheshire SK2 5NW U.K. for having such skinny legs and bony knees. Gradually, the carriage makes its way to the left, the typewriter develops a list to starboard (if left is indeed 'starboard' - is it the same with beds and typewriters as it is with ships even? Do beds and typewriters have a recognised port and starboard? One would presume so, otherwise when they sink, and you have to man the ~~lifeboats~~ pillows, how the hell would you know which side of the bed to head for? One wrong decision and you could get dragged down with the duvet, and then where would you be?)... anyway, I was telling you of the gradual list to starboard (or is it port?), which one compensates for with an equally gradual twisting of the lower torso on which the typewriter is so precariously balanced. Then, when you get to the end of the line, when the whole shebang, torso and typewriter both, are in their maximum state of dynamic tension, you hit the 'carriage return' key and sudden strange, and apparently random forces come into play. The carriage shoots back in an instant, and all that painfully nurtured equilibrium goes for a ball of chalk. Everything sways alarmingly and in order to prevent the typewriter diving over the port side of the bed (or is it the starboard side?), twisting and turning as it goes with an apparent 'degree of difficulty' of at least 3.9, much instant lower-torso and leg movement is called for at this point, with considerable strain in the area of hips and buttocks and apparently causing the rectal muscles to go into and out of hyperspace about 250 times a second. As the whole point of laying prone and horizontal in bed in the first place is to place as little stress and strain on the rectal muscles as possible, I can see that this whole idea is a bit of a non-starter. Hang on whilst I try to find a better typing position.

One thing

I will never understand is the kind of suburban dwellings that they have in Australia. Up until now I had always taken for granted that suburban dwellings were suburban dwellings and that, other than in superficial ways, they were much the same the world over, at least conceptually. I live in a suburban dwelling, but mine appears to be nothing like those that Marc Ortlieb is familiar with. "You arrive in a suburban dwelling..." says Marc, and then goes on, "... you note the clean brick houses;" (Nope, sorry, but there are no clean brick houses in my suburban dwelling, unless he means Beth's legos - though of course there are quite a few clean brick houses outside my suburban dwelling). Nor do I note the absence of readily available public transport, or even the distance between milk bars, in my suburban dwelling. Not that there isn't an absence of public transport, nor for that matter am I arse-deep in milk-bars, it's just that I don't note their absence in my suburban dwelling, because I don't expect to find them in my suburban dwelling. Hell, I hadn't realised that Aussie fans were so well off that they could afford suburban dwellings so vast that one needs public transport to go to the bathroom, nor that one would need milk-bars along the route in order to take refreshment so that one didn't arrive back in the kitchen too shagged-out to finish making one's vegemite butties. I am glad to see though that people who live in Australian suburbs still have some problems in common with those of us in English suburbs. Listen Marc, if you ever find a way of getting rid of those neighbourhood kids who rev up their 1967 Holdens in your lounge at 3 a.m., let me know, eh? In the meantime, do you have any tips on how to get sump oil out of an acrylic shag-pile carpet?

To me this is the most satisfying issue of ANVIL to date, well-balanced, quite a lot of reasonable material (my favourite piece was Barbara Harmon's)--a good blend. You have not lost the 'identity' that you had as a club-zine, because that identity was a composite of the characters who contributed to

it in one way or another (not least of which contributions is that of putting the whole thing together, of editing it), and those characters are still there. I think I suggested, in a much earlier LoC, that the ANVIL of the time didn't really seem to know where it was going - it was emerging from being simply a clubzine, but didn't seem to know which direction to go in. In fact I think I suggested that a possible solution was to make ANVIL the place where the group interacted with the rest of fandom. Do I get a prize for guessing right? I don't know how or why you came to your decisions, but from here it looks like they will have precisely the effect I suggested. By cutting the formal ties with the club, dropping the minutes and lists of income and expenditure and all that strictly official shit, and yet maintaining the strong local identity by keeping the good local fans involved - the club members whilst not the club itself, you get the best of both worlds, particularly with the club recognising that it still has an involvement through its members, and therefore making a grant by way of a confirmation of this fact.

Krsto A. Mazuranic An interesting, intriguing, well-done cover on ish 37 -- my
D. Zokaija 1 detached, critic's bone says so; my gut prefers fun and hard-
41430 Samobor YU ware, though. My grown-up self says, "Greg A. West is good."

The sentence about the "... command of the English language..." made me seek a secret and lonesome place, lock the door behind me, and blush in silent embarrassment. The fact is that you folks can just sit behind (in front of?) the typewriter and pound away kind of natural, whilst I have to sweat for hours polishing my sentences into something I think may be acceptable English...

Anyway, I'd say it's the attitude rather than linguistics which makes a zine a fanzine. (In YU, we just borrowed the English word, "fanzine". Our words for "fan" and "zine", being "navijac" and "casopis" respectively, make any translation impossible. And we're simply too lazy to invent a word of our own.)

A fanzine is a piece of communication among friends, a back-and-forth relationship. Obligations are quite loose here: the reader tolerates lapses in the pubbing frequency, inconstant quality of printing and even writing, and editor's whims; the faned, in return, tolerates lapses in locking, foolish letters, etc. With prozines, the reader has one and only one obligation, that of paying the sub money regularly.



In return, he or she expects value for his or her money, and no kidding. As far as I can see, Tahtivaeltaja is exactly the same thing as ANVIL - the curious hybrid called a "clubzine". If there is a difference between the two, it's in the attitude on the part of their readerships. For some reason or the other Europeans can't seem to catch on to the idea of loccing, that's all. Also, it's far more expensive to pub a zine in Europe than in the US, so sub money is vital in keeping a zine alive.

The Not-a-Trip-Report in ANVIL 38 is the best one I read in years. Its of the kind which causes anguish when you realize there isn't any more to read.

Julie W. Ackermann I had a dream the other night with you in it, Charlotte, so
280-A Merrimac Trail I decided it was about time to write. In this dream, which
Williamsburg, VA 23185 was very strange (of course all dreams are strange once you
wake up), we were all at this convention and there was this
great big Chinese fan contingent who wanted you to lead them onto the path of Tru-
fandom. Don't ask me what it means.

I got ANVIL and your letter at the same time.
I started to read your letter first, but then realized I had a LoC printed in ANVIL
and so had to do an immediate egoscan. Egoboo is a terrible thing.

I really enjoyed
Marc's article. For the last few months that Eric and I lived in B'ham, we rented
a little house complete with a huge yard but no lawn maintenance agreement. I, too,
know the joys of growing, er, turf. Or trying to. Thankfully, we're now in an
apartment here in Williamsburg. We pay an exorbitant rent and the management mani-
cures the lawn and trims the hedges. No problem.

The letter column is fascinating.
The only thing that bothers me is the idea that all these people in all these other
countries hate us so much. We're nice folks, pretty much, when you take us indivi-
dually. And if you don't take us individually, it's just so much prejudice.

((They don't hate us, Julie... it's our government some people don't like. I have
been trying to figure out why I reacted as I did, and Jean Weber put her finger on
it when she said I was a "patriotic American". One does get upset when part of
one's self--one's family or nation, say for instance--is put down. I remember the
time I was slandered and called names (all in the name of fan politics) and my teen-
age son overheard this reported to me. He was incensed, and ready to commit mayhem.
I calmed him down--told him everyone says ugly things when they are angry, and that
the ones who just couldn't wait to tell me were the real trouble-makers. So if my
son gets hostile when his mother is criticised, then I suppose it's only natural
that I should react that way when my country is criticised, especially when I never
once said "...and what do you think of my country's government?" Roger Weddall
addresses your point about individuals being taken for themselves rather than being
judged by their nationality in his letter following. He also voices some opinions,
but I decline to reply, and will just let the loccers fight it out among themselves
if they want to. In politics, as in religion, reason has nothing to do with opinions
and I feel there is no point in arguing, as when each feels so strongly, neither is
going to change just because of something someone says to them. Roger also discusses
this point.

Roger Weddall P.O. Box 273 Fitzroy 3065 Australia Your piece on 'The Ugly American' was quite humourous, if unintentionally so. Sure, many Australians are 'Anti-American', and with American ownership and economic control of much of the country, and American garbage on television and at the movies and so on, and considering much of what "your" government has done and is doing around the world, why shouldn't they be? But where any sensible person stops being Anti-American (or Anti-Russian, or whatever) is when one meets the people themselves. I've been through this whole Anti-American schtick myself, as thoroughly as anyone, but most of the Americans I've met recently have been decent, charming, interesting people, and it is foolishness to insist that because the American government would seem to have a collective mental age of about five when it comes to something like its dealings with Nicaragua, it's absurd to insist that therefore all Americans are thus personally responsible for all (or any) of the American-caused ills of the world. Similarly, I'd hope that non-Australians wouldn't think too badly of all of us Aussies because of the actions of a few Federal or State level politicians.

The point is, of course, that friends look to share their interests, and what they have in common. Going out of one's way to point out such things as differences in political viewpoint is downright silly, and the matter of where someone comes from (what country) is something that an interesting conversation or discussion can be built around--turning it into a debate or a complaint is a ridiculous waste of time.

On the other hand, it's another thing entirely to make pronouncements at large about the state of the world, and expect them to go unchallenged... I remember having a fascinating discussion late one night at Aussiecon Two with an American, in which he "explained" why the Australian economy ran as it did--how it evolved...and so on. He didn't know what he was talking about but it was fun to listen to him, anyway. If it hadn't been three in the morning, I might have risen to the bait, but I was in no condition to and there was no point in just argumentatively saying "No, no, you're wrong." if I was going to leave it at that.

I don't know about the subtleties of the discussion you had about American troops and nuclear arms, but for one I assure you that I would be positively delighted to have all American military personnel, equipment, tracking stations, the lot, leave Australia immediately and never return. As far as enemies are concerned, the Russians are to be feared about as much as the Burmese, I should think--and a lot less, ultimately, than the Indonesians whose military officers our country helps train, and which country is an American ally--but this is a topic with no end, and the trouble with this neverending topic is that, when talking politics, or Global Domination, people tend always to end up shouting at each other, when they could be talking or--heaven forbid--laughing. The important thing is probably not to be rude to other people by telling them what to think or what is good for them--most people are capable of making up their own minds..

Quick, quick--I need a cheery note to end on... Did you find, at Aussiecon, that you were surprised at the appearance or manner of some of the people you'd already corresponded with but never met before? I've done this a few times before--I remember the first time I met Marc Ortlieb... upon seeing him I couldn't say what exactly I'd expected to see, although I was sure that this wasn't the way he was supposed to be. I mention this because I seemingly constantly had people coming up to me at Aussiecon, saying how surprised they were to see I looked as I did--or how different I was in person to how I was in print. Not one person doing this, but many, and often. At first I passed it off as my inability to express myself properly in print, but as the con went on I conceived a more radical theory

...maybe I was someone else! Maybe I was a Welsh coalminer, named Brandon... or how about a used car salesman from Spokane? Hey - maybe I'm really Tony Cvetko. In which case, where are those Mafiaettes! Ooh, ooh...

(P.S. I don't have a fast, high-performance car. Will a low-slung IBM Selectric II do instead?)

Keith Asay (COA)
412 Bauer Ave. #1
Louisville, KY 40207

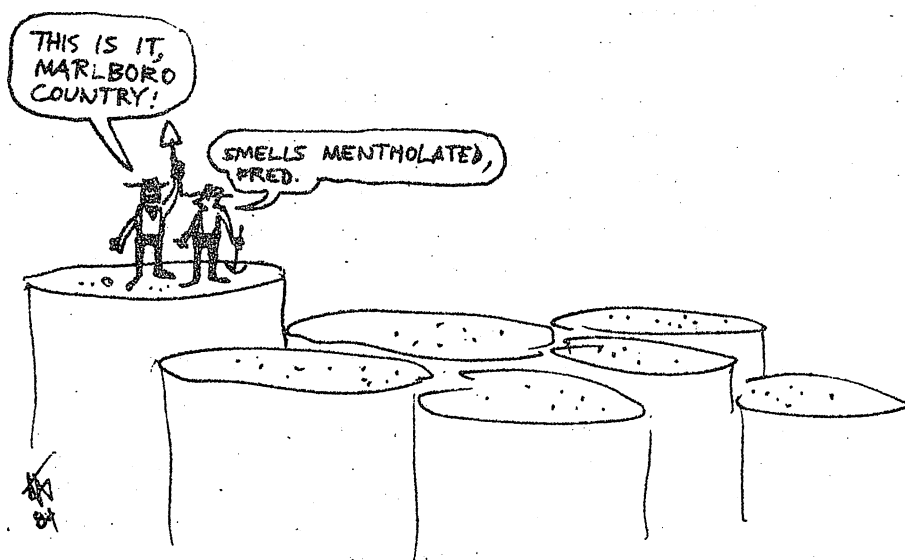
It's pretty interesting to hear the origins of a whole country's SF fandom, especially when the time is less than ten years ago. Will any Czechs be at the worldcon?

Marc Ortlieb

reminds me of why I sold my house and moved into an apartment. I hate yardwork. Unfortunately, so does my landlord. The yard was mowed twice last year and raked only after the leaves had permanently burned the grass by late November. I can look out my window at a mudhole while all the yards around me are beginning to green with the coming of spring. Any recommendations as to how to get the landlord to take care of his property?

Buck Coulson mentioned painting barns. I remember Southern barns being painted with "SEE ROCK CITY". Occasionally a chewing tobacco product or two would grace the sides of a barn. Now the question is this. Suppose some sponsor, let's say Royal Crown Cola, would go for a barn painting campaign for rural areas where the barns were next to the highways. Would they be willing to pay the painter's expenses plus salary to give the farmers a free paint job? The symbol of an all blue barn with the nearest side or roof painted with the RE slogan could restart a bit of the old Americana that I used to relish. To Buck--how much does it cost to paint the average size barn?

Bless Barbara Harmon.



George Inzer
P.O.Box 2381, UM
Montevallo, AL 35115

I hope that Buck Coulson succeeds in convincing Baen Books to reprint some of the old Geoff St. Reynard stories. I have some fond memories of his stories from the forties and fifties. "The Usurpers" was one of my favorites. And didn't St. Reynard also write "Power Metal" and "The Sun Smashers"? I can't recall exactly and they may have been Stuart Byrne. I don't have my collection handy...I'm typing this on the word processor at work, but I believe he also had stories in Other Worlds and Amazing Stories. If Buck would like some photocopies of those, I'd be very happy to supply them. If Baen isn't interested, perhaps one of the small presses would oblige. I believe that Robert Weinberg is still publishing stories from the old shudder pulps and some of these stories might interest his readers.

Loved Barbara Harmon's "Fandom in the Middle Ages." I've heard similar things from my students when they find out that I still read comix and SF. Especially that I go to cons. I ran into one of my students at the Huntsville DSC last year. He really freaked out. Can't imagine why, though.

I would like to second Mike Glicksohn's motion that there be an inexpensive way to nominate and vote for the Hugos. ConFederation is the first worldcon I've belonged to since the SunCon in Miami and it's also the first Hugos I'll be voting on since then. Back in the good old days I participated a lot more in these fannish things, but since the late seventies, I've simply been priced out of it.

A note to Mike Rogers: Actually the U.S. does not spend \$300 billion a year to defend Japan so they can wreck our economy. We defend Japan so they won't build up their army and navy to threaten us again. Or, have you forgotten Pearl Harbor already? When the U.S. totally reformed their government and rewrote their constitution, we fixed it so they could never build up their military again. It's against their law. Since we beat them last time, we can do that. Consequently, their economy isn't drained by military spending as ours is. Would you like Japan to become a major super power again?

George "Lan" Laskowski
55 Valley Way
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013

((And now, here's a letter from another 1986 Hugo nominee for Best Fanzine for his "Lan's Lantern". Congratulations, and good luck!))

So you are going independent of the Birmingham SF Club. I'm not sure how much more work that will mean, except that there will be a couple extra pages to fill since the "Money" and "Minutes" will no longer be included. I hope you will be able to get articles and reviews to fill in the gaps. I'd offer to write something, but I'm busy trying to fill in my own fanzine, Lan's Lantern. ((Excuses, excuses...))

BoshCon II sounds like a good idea. There are lots of relaxicons in the Midwest, no-programming, make-your-own-fun, conventions. I'm attracted to go to this one, especially to talk to Bob Shaw after the pressures and hectic days of the worldcon are over, but I have to be back at school for teachers' meetings the day after Labor Day. I do hope, though, that you have a good time. You'll have to write it up for ANVIL.

"Genesis of Czechoslovak Fandom" was an interesting article. Beginning an organization is fun, and starting one related to SF is even more exciting. Obtaining 140 replies from one ad, and beginning a club from that, is a story worth telling by itself. I recall that InConjunction I, a con in Indianapolis, Indiana, had a few fans from the Midwest in attendance, mainly to help out this fledgling

convention. What happened was about 150 local people who had never been to an SF con before showed up. The numbers have increased dramatically since, and last year's attendance was in excess of 700. The unfortunate result of this is that most of the attendees, and most of the concom (changed since the first InConjunction four years ago), have never been to a convention outside their own. In any case, I hope to hear more about Czechoslovak Fandom. Are there many books in the US translated from Zdenek Rampas' country?

Marc Ortlieb's "Just a Suburban Boy" was clever. Grass as a menace to flowering and vegetable plants, is rather a unique idea, and extending it to the eventual demise of the dinosaurs is extremely clever, though I can't imagine what a saurian equivalent of a K-Mart would be. Swamp-Mart? Scaley's Thrifty Acres? Spears & Shears Shop? I also liked Marc's alternate explanation for the destruction of dinosaurs (why should the meteor people have all the glory?) as massive afflictions of hay fever from the recently flowering plants. I prefer to think, however, that they all died from lung cancer and heart disease due to smoking. I wonder what the medical profession was like then? // The "true horror of the suburbs" strikes me every Spring. I, too, look at store catalogues for the seed prices and gardening tools, rather than the toy or book sections.

I can agree with some of Patrick Gibbs' choice for the Hugo balloting this year, but I do have criteria of my own. I am not against a book winning if it has incorporated a previous winner into its story. If a good, logical extension of the story is made, why not let it on the ballot. Greg Bear's Blood Music develops the original idea very well. David Brin had already planned to write The Postman as a novel, and used the two novellas "The Postman" and "Cyclops" as the first half of the book. Taken together, the novel is indeed greater than the sum of its parts.

I do agree with his assessment of some of the books published by the established authors. The younger ones seem to be more creative; the older ones are going to have to push some to keep up nowadays. Emprise by Michael Kube-McDowell is a good possibility, as is Scot Card's Ender's Game. Timothy Zahn's Cobra is damned good, but I have some trouble deciding between that one and A Coming of Age. Most of the others I haven't read or didn't care for. I have been concentrating on finishing the 1985 copies of the magazines, and haven't read as many of the novels as I would have liked. It is going to be an interesting year. All we need now are the ballots.

Regarding fanzines. There are whole subgenres of fanzines to meet the tastes of the fans of various TV shows and movies. If you like Starsky & Hutch, Man from UNCLE, Chips, Indiana Jones (or even just Harrison Ford), Star Trek (of course), and a host of others, there are fanzines and apazines for you. Personally, I am looking for one on The Avengers. I agree with Mike Gunderloy that there are fanzine fans who have nothing to do with SF, and I know convention fans who are the same way. They go to cons to party; the hell with the reason those cons are put on for.

As for Mike Glicksohn's comment about instigating a separate fee for the Hugo Voting, I do heartily agree. One of the readers of my fanzine proposes that the Worldcon activities and the Hugo Awards be run separately, and that the Hugo committee advertize in the SF magazines to encourage a wider range and greater number of voters. The Awards, however, would still be given out at the Worldcon.

Robert Bloch Thanks for another fine issue- but I was inadvertently sad-
2111 Sunset Crest Dr. dened by Patrick J. Gibbs' mention of a campaign for Judy-
Los Angeles, CA 90046 Lynn del Rey as Best Pro Editor. It's true she's been over-
 looked, and now it's too late to remedy the situation. We
who were close to her could never understand why she hadn't received proper recog-
nition for her many contributions to the field. Perhaps a posthumous award is in
order, but of course, it's not the same: I believe people should be honored while
they're still alive and able to enjoy it. Judy will be mourned and missed for a
long time to come.

Buck Coulson I read most of ANVIL 39 while we were visiting the DeWeeses, before
2677 W - 500 N and after Wiscon. Much pleasanter for us old codgers to have a
Hartford City nearby place to unwind in, after the trip up and before the trip
IN 47348-9575 home. Our copy was in the mail being held for us, though we had to
 fight to get it. First trip to the post office, they gave us one
bundle of our mail and one bundle of someone else's. Came back in, and swapped the
erroneous bundle for two more of ours.

 Thoroughly enjoyed Barbara Harmon's item on
middle-aged fandom. Not much of it applies to me, but I certainly know people it
does apply to. Mostly, after the heart attack I note that I have to conk out at
1 AM or so; no more of this staying up until 5 AM, or dawn, or whatever. Of course,
people keep telling me how good I look, instead of saying I look exhausted, but
then I think it's because I'm up and moving instead of lying there with a lily in
my hand.

 Looks like the campaign for Judy-Lynn del Rey for best editor didn't move
fast enough; I was never much for posthumous awards. Not that she didn't deserve
one, any time in the past ten years or so.

 For all I know, my name was solicited for
that list of references. I don't recall it, but then I wouldn't: I'd have agreed
and forgotten about it. I didn't see the list, and I can't say I care particularly.
I wrote years ago that I'd vouch for anyone on the YANDRO mailing list. Interest-
ingly enough, nobody has ever checked with me about a voter's name. One might
wonder why references are required, if nobody is going to check them. But then, of
course, if a fan isn't too involved with fanzines, he/she probably never finds out
if his/her vote was discarded, eh?

 While I'm on Mike's letter, maybe I should inform
him that a "hairdresser" means just what it sounds like: someone who puts clothing
on hair. A snood is required, in some instances...

 Commenting on my letter, I just
received a newspaper clipping about a man who collects toilet paper. He seems to
like types with printing on them, which provides an obvious connection to fanzines;
certain titles might well become collector's items.

 Bob Shaw says he couldn't "work
constructively" because his feet were swollen. I never knew he typed with his feet;
never say ANVIL isn't educational.

 A third long-seriesed author for Harry Warner:
Asimov's first "Foundation" story appeared in 1942, and FOUNDATION'S EDGE in 1982.

 I find it amusing that the English, the major purveyors of "gunboat diplomacy" over
the years, now are so strongly pacifist. It do make a difference whose ox is gored.

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

The new issue of ANVIL certainly demonstrates how fanzine fandom has gone international. You point out in the editorial that fact but maybe you didn't tally up how many nations were represented: United States, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, Australia, Canada, directly through contributions, Finland, Yugoslavia, The Netherlands, and perhaps one or two others I missed through references. It seems somehow appropriate that it happened in the issue which announces ANVIL's change in status from clubzine to genzine.

The article about Czech fandom interested me a great deal. It seems to typify how fandoms have been springing up in smaller nations where the dominant language is not English, German, French or Russian and thus there isn't the big backlog of science fiction published in the native tongue that fans can enjoy in the more widespread tongues. And I suppose the difficulty of publishing a prozine in Czech or another tongue with a limited number of native speakers is enormous. I don't understand how fandom in several Scandinavian countries came into existence in a slightly different way and was less pro-oriented in its early stages, but the Czech fandom history seems quite similar to that in Poland, Turkey and several other nations where some sort of fandom has emerged. Almost always it's the students and slightly older individuals who spearhead the national fandom's emergence, the professionals are more cooperative with the new fandom than they were with United States fans when fandom was young in this nation, and local clubs rather than fanzines form the focal point for the new fandom. In a way, I suppose, young fans in Czechoslovakia can enjoy the same special privilege that fans possessed in the United States in the 1930s: it doesn't take too long to read all the available and well known science fiction in their native language, so there's a common pool of knowledge about science fiction.

Marc Ortlieb's article is most amusing and I find myself on the verge of believing his theory that the dinosaurs lost the urge to live when the time came for them to keep the newly evolved grass mowed. I have a special problem with my lawn. It's easy enough to find some one to cut the grass on it periodically during the growing season, thus preserving my full quota of fingers and toes which I would periodically deplete if I tried to manipulate a power mower. But the individuals who cut my grass don't do trees. Saplings spring up this week and grow by next week into sturdy young giants of the forest. During the two months of my back soreness last summer, I couldn't do a thing about the reforestation program nature has been conducting on my lawn and by fall, it would have been a good place to film a revival of Daktari. I keep reminding myself that I must begin logging operations before spring causes the sap to ascend, but every day I decide it's too cold or too muddy or too icy to tackle the job.

Buck Coulson cites what mail order houses claim to know about potential suckers. But sometimes they slip up. Somehow, a computer malfunctioned or an old enemy lied about me or something else caused me to start receiving mail intended for veterans of the armed forces. For several months I've been deluged with invitations to join this or that veterans' organization (the American Legion has been almost hysterical in its appeals to my duties as a former serviceman) or to buy insurance from firms catering to veterans. I've thought and thought and can't remember having ever been a member of any of the armed forces, so apparently it's a mistake by others rather than absentmindedness about my own past that is at fault. (I am an honorary member of the 29th Division Association, with a membership card to prove it, but that resulted from being helpful to someone who was writing a book, not service with the United States Army.)

((Harry Warner is a HUGO winner))

I like Mike Glicksohn's idea about changing the Hugo procedure to permit voting without worldcon membership. But I'm dubious about the idea's chances for fruition. That's because existing and potential future worldcon authorities aren't apt to look with favor on even this slight a wedge being inserted in the currently solid amalgamation of worldcons and Hugos. The Hugos are in a sense what makes the worldcon the premier con each year. The worldcon has become so big that it can't risk the loss of any selling point, particularly its Hugos. Allow non-members of the worldcon to take a part in Hugo voting now, and who knows how long it would be until someone would propose a separate committee to handle the Hugos instead of a worldcon subcommittee and after that, how long it would be until a movement arose to rotate the Hugo ceremonies among the worldcon and several other major annual conventions. I don't think such evolution would necessarily be bad, but I'm sure the threat of it happening would induce worldcon authorities to insist on the existing system.

Whoops, I almost forgot to say complimentary things about Fandom in the Middle Ages. It brings back long-ago memories when I had that status. I wish I had a photograph of the expression of Mike Deckering and me, the time we were seated at the same table at a worldcon banquet and a waitress assumed we were father and son.

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Harry J.N. Andruschak
Post Office Box 606
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Marc & Cath Ortlieb
Post Office Box 215
Forest Hill, Vict.
3131 Australia

How come I got the copy that was missing page 8/9? I know I've read my article, but that doesn't mean that I wouldn't like to see all of it...(Fire the collator!!!) // Re: Gene Wolfe's letter, the lighting for the Masquerade was even worse than I thought. Gene thought it was me up on the podium, when it was actually John Maizels.

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Barbara's article struck far too many sympathetic notes. Maybe she should have included a note or two for fanzine fans, tho: Fandom in the Middle Ages means that...

...you stop running your mimeo on manual, and use the motor, despite the drop in quality.

...you no longer find it that urgent to pub your ish that you are willing to stay up to three in the morning doing so.

...you start taking two trips to the post office to get your issue mailed.

...you arrange collating races for your grandchildren.

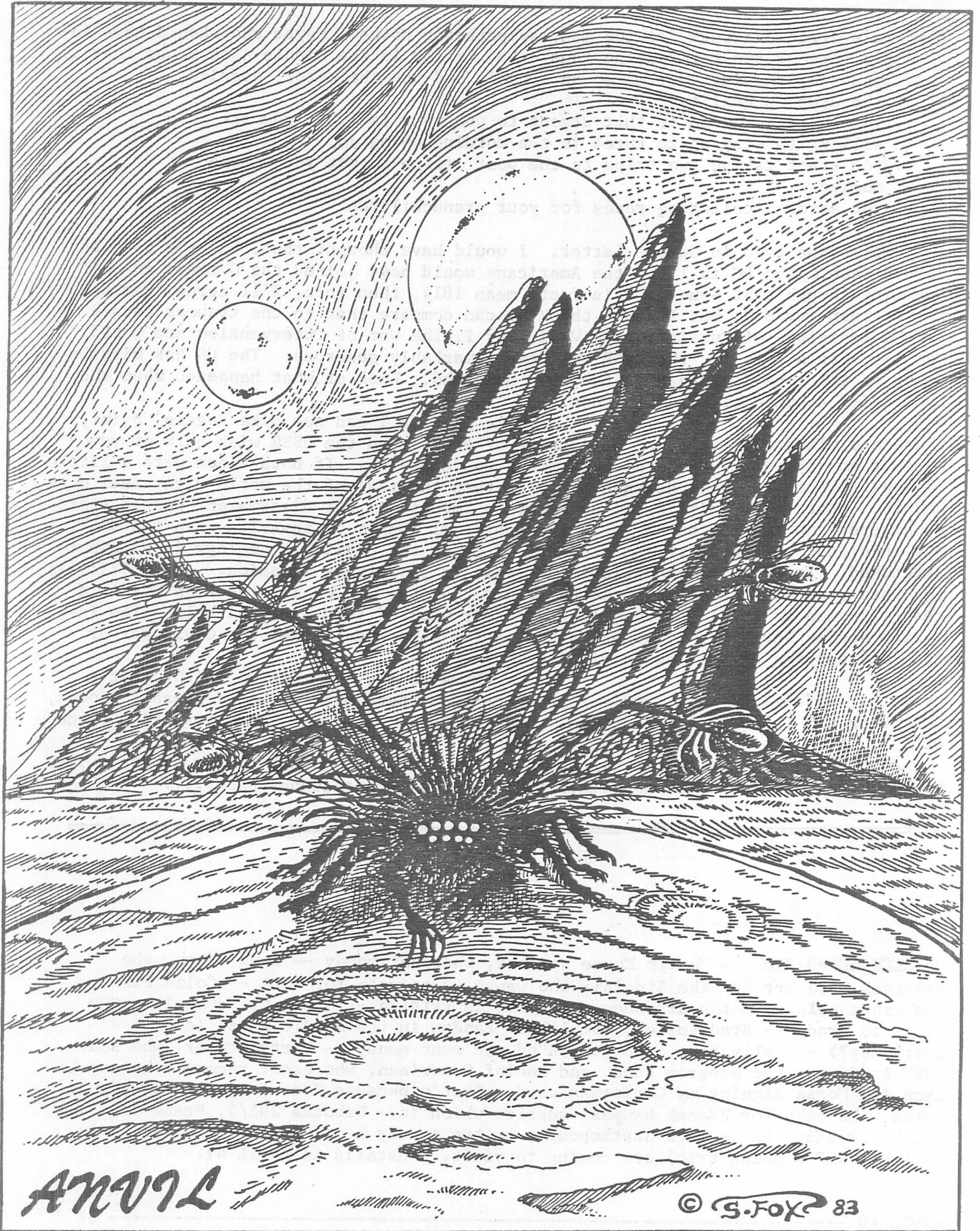
I did like the typo in Gene's letter. I would have thought that, had the British burned Washington DC in 1914, the Americans would have joined the Germans in WW I. Assuming though that Gene did, in fact, mean 1814, then sure, I'll agree that the US has been invaded, but I don't think he can compare that to the traumas caused by the invasions of Russia during World War I, The War of Intervention and World War II. Let's face it, the USSR has been remarkably generous. The US has missile bases on the same continent as the USSR homeland. Look at what happened when the USSR tried to base missiles in Cuba...

While I think I can see Mike Rogers' point, there are times when those of us outside of the US and the USSR wish both of you weren't so willing to spend so much money to defend us. If both sides were a little less altruistic in their defense policies then the rest of the world might feel more secure. Certainly verifying disarmament is important, but disarmament has to start somewhere, and, since the US is in less physical danger of invasion than the USSR, why shouldn't the US start the process? I think the Civil War analogy is somewhat stretched. Internecine struggle is not easy to justify as invasion. ((WHAT????!!)) For this reason, I guess it could be argued that the War of Intervention wasn't a real invasion of Russia, though it had a fair wack of international help. The Invasion during World War II affected Russia far more than either the Civil War or the 1814 sacking of Washington did America.

Nice to see Bob mention Whitby. It's my mother's family's home town. I've never been there myself, but I guess I should, what with all its other connections - Captain Cook, Robin Hood's last resting place, etc.

Aha! So you're the person responsible when there's no paper in the dunney. Jeess you American sheilas take some liberties, as well as our dunney paper!!!!

WE ALSO HEARD FROM -- Martin Morse Wooster, who sent money -- Hank Heath, who promises more art -- Mike Sinclair who wants us to vote for NOLA -- Colin Fine, who wants help with the art show next year in Britian -- Grant C. McCormick, who wants to trade -- Brad Foster, who liked "Fandom in the Middle Ages" (didn't everybody?) -- Holly Hina, who got "X"ed and sent money -- Marty Cantor, who sent DUFF stuff for the program book, and Roelof Goudriaan, who can't remember he and L Lynn Ann Morse signing my Christmas card. That's because Kees forged their signatures. He asks for Zdenek Rampas' address which is - Libocka 281/3, Praha 6, 162 00, Prague, CZ -- Nick Stathopoulos writes to say he, Marilyn Pride and Lewis Morley (DUFF-winning trio) are coming to visit... details in ANVIL 41.



ANVIL

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