

* * * * * The 14th issue of a bi-weekly fanzine by Andrew
A P P A R A T C H I K Hooper, member fwa, supporter afal, camped out
* * * * * at The Starliter, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103
14 July 28th, 1994 Seattle, WA 98103. This is Drag Bunt Press
* * * * * Production # 190, listening to "My Back Pages."

Gentlemen, energize your ground units!

I SPOKE LAST TIME OF A NEW DTP SYSTEM; and indeed, I can see it from where I type this, just a few yards across the room. Carrie and I took the plunge last week, and used the last of the baseball booty from earlier in the summer to buy a new Compaq 486/66 clone, an HP Laserjet 4L and various up-to-the-minute publishing software, none of which ought to be of any real interest (I find the appearance of computer model names and numbers in a sentence of my construction so distressing that I promise I won't say anything more about it). I've made great strides in figuring out how to run various applications and I'm getting to where I can land a fighter plane without crashing, but the operation of the printer remains mysterious, and there was no hope of getting the problems resolved in time for this issue, so here we are, back to the old stalwart machine on which all but six or seven Drag Bunt Press Productions were composed. Eight years, and who knows how many thousands of pages, most of them padded with Rotsler Monkey Heads and Alien Money. I have expressed dissatisfaction with having a computer which produced fanzines that looked like they were typed on a dirty Selectric, but considering the volume and variety of text it has accommodated, and the varying conditions under which it operated, this has been a pretty good machine after all. I'll miss it, I suppose; or at least miss the callow youth I was when its keys were white and new... ANYWAY, keep an eye out for the gala 15th issue of APPARATCHIK, full re-designed and printed on Mukkinese lizard vellum, coming your way August 11th... THE TIME HAS COME, I'm afraid, to do a little pruning on the APAK mailing list; if you find a red "X" next to the 9 (aka the "trout indicator") on your mailing label, you need to let me know if you would like to continue to receive this fanzine, or this will be the last one you receive. There have been a number of requests to be added to the mailing list, and I am still committed to keeping the list small, and therefore, the whole endeavor financially manageable. As always, APAK recipients who make copies and give them to their fellow fen who are not on the list are regarded as heroic trufen and beloved of Roscoe... This issue will be bundled with the previous three and sent to our stealthy U.K. mailing agent, to be anonymously heaved over the transom of certain fans of distinction. Naturally, I'll edit out all the really unpleasant things I said about Britfandom, but you true-blue Amurrican fans will know what I really think... Lots and lots of great reports have reached me about how much fun was had at Readercon weekend before last. The fund-raising efforts undertaken on behalf of the Tiptree award were more successful and lucrative than on any other single weekend in the history of the award -- single T-shirts customized by Freddie Baer apparently went for around \$200 apiece! And in the same week, we hear that the Wiscon 19 committee has voted to return that convention to the Concourse, a downtown venue with easy access to many Madison attractions. Things are looking up all over... Loyal correspondent and pal Tracy Shannon reports that the papers have been signed and she has legally reverted to her maiden name of Benton... funny name for a girl, I chortled... which allows me to observe that she has debuted at number one as one of the most eligible women in fandom. Bachelors bearing e-stencils should form to the left, please...

"Yes," replied Mr. Player, "Wild Sounds From Outer Space!"

THE COMETARY IMPACTS with Jupiter were an intriguing phenomenon -- it's a lot more appealing to open the morning paper and see a picture of a gas giant in space than, say, Strom Thurmond -- but there's not a whole lot of communal interaction in reading stories in the newspaper; I don't expect to get a lot of mail about what chair you were sitting in while you watched the story on CNN, or what kind of cereal you were eating while you read USA Today.

The most notable event of the past two weeks for me was a Civil War re-enactment Carrie and I attended in Arlington, Washington. (We looked for Glebe Road, but Dan and Lynn were nowhere to be found.) I'd never been to one before, and really wanted to check it out; Carrie had to catch a 4:30 flight to San Francisco that afternoon, but they were promising a battle performance at 11:00 am, and I thought we could be back in time. When I mentioned this she looked at me like I was insane; It's not so far, I replied. I went to get a map. See, it's not even as far as Mt. Vernon. She still just stared at me, as if I were saying something particularly filthy in Farsi. I laid the map down on the table. Something turned over in my mind. Arlington, Washington, I meant; and Mt. Vernon, Washington. I wasn't really talking about driving to Arlington, Virginia that morning, and getting back in time for her flight to San Francisco.

After that horrible little moment -- a kind of Hitchcock instant, where your dearest loved one is revealed to be a raving maniac and East German spy -- the re-enactment itself was slightly anticlimactic. We drove up to this little town in the North Cascade foothills, then stopped at a large pasture taken over as a county park, and let the troopers of the 4th Texas infantry regiment guide us to a parking space. The day was hot and humid, and shade was at a premium in the little treeline that hugged a low ridge beside the Pilchuck river.

This was the site of the Union camp, which was very clean and small. When we arrived, re-enactors (what a cumbersome phrase. Let us refer to them as Blue and Grey Fans, for that is what they most clerly resembled) in Union uniform were already in a line in the field in front of the camp. A few pickets were in the field near the wooded hill-slope that formed it's western border, but most were lying down along a snake-rail fence nehind a small crest in the hay field. Carrie and I hiked around the convenient barbed wire fences that lined the road, and grabbed a likely spot near a line of haybales that ringed the field. At this point, the Union artillery commander came up and spoke to the crowd over a PA system that was hidden among the bales. He warned us to open our mouths and cover our ears when the guns were fired, and described the procedure as his lieutenant led the loading and discharge of a 12 pound rifled gun.

As we were all still quivering with the impact of that firing, the confederate infantry came down the road and into the field, screened by a five-man cavalry unit. I should hasten to note that while there were purportedly three union regiments represented on the field -- 1st. U.S. Cavalry (dismounted), the 3rd. U.S. Regular Infantry regiment, and the 20th Maine Volunteer infantry, along with Battery L, 1st. U.S. Artillery, there could not have been more than fifty men in the entire Union force. The Gray Fen eventually numbered about twice that, and they looked like several hundred as they milled around in the long grass at the other end of the pasture. Most noticeable were Company C, of the 1st. Louisiana Special Battalion, with fire engine red shirts and baggy Zouave trouser, who would have made excellent targets at long range. Accompanying them was a North Carolina regiment, and they beat back the Union pickets, only to have their attack broken up by the fire of the Union artillery. The Grey Fen were very good at judging when the guns were going to fire and flinging themselves to the ground as the imaginary cannister fire swpt through their ranks.

Then the 4th Texas infantry arrived from a trail to the Union right, and enfiladed the Union line, forcing it back to the edge of the camp. The Union reinforcements, in the form of the 1st. Cavalry troopers, stiffened the depleted line, and the guns again sent the confederates retreating. This time they occupied a line about fifty yards in front of the original Union position, and gathering up the wounded, began to slowly retire toward the trails they had entered on. The Union troops set about caring for their own wounded, and brought in some Confederates who were left on the field. Some of the wounded lay convincingly inert where they fell, but most of them got up on their elbows to watch the action. A few of these were dragged into the Union camp, and traded banter with the Chaplain of the 20th Maine. All of the Blue Fen in sight busied themselves with various after-action duties, until a Big-Name Officer noticed the mundanes were all standing around staring at them, as if something else was going to happen. He picked up the microphone and said that he hoped we had enjoyed it, and we applauded, and he invited us to tour the camps, and ask any questions we cared to.

We walked into the Union hospital area, which was a section of open ground with some sheets spread over it. There was a complete surgeon's kit laid out on a folding camp table, but happily nothing contained within it was used. All of the wounded appeared to be suffering from concussion injuries or graze wounds -- a few had a little red food color worked into their shirts -- and there was no need for any amputations. The Blue Fen sat sweating in the shade, their heavy wool jackets partially open, talking very quietly amongst themselves. Small crowds of the public padded through the straw, the swishing of their feet in the stalks audible as they silently observed the role-play. It was interesting looking over the Union guns -- in addition to the 12 lb. Napoleon, there was a small breech-loading Whitworth "screw-gun" and a mountain howitzer -- but after a little while, we felt the need to move off to the picnic area, as much to exit the "event" as to eat our lunch.

We walked past the hucksters in the union camp, people selling various edibles, uniforms, memorabilia, books, and recruiting new members. At one end was an espresso bar. We ended up just sitting at a picnic table in a concrete shelter, listening to people nearby talk. We were apparently close to the overflow camping spot for stray Confederate infantry. A large blustery didact (almost certainly a relative of the Rufous-Sided Towhee) a few tents away detailed the justification behind the Confederate cause in broad libertarian terms. A lot of the trucks parked nearby had bumper stickers with rebel flags on them that proclaimed "Heritage -- not Hate." In fact there seemed to be a lot more Confederate sympathizers -- Gray Fen -- on hand. The Blue Fen seemed less ideologically involved with what they were doing, which was a little disquieting. It also occurred to me that it was just about the only mass gathering of any kind that I had been to in years where there were nothing but white people, and pretty red-necked white people at that, as far as the eye could see. It made me want to go out for Dim Sum.

At the same time, the smell of the powder lingering on the wind was an amazingly powerful, suggestive sensation.

After the action, Carrie and I tried to mentally multiply the smoke, bodies, horses by ten, and the mayhem by a considerably greater factor, and I reflected again on what Oliver Wendell Holmes called "the incommunicable experience." Civil War fan gatherings, open air conventions with muzzle-loading ordinance, come no closer to simulating battle than the SCA comes to presenting the medieval world, but I think everyone dresses better, and the accents are more fun.

Do you think we have finally read the last ConFrancisco reports now?

LET'S LEAD THE LETTERS OFF with the agony column, led by Steve Stiles [8631 Lucerne Road, Randallstown, MD 21133]: "...I still don't have time to write a *genuine* loc, due to an extremely demanding workload -- only 628 illustrations left to go! -- but I do at least find the time to read them; today, for example, while taking our labrador pup for a walk in a nearby stream (it's cooler that way, less ticks, and I only have to keep an eye peeled for that snapping turtle we spotted a few weeks ago. Mainly, I'm writing to make a request, which is as follows:

'Will the discerning and tasteful art-lover who purchased the original of my PULP cover at some convention a few years ago, please make a few photocopies and send them to me. You'll get reimbursement, my gratitude, natch, and maybe even future art commitment. The thing is, all my own copies have disappeared -- along with the usual left socks, and, for that matter, PULP itself (which means you now have a Collector's Item!). Since I have a horrendous freelance load, and too little time for fanac, I'd like to recycle it for some other fanzine. I guess this will teach me to keep records of such transactions in the future (Avedon: "Just like a man!"). Thanks!'

[I hope we can find your art, Steve, but don't try to get me involved in whatever dispute this is you're implying that you have with Avedon. Who do you think I am, Marty Cantor?

By the way, what's the dog's name? -- aph]

The North side of my town faced East, and the East was facing South

LUKE MCGUFF [a-lukem@microsoft.com or P.O. Box 31848 Seattle, WA 98103-1848] muses: "I was intrigued by your Selim the Algerian dream, too. It reminded me of several of the essays in Gone to Croatoan: The Origins of American Drop-Out Culture which I read a couple months ago. the book resurrected some of the forgotten history of utopian colonies, wanderers like Selim (a 'land pirate'), people who "went native" and many other things. There was quite a lot in there that I'd never heard of, things that seemed pretty large for their day. You'd think, for instance, that a history of the American Revolution would cover such things as the seamen and working class movements and riots that occurred all over the Atlantic seaboard, in London and Ireland, North America, and the Caribbean. But our revolution is reduced to a few genteel 'actions' like the Boston Tea Party (genteel as compared to New York press-gang riots that closed the city). At the same time as our revolution, the Levellers of Ireland were in action. The Levellers tore down walls and filled in ditches and moats, destroying the property demarcations of the British landlords. Our revolution was also immediately whitened; its pan-racial nature was written out of history before it was even underway. We did manage to remember Crispus Attucks just in time for the bicentennial, but no further investigation was made. The press-gang riots and the struggles of freed slaves and Indians all played a part in the American revolution.

"GtC also had a couple essays about tribes made up of escaped slaves, sympathetic Indians and runaway indentured servants. Sociologically, these are called the 'tri-racial isolate.' But one of the tribes, the Ishmaelites of central Indiana and southern Illinois was so opposed by the majority culture, so vigorously suppressed, that they've been completely erased from the history books; the person who wrote about the Ishmaelites had to reconstruct their story from the surviving records of the ministers and eugenicists who destroyed them.

"How is it that these stories are forgotten? As I read about the Ishmaelites, I wondered how we would remember the Davidians. AS a government protecting its children? As a gigantic and awful accretions of mistakes and misunderstandings that resulted in a massacre and an inferno? Or will the whole thing just fade into obscurity?

"Well, you can see the idea of forgotten history has gotten me

going. Why is the 'baby boom' described as a white, middle-class phenomenon? It is fashionable for conservatives to say that the licentiousness of the 60s and 70s have resulted in the moral 'decline' we see today. But: the path of postwar society was determined by the influx of soldiers returning from the war. They just wanted something normal and comfortable. All the machinery was there to give them a comfortable material existence. (Here's a neat quote I just encountered: 'Isolated behind their oceans, Americans still seem to be a provincial people. This psychology probably derives from the unique position of American capitalism, which has up to now had a domestic economy sufficiently broad and developed to sustain it with comparatively little intercourse with the rest of the world. It may be that this is no longer true, but...whether true or not, most American businessmen still believe it.' That was written in May of 1944, by Dwight Macdonald.) [NB: In this same collection, Macdonald reprints something he wrote for a 'mimeographed undergraduate publication.' Hah!]

"But black men came home too. Came home to the farms after the relative luxury of, say, loading munitions in New Jersey. They wanted something better, too, so they moved North. And they had a lot of kids. How come white flight hasn't been tied to the black baby boom? (More important than the black baby boom would be tying white flight to the real perpetrators, the real estate agents of the type called at the time 'panic peddlers' and 'block busters.') The 20th anniversary of the summer of love (67/87) was celebrated all over the white media. But the 20th anniversary of the summer of hate (68/88) was largely ignored. During the Rodney King riots, some people managed to remember that Watts had been closed down for days in a row in the past. But no one pointed out that the same year riots happened all over the country.

"The view of the 50's that sees it as America's golden age may be based on the fact that for white veterans returning home, their station in society was enhanced by what they had done, and those lucky enough to return home were happy to leave the war behind. But for black men returning to pre-war jobs and homes, and for all the women sent home from the factories, their station in society was worse than what they were leaving.

"But why is all this forgotten. One of the big questions during the Rodney King riots was posed by King himself: Why can't we all get along? It seems an unbridgeable gulf. But some of those tri-racial isolate tribes lasted for generations. And some, like the Seminoles and the Metis, still exist today.

"So these are some of the questions I ask myself about forgotten history, why and how it is forgotten. My social and political prejudices suggest to me that society considers it a Good Thing that we (as in, you and I, white men) think we can't get along with black people so that we can't fight the True Oppressor."

[Jeez! Everybody pause for a deep breath just here. Luke, you raise so many issues here, and we could fill this zine ten times over to consider them all in detail. I'm slightly croggled by the effort to relate Selim the Algerian to Rodney King (well, they both suffered head injuries), but the over-arching question of your letter -- Why is forgotten history forgotten? -- is something we should take the time to pursue, because I think it has some important implications on the fannish level, as well as in general philosophical terms. The most immediate answer is the one we learn as proverbial wisdom -- "History is written by the victors." The people who emerged from the American revolution with the control of the apparatus of traditional history were white, land-holding men, who, if they rejected the titles and piratical privileges of European aristocracy, still lived much the same lives that they did. Black Americans, on the other hand, were the corner stone of an emerging economy in the more arable states of

the Union, and it was financially expedient to portray them as being beneath such aspirations as revolution and self-government excite. It is entirely natural for anyone writing any history of any kind to try and tell it in terms of their own participation in events, their own ideas and reactions to them, and with an eye toward their own values and principles. Tri- and bi-racial isolate tribes eking out a living in the wilds of the western Appalachians, or in the marshes of the deep south, would not have merited consideration on the grounds that no one really knew they were there, let alone had any direct experience with them.

Stories and traditions which issue from isolated and transient cultures are often impermanent because they shortly have no direct advocates; the people who were there and their issue die naturally, or are massacred in the movement of other peoples, or assimilate themselves into the dominant cultural paradigm and leave their ethno-cultural identity behind with their parent's generation.

Complicating the specific case of Selim, and figures like him, by which I mean bi-racial, non-white or non-Christian figures like Chief Joseph Brandt, thousands of black cowboys and homesteaders, mountain men and other vaguely deviate figures, is the moral parable which people tend to expect along with their American history. We are taught to believe in an orderly progression of settlement and civilization, but a large percentage of the people who actually went out to settle "uncivilized" areas of the country were doing so in order to escape "civilization" themselves, and had no interest in sponsoring or even maintaining contact with the dominant culture they came from. The wilderness has always been a place where criminals, madmen, the bereft and the lost wander, and the American conquest of the frontier is tantamount to a denial that such places -- and the people who dwell in them -- are an essential shadow of organized society. And Selim, who passed through both worlds, and who bore many of the hallmarks of such travellers in western folkloric tradition -- he came as a stranger, tended to madness, bore the severe effects on his passage through the wilderness -- appears as a cautionary figure, an indication of the perils which lie beyond the boundaries of civilization.

Serious historians tend to dismiss the more Jungian elements of the historical record, and often fail to recognize the human need to assign larger-than-life characteristics to people and events. Selim's story is not especially significant in the kind of macro-historical terms in which modern theorists tend to work, but it's exactly his kind of story that really catches the metaphorical eye, and it's almost certain that his story had a moral component to it which we don't perceive as clearly today. Today, we have somewhat more prosaic legends and stories, like the Crocodiles in the sewers and the woman with spiders in her beehive hairdo. Those are probably worth having dreams about as well.

Telling unremembered stories requires a different kind of attitude than most of us have, a quality of having the mind's eye unstuck in time, if you will. When I have been reading a lot of history or archeology, I look at buildings, fields, water-courses, shore-lines, and try to roll my vision back to see how things were 50, 100, 1000 years ago. Loren Eiseley wrote about the consequences of seeing things with an archeological sensibility: "A man who has once looked with an archeological eye will never see quite normally. He will be wounded by what other men call trifles. It is possible to refine the sense of time until an old shoe in the bunch grass or a pile of nineteenth-century beer bottles in an abandoned mining town tolls in one's head like a hall clock. This is the price one pays from learning to read time from surfaces other than an illuminated dial. It is the melancholy secret of the artifact, the humanly touched thing."

These fans will soon become the Fannish Gestalt....

KATE YULE, [1905 SE 43rd Ave., Portland, OR 97215] writes in response to: "...Walt Willis in regards to conversation drying up and your response: Amen, Amen!! On my 'junior year abroad' we had a group of six or seven people who got together almost daily for tea and natter. By the end of the year, our conversations had the cozy -- and boring -- familiarity of old broken-in clothing. the revelation, in early summer, that one girl's mother's name was Ginerva was seized upon like a hoarded Hershey bar in a life raft!

"I find myself with very mixed feelings as I choose increasingly often not to attend some fannish event in Portland. There is more and more a feeling of "been there...done that..." More and more, the people I would like to be seeing have gone and "gotten a life" somewhere other than fandom, and Square Dance has taken over my calendar and my thoughts. The hypothetical future ennui with fandom that I shrugged off in a 1992 Bento article has snuck up on me, and I've fallen under the spell of a newer, and shinier toy. I don't want this to be the end of fannish friendships. I hope it isn't."

DAVE HICKS [8 Dyfing St., Pontcanna Cardiff, CF1 9LR U.K.] has some related concerns: "Gorblimey! Just got a bolted-together set of APAK. Excellent stuff, especially on the fear in the U.K. fanzine scene, which is enjoying a mild revival, that come INTERSECTION there will be a darkness upon the land, and evil scouring wind, and the scattered bodies of emotionally and creatively drained faneds too spent to crank a duplicator handle again until, oh, about 2004. Frankly, I'm scared by this. I'm one of those Britfans whose fanning always revolved around pubs, parties and small cons, and while it would be nice to meet some overseas fans a Worldcon generally appeals to me only as some kind of Disney-world-like event, not as a fannish affair. So just as I get back into fanwriting it's all gonna die again, because there just aren't enough of us to take this on and continue normal service. '79 was just before I got into fandom, I was partially gafiated in '87 and now I'm probably too skint to go in '95 (We could probably spend a week in the USA for what INTERSECTION would set us back...).

"So. What to do. My policy may well turn out to be extending my contact with U.S. Fandom, with whom paper contact remains far more significant than (say) U.K. fans I can see and get drunk with. So when the "fanzine renaissance (tm)" over here hits the next dark ages I've still got an active, ish-pubbing constituency over there. I'm gradually, cash-permitting, extending the U.S. mailing list with the help of publications like APAK.

"Weekly? Fucking hell (copyright Greg Pickersgill -- yes I agree totally with your/Ted's stuff about criticism - wimps!), I'm killing myself with bi-monthly. Mind you, I have to drive 120 miles to Birmingham for the photocopying...."

[I'll respond to both of these letters together, because both address the great unanswerable question: How Do We Keep Fandom Alive? Dave and Kate see different agents for the decline of their personal corners of fandom, but the problem remains essentially the same. As our lives in fandom drift farther and farther from what we originally wanted them to be, we lose the energy we need to bring the edges back together, and as contact becomes more and more sporadic we become less interested in maintaining it. I think the answer is to intervene in the process as soon as possible, and actively promote fanac through letter-hacking, writing articles, trying to draw intelligent and personable acquaintances into your fannish web, and so forth. I would even be able to accept the idea that I was losing some touch with fandom if it was happening because of active overtures I was making toward other interests, rather than reacting to the decay of fandom as we know it.

This fear of universal devastation as a consequence of running a worldcon is particularly virulent right now, but I think the parallels

drawn with 1979 and 1987 are not especially apt. There is some reason to be glad over the recent increase in the number of fanzines published in Britain, but it doesn't seem like the scene is anywhere near developed as it was in the early to mid-seventies or in the mid-eighties. Those people who are involved in publishing fanzines at the moment don't seem to have a particularly large role in the pursuit of The Scottish Convention; that seems to be the realm of the con-running fandom that has grown up in the past five years, and which seems to be such a rival for fannish energies in the eyes of British fanzine fans. The collapse of British publications in the wake of the two Brighton conventions also seems like a natural consequence of fannish eras running their course, and I don't have anything approaching that feeling in regard to the current scene. If anything, I would think that the time after Intersection will see a burn-out and sapping of energies on the part of that con-running sub-sub-culture, leaving fanzine fans an open field to run on. Let's hope something like that happens; I have been enjoying getting some new British zines, like Dave's Moriarty's Revenge. But Dave, the first page of your article on your memories of the Goon Show in issue # 1 was blank in my copy! Whatwhatwhatwhatwhatwhatwhatwhat? Send help soon!

WHAT PRESTIGE IS THERE IN THAT?

VICKI ROSENZWEIG [33 Indian Road, 6-R New York, NY 10034] has some related comments: "This is probably obvious, but I haven't seen it before: one problem with trying to lure young fans away from computer nets to fanzines may be precisely that they are sf fans: years of reading, and even believing, sf leaves most of us wanting access to advanced technology. Once we're used to paper, it's different, or may be, but why do people who expect fans to care about the space program -- which is as much tech as science -- also expect them to be eager to give up this year's neat new equipment in favor of something that is obviously not high tech (thought they should look inside a copy machine sometime) or even is definitely old-fashioned and hard to find parts for (mimeo)?

"Yes, there are fans working to reduce if not eliminate the private use of internal combustion engines, but few started there. We started with the idea that not only were the stories neat, so were the gadgets they described. We had to give up the personal flying harnesses and (I think, at least for a while) vacations in space, but we can have -- or at least, those with the money can have -- the personal portable computer that will keep records, play games when we're bored, connect us to what looks like the whole world, and either impress people or be taken as a given. They can have phones that go with them everywhere. The attraction of the printed page is subtler."

"While this may explain why it's easier to get a punk rocker -- working in the DIY ethos -- than a Star Trek: Deep Space Nine or even Pat Cadigan fan to do a zine, it doesn't, as far as I can see, offer a solution. Copiers are a bit too embedded in the culture, the changes they made now taken for granted, and the continuing improvements subtle by comparison, and I doubt we can sell the magic of mimeo to many people in 1994. But I'm not satisfied to repeat 'It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan.' If it's worth being proud of, and I think it is, we should want -- I do want -- to share it, and find more people who are, at least potentially, like us, with a wide-ranging curiosity and a delight in varied discussion, if perhaps less interest in fashion than is considered normal, to send my zine to, in return for letters or their zines.

"While I continue to find more thrill in an envelope postmarked Ireland, or an Australian stamp, than in any number of From: headers, I am suspicious of attempts to define this as more than idiosyncratic. It doesn't help that the New York Times was praising letters over e-mail for handwriting -- how many of our letter do we fen write long hand? [Well, three of those included in this fanzine. -- aph] -- and because they are supposed to be easier as well as more evocative to save. Almost all of my mail comes on 8 1/2 by 11, the size my e-mail prints out in, and it can all be founded if necessary. I prefer foreign stamps, the occasional pretty paper and such; some people prefer the flash and speed of the net. I don't think there's a moral judgement involved. If there's a useful aesthetic distinction, it's between material dashed off and sent immediately and material the writer stopped to think about, consider, and maybe even proofread: and either medium can support either approach. I think, though, that as now constituted, the net encourages people to send things at once, lest the conversation pass them by; the slightly more considered pace of fanzine fandom may be one of our best attractions."

[I'd certainly agree with that last part; it's much the same argument I make on behalf of baseball when confronted with the belief that the game is more boring than other sports, because it tends to take longer and move at a more measured rate. It is the discontinuous quality of action which gives time for reflection, discussion and argument upon the remarkable events which do occur from time to time. Fandom has come to possess that same quality for me, a nice two-week breather in between periods of violent activity.

There are undoubtedly some people currently active on the net who would be well-suited to a transition to zine-publishing sf fandom, but I see no reason to assume that the net would be a much more fertile recruiting-area than any other group of reasonably-literate people. Just because people use tools that once existed only in the pages of science fiction doesn't mean that they will necessarily have an interest in the genre, or in people who do have such an interest.

In fact, the Net probably performs the same role in the lives of active and dedicated netheads that fandom does in the lives of fans; as peer group, hobby, source of social interaction and intellectual stimulation. What we really need to find are people who have not yet formed those kinds of associations, and who are in need of, at the most basic level, friendship. That's the glue that really holds fandom together; I mean, you know it isn't science fiction, or we'd spend more time talking about it, and less time going on about fans. Perhaps that's why we can't get away from the idea that we need to recruit more young fans, because young people are the only ones in whom such a low level of baseline socialization is not seen as evidence of personality defect or deficiency. But as to what sort of overture we are supposed to use to attract such proto-fen is still unclear to me, as indeed it always has been. When I think about it now, it almost seems like the Spirit of Fandom really did find me toiling in the dark unaware, and touched me with the wand of contact. It's hard to remember what life and the world were like before then.... --aph]

I didn't steal it! I stole it! To save it from senseless worship!

And now our bi-weekly note from GEORGE FLYNN [P.O. Box 1069 Kendall Sq. Station, Cambridge, MA 02142]: "On 25-year anniversaries: Around here at least, the media have been devoting about as much attention to Chappaquiddick as to Apollo 11. I do remember the former, but that weekend it seemed like a pretty trivial distraction. I

Peter Gammons: "The players don't want a nuclear winter."

thought Neil Armstrong still lived in Ohio, but couldn't swear to it; certainly it was in Ohio that he actually showed up at an air show the other day.

"Yes, Joe Siclari is still in charge of the stock of WARHOON 28. But he has subcontracted sales to NESFA (and for all I know others) to help make it more visible.

"KTF criticism has never been much to my taste. I wonder, though, whether you and Victor are using the term with quite the same meaning. Could it be that 'KTF' is undergoing the same sort of bifurcation of meaning (unsparingly objective vs. gratuitously pejorative) that 'criticism' itself long since underwent?"

[a VERY interesting question, and I think we'll lead with readers answers next time -- aph]

ALGERNON D'AMMASSA [134 George M. Cohan Blvd., Providence, RI 02903] sums up the feelings of millions: "By page 3, reading APAK # 12, I wondered if you had been re-reading S.J. Perelman. You and Pickersgill both demonstrate a deft touch with words, but alas, ye minds are heavy and ye strength is waning. I like plodding field boys bred for boring."

"...P. Pickersgill's fanzine any more rewarding than a tree?" [a tree? -- aph]

RICHARD BRANDT [4740 Mesa # 111, El Paso, TX 79712] responds to my comments on his letter about his and Michelle's responses to the solar eclipse: "Indeed, Michelle heatedly denies any resemblance between herself and 'an Al Ashley/Martin Smith figure.'

"'I'm a Gracie Allen Figure,' she insists."

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FANZINES received since last issue: Cube # 53, edited by Hope Kiefer for SF3; Moriarty's Revenge # 2, Dave Hicks; Opuntia # 19.5 & 20, Dale Speirs; Trash Barrel, no number, dated 6/94, Donald Franson.

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Address Correction Requested

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