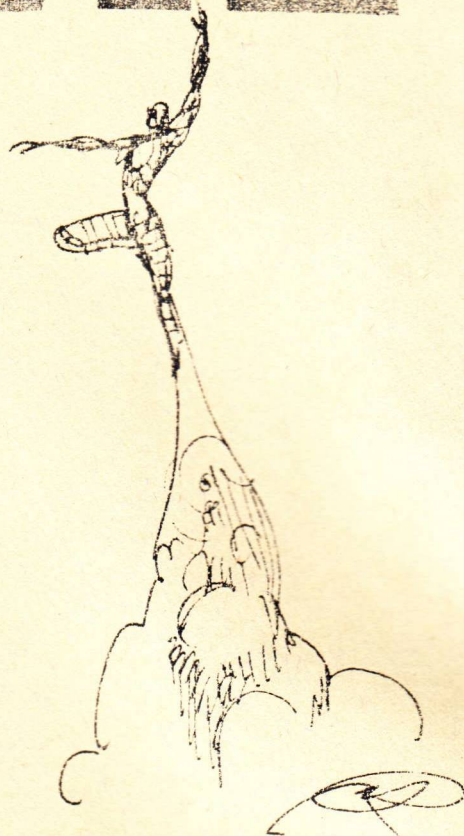


1989

ANVIL



Charlotte's Web Editorial Natter	1
Czech Con Report Eva Hauser	3
Charlotte's Night Out With the Boys	4
The Ironmaster and the Strippers - Buck Coulson	6
'Zine Reviews Roy G. Bivens	8
Hugo Winners Reviewed Patrick J. Gibbs	13
The ANVIL Chorus Notes from YOU	15



We Also Heard From: Scott L. Spence who wants to subscribe; Eva Hauser; Julia Bateman, Perth in '94 Chairperson; Harry Andruschak wondering where ANVIL is; Joan and Colin Langeveld with some more illos; Gene Gryniewicz with ditto; Damir Coklin who said "This is just a postcard. Obviously. Sorry, I'm too busy for more elaborate writings. Krsto & I are in haste making preparations for NolaCon III." ((?!?!))

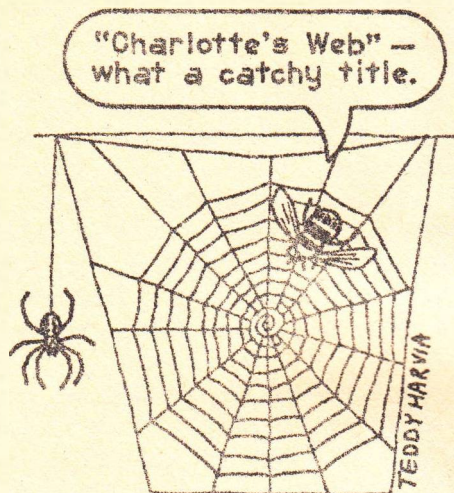
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Ha! Fooled you, didn't I? Bet you thought I was never gonna publish again...

Actually, it was something the loccers said... that I really should publish #50, that's such a nice round number. So here we are, back again by popular demand!

So what have you been doing lately? How was Worldcon? I always did aim to publish in the fall, after Worldcon. I asked Patrick for a review column on the Hugo winners instead of the nominees. Nominees are dated so quickly, but winners are forever! Roy Bivens came through for us again with another biting and opinionated zine review column. The Ironmaster, aka Buck Coulson, talks to us this time about his experiences with strippers, yes, that's right, as in take-their-clothes-all-off strippers. I'm reminded of something Gypsy Rose Lee said, that I have been known to quote: "I've got everything I had 20 years ago, it's just lower now."



Eva Hauser graces the pages of ANVIL once more, this time with a con report. How gay and carefree these Czechs be! Our masquerade balls are not that much fun... ((I had to consult the library's unabridged dictionary to find out what "oligophrenically" meant; do you know?)) I can't help but be struck by how much Czech fans are like us. How many times have we gone to a con in a lovely city, and never left the hotel? How many times have we found a good party and stayed up all night, talking? I think Eva has a good time wherever she is.

ANVIL's format is going back to the larger (12 pitch) type, for easier reading by Robert Bloch, Harry Warner, and yours truly.

What have I been doing? Well, it's been pretty boring, really. Family stuff, working, keeping house, dieting (lost 40 pounds!) — dullsville, huh? The bad thing about losing weight is that I took up smoking again after having been quit for almost a year. // My beautiful blue Taurus always needs washing. How come old cars don't get as dirty as quickly as new cars? // Haven't been to a convention since Kubla earlier this year. I'm suffering con-withdrawal, and have plans to attend Huntsville's ConStellation in October, as well as Julie-Con (also know as Sci-Con) in Virginia Beach, VA. This may tide me over until Chattacon, and Kubla next May where I am Fan Guest of Honor. I'm looking forward to that. Kubla was my first con, and still my favorite. Next year's DSC is in Chattanooga, with Bob Shaw once again visiting the South. We can look forward to an Aussie or two, too, next year. Both Greg Turkish and Roger Weddell are standing for DUFF, and both have promised to come to Birmingham if they get to the States.

8/2/89: Monday, July 31, I had a visitor. Imagine my surprise when I got a call at work saying that I had a guest: Mike Glicksohn (world-famous Canadian fan, letterhack and sometime publisher) was in my living room.... he just happened to be in the neighborhood, etc. etc. (Actually, he had called the day before and I had not gotten the message, which is just as well as I would probably have tried to do too much.) Mike said he had just been to Rivercon, but I was confused about why he was in Birmingham. If he was on his way home, he was going the wrong way! No matter, mine is not to reason why... I called Wade Gilbreath, who shares Mike's interest and background in fanzines. Wade said he would be right over. Now this is amazing. I haven't seen Wade in four months. He had totally withdrawn from fannish gatherings and I thought we would never see him again. But all I had to say was "Mike Glicksohn" and he was on my doorstep. (Hummmmm, maybe next month I'll say that, oh, say for instance, Mike Glycer is going to be at the meeting.....)

On the way home, I picked up some wine and strawberries to go with the diet food I had in stock. Wade came over and we took Mike for a little tour of Birmingham... "There's Vulcan, the world's largest iron man... the only thing Birmingham has that other cities don't. There's the really good art museum that is closed on Mondays. This is where I work... etc., etc." Mike marveled at how deserted downtown Birmingham was after working hours. But that's the way it is. We drove him through Southside, the nearest thing to Little Bohemia Birmingham can boast of, but it was dead, too, during the supper hour. Things don't pick up there again until 7 or 8. Wade guided me through parts of Mountain Brook (and it's a good thing, as I was lost) to show Mike some beautiful old houses where the other half live.

We came home and had dinner. Forrest came in from work and we four talked for hours about science fiction movies, fandom and such. It was a really good evening and I was so pleased that Mike had come. The next day, after he had gone, I began to wonder why he had come... other than for the pleasure of my company, of course. It seems he makes these summer trips every year to visit his friends the Haldemans in Florida, but he's never stopped to see me before. ~~hummmmm~~. I'll bet it's because he was curious, given our correspondence via ANVIL, about how an Alabama fan lives. After all, there have been mention of visits from the police, firearms and other weapons (see: "The Screwdriver as a Deadly Weapon", ANVIL 47). Maybe he just wanted to see Charlotte in her natural habitat. With that in mind, I looked around, trying to see my natural habitat through the eyes of a Canadian fan. I'll bet he couldn't help but notice the polearms in the corner of every room -- left over from our SCA days. Then, when I took him in the back to introduce him to my mimeo (which is at one end of Jerry's reloading room), there in plain sight were most of Jerry's collection of firearms. After we had come back from sightseeing, the subject of weapons did come up and I asked Mike if he knew that my .357 was under the front seat of my car. ".357 Magnum???!!" he asked..., seemingly horrified... "Is it loaded?"

"Well, Mike, it wouldn't do me any good if it weren't."

-- Eva Hauser

((Editor's note: Eva Hauser is an award-winning science fiction author in her native Czechoslovakia, and contributor to ANVIL. See "My American Vacation" -- ANVIL 49.))

Olomouc is a beautiful ancient town. I know that it is, but I didn't see it while I was there. The dance hall, hotel, restaurant and club where the SF fans met and discussed their affairs were close to one another, so we didn't need to get out at all.

The masquerade ball was the high point of the meeting. The music of Panika (Panic), a girls' rock band, was very vivid, unrestrained, with wonderful text. At the moment we came into the hall Panic sang: "You look so crazy..." Yes, all of us looked really extravagant. Several KYBERPUNK scifists from Prague inspired inspired horror and consternation not only with their masks but also by their behavior. Ivan Adamovic (excellent author, translator and expert for American sci-fi) shouted oligophrenically and lurched like a drug addict. Kyberpunk girls wore stockings and garters (which appeared also in one of the three fashion shows inserted into the program.)

Another spectacle was a woman body-builder. The chief of the Olomouc sci-fi club, Pavel Polacek, drew me to the platform and asked whether I wanted to become a body-builder (as I am a well-known feminist.) I refused - it seems to be too laborious.

My costume was inspired by BIOPUNK (I founded BIOPUNK as the biologist's answer to KYBERPUNK). I wore heavy boots; a siren suit with fixed rags; on my shoulder a third hand of rubber which stroked the other dancers and frightened them with its cold, clammy touch; wildly painted earrings and eyeglasses; facepaint; and badges advertising BIOPUNK. But most important was my hair, dabbled with green, highly aromatic, toothpaste. My friends acknowledged my costume with the sincere and heart-felt words: "You are really disgusting!"

The costume of our sci-fi writer Ondre Neff was extremely witty: he came with a tube inscribed TOP SECRET!... DANGER!!!, etc. What was inside? We were all thrilled by expectation. Finally, he opened the tube.... deadly silence.... terror! It was the Alien, its "crustaceous-like" form! It jumped on Neff's face and stuck to his head and neck! "Yaaaarrgh!" Neff shouted terribly, and rolled on the floor....

There was a collective costume - the crew from Star Trek. It was a lot of work with all those uniforms. There were lots of extra-terrestrials, and cosmonauts, and robots - all very laborious to create, and beautiful.

Panic sang: "Nobody needs the girls, I want to be a man...."

Bratislava's SF club president sang to me: "With the toothpaste of your hair."

And Panic sang: "Where are you going, guy, don't burn the house...."

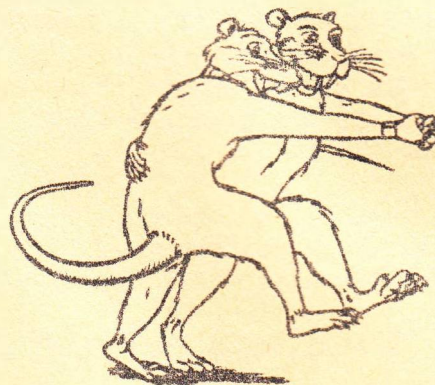
No, we didn't burn the house. At midnight we left the dance hall for a party and talked about books, and people, and all the interesting science-fictional topics till dawn.

Charlotte's Night Out with the Boys.....

One fine Friday night I went, with three young men friends of mine (Richard, Tony and Kelly), to Eunice Crabtree's, which is a gay bar on the south side of Birmingham. It wasn't so much a bar as it was a dive, a low place. It had no class. It was a low-ceilinged, rectangular room, smoky and dark, with the entrance and bar at one end, and a stage at the other end which doubled as a dance floor between floorshows. A mirrored ball rotated, casting sparkles of light, emphasizing the shabbiness of the decor. There were less than a dozen bare tables with mismatched chairs. People sat, stood in gaggles, milled around, hung on the bar, and went to stand near the stage in anticipation of the show. On one wall was a picture, circa 1890, of a stern-faced dowager, with the caption "Eunice Crabtree." A poster proclaimed "A Hard Man is Good to Find." I was introduced to a person whose short stature, round face and falsetto voice reminded me of no one so much as Truman Capote. One could only hope the glasses our drinks were served in were clean. I think the people who took me there did so in the hope of getting a "reaction" out of me. They may have been disappointed. After all, I've been to bars before, and some of my best friends are gay, so what's the big deal?

It was kind of disgusting, though, that the transvestites who were the entertainment that evening were better looking than I. But they didn't really perform, they just lip-synced to recorded music. There were some lesbian couples who didn't bother me as much as they did thefellas. Then there were the male strippers. There were two of them, one skinny, with long stringy hair and a droopy moustache, and one with a well developed body and a good haircut. I preferred the latter. They came out on the floor after their "act" (I use the term loosely - there was no tease about it, they just took off their clothes), and wriggled around (I can't think of a better term for it) for any man who put paper money in that little thing they were wearing. I called the wellbuilt one over and asked him to "make a muscle" for me, which he did grudgingly, as it was obvious I wasn't going to "tip" him. I may have embarrassed my friends, but that's what they get for taking me out in public!

When it was time to leave, Richard didn't want to, so I offered to take Tony home. We had to stop to let Tony call home. It seems his parents are very concerned about him and want him to call if he is going to be late, as well as when he starts home so they can expect him. They wait up for him. You don't know how much I admire parents who take their job so seriously, and are so concerned about their children's welfare and safety. Tony, it seems, is only 20, and he quite understands his position of being a minor, living at home, and does not seem to resent the rules. Now if his parents only knew where he was, what he was doing, and with whom...



Gary Hillman '88
Rats of the Underworld ©

Charlotte's Night Out with the Boys.....

When I had teenagers living at home, I took the opposite tack. I knew full well that people who say "Yes Ma'am" and "No, Ma'am" and who come home on the dot of 12, can be out raising hell, screwing around, drinking and smoking, until 5 minutes before the witching hour. Besides, I am not a night person and need my sleep. My instructions to them were to try to stay out of trouble and come home at a decent hour. Only call in case of an emergency. I work on the theory that no news is good news and if the telephone doesn't ring, the police are not calling me to come get my kid out of jail. Or the morgue.

This attitude led to some interesting times. Once I was awakened from a sound sleep by my daughter beating on the front door. I staggered out of the bedroom, opened the door and asked why she was making so much noise in the middle of the night, didn't she know people were trying to sleep? "I was locked out!" she cried. "I live here, too, you know."

Another time I was awakened by the phone ringing. "This is Officer Jones. Do you know where your son is?" Arrrgh.... I don't like guessing games in the middle of the night. I knew full well which son was apt to be in custody, but I was contrary. "Which son?" I asked. "One is away at college, and the baby (I exaggerated a little bit there... Forrest must have been 8 or 9 at the time) is asleep, and the other one should be in bed.... I'll go check." Sure enough, the trouble-maker had put pillows under his covers to look like a sleeping body and had jimmied a window (we had dead bolts on the doors) and gone out. "O.K.", I admitted to the officer, "Martin is not here. What's he done?" Whereupon I had to listen to a list of his sins ending with the directive to come get him. "Well, I can't," I told him, "My husband is at work and I can't go off and leave the baby by himself." (In case you're wondering, the theory behind not immediately picking up the child at the precinct or juvenile hall is that the child may just figure out that if he doesn't watch it he may really have to take the consequences of his actions.) They brought him home and I had to listen, again, to a lecture on the error of his ways, which I already knew all about. They were preaching to the converted. The one we had to convince wasn't listening. I still don't know how he lived to grow up.

You can't imagine how good it felt when their father finally had to go get one of the kids out of jail. I came home from a convention once to the story of Justin being out walking and getting into the car with a friend only to discover the friend was drunk out of his mind. Sure enough, they were pulled over and Justin was guilty by association. He paid the fine for public drunkenness and called his father to come pick him up. If I had been there, I would not have paid the fine. He had not been drinking, and I wouldn't want a thing like that on my son's record. But I wasn't there. I was off at a convention, probably drunk in public.

But I digress. We dropped Tony off at home and I was so spacey by this time that Kelly drove me home and slept on the couch that night. At least that was the game plan. I discovered later he and Forrest stayed up the rest of the night watching movies.

-- Buck Coulson

I went to Silver Lake High School, in Indiana, and there was a tradition ("We did it last year, so it's a tradition." Fred Allen) that each year the junior class paid for a junior-senior event, earning the money by selling candy and pop at ball games and during noon hours at school. The event alternated between a junior-senior prom, and a junior-senior trip. Our class wasn't much for dancing, and we rebelled; we would either have a trip as juniors or we wouldn't have anything, and never mind that it was our turn to pay for a prom. Somewhat to our surprise, the authorities caved in and agreed to a trip. Our next problem was where to go, since we hadn't raised much money. (Our class never did have much school spirit.) Eventually, we went to Chicago, where the school powers decided we could see some cultural events, like a Victor Herbert operetta. Someone also decided we should visit the city morgue; I don't know what great brain came up with that one. It was sort of interesting, though more so to the senior boy who was the son of the local undertaker than to anyone else; Bill went around opening the cabinets where bodies were stored and sniffing appreciatively. (I stayed with him; several others stayed well away.)



The next night was supposed to be more or less free, for a movie or whatever. Several of the boys had discovered that Gypsy Rose Lee, the well-known striptease artist, was performing not too far from our hotel, and the plan was to sneak out and see her. Somehow, the teachers who went along to keep an eye on us found out about our plan, and instead of frustrating it, the thing was turned into an official part of the trip; the entire class went. And so I got to sit well back in the audience and watch the famous Gypsy perform. It was more tease than strip; I suspect that one of our mentors tipped her off and she toned down her act for that performance, though I never found out for sure. At least, I did get to watch her perform.

I met Sally Rand, the fan-dancer, a good many years later. It was, as a matter of fact, at the 1972 Worldcon, in Los Angeles. Midwestern fandom's "den mother", Martha Beck, invited us down to her room one night "to meet my sister-in-law". I had known Martha for at least 10 years by then, and she'd never mentioned the fact that her sister-in-law was Sally Rand. This was a good many years after Sally's great successes in the 1920s, but the legs were still good even if the face was a bit shot; she had to be around 70. Interestingly, she was a science fiction reader; she couldn't remember story titles but she could discuss plots as well or better than the rest of us. She also said she'd gone to school with Robert A. Heinlein -- "his brother was the smart one in the family, but he got killed". She told some Heinlein stories, which I no longer remember -- nothing of vital interest to his biographers. She'd brought a friend with her to the con; a belly-dancer, who was completely out of it, as far as science fiction was concerned. I remember Bev DeWeese talking to her about something, to keep her from being ignored. This was during the time that F&SF was running back cover ads which quoted famous people about how they read science fiction; I always thought they missed a bet

by not interviewing Sally. So did various fan historians, for that matter -- and so did I.

One amusing bit was the skinny-dippers. Martha had a "cabana" room next to the pool, and while we were sitting around talking, a group of fannish skinny-dippers came by, "daring" those in the room to join them. Charlie Brown was one; I can't recall the half-dozen or so others. Sally was scathing about people who showed off that sort of bodies.... baring the flesh was supposed to be an art, as far as she was concerned. Not to mention that she still had a better bod than anyone in the skinny-dipping group.

I wonder how many of today's fans ever heard of either Gypsy or Sally? They were big names in their day.

Incidentally, one of the convention program items was a display of belly-dancing, by a group largely composed of "Star Trek" fans. (Don't try to tell me that ST has never done anything for fandom.) The women doing it were of varying ability and beauty; one of them was particularly athletic and we found out that her mundane profession was that of Hollywood stuntwoman. Another could do the classic routine of dancing with a sword balanced -- on edge -- on top of her head. If she wasn't already a professional, she could have been.

Good old 1972. That was the year I was having my teeth out. Sandra Miesel wanted me to get stainless steel replacements -- pointed ones -- to go with my fan image. I did consider it, but it would have cost too much...

1972 is the year we drove to the west coast in a leisurely 4 1/2 days, stopping with fans every night. Norb and Leigh Couch in St. Louis, Bill and Randy Scott in Norman, OK, Roy and Crystal Tackett in Albuquerque, and Kay and Gary Anderson in Oxnard, CA. That's the sort of way to take trips; take your time, see the scenery, and have a good fannish time at night. It's a big help if you're publishing a fanzine and happen to know people in all areas, of course. We went to California this year, too, but on the train. You'll have to read MENTOR for that rather hectic trip, though; I plan to write it up for Ron when I finish this column.



— Roy G. Bivens

In my first column some months ago, I made the statement that an inaugural column for any periodical is hard to start, because of reader unfamiliarity with writing style and plain old inertia that comes with starting anything new. What got me off the dime in the first place was the seemingly contagious spread through fanzine fandom of fan press reviews that weren't actually reviews at all, instead being just listings of fanzines received, with maybe a few throwaway comments. Hardly anything to get excited over, and certainly hardly enough information to decide if the fanzine is worth reading, much less sending away for. No wonder fanzine fandom seems on the wane.

Anyway, my column last issue tried to go beyond that, by taking a much closer look at a few fanzines that piqued my interest. And in the process, maybe pique reader interest in discovering some of them he or she might have been unaware of. I'll be apprehensively looking forward to reading ANVIL's letters column to see if I've succeeded; well, maybe not too apprehensively, since like in politics, there's a "honeymoon" period of grace that comes with any new change in the cast of characters. On the other hand, I just received a letter from my good friend Charlotte, who tells me that her deadline is fast approaching, and would I kindly put my fingers to the keyboard before too long so she won't have to publish three pages of blank space where the fanzine review column is supposed to be. I guess maybe the honeymoon is already over...

With that in mind, I'd better start by correcting a bit of misinformation from last time -- I stated that Chuq Von Rospach was demonstrating that someone else in Los Angeles fandom besides Mike Glycer and Marty Cantor is capable of producing a competent fanzine. Only trouble is, Chuq lives in Newark, which is in the San Francisco Bay area. Goes to show you how much I know about California geography, I guess. To make up for it, I feel obligated to begin this column by reviewing Delineator from Alan White, a fanzine that is more or less from the Los Angeles area.

To be frank, this is going to be a somewhat negative review. The current and apparently final issue, #7, is just too much of a mixed bag for me to do otherwise. There's everything here from fan fiction, to poetry, to convention reviews, to artwork portfolios, and more. The contrasts in material are so glaring and jarring, and without any theme or direction, that it's difficult to see just exactly what the editor was trying to accomplish by publishing this zine. Some examples: the very first article is a bit of fluffy fiction about a time-travelling electric floor sweeper from the year 2154; not exactly the most original or most interesting sf story I've ever read, but on the other hand, I've probably read worse in any recent issues of Analog. Right after that, though, is a short article about the need to outlaw war in space; not only do you have to change mental gears when you read this article directly after the preceding short story, the editor (in an afterword) disagrees with the article's conclusion, effectively knocking the pins out from under the writer of the article. You have to wonder what was the point in bothering to print the piece in the first place.

Following this is more fan fiction, then a page of poetry, and then a fourpage portfolio of surreal photographic art from one J. M. Williams, who is evidently better known in California than in these parts. Yet more fiction



follows this, and then there is finally, after stripping out my mental gearbox from so many changes in direction and pace, finally something I can sink my teeth into -- an article called "Through Fandom with Gun and Camera", Alan White's personal ramblings and observations about the L.A. fan scent from Westercon 1988 through the end of the year. Actually, the writing in this piece isn't much out of the ordinary, but there's a wealth of photographs included that puts faces to fans I haven't yet met. In fact, photography seems to be the strong point in Delineator. There are photographs everywhere in this zine; looking through it is like browsing through a garish scrapbook on fandom. This works to advantage in the nicely-done 30+ page tribute to Forrey Ackerman (which would have made a good fanzine all by itself) but is used in excess to the point of being distracting elsewhere. Photographs are effectively and innovatively used in the letters column, though, with the innovative feature of running a photograph of the LoCcer next to his or her letter. I've never seen that tried before and it's actually pretty neat, though it must be hellishly expensive to do.

And speaking of expense, this whole fanzine looks to be a big money sink in production expense. Besides all the photos (and there are literally hundreds) there's also liberal use of color, including a multi-color cover printed on slick paper stock. If you get the idea that this was an expensive zine to produce, you're probably right. One of the reasons for this zine's demise is apparently its excessive cost. No wonder the asking price is \$10 for the issue.

I've covered only about half the material in the issue. There's yet another portfolio, this time by another artist I've never heard of, who seems to specialize in dark, disturbing imagery. And there's another good article, a personal remembrance of past Westercons, complete with lots and lots of photos. This is one hefty issue; it weighs in at over 150 pages -- ranking right up there with Lan's Lantern in obesity. And, like LL, Delineator seems to try to have something for everyone, right up to the point where it starts becoming a compendium of fan-related material instead of a fanzine. It's not an understatement to say there's a pretty good fifty or sixty page fanzine here straining to get out, that is being strangled by too much marginally interesting material.

I guess I'll miss Delineator, though. It certainly wasn't nearly the best fanzine that I received in the past year, but it sure was one of the most different.

Pulsar! Science Fiction Quarterly from Tony Ubelhor of Evansville, Indiana, is another "different" fanzine -- so different that again, I have to wonder if it's really meant to be a fanzine at all. In my previous column, you may remember that I singled out two fanzines, OtherRealms and Torus, that were examples of how slick and polished fan press publications were becoming. Pulsar! takes this to a higher level yet -- with its crisp three-column layout and sharp graphics, I can't think of any other fanzine that looks so polished and eye-pleasing, to the point that it more resembles a magazine than an fanzine. Plentiful use if made of photos and artwork integrated into text, but much more skillfully and pleasingly than is done in Delineator. It is apparent that Ubelhor is an experienced hand at desktop publishing, and this zine is a good example of what Macintosh desktop publishing software and a laser printer is capable of producing in the hands of a capable user.

But is slicker better? Last time out I also made the statement that too many fan publishers seem to be spending their resources making their fanzine look as slick as possible at the expense of content, and this may be yet another example. Content-wise, Pulsar! is all over the map. The latest issue (#14) has an interview with an up-and-coming author, a convention report, three short pieces of fiction (one fannish, two not), two works of poetry (one fannish, one not), an artist portfolio, plus the usual things like book and fanzine reviews, a listing of upcoming conventions, and letters of comment. Like Delineator, there just doesn't seem to be any underlying theme or direction that holds the issue together, or gives it any sense of continuity.

Not only that, the issue's contents also seemed uneven in quality. The interview with Raymond Feist exemplified this -- I like to read interviews with sf authors, because I quite often find out things about the author that leads to greater enjoyment of his or her stories. This is how I discovered Jack Chalker (back when he was writing more sf than fantasy), and rediscovered Jack Williamson. Here, though, we never really do find out much about Feist as a person, though quite a bit is revealed about his mechanics of writing and influences. I came away with the feeling I'd just met a talented and well-travelled mannequin, which I'm pretty sure wasn't the intent of the interview.

Other parts of the issue were also somewhat disappointing. The two nonfannish short stories weren't at all memorable and as you'd expect, don't stand comparison to fiction you find in commercial sf magazines. This is to be expected, of course, since if they were better the authors would have sold them to Asimov's or F&SF instead of given them away. I really don't understand why fanzine editors would want to publish "serious" sf (as opposed to the "fannish" or even "faanish" sf), when it's obvious they'll never see very high quality material. Why not instead seek material in areas where paying markets don't exist, and where there is a good chance of seeing excellent writing?

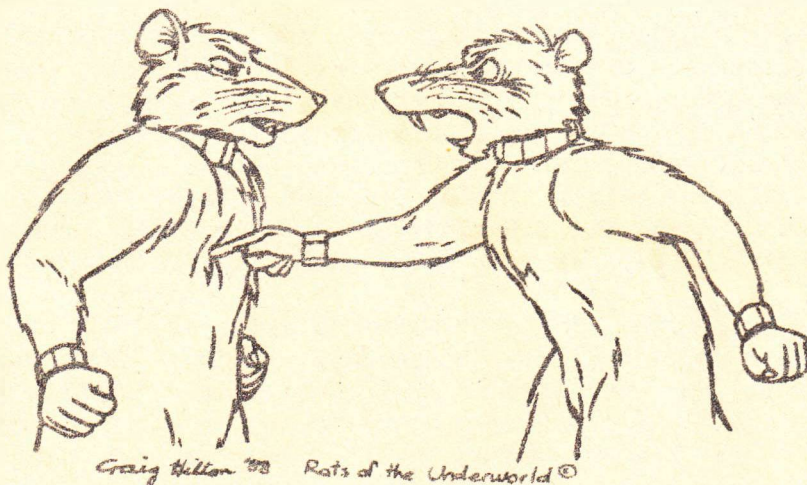
In any event, this is not intended to be an overly negative review. There are some good features here as well. The Steven Fox portfolio was attractively laid out, and shows off a good cross-section of the art that's gotten Fox nominated for the Fan Artist Hugo over the past few years. There's also a couple of neat little fan articles, one a fluffy bit of fan fiction by Rocky

Halleron ("The New Adventures of BEM Savage") and the other Kimberly Lockridge's Hamlet Soliloquy pastiche about convention chairmanship. There are probably more overall positives than negatives here, and this fanzine has in fact been getting steadily better as the editor gets better known and widens his pool of contributors to draw from.

Overall, however, I still have to be somewhat disappointed by a fanzine that has the look of a slick semiprozine, but doesn't have quality contributions that live up to its appearance. With fourteen issues under his belt, the editor should have a good idea by now what seems successful and what isn't. It seems obvious that he should therefore build on his strengths and eliminate the weaknesses. This hasn't been done yet with Pulsar!, but when it is, it'll be one of the fanzines I'll really look forward to receiving.

Another fanzine I look forward to receiving is that enigma from Kentucky, FOSFAX. Here's an example of a fanzine that has really evolved from modest beginnings under previous editors to something that's gaining broad fan community attention. For the two of you out there who somehow aren't on its mailing list yet, FOSFAX is the clubzine of the Falls of the Ohio SF Association, with the usual purpose of clubzines to inform club members of upcoming meetings and news, with informative features thrown in as space permits. At least, that's the way it started. Now, the fanzine is getting much more attention than the club itself, a sort of fannish equivalent of the tail wagging the dog. The editors keep to a brutally regimented publishing schedule of 12 issues a year, yet are somehow able to do 40-to-50 page issues each month. Added up, this is as many pages per year as Laskowski does in Lan's Lantern! Or maybe even more! How do they do it? Or better yet, why do they do it?

I'm of the opinion that there's no fan publication out there that couldn't somehow be a little better. So before I mention some of the good points about FOSFAX, I have to wonder: why deplete your physical and financial resources by publishing a 48-page fanzine each month when it's possible to publish a perfectly good 30-pager instead? More specifically, why publish 32 pages of letters to the editor each month, when by cutting out extraneous material, 10 pages or more could be eliminated without losing any content whatsoever?



FANZINE REVIEWS

With all their talent in putting together an interesting and comment-worthy fanzine each month, it seems to me that good editorial judgment is not being used by letting too many of the correspondents blather on and on in print. I know of only a very select few writers whose correspondence remains consistently interesting over more than a few paragraphs. Walt Willis, Harry Warner, and maybe two or three others have taken the Letter of Comment into a new art form that's welcome at whatever length their correspondence happens to be; to give other lesser talents the opportunity to do likewise not only sets a bad example by encouraging uninteresting writing, it dilutes the good stuff that's already there. It's obvious that is what's occurred here -- the lettercol has taken up so large a fraction of each issue that it's become the dominant topic of conversation within the issue. To pack as many letters into an issue as possible, a reduced typeface has been used throughout the zine, which frankly is hard on the eyes. Layout has also suffered in terms of easy readability, and interior art is skimpy to nonexistent for pages upon pages.

Not long ago I ran across a quote from a famous writer who, when asked by a friend why a recent letter was longer than usual, responded by saying (and I paraphrase) that he was in a hurry and didn't have the time to make it shorter. I suppose that's what's happening here -- the editors just don't have the time to make the letters column more concise. So what we get is people writing to tell of passing a medical exam, or about what their Chinese roommate is up to, or on being a "cultural relativist", whatever the hell that is. There is also an immense amount of cross-talk of correspondents being allowed to comment directly to other correspondents from previous issues, as if the FOSFax letters column was one big APA. It's gotten to the point where the letters column has become the focal point of the fanzine, just about to the point of making the editors unnecessary.

And it's a damn shame, because FOSFax is basically a likeable and interesting fanzine except for that. Some of the best book and convention reviews I've read lately have been printed there, and quite often there's fan news and views you don't seem to find in File 770 or other newszines. It's a worthwhile fanzine that seems about to be overwhelmed by an out-of-control letters column that's already taking up well over half of the available space.

And it wouldn't take much to make it an even better fanzine, if only the editors would do a little more editing.

Issues Reviewed: Delineator #7 (July, 1989), from Alan White, 455 E. 7th St. #4, San Jacinto, CA 92383; available for \$10 in cash or stamps. Pulsar! Science Fiction Quarterly #14 (Summer '89), from Tony Ubelhor, P.O. Box 886, Evansville, IN 47706-0886; available for \$3.50 per issue or \$12 per year (4 issues), arranged trade, or the fannish "usual". FOSFax (several issues compositely reviewed), from FOSFA (editors Timothy Lane and Janice Moore), P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281; free to FOSFA members (\$18 per year dues), \$2 per issue. \$15 per year (12 issues), or for arranged trades.

((Ed. note: Mr. Bivens isn't always this surly, and has even been known to pet dogs and kiss small children on occasion. On most other subjects he's not nearly so outspoken, with the possible exception of whether National League baseball is really all that much better than the American League version of the game (don't get him started on that!). And yes, he'll be back again next issue.))

-- Patrick J. Gibbs
Critic in Residence

Every year the Hugo Winner for Best Novel gets a fair amount of attention as the publisher issues a new paperback edition with "Hugo Winner" inside of a gold seal or star. As a service to our readers we now bring you, our reading public, a survey of the Hugo Winners for fiction for the year 1989:

Best Short Story: "Kirinyaga" - Mike Resnick
Best Novella: "The Last of the Winnebagoes" - Connie Willis
Best Novelette: "Schrodinger's Kittens" - George Alec Effinger
Best Novel: CYTEEN - C. J. Cherryh

An even more valuable service has been performed by Editor Gardner Dozois in The Year's Best Science Fiction, Sixth Annual Collection (St. Martin's Press \$13.95, 596 pp.). He has again assembled a humongous paperback with a comprehensive collection of the best short SF from the past year. This year he has all three of the short fiction Hugo winners and half of the nominees.

. Mike Resnick won Best Short Story for "Kirinyaga". Set in the same universe as his novel IVORY, the story deals with the clash of two cultures on a planetary colony of the last adherents to the old ways of pre-colonial Kenya. In IVORY Resnick wrote of the last of the Masai tribe. Here he depicts the Kikuyu on their new home, the planet Kirinyaga, faraway from the teeming city in Kenya that bore the same name. When the witch doctor of the Kikuyu persists in such practices as infanticide, the Terran authorities, known simply as "Maintenance", send an investigator.

The narrative is told in the first person by the witch doctor. He is a strange one, with a university education and determined to uphold the tribal traditions of the Kikuyu. "Kirinyaga" could be the opening of a novel length story. That does not take away from its quality -- just don't expect the short story "gotcha" sort of pay-off at the end.

. "The Last of the Winnebagoes" by Connie Willis won the Best Novella Hugo and deservedly so. Willis gives us a picture of a world in the year 2008 that is full of shortages. David McCombe is a photojournalist in Phoenix, Arizona and gets the assignment to cover the visit of a retired couple who are traveling the country in the last Winnebago motor home extant. There are so many nice touches to this story. McCombe is given a new camera, an eisenstadt, that is able to operate automatically and compose, focus and photograph everything that occurs in front of it, but it doesn't look like a camera. He can capture his subjects close up before they pose. Willis succeeds in making the whole greater than the parts. In a particularly evocative fashion she includes McCombe's hidden past and his guilt, the role of government and the place dogs have in our lives. It is as rich as bittersweet chocolate.

. George Alec Effinger has created an alternate universe in his novel "When Gravity Fails" with a city somewhere in the Middle East with an Old Quarter that has a remarkable resemblance to New Orleans. In his Hugo Award winning Novelette, "Schrodinger's Kittens", we return to that milieu. In "Kittens" Effinger mixes in some quantum physics. Jehan Fatima Ashufi, a young woman in the Budayeen, has a gift of second sight into the alternate futures some scientists extrapolate from quantum physics.

The title is a reference to the famous "thought experiment" by the German physicist Schrodinger concerning the inability of an experimenter to measure the emissions of sub-atomic particles as both particles and waves at the same time. The skill with which Effinger weaves scenes from various alternate futures in his narrative is truly impressive. It is a stimulating speculation on the nature of reality.

. The "big one" went to CYTEEN by C. J. Cherryh (Warner Books, \$18.95, 680 pp). This novel is so big that the paperback edition was broken down into three volumes. Cherryh again works within the same universe she first created years ago in such books as DOWNBELOW STATION. This is a novel founded upon the Byzantine plotting of different political factions from different planets - similar to Gordon Dickson's Dorsai stories.

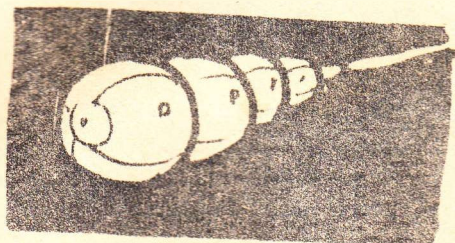
What makes CYTEEN distinctive is the exploration of the human consequences of cloning, artificial intelligence and genetic manipulation. Cherryh picks up where Aldous Huxley left off years ago in BRAVE NEW WORLD. If someone like Heinlein had written this book anytime in the past 20 years, it would be considered a breakthrough SF novel on these topics. I just wish there was a dash of Heinlein's style in the characters. I did not find anyone I liked.

I do not mean that the book fails to engage the reader. There is plenty of intrigue. Cyteen is the planet upon which the Union (those interstellar colonies united against Earth) depended for such biological science. The genius (literally) in charge of such research is Ariane Emory, who is also the most powerful person on Cyteen.

After we are introduced to this universe of plots and counterplots, we spend the rest of the novel resolving the complications created by the murder of Ariane Emory and her "resurrection" in a genetic double. Most of the book deals with challenge for the second Ariane Emory to discover herself and her origins and then to assume the political power of her predecessor without meeting the same fate.

Be forewarned, the ending is a perfect setup for at least one more book. Ironically, breaking the book into three volumes for the paperback edition was nothing more than a publishing gimmick. There are no natural divisions in this novel and it should have been kept intact.

Although 1988 was not a particularly notable year for SF, the quality of the Hugo winners (and nominees) cannot be denied. The Year's Best Science Fiction should be on every fan's shelf.



CYTEEN is a challenging book, requiring the reader to immerse himself in order to keep up with the plot. But it is the most provocative science fiction dealing with biology and the "soft" science in many years. Cherryh has followed the mandate of science fiction literature to explore the human issues raised by a series of "what ifs". She fully earned her Hugo with this book. It's gratifying to see the Worldcon's members get it right.

Taral Wayne, 1812-415 Willowdale Ave., Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 4B5, Canada.

Personally, Torus isn't my favorite fanzine either. But it can be relied on to publish anything. All the same, I disagree that the folio published in number 4 was that much of a waste of space. It's not something that should be done often, but surely once is okay? There were differences between the pieces in proportion, emphasis, etc. That are the sort every artists faces when trying to decided how to finish a piece. This time I decided to "finalize" them all, to show how these decisions produce different final art. This, I think, can be said once, no? Does the name "Sorayana" many anything to you? Oh well, my little joke is very little...



Catherine Mintz, 810 S. Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Sorry to miss loccking your last ish, no, wait, that's the wrong phrase. Actually, it looks like it took a blue Taurus to make ANVIL readers blue. How can you resist making it 50? And then 51? And then.... I was rather hoping the 'possum would consider barbecue at some point: I need a good receipt, as they used to say.

I can present statistical evidence that tends to refute -- well, raise some questions -- about Buck Coulson's article naming names. I've known one person with the same last name, first name, and birthday; one family where all the names of the members duplicated my own family, except for myself -- they had no daughter; one person with the same first name, last name, and profession as my husband; and one person who duplicated my married name and profession. I am resigned to receiving phone calls from people I haven't met for people I didn't know existed. In fandom, however, my name is still one and only, although I notice in the FANDOM DIRECTORY that there is, finally, another Mintz.

I was puzzled by Eva Hauser's article on her American vacation: I didn't recognize the country she was talking about. The comfort of life...? The naive patriotism I did recognize, since I have only to go down to Independence Mall to see a film in a similar vein. It is always faintly embarrassing to tour with foreign visitors, since it's like explaining quaint family customs to an outsider. Yes, we-really-feel-that-way-and-like-it-fine-thanks. Seriously, I appreciate reading Eva's different point of view, it's just that, living in a big, poor city I see so much of the frantic underbelly...

Ruth Shields, 1410 McDowell Road, Jackson, MS 39204

Enjoyed ANVIL 49... you really do have too good a zine here to let it die, but I can understand your not wanting to be held to a schedule. I will remove you from Smart-Ash's mailing list, since we are on a limited budget and print-run

THE ANVIL CHORUS

these days, but I hope you will keep me on your mailing list if you do continue to publish ANVILs (or anything else!) and I promise to respond at least often enough that you will know how much I enjoy your efforts. I loved the cover of #49. Maybe that's why my "library" never seems to say in order -- my ghost-readers aren't refiling the books properly!

John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, IN 47904

I haven't been commenting on ANVIL very much, but I'm writing to say a fanzine review column is a good thing to have just as your spectrum-seeing reviewer cogitated. Hope it continues to appear.

Glad to see Kathleen Gallagher's range increasing, and a column by Buck Coulson.

Taras Wolansky, 100 Montgomery St., Jersey City, NJ 07302

Sorry to hear you are gafiating. Also sorry you didn't print my letter: I'm a painstaking writer. Did you say you were sending it on to Bruno Ogorelec? If not, please let me know so I can. ((Yes, I sent it to Bruno.))

Teddy Harvia, 7209 DeVille Drive, NRH, TX 76180-8257

Four-year-old Matilda liked Brad Foster's cover art. As for its realism, she immediately recognized the characters as ghosts.

Does your "naughty in the bushes" refer to the first taboo or second? I have often broken the first in the bushes. The second never. Maybe I will next time a WorldCon is held at Yellowstone. ((There's more than one naughty in the bushes????!! --cp))

I found Buck Coulson's article of nominal interest. I have encountered a number of other David Thayers in my life. My decision to use a pen name for my cartoons was a precaution against one in fandom. The resulting confusion was over one fan with multiple names rather than multiple fans with one name.

I was mildly amused by Roy G. Bivens' label "fanzine ghetto". Contributing to fanzines has given me a creative freedom that I have never experienced in my paid work. Escape for me is into fanzines not out of them.

Garth Spencer's letter of comment reminded me of the situation in Harry Harrison's Deathworld novels. Antagonistic Earthlings land on an alien planet and discover a hostile environment. But the lifeforms on the planet are only reflecting man's hostility in self-defense. In fandom I have found that a friendly attitude makes surviving and enjoying easier. And unlike the reflective life in Deathworld, I do not react openly to hostile fans I meet.

THE ANVIL CHORUS

Craig Ledbetter, Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325

A bit tardy, aren't I? Blame it on watching too many Euro-horror films or taking care of two daughters (9 months and 4 years of age), but not both (at least at the same time. What a convoluted opening.) Congratulations on the 10th anniversary of ANVIL. // As histories go, your opening discussion of ANVIL provided latecomers, like myself, an excellent overview to all the permutations ANVIL went through. MOVIE TIME was the fave this time. Hooray, someone else who like the film version of SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES. All the films you discussed received intelligent, thought provoking readings. Charlotte, you really should do this more often! Your comments on THE HIDDEN were the best I've read on that film, and I read lots of reviews.

Now that I've gotten the last few ANVILs, the letter column is starting to make sense (or am I getting sick?).

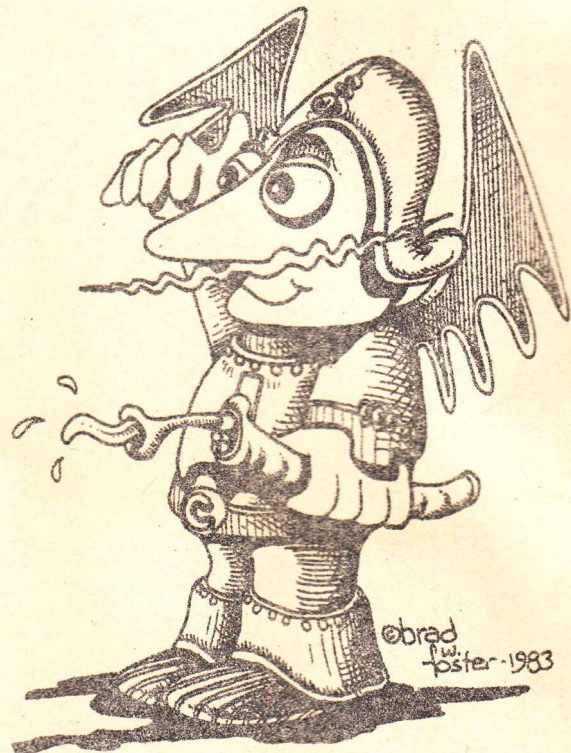
Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224

Time must be pressing in on you, like you say in your editorial, I found half of this issue stapled in backwards. At first I thought the letter column seemed unusually incoherent, then I noticed that I was jumping from page 13 to page 22 to page 20, etc. ((Oops!!))

Lovely Foster cover. I was going to compliment you on mimeoing it so expertly then noticed that it had been xeroxed. Pretty brave of you to run twilltone through your copier. ((No, Brian, that's not bravery, that's ignorance. Enlighten me, please. What can happen?))

Buck Coulson wonders if other fans ever see "themselves" in print, and are equally startled if they do." I was pretty startled the first time I saw a book written by Jerry Earl Brown. Brown's a pretty common name though Rosal George Brown is the only other SF author named Brown I can think of. And Earl is not your common, everyday, household sort of name - first or middle. So finding those two names together on a book did and still does give me a start. Even scarier, though one that doesn't bother me as much, was a notice of a gallery opening for artist "Brian E. Brown:" no idea what that "E" stands for. I was too scared to call for fear of finding out that it stood for "Earl".

At first I thought Eva Hauser's "American Vacation" was some kind of surreal story, a satire of American life, some sort of put-on. Then I noticed her letter in the letter column with its



Czechoslovakia address. Well, now. Then it does make sense and America, and particularly American waste, must have been a shock to her.

Interesting idea - teaching psychology using SF films to illustrate various types of behavior. I'm surprised that Marie Rengstorff has been able to find enough films to use. The impression I too often have is of SF films all being about stomping, hacking, burning some monstrous evil before getting eaten by it. An appropriately Freudian subject I'm sure, but seemingly of limited scope.

It would have been nice if Roy G. Bivens had included his address so that those fan-eds who don't already have him on their mailing lists could send their zine to him for review. It's nice to see long thoughtful reviews of fanzines. He makes some good points - such as that Other Realms efforts to cover the entire field becomes counterproductive.

Roy's comment about Torus -- well, I do agree that over all there is a sterile feel to the zine. But his comments on the anti-pornography bill discussed in Torus 4 seem off the mark. Roy says the issues discussed in this article aren't of much interest to "fans," just writers and publishers. But censorship is as important to the people wanting to read what they will as it is to the people who want to write or publish what they will. Moreover, the thrust of the article was that fairly standard or classic works of SF would not pass muster under this proposed law. Works that were never thought pornographic before but which could be declared so under the very loose definition of pornography used in that bill. A bill that could turn Anne McCaffrey into a "pornographer" is a threat -- not to mere fandom or the SF community, but to society at large because McCaffrey is about as middle-of-the-road as you can get. The examples serve to show that this law is reckless and ill-thought through.

Besides saying that fans aren't interested in censorship, Roy also says that this article ought to have appeared in Locus or some SFWA publication, presumably as a community service notice. In saying this, Roy implies that some sort of editorial uberboard distributes articles and determines who gets to publish what. It just ain't so. The three editors of Torus found this article in a Toronto Sunday Supplement and decided it was of interest to fans and would go well with their fanzine. Fanzine editors grab what they can when it comes to material for their zines. Sometimes they'll pass on an article they didn't quite like, but most times they either use it or return it to the writer. If the editors hadn't liked the article, it would never have been passed on to another fanzine, it would have just died. And why should Locus or the Science Fiction Writers of America care a whit for some law in Canada. Isn't it, properly speaking, the sort of issue that Canadian fanzines should cover?

That's a very strange letter from Mark Manning. I recognized the fanzines behind Panjandrum (Pulsar) and "Medieval Stories and Verses (The Renaissance Fan)" but not any of the others.

P.S. The media up here has been talking about a black student on a "Freedom Ride" tour being denied use of a bathroom in Birmingham because of her race. Hear any mention of this down there? ((Yes. It distresses me that a person would level such a charge, the media would print it, and people reading it

THE ANVIL CHORUS

from far away would think the charges might be true. The rest room in question was out of order. It's too bad the young black girl was so anxious to find inequity. "Public" means just that, whether it be parks, restrooms, libraries, or whatever. Thanks for asking about it in such a neutral way. \\ Did you read about/see on TV those riots in Virginia Beach, VA? The local police called out to stop the looting and vandalism had dogs, and used them. (Guess which city was referred to in this connection?) After the dust had settled, the students protested the use of dogs, saying it was because of their race. Funny, I thought it was because they were breaking windows and stealing stuff. --cp))

Udo Emmerich, Steffenstrasse 39, D-4000 Dusseldorf 11, West Germany

This year Jersey was invaded by Germans again (since World War II). Fifteen Germans are here at EasterCon, more than in previous years. German fans are more and more interested in international fandom.

Jeanne M. Mealy, 4157 Lyndale Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55409

Thanks for ANVIL 49. The first page of "Charlotte's Web" was upside down. I've got some time off between temp jobs, which is a mixed blessing: I'm not earning money, but I AM getting caught up on fanac like locs and apazines. I hope there is another ANVIL soon, but will try to be patient and wait for when it's a good time for you. Heaven knows that Rune has had to wait through job searches (both mine and Dave's).

Kathleen paints a wonderful picture of summer spent in various stages of childhood. I've never been water skiing, though, and read reminiscences of such activity with mixed fascinating and puzzlement.

Eva Hauser's "American Vacation" was fun to read. I kept wondering who they spent time with, and where, to get some of the impressions they did. For example, the nonsmoking campaign. Did she mean that people don't smoke when the signs say so? Not always, unfortunately.

Bob Shaw's "Christmas" greetings were amusing. I am glad that living on ice cream pulled him through a bout with bronchitis. Few things are as sobering as finding out that we have something that people have died of, not just an excuse for staying home and existing only on ice cream. (Rum-flavored?)

Glad to see Roy G. Bivens' fanzine reviews (color commentaries?) Nice of him to resist contributing to the greenhouse effect by focusing on just a few zines. He really didn't do much for OtherRealms, though, beyond commenting that it's a "competent" fanzine. He spent too much time wondering if it's a commercial venture rather than telling us about the content/style.

To Garth Spencer about temper fits: Yeah, I know what you mean. I occasionally give vent to frustrations and other annoyances with anger, and it can get scary. I'm embarrassed about fighting dirty (with sarcasm), and even throw things (not usually at the person I'm mad at), generally kicking up quite a ruckus. You're right -- it doesn't do bystanders any good, and may alarm them even if all you're doing is giving off a little steam at the Murphy's Law

THE ANVIL CHORUS

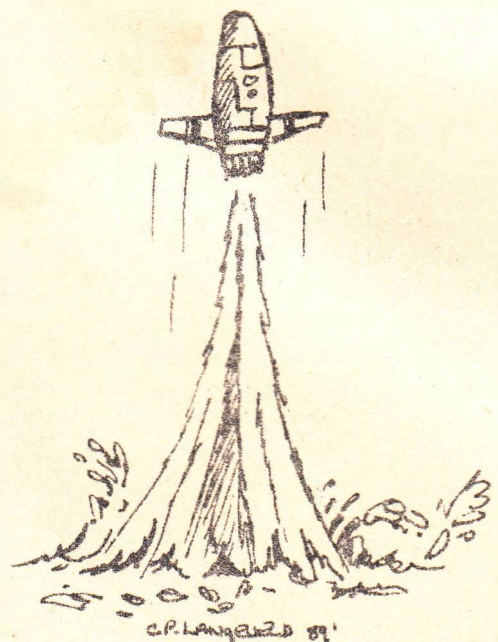
Universe. There are other ways to work out unhappiness, and more productive approaches to anger. The Cosmic View can even be just about next week or year, I've found. Appreciating the absurdity of it all can help, too. I remember one incident at a new job where I was learning typesetting. Alone in the office, I began to run out a long file of band listings. I incorrectly set the space setting between entires: instead of the lines being one after the other, there was a solid inch of space between them. YARDS of the photo-typesetting paper was reeling out onto my numb hands, and I didn't know how to stop it. In the midst of wondering if they'd kill me or fire me first, I saw a listing for a band called The Minnesota Barking Ducks. Suddenly, a message about the absurdity of life was flashing in neon -- how could I take ANYTHING seriously when there existed a band called The Minnesota Barking Ducks? I was neither fired nor killed, and learned more than a few things that day about typesetting and having a sense of humor.

(Another odd thing: While typing this mention of absurd things, there was a weather warning on TV about severe thunderstorms. Dudley Moore in "Wholly Moses" was at that moment telling someone that God would send thunderbolts to punish them for disrespect!)

Garth mentions his feelings of inadequacy when Harry Warner tosses historical bits into his locs. Certain poets did the same thing with an even greater vengeance -- T.S. Eliot, for instance. The explanatory footnotes were often far longer than the poems in my college English book! Apparently the prevailing attitude was "If you're too dumb to catch all of my learned references, you're too dumb to understand what I'm writing about." I had to admit that I'm NOT as learned as many people from years ago, but I'm also angered by the smugness.

Ben Schilling, 45605 Fox Lane E., Apt
206, Utica, MI 48087-4228

You're probably wondering why I didn't loc ANVIL 47. That's because I was in Egypt this summer and a fair portion of my mail just never caught up with me, with things sent by other methods than first class being the most likely to disappear. ANVIL 47 was one of those things. Tell Bruno that he wasn't the last one on the block to receive his copy. Mine still hasn't arrived. I did write and try to tell you than, but the letter came back, apparently the victim of your difficulties with the Post Awful. I once got a letter that had been in the system for about seven years. I suspect that the person was mighty unhappy with me for not answering, but he was a student at the University of Texas - El Paso when he mailed. I doubt that he was still living in the same dorm seven years



THE ANVIL CHORUS

later. The Post Office did apologize, in both English and Spanish, via a form letter.

You know that most people quit after they reach issue fifty, not issue forty nine. Are you afraid that issue fifty would have some special significance and that you'd then continue with the zine? If you really are going out of business, you will be missed. I guess this is my last loc of ANVIL. ((and then again, maybe it's not. --cp))

Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6S 3L6, Canada

I've always liked the idea of a Fannish Olympics and you've made a good start on some of the core vents. I'd be interested in signing up for the Electric Mimeo Two-handed Slip-sheet Race as well as the Hand Cranked Mimeo One Handed Slipsheeting Race along with the Beat the Neo to the Last Beer Dash (after competing in the other two, of course.) Collation is always a good skill to test along with Electrostencil Paste-Up (with and without Alcoholic Accompaniment... although the former is not for the squeamish or those with a cleanliness fetish.) Large Issue Hand Stapling should bring out the trufan in those who attempt it while my own favorite would probably be the Party to Party Corridor Obstacle Race (With Full Liquid Refreshment Accompaniment.) Do let me know what con or club meeting you decide to run these Olympics at: I'll do my best to be there and bring glory to this glorious Dominion!

I doubt I'll ever see my own name in print other than in the fanzines I contribute to because as far as I know there are only about nine Glicksohns in the world (it's "about" because I'm not really sure if one of my cousins has married and changed her name yet) and they're all members of my family and none of them is a writer. I've never been Tuckerized (yet) although I do have a walk-on part in a Joe Haldeman STAR TREK novel in which my name is transformed into an appropriate alien-sounding character. But I never expect to pick up a novel and just "find" my last name used in it. (Speaking, as Buck was, of fannish doubles I'm very surprised nobody mentioned the infamous Bob "Fake" Shaw who was active in Scottish fandom a few years back. His reputation was not particularly good so most British fanzines referred to him as I did in the line above so as not to confuse newer readers who might only know the "real" BoSH.) I used to get an excellent fanzine called CITABEL from a George Proctor in Texas. I'd imagine this is the same chap you mention as writing books nowadays. I guess I can close my file on that particular 'zine!

It must be nice to have such strong memories of being a child as Kathleen does. If I didn't write it down I wouldn't remember what I did last month, let alone last year or last decade or as a child. I have maybe half a dozen clear memories of the 11 years I spent growing up as a child in Britain and some of those are undoubtedly the result of repeated exposure to family stories of "cute" stuff I did as a small boy. When I read a novel in which a protagonist vividly recalls an entire scene, complete with dialogue, from several years in the past I always assume this is just a literary device but there do seem to be some people who can recreate a hell of a lot more of their past than I'd ever imagine would be possible.

Interesting to see a Czech's-eye view of American (or at least of the US) and hard to deny some of the suggestions of conspicuous over-consumption Eva and



her husband observed. Equally had to believe, though, is her conclusion that "everybody" in the US "is proud to do his best in his job... This has certainly not been my impression of the American worker as gleaned through a couple of hundred visits over the last twenty-nine years!

I don't recognize Roy Bivens name but I'm delighted to see anyone attempt a real fanzine review column: fanzine reviews in a fanzine may strengthen the self-referential nature of our increasingly-isolated community but as far as I'm concerned that's all for the best! Still, despite the fact that Roy seems to know a fair amount about the fanzine scene ("Then how is it you don't know him?" a little paranoid voice whispers in my ear, causing me to hit myself in the side of the head and spill my martini) he occasionally makes some rather unusual statements. For instance, he claims that SFR was a "pure reviewzine." Hell, then what were all those columns, articles and letters doing in it? And he wonders why Brad Foster and "Sheila"? Birkhead are ignored outside of fanzines, seeming not to be sure of Sheryl's first name despite her twenty

years of active fanzine participation and apparently unaware of Brad's career as an underground comix artist. Strangely contradictory to his suggestion that he knows the fanzine field quite well. By and large, though, his observations and commentaries are quite good. Terry Bohman deserves at least a Hugo nomination for his writing in AIRGLOW and while I don't think TORUS is quite as vapid as Roy finds it I agree that Mike Skeet's cartoons deserve wider exposure (and Mike's name appears in TORUS so why would Roy not know what sex "Skeet" was? Is this a fannish hoax or just another Will Straw man? Obscure Fannish Reference #87: explanations available from Harry Warner Jr.)

((Re Sheila/Sheryl Birkhead: Roy says it was listed as "Sheila" Birkhead in OtherRealms, which made him wonder if the editor was just careless of maybe unfamiliar with the names of non-pro artists. However, Roy admits he doesn't have an excuse of missing seeing Mike Skeet's name listed in Torus, though. He thinks it was probably due to onset of senility, or maybe the effects of too many beers that night, he's not sure which. --cp))

We all have our own stories about the Mysterious Ways in which the Post Office works, although your own experience are certainly not to be slighted. Years ago I returned an Alex Eisenstein fanzine cover to Alex in Chicago but he never received it. After waiting a while he called me and I put a trace on it. It showed up in the Chicago dead-letter office. Alex went down, showed his ID and even demonstrated that the package had been correctly addressed. So they gave it to him, right? Wrong, logic breath! They shipped it back to me and made me re-address it to the same address I'd sent it to previously! Now you come up with an explanation for that behavior...

I think Lloyd's got it a bit backward: a loc is the place to praise new young faneds and encourage them to stay around. A review should be honest (but not

THE ANVIL CHORUS

cruel) since it is written both for the fanzine editor and those who might consider getting the fanzine. A review can try to balance criticism with praise (even if it takes some acrobatic back-bending to do so) but it should not sugar-coat the reviewer's true impression of the fanzine.

According to publishing sources THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS is scheduled (yet again) for publication in 1991. I'll believe this when I actually hold a copy in my hands (or have my nurse hold it for me as I doubt I'll have the strength unless my wheelchair has a built in book rest that'll accommodate all three volumes.) I anticipate enjoying a new ANVIL long before I get to see Ellison's Albatross.

Lawrence Watt-Evans, 5 Solitaire Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20878-4119

ANVIL 49 just arrived; good to see it. I do hope you'll manage at least one more issue, so as to achieve that fiftieth issue. I like round numbers.

In response to Buck Coulson's column, I'd like to point out that the reason I write under a stupid pen name like Lawrence Watt-Evans is that another Lawrence Evans got published first. I saw one of his books on the shelves in 1978, and thereafter always insisted on including the "Watt"--whereupon Lester del Rey added the hyphen.

And there are two different writers named Larry Evans who are partly responsible for my absolute refusal to even answer to "Larry" instead of "Lawrence." They're chessplayers. I believe Larry Evans is the current U.S. champion, isn't he? The other one, who achieved master status a year or two later, is called Other Evans, but they've both written books on chess.

I learned to play chess when I was about six. I wasn't a prodigy, or anything, but I was good at it, for a kid--I could beat my father regularly by the time I was ten. And I gave it up completely a couple of years later, and swore off allowing the nickname "Larry" (which I already actively disliked) because of the stupid jokes about me and Larry Evans. I got very tired of receiving copies of Evans' books as gag gifts. That was when, and why, I started insisting that I was Lawrence Watt Evans or L.W. Evans, not Lawrence Evans or Larry Evans.

((Speaking of chess, I once had a neighbor, a boy of about 12 or 13 named Mike Lucas who lived with his mother. I looked out the window one day to see a disturbance in the street and went down to investigate. Mike's mother was having a psychotic episode -- classic textbook case of something. She spoke to God, and listened, but when she started to molest the police officer, I took Mike home with me. To pass the time, and take his mind off things, I taught him to play chess. He took it and ran with it. He borrowed our books on chess, and went on to become Alabama's junior champion. I actually got to use the line, when his name came up in conversation during a chess event in a local park, "Mike Lucas? Yes, I know him. I taught him to play." I got a look of totally undeserved admiration. Several years later, when we were no longer neighbors, we heard he was playing in a tournament downtown. Valerie and I went to the Hyatt on the off chance we might see him. And see him we did. We found him at a game, complete with the little dual clocks, and he was glad to see us. "Come on out in the hall where we can talk," he said. We must have chatted for 10 or 15 minutes, and he was not at all concerned that

the clock was running. I heard that he went to Duke University, but have now lost touch. [His mother was all right, by the way. When she came home from the hospital a week or so later, she had no memory of the episode. It seems she did this every 5 or 10 years, and inbetween was a kind, intelligent lady.] --cp))

I haven't even mentioned the TV actor named Larry Evans. He was a regular one season on the old series "Medical Center." When I started writing professionally, I didn't get more chess books, but I started getting books by another Larry Evans--or maybe it was one of the chessplayers, I don't know--who wrote things like How to Draw Robots and Spaceships, or Three-Dimensional Mazes. This was even though I hadn't been called Larry for a decade or so.

So when I sold my first novel I tried to use a pen name totally unlike my real name, and Lester del Rey talked me out of it and came up with the hyphen instead. Since then I haven't heard of any other Larry Evanses or Lawrence Evanses, except for Lawrence J. Evans, whose insurance bill I once got--his policy number was identical with mine except that one digit was an 8 instead of a 3. And there are no other Watt-Evanses at all, except my mother--thank goodness!

I really enjoyed the pieces by Kathleen Gallagher and Eva Hauser and Bob Shaw. I'm not sure why, but Kathleen's used frogs really amused me. Eva Hauser's article was interesting in its unfamiliar point of view, since I seem to hear so often these days that American's have lost that feeling of optimism and confidence that they used to have. And Bob Shaw is always fun. Has England declared him a National Treasure yet?

((I think Eva, visiting the locale she did, picked up on the "holiday" mood of the people she was around. Which, if I may point out to all those readers who noted it, shows only too clearly how our image or conception of a people or a nation may be based on limited or narrow experiences. --cp))



I'LL PUBLISH NO
WARNER LETTER
BEFORE ITS TIME

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

This new issue is a fine one, with an ideal top of the show in the form of Brad's wonderful cover. I've been griping because so many Foster illustrations have been appearing in small dimensions so it's doubly gratifying to find one that fills an entire page (but would look even better if enlarged to poster size for hanging on fannish walls).

I can't exactly say with honesty that I envy you your new car because I've never liked the responsibility of new car ownership, preferring to buy mine used and then when things go wrong with them I can grumble about the lack of care

THE ANVIL CHORUS

bestowed by the previous owner instead of acknowledging that I probably haven't done the proper maintenance. But I'm glad you've broken the VW umbilical cord. I don't know how it is in Birmingham but in Hagerstown, every VW owner apparently labors under a hypnotic spell which forces him or her to remove the muffler before driving it everywhere. The streets are much quieter now that there aren't many Beetles remaining in service.

To the best of my knowledge, I'm the only Harry Warner who has ever been active in fandom. But I long ago grew accustomed to hearing my name over the air and seeing it in mundane publications. The Harry Warner who was one of the movie-making Warners got lots of publicity during his lifespan and still bobs up frequently in new books about Hollywood's golden age. Then there was a Harry Warner who was first a minor league manager and then a coach for the Toronto Blue Jays and was frequently mentioned in The Sporting News; I don't know if he is still active in organized baseball but I've lost track of him. Additionally, H.B. Warner was an actor who shared my initials (I don't know what his first name was but I suspect it was Harry and he used only initials to prevent confusion with the executive) and was in the cast of many movies in my youth, most notably as Christ in King of Kings. Buck Coulson failed to mention fandom's Bob Stewarts. There were three or four of them, all active at more or less the same time around the middle of the century. Currently we have two Bob Shaws, the older one who became a famous pro, and a younger fan in the United Kingdom.

Eva Hauser's reactions to the United States are gratifying. She probably would have modified her all-out favorable impression if she had stayed long enough and spent enough time inspecting some of the less savory things in this nation. But at least she reinforces the general impression I'm getting that the average person in communist and iron curtain nations is not as satisfied with conditions there as the extreme left wingers in the United States would have us believe. What's been happening in China is relevant, of course.

I must try to remember to write to the original Bob Shaw, proposing a joining of forces between his Christmas Should Be a Moveable Feast Association and my Society to Put the X Back into Xmas. His idea bout how to improve sales of his novels, by having them burned in quantities, in an ingenious one.

Roy Bivens' belief that "new desktop copiers... so inexpensive that mimeography... is becoming an endangered species" seems doubtful to me. Those copiers may be inexpensive in contrast to the massive large copiers that are needed for some business purposes. But they are still expensive when compared with the amount a fan would spend for a used mimeograph and there is no comparison in operating expenses. I don't think any brand of desktop copiers could produce fanzines for less than five or six cents per side of each page, if you count in the cost of the toner, the cost of the paper, and the cost of the copier depreciated over a useful life of perhaps eight or ten years. Of course, copying is the best method of turning out fanzines meant for extremely small circulation like those in the smaller apas or in circumstances where the fan can arrange for using a business firm's copiers and supplies without getting fired.

Your success in controlling your temper might be turned into a profit-making sideline for you. I can think of quite a few fans and pros who could use a course of studies in that discipline as taught by you. My own temper problem

THE ANVIL CHORUS

has been somewhat different. I've very seldom let it run loose and cause me to say or do things I later regretted. But the effort of restraining that temper has usually been plainly visible to anyone around me and sometimes I've frightened people more severely by my restraint; people tell me that my face goes deathly white and my expression becomes something like Dr. Jekyll at the moment when Mr. Hyde is making an entrance.

Fannish Olympics event suggestion: races to determine who can remove fastest and with least damage the staples from fanzines that go through the mail folded and stapled to themselves at one edge. Points deducted if the contestant accidentally removes a staple that should be left in place or uses a machine specifically meant for this purpose; points added if anyone does it with only fingers and fingernails instead of a nail file or letter opener.

Dick Lynch, P. O. Box 1270, Germantown, MD
20874-0998

I liked the 49th issues of ANVIL a lot, but am distressed that you're thinking of pulling the plug on it, especially just before your milestone 50th issue! Still, I can see where trying to publish a general interest fanzine on a quarterly schedule can wear you down. I hope you decide to keep ANVIL alive, if only on a two-times a year schedule like Nicki and I do with MIMOSA. This gives us time to put together decent issues, without becoming the dominant activity of our free time.

As for Buck Coulson's article on namesakes, there are several other fans with the last name of "Lynch" (including, of course, Nicki), but none that I know of with the first name of Richard. I do have two namesakes that were (or are) famous in their career fields. One is an ex-Defensive Back for the New York Giants, and the other is a Hollywood actor. I don't think they're the same person, but with the number of ex-football players moving on to acting, one never knows.

Alexander R. Slate, 1847 Babcock #406, San Antonio, TX 78229

Sorry to see another fanzine, especially one of the quality of ANVIL go to an irregular publishing schedule. I do hope you can somehow find the energy to keep it going. \\ As for naming names, I too wondered whether you were related to George Proctor, being around Texas for the past 11 years, I've gotten to know George fairly well, although I haven't seen him in a while. I knew George for many years before I got into fanzines and discovered Charlotte and her ANVIL.



THE ANVIL CHORUS

Something I thought was particularly interesting was the contrast of Eva Hauser's article and Ladislav Peska's letter. Eva Hauser's letter was actually quite thought provoking, and I'm not quite sure what she really feels about the way of life in the US. Is she envious at the choices available or is she aghast at the waste, when so many do go without?

Continuing on the same topic; does the freedom of the market economy have to go hand in hand with the prodigious amount of waste, and do such disparities in living conditions. Certainly I believe that the raw materials and ability exist for everyone around the world to enjoy life without starvation and away from the everyday struggle to simply survive. The problem is opportunity and distribution. "There will be poor always," someone once said, even if it is only by comparison. But the question remains, how do we distribute the cost? Who bears the responsibility? Do we let others receive without having earned, and what restrictions get put on what they get? There is no such thing as a free lunch, everything has consequences (Platitudes, I know). But, suppose we raise the health standards of certain third world countries and increase the life expectancy and lower the infant mortality. These countries also tend to have higher birthrates, will this birthrate naturally decline as the standards of living improve? I for one am not convinced that this will necessarily be the case.

But getting back to who pays, capitalism has problems, but so does socialism. From each according to his abilities and to each according to his needs doesn't really work, not in an industrialized society. If you take away personal incentive, productivity and quality drop. So will the rich pay for the poor? be real, the rich spend a lot of time trying to figure out how to keep what they have away from the limited taxation we have now. The poor obviously can't pay, and any more burden on the middle class and the revolution will come.

Marc Ortlieb, P.O. Box 215, Forest Hill, Victoria 3131, Australia

Cath and I will be up to our armpits in dirty nappies by the time you read this. ((I've heard through the fannish grapevine that you are the proud parents of a bouncing baby boy. Congratulations! --cp))

Child Inside has already worked mighty changes on my life. Yesterday I did my driving test. I passed, too. This means that Melbourne drivers are no longer safe. Birmingham drivers should be okay but, given Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and my erratic driving, I'd be careful if I were you. If you seen an orange Ford Cortina with P-plates, avoid it at all costs.

We've been diverting our fannish energy into working on the house - Cath's Dad has been doing most of the work, but he's let me hold a paint brush every now and then. The 'orrible bedroom wallpaper has been stripped and is sitting in rolls, waiting for us to chop it for use as an ANZAPA cover.

I've had a moment to egoscan the latest ANVIL and my head was well and truly swelled by Mark Manning's enjoyable piece. I'd like to be Marc Ortlieb, too. Being had at work writing faanfic and LoCs would be fun. As it is, there are two apa contribs half written on the kitchen table, three pieces of faanfic cluttering up the stove, and a whole pile of unLoCced fanzines in the sink.

I guess that means I'll have to write another article or two but, with bub due, I'm not promising anything. Cath is, but that's another story altogether.

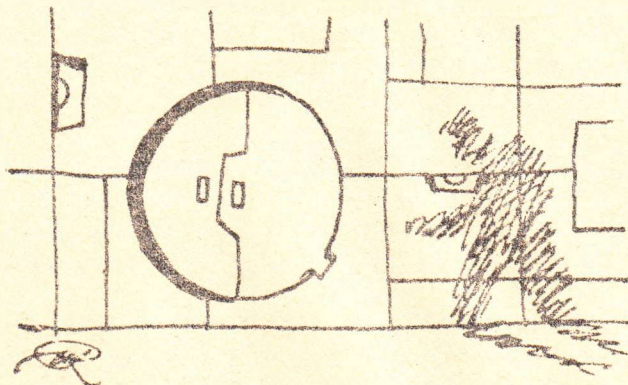
Cath and I aren't great movie-goers and reports on Dune convinced us that it was too gory for us. the only skiffy film I can recall seeing and enjoying over the last three or four years was "The Brother From Another Planet". Terry Gilliam's "Brazil" was dark, nasty, and superbly made, but it wasn't the sort of movie that is easy to enjoy. We've been hitting mainly comedies - "Roger Rabbit" and "A Fish Called Wanda" - more more pleasant than that Buck Rogers stuff.

Sheryl Birkhead, 23629 Woodfield Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20882

While visiting Dick and Nicki Lynch in their new home, they pushed a stack of zines at me and said I could take any of them - but there was one I had to take -- ANVIL. First off, The Package as a whole is might nice. The Taral cover and layout in general was a nice respite from what a lot of zines have.

Once upon a time we had a cat named Tao (Siamese x Persian) who also (a la Miss Kitty) liked to climb UP trees. She never got the hang of getting down and was always determined that it had to be done head first. Hence, she would get herself stuck, turn around and hang upside down - yowling like mad, but refusing to either inch down, run down, or turn around. The technique developed to rescue her was simple and rather ingenious. Someone would halfway hang out the upstairs window with a rope attached to the head of a big, fluffy dustmop, and lower it to where she was ensconced. After the first trial, she learned to step right on board, grab the mop with both "hands" and go for the ride down. She never seemed the least upset once the trip was over - but while she was up in the tree (the same one by the way) it was screams and threats as only a Siamese can produce.

Thanks for putting out such a nice little package! ((And thank you for the kind words. You are hereby added to the once and future mailing list --cp))



Lloyd Penney, 412-4 Lisa Street, Brampton, Ontario, L6T 4B6, Canada

I can tell the Ironmaster about Peter Roberts. Not the Peter Roberts of Birmingham (England, not Alabama - there's another duplication that must cause problems), but the Peter Roberts of Guelph, Ontario, who provides the extremely beery and very popular con suites for Ad Astra. Peter had his stint in fanzine fandom some years ago, and was confused with the other Peter Roberts quite frequently.

Eva Hauser's reaction to the United States is a reaction of many... a land of plenty, a land of waste, a land of ego, a land of consumer products beyond number, and all to a quantity beyond belief, or even tolerance. Canada attracts a large number of immigrants each year, too, and I think it might be because of the quality of life here being similar to the US, but not with the same amount of any of the above, which is more comparable to the way of life they've left behind.

Thanks to Roy Bivens for his comments on TORUS. We're still trying, and experience is the best teacher. The only comment I can offer on his criticisms is that with the four-page Taral portfolio, we were instructed to produce them four-in-a-row as a portfolio by the artist. Skeet is Michael Skeet, editor of MLR, Canada's fannish newszine. Michael's assisted us with several issues of TORUS. Right now, the only people working on it are Keith Soltys and myself.

To Brian Earl Brown... Your definition of "mediafan" matches mine more or less, some people in the Toronto area used to get on my back because I was one of the people who read SF and watched it. To those overly purist fans, I was a mediafan because I watched SF on TV and on the movie screen. The fact I might have had a Cliff Simak book in my hand at the time had no effect in their judgment upon me.

Catherine Mintz's comments on Dune are quite valid. I gather an enormous amount of film wound up on the cutting room floor to produce a very confused final product. If only someone would make a fresh copy of the original shootings, and re-edit for something like a six part TV miniseries, just for example's sake, Dune on film might be saved yet. Aren't I the optimist? ((Speaking of Dune, I recently found a copy of the Dune Coloring and Activity Book on my chair-side table. Surely it was a gag gift someone found on a remainder table and bought for me. --cp))

With the possibility of ANVIL slowing down to stop, what will your Eastern European readers do for their contact with Western Fandom? After seeing letters from Eva Hauser, Ladislav Peska and Damir Coklin, just to name a few of the Eurofen whose names have seen print in this issue and the past, I'm sure they want to keep in touch. If ANVIL disappears, and I hope it doesn't, will another faned be so generous as to open up their fanzine to Eastern Europe? ((Oh, I feel sure of it. I have seen some of my Eastern European correspondents in other zines. They have contact addresses from ANVIL, and so do the US and Canadian faneds. --cp))

Ladislav Peska shouldn't rely too much on movies to glimpse life in America. True, it may be rough and tumble, but it isn't nearly like what the films depict. John Rambo doesn't exist.

THE ANVIL CHORUS

Damir Coklin, I might have met you at New Orleans. That's where Krsto Mazur-
anic shanghaied me into working for the Yugoslavian bid as Canadian agent.

Ladislav Peska, Na dolikach 503, 274 01 Slany, Czechoslovakia (1st letter)

I sent you a copy of SLAN 1/89 with your article about Worldcon 88. We also
reprinted part of your article "Movietime" from ANVIL 48 about the movie "The
Hidden." The story "A Statue For Father" by I. Asimov (from The Science
Fictional Dinosaur) is also printed there.

The price of printing increased about 200 to 300 percent from January. I
don't know how we will print covers for our fanzine. It will be very expen-
sive for us now.

I hope you have received the magazine ZAPISNIK 4/89, and were pleased by the
article about you in it. ((Lada reprinted, from his fanzine, a fannish bio-
graphy of me entitled -- by him, not by me -- "Prima Donna of American Fandom.
Now, nobody knows better than I that I am not "first lady" of American Fandom.
Birmingham (Alabama) fandom, maybe; somewhere in the top ten of Southern
Fandom, maybe. But I am the only lady he knows in American fandom, and it was
certainly great egoboo! The magazine in question is sort of like Life and
Time combined, with a circulation of 220,000. There were articles, with
pictures, on such diverse subjects as art, cultural events, the cosmonauts in
Huntsville, Alabama, movies, fiction, science fiction fandom, updated uniforms
for the military female, pictures and diagrams of our Stealth bomber, food and
fashion. --cp))

Our con "Ufouni ve Slanem" was good, but only with my extreme pains. A week
before opening Milan Dundr - my main collaborator - fell ill. Ten minutes
before opening Vlada Matl, who was to chair the main programming panel discus-
sion with Ondrej Neff, came and said that he had fallen ill, too. The flu
epidemic which played havoc in Czechoslovakia in February hit not only the
organizers but also the spectators. Attendance was about 80 percent compared
with last year. The day after the con I fell ill with the flu also.

((Following are some Good Things that have happened to Lada recently..)) I
won in our club's literary competition with the story "Nove Mysleni" -- (A New
Way of Thinking). One of my programs obtained a very good place in specialist
competition (second place and prize of 1500 Kcs.)

Ondrej Neff gave my name to one of the main characters in his new novel "Mesic
Meho Zivota" (The Month of My Life). The name of the novel is a pun; "mesic"
means both Moon and Month in Czech. This novel takes place on the Moon in the
21st century. Ladislav Peska is a rather goody character but with a dark past
(killer and executioner).

Yes, you are right, my immediate notion about life in the USA may not be right
but I haven't other possibilities. Yes, sometimes I doubt if what I see in
film is truth or fiction.

(2nd letter) We recently celebrated the fifth anniversary of the establish-
ment of our club. We organized a meeting of all former and current members.
We told stories of the early days, reading stories, video, a documentary film

about past actions, computer games, SF lottery (the first prize was your poster from Worldcon in Atlanta), movies and so on were on the program. It was very good.

Yesterday I was in Villdidcon in Prague which took place at the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the first SF club in Czechoslovakia. Zdenek Rampas was one of the five founders. I have become acquainted with Marcel Grun, an eminent Czech astronomer. He liked SLAN very much. The film about landing on the Moon of Apollo 11 was on the program. To this day, I remember that July night twenty years ago.

SLAN obtained a very good seventh place in the vote about the best Czechoslovak fanzine in 1988. There are about 30 fanzines published. "Poutnik" came in first. It's a fact that fanzines that reprint foreign SF stories are the most popular. They are mainly "Poutnik", "Laser", and "Villdidus". I don't want to go this way with our SLAN, I want to do a real fanzine (genzine?).

Winter of 88/89 was a very meaningful period for Czech SF as three anthologies of Czech SF were published. This frequency is, from the point of view of publishing original Czech SF, quite rare. They were published by Mlada Fronta and edited by Vojtech Kantor. They are: LANDING ON RIP, THE GOLD NEWTS HUNTERS, And SCANDAL IN THE THEATRE OF DREAMS. Zdenek Rampas shared on choice of stories to GOLD NEWTS. Eva Hauser had two stories printed (Tomorrow in Agony, Adam and Mikra) in these anthologies.



I read the lines about your life with great interest. ((I can't for the life of me remember what I said -- cp)) Yes, everybody has his own everyday troubles. My problem is how to keep my family on my pay. No, you mustn't think my children are hungry! They are not. But we can't afford to buy all we would wish. I have an older car, a 1980 Lada 1200. We need a new car but it is a luxury item. Imagine: a contemporary Czech car Skoda Favorit, similar to a VW - Golf or Fiat, costs 86,000 Kcs. My income is about 35,000 Kcs per year. And that's why we will have to go in our old car for a long time. The color TV we bought two years ago is our biggest purchase recently. We would like to have a video or foreign holiday, but can't afford it. We have a flat in a block of flats, three rooms and a kitchen. It isn't much for a four person family, but it isn't possible to get a bigger flat for me in Slany. One-family houses are very expensive for young people in Czechoslovakia. I hope our situation will be better after my wife's return to work. She is a nursery school teacher and is going to start work in September of this year.

THE ANVIL CHORUS

Zdenek Rampas, Libocke 281/3, Prague 6, 162 00 Czechoslovakia

Many thanks for ANVIL 48. I am glad to see a new issue, after a small interruption. The last one I received was #45. I asked Lada Peska: he has #46 but no #47. Is there anything you can do to help us? ((I'll see if I can find an extra one and send it along with this, and hope they both don't get lost! --cp))

As an addition to the usual overworked condition of each trufan, there is a new contribution: my second son Pavel was born in November. The coming period of economic bankruptcy - as it seems - is inevitable. Plentiful childbearing is regarded as a hazard here, but how am I able to refuse my wife?

Aren't you going to prepare yourself for a journey to East Europe? Soon some interesting things may happen here (but everything without danger, and cheap for a lady with an American passport). ((You don't know how you tempt me. But because of the language difficulties, I would have to stick close to my friends there who spoke English, and I wouldn't want to be a nuisance. --cp))

I am sending you a special issue of our Interkom dedicated to declaring the 1989 Karel Capek Prize competition. My speech at Parcon '88 is contained therein, also (but nothing interesting enough to translate for you).

