
APPARATCHIK

The thirty-eighth issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, published by Andy Hooper, member fwa, supporter afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at APHooper@aol.com. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 227. *Apparatchiki*: Randy Byers, Victor Gonzalez, Carl Juarez & Martin Tudor (British Address: 845 Alum Rock Rd., Ward End, Birmingham B8 2AG UK). "Big knockers, eh?" guessed Burbee.

Issue # 38, July 13th, 1995

DUE TO MY PLANS to visit Madison, Wisconsin this week, this issue of Apparatchik had to be finished a little earlier than usual. There won't be a lengthy editorial from me this time out, and I had to cut off this issue's fanzine countdown the day before five new fanzines arrived in the mail. Ah, well, next time . . .

ACCORDING TO RECENT e-mail communications, Precursor, the Pre-Worldcon event for fanzine fans, will go off as planned. So far, the majority of attendees are British fans, but more American are expected to trickle in. John Berry tells me that he and Eileen Gunn plan to attend, and Frank Lunney and Ted and Linda White are making tentative plans as well. It should turn out to be quite a party.

MARTIN SMITH, he who is alleged to be a wholly-owned subsidiary of Rob Hansen, called the other day to crow over his softball team's triumph in the Treasury and Cabinet Department's Sports Day Tournament. Apparently they weren't all that sure of the official rules about the strike zone and advancing on fly balls and the like, and many of Martin's team, schooled in cricketing skills, preferred not to wear a glove for fielding. But a win is a win, and Martin was so incandescent in triumph that he would like to organize a softball game to be played Sunday afternoon at Precursor. So if you're planning to go and can find room in your luggage, bring along your glove and shoes that you can run in!

VICKI ROSENZWEIG wants me to bring to everyone's attention a new person to send your fanzines to: Fred Herman, 112-15 72 Road Apt. 409, Forest Hills, NY 11375, is said to be a reliable correspondent and a fine addition to anyone's mailing list.

NOT THAT I WANT to pressure anyone, but the deadline for getting in final ballots for the Hugo awards will be breathing down your neck by the time you get this. There are plenty of reasons to vote beyond the dubious goal of keeping my name above "no award" in the Best Fanwriter category. Teresa Nielsen Hayden and Christopher Priest are both up for best non-fiction book, and one could vote *Ansible*, or *Mimosa*, or *Habakkuk*, or *File 770* for Best Fanzine . . . and every member of the APAK mailing list who votes is yet another person who actually reads fanzines being added into the electorate. Hell, you've paid enough for the privilege . . .

PLEASE NOTE: the address above is the correct one for my British mailing agent. It was incorrect as printed last issue, and I even made the mistake of sending the originals for #37 to the wrong address. This may have caused a big delay in U.K. correspondents receiving that issue. If so, please accept my apologies.

I'M NOT SURE HOW the conversation started, but Carrie and I got around to the subject of big conventions and big crowds of fans, and she said, "I'm afraid that there are an awful lot of people in fandom that I don't want anything to do with. All those hordes of people you see wandering around the halls at big conventions, just looking for a way to cause trouble. Carrying weapons. Lots of them drunk. It's not the kind of people I want to associate with. Or that I want my kids to associate with."

I think I had been puzzling over the issue of recruiting new people into fanzine fandom, and tried to offer some lame plan to get fanzines into the hands of people as their first exposure to organized fandom, but this brought me up short. It's nothing I haven't heard before, but this time it struck me as an appalling state of affairs, in that I rather agreed with her. Imagine, thinking of fandom as a dangerous mob of vandals and drunks. And still wanting to be a part of it. What's wrong with this picture?

There is always anxiety implicit in confronting a group as an individual. When we were all neofans, and went to our first big convention, fandom seemed like an impenetrable secret society, whose customs and history were so involved that we would never be able to grasp them. Taken in one monolithic lump, fandom is impossible for an individual to understand. Even after decades of fanac, experienced fans look at fandom as a whole like a stampede of wild animals - friendship with them is only possibly after you cut one or two out of the herd. And some fans need to see their brand on a person before they're willing to take that chance.

What I try to keep in mind is that it is still possible that any person you run across at a convention has the potential combination of interests to be a fanzine fan, especially if someone is willing to see them as an individual --and yes, give them a copy of their latest issue. It won't always work, certainly. But for this job, a fanzine strikes me as a more useful tool than a lasso.

The Confiscation Issue

The Good Stuff
By Randall Dean
Counter-Cultural Attaché

It was my fault, in a way. My friend, whom I will call Spartacus, in order to protect the guilty, asked

me where we should go to smoke dope before the show. I don't smoke dope downtown very often, so I wasn't sure. I thought first of the little plaza at the bus tunnel station near the theater, but that seemed pretty exposed. When I remembered the park behind the Convention Center, I thought it would be more secluded. So, we headed off.

I was concerned about whether I could remember how to get to the park, since I'd only been there once before and Spartacus was in a no-nonsense mood.

As it turned out, we didn't make it all the way to the park. I found a door, which I hoped would open into the atrium leading to the back of the building and on into the park, but which revealed a fitness center instead. Beginning to sweat in the warm evening sun, I took us back out to the sidewalk and headed up the hill, toward the east end of the Convention Center. I thought there might be passage along the perimeter. Sure enough, we came upon a long and winding stairway hugging the east face of the complex, and we began to climb. When we happened on a secluded little nook along the way, there didn't seem to be any point to pushing on to the park. Indeed, if the hanging gardens and cozy bench weren't designed for a little private pot-smoking, what could be their purpose?

We sat, and Spartacus stuffed sticky weed into a small, duck-shaped wooden pipe, which he had made with his own hands. The first bowl tasted so good that a second was wanted, and he filled the pipe again.

As he stuffed the film canister containing the supply into the pocket of his tweed jacket, we became aware that someone was approaching. The pipe was sitting on the bench, and Spartacus covered it with his hand. My mind, floating free and gentle in the golden light of the setting sun, could not at first track the anxiety that welled up from some dim instinct of self-preservation. It was a beautiful day, we'd had a lovely meal, and we were performing a time-tested ritual before a long-anticipated show. What could go wrong?

What could go wrong was a gentleman wearing a blue blazer, gray slacks, and a small metal plate inscribed with his occupation: Convention Center Security. A man in his late forties or early fifties, with a narrow head stereotypically balded, he had the sleazy, uneasy air of an ineffectual used-car salesman or host of

an unsuccessful gameshow -- the kind of middle-aged man you'd expect to run into at a Mel Torme show in Las Vegas, or belting down drinks at a strip joint, where he'd gone to escape the tirades of a dissatisfied wife.

He strode up to us, looking more threatened than threatening, and demanded, "Where is it?"

Spartacus -- as mentally nimble, no doubt, as I was, under the impact of the first bowl -- said, "Where's what?"

"The pot," said the security man, glancing meaningfully at my friend's blatant hand.

The pipe was handed over.

"Where's the rest of it?" the man said.

Spartacus fished out the film canister. The gray lid was swiftly pried off the black tub, and the contents were sniffed. For a moment, the mask of stern security slipped away, forgotten. "Good stuff!" the man said.

Indeed, it was. Though the present configuration of stimuli was clearly unpleasant, if not downright dangerous, I felt remarkably calm.

The mask of stern security was fumbled back into position. "Gentlemen," the man said, "you have two choices." His voice strove for a deeper note. "You can go to jail" -- he paused to let that sink it -- "or you can walk." Leaving me the dope, he might as well have finished.

"We'll walk," Spartacus volunteered.

We stood up.

But our man was not through with us. Perhaps we weren't acting shit-scared enough, though it seemed to me we were being extraordinarily polite, considering the fact that he was robbing us.

"This is your first offense," he told us in that strained depth of voice. "If you ever come back to these premises, you will be arrested. Do you understand?"

This last was aimed at Spartacus.

"Yes," said my friend.

The furtive glare was then aimed at me. "How about you?"

"Yes," I said, surprised at my own voice.

He looked back and forth between us. Something was still missing. "Okay," he said, still struggling to figure it out. Ah. "What's your name?" he asked my friend.

"I am Spartacus," said he.

"What's your last name?"

"I have only one."

"Huh," the man said. He hid his confusion by looking at me. "What's your last name?"

"Byers," I said.

He nodded. "What's your last name?"

"That is my last name."

This answer flustered him only for a second. He nodded again. "What's your first name?"

"Randy," I said.

Suddenly, he fumbled an old-fashioned radio mic out of his blazer. The wire trailed into his armpit. He held the mic to his mouth and pushed the button, "Yeah, I've got Spartacus and Randy here, with a small quantity of pot, which I'm going to destroy. They are leaving the premises." There was no sound from the mic, not even the scratch of static that usually accompanies radio communication. His eyes darted between us. "Okay, you'd better leave now."

We left.

It was hard to determine whether Spartacus' silence was grim or merely stunned. It was slightly more clear that the calm I felt was the product of shock. We wuz robbed! Mugged! The words "a small quantity of pot, which I'm going to destroy" cycled through my head in a kind of fugue, building toward an ever denser communication of simple venality, so raw and lumpy that it could not be digested on one listening. The look of surprised, childlike greed when he had said, "Good stuff!"

"What a nerd!" I remarked to the back of Spartacus' head.

Spartacus listened to his own fugue. Likely it involved the sound of gunshots.

I was back in the sand-box, and someone had grabbed the little gardening shovel out of my hands. It wasn't that I couldn't do without the shovel -- hell, it wasn't even mine, and we had been told not to play with the gardening tools -- but it was my turn. If somebody else wanted to play with it, they should either wait their turn or ask me to share. Don't tell me I'm not supposed to playing with it, if it's just an excuse to take it away and play with it yourself.

If only we had been less servile. Surely that "Good stuff!" had been an opening -- a moment in which the Law was vulnerable. Are a blue blazer and an inscribed metal name-plate so fearsome? Am I so Protestant in my atheism that I can't request an indulgence?

"I'll just bet he's going to destroy it!" I said to the air.

A stench of corruption rose from the heated pavement. "Let's jaywalk," I said, as we approached the theater.

In a moment, the result of that trial.

Fuck 'em with a Chainsaw
By Victor M. Gonzalez
Staff Writer

What got to me was that we were complacent. If the guy hadn't

been wearing a badge, I'd have had a hard time keeping from taking him on.

In my imagination, I pull out the 9-millimeter from the shoulder holster, and, as the baseball-capped pig's face takes on a look of surprise, I put two crisp holes in his chest.

Then we run.

Unfortunately, since we couldn't figure out how he saw or heard us in the first place, it would be hard to know if we weren't being watched. And I wasn't armed anyway.

And truthfully, I disapprove of killing over such minor matters.

But ooooh, does it get me steamed.

Is this country serious about enforcing its marijuana-possession laws? No. Pot use is in the closet, but just barely.

The next time you go to work, think about who among your peers might smoke. And then your bosses. Some of them do, I guarantee it. You just don't know them well enough to be included.

They do because they enjoy it. They can do it and get to work the next day without impediment, and with a few dollars still in pocket. They do it because they work hard and they want something to relax them that won't act on their body like a poison.

They do it because it makes them silly, but not idiotic.

They do it because pot is an essentially harmless drug with minimal non-mental effects; it does not slow down the central nervous system like alcohol. Tests with mice and pure THC extract have shown you've just about got to drown the cute little creatures in the oil to kill them. Simple ingestion, no matter how much, won't do it.

Alcohol indirectly causes hundreds of thousands of deaths every year from disease and accident. Directly, it kills people because they drink to much on the spot: overdose.

No one has ever overdosed on pot. From the research I've looked into, the only arguable long-term damaging effect of the drug is to the lungs -- and that could be avoided by eating it.

Yet for almost 60 years, the United States Government has promoted a policy of suppression, forcing underground anyone who deals with pot.

He can probably leave out the 'til death part

This weirdness didn't get started until the 1930s. By 1937, 46 of 48 states had banned the cultivation or possession of pot.

Although criminal penalties are lower for pot than most other illegal drugs in most states, it is still considered a ``narcotic`` federally.

Despite the fact that perhaps 30 million Americans regularly smoke it.

One can only wonder why it remains illegal when more dangerous drugs are not. Are people stupid, or so short-sighted they can't tell the real difference? Is it simply a punching bag to bring up whenever politicians feel they will succeed by presenting an evil enemy we can fight?

Is it because the black market economy provides much more cash than a legal drug ever could? Marijuana cultivators may not pay all their taxes, but they do buy sportscars and otherwise invest in the economy with their inflated profits.

After all, that's why pot is still one of the largest cash crops in the nation: one acre of pot is worth a fuck of a lot more than one acre of wheat.

And meanwhile, people unqualified to do anything but run around parks harassing people -- indeed, people not even sufficiently qualified to become real cops -- wink at you as they steal, knowing they'll go home and smoke without worry.

The fears about illegal drug use fucking up society may or may not have merit; it depends on the substance, the quality and quantity, and the regularity of use.

But how are we going to teach people about the harmful effects of some drugs if we consistently lie about marijuana? This easily exposed hypocrisy -- hey, Mom and Dad have smoked for years -- leads to distrust of all information about recreational substances.

When the propagandists say pot is a gateway to other drugs, this is not what they mean.

Blam! Blam!

Tricycle landing gear? Okay.

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH: As promised at the end of the last issue, we'll lead off this lettercol with a LoC from Robert Lichtman (P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442):]

"To start off, you'll recall that in my last letter I reported on the imminent increase in non-US postal rates. My information at that time was pretty limited, but now I have a date certain when new rates take effect - July 9th - and a little more information on what they are. As I related previously, the new rate for a half-ounce of airmail overseas (including South America, but not

Mexico) is 60 cents. The rate for an ounce is \$1 even. I don't know the increments beyond that yet. The Canadian rate has taken the strangest twist. It's been 40 cents for the first ounce and 23 cents for additional ounces; it's going to be 46 cents for a half-ounce, 52 cents for a full ounce, and again I don't know beyond that. The press release I saw said that the 'letter and letter package rate' is being abolished because 'all mail is being sent by air.' There is no word yet on the printed matter rate (the one I use for *Trap Door* overseas) or the book rate.

"... so far as the larger question goes - the future of *APAK* - I can well imagine that turning out issues on a relentless every-other-week schedule must wear on you and the amount of wear must be moving incrementally upward. We can all see that the issues are larger and can't possibly be done in an afternoon, but it would be interesting to know beyond that what your circulation is currently - clearly more than sixty - and where it goes. Have you given any thought to becoming a three-to-four weekly, or even a monthly, and perhaps expanding the zine's size out to a standard ten pages (still getting you in for one ounce with an envelope). You could gain wordage by doing more (or even all) of the zine in the typeface and line height you use in the fanzine review box on the back page - I would suggest justified triple columns if you go this route for greater readability. A case could be made that *Apak* serves as a modest focal point for the portion of fandom it serves and monthly focal point fanzine would be *A Wonderful Thing*. (I guess we have a biweekly one now, but at what long-term expense to the health and mindset of Andy Hooper.)"

[APH: I think that I will inevitably be forced to cut back to a monthly schedule at some point in the future, and there will be undeniable benefits to doing so. First of all, people will have more than a three-day window in which to LoC or miss the following issue. I'm not the only one that is inconvenienced by this break-neck schedule! But I hope it can be avoided, and that my readers will do their best to keep up, for at least a little while longer. As long as *APAK* appears as rapidly as it does it has a quality which appears to be unique in contemporary fandom. Also, since I have to assemble and publish it in such a rush, there are certain limits in what I can be expected to do with it, giving me a measure of circumstantial support for my editorial decisions. And I have to admit, I'm having a lot of fun with it right now. As far as the mailing list goes, the U.S. roster is just a hair under 90, the U.K. list is around 40 and growing, about a half-dozen Canadians receive it, and I am in negotiations to add some Australians, probably about 20 of them, in the near future. I'd be happy to make the mailing list available to whomever would like to see it, but I am loathe to spend several pages of the fmz to run them. I'll send you a copy under separate envelope, and would be happy to do so for anyone who asks. Back to you:]

"If I lived in London, I could quite easily do without owning a car - if I wanted one for a road trip, I'd rent one - but unfortunately for me and for anything more than tacit support for Judith Hanna's position regarding automobiles, it's simply not possible to live in Glen Ellen carless unless one is fortunate enough to work here and willing to pay the higher prices charged at the local market rather than go into fairly nearby Sonoma to shop the chain stores. As part of the Bay Area, Sonoma County employers above a certain number of staff are required to survey their workers annually regarding their means of getting to and from work, with a big pitch thrown in favor of carpooling, bicycling, walking and public transit. None of this, I always point out when I respond to the questionnaire (as I did most recently about two weeks ago), would work for me. No one who works in my part of city government (I work for the city of Santa Rosa) lives in the Sonoma Valley except for one auto mechanic who works an evening shift. There is public transit, but it's slow and inadequate. In order to use it to get to work, I would have to wake up nearly an hour earlier. Then I would have to drive to the nearest bus stop about three miles away. Hoping that no one would vandalize my car while it was parked during the day, I would then take one bus to downtown Santa Rosa's 'Transit Mall,' where I'd wait about fifteen minutes to catch another bus that would drop me off across the street from my office. This process would be reversed in the evening, plus I'd get home about an hour later than I presently do. Unfortunately, no thanks.

"Also, unfortunately, much of Sonoma County doesn't lend itself to intense public transportation; except along the '101 corridor' (the north-south road leading out of San Francisco toward Oregon) the population is fairly dispersed. But the bus system could be improved, as I point out in the 'comments' section of the commuter questionnaire every year, and more express buses put into service during the main commuting hours. None of this has taken place. I *could* move to Santa Rosa, but the truth of the matter is that while I like it fine as a city to work in and for, it's not got many neighborhoods I find both attractive and reasonably safe, not to mention affordable. The best areas from my point of view for habitability also happen to lie atop the main earthquake fault - which also runs under or very near both major hospitals, City Hall, both main shopping malls, lots of multi-level parking structures, and a community college campus. Also, it would become inconvenient to drive to Glen Ellen to pick up my mail -- and I really don't want to file a CoA after all these years.

"Don't get the idea that I don't generally agree with what Judith says here, though I would question a blanket statement that 'roads given over to traffic at speed make cycling and walking unpleasant as well as actively dangerous.' To this I would say that it all depends on the quality of engineering in the road -- are any curves in it built to handle the speed limit that is put in place; are the

lanes wide enough and are there enough of them; are there well-defined pullouts for transit vehicles to get out of the travelway; is there enough separation between auto travelways, bike lanes and sidewalks to make for both physical and psychic distance? As mentioned above, I work for the city of Santa Rosa, and it just happens that part of my job is to be the front line for traffic-related complaints. But this just becomes one of those 'don't get me started' things. I've no interest in writing an article about it tonight."

[APH: Everyone has a different threshold of inconvenience that they are willing to endure when it comes to getting from place to place. In time, I suspect that it may actually become less convenient to maintain a private vehicle than to use public transportation, but so far -- especially in this country -- we are nowhere near to reaching that point. Another person who isn't very pleased with the current state of public transportation (among other things) is DENYS HOWARD (1013 N 36th St., Seattle, Washington 98103-8824, e-mail at denysh@oz.net):]

I have nothing to offer by way of recommendations of current SF&F. I'm two years behind in my reading of *Asimov's* and *F&SF* and haven't purchased a new book in the genre in 10, these many years. I'm looking forward to seeing what others suggest, however!

I also wonder whether you've utterly mined the lodes you mention: new-wavish psycho-social novels with abstract covers, experimental FTL ships (or LeGuin's lovely NAFAL conceit), first-contact teams, psychic resistance cells (which I read at first blush as a new data-storage medium...), and so forth. I certainly haven't. Have you really read everything by your favorite writers? I'm impressed.

Believing with implacable self-righteousness that "journalistic ethics" ranks among the most moronic of oxymorons, I have not availed myself of any of Victor's writings here. Whatever karma he is working off via this new career, it does not appeal to me.

The letter-column is much more to my taste, though. Read it late into the night, dizzy with comment-hooks, and now in the clear light of morning I scan it desperately trying to re-locate them. Oh, yes: cars.

I commute to work now and would rent a car for the day rather than take what is pathetically referred to as "mass transit" hereabouts. I tolerated that nonsense when I worked in the city—commuting from Fremont to First Hill, for those who know Seattle. I did so for a number of years, before Randy moved into the house bringing a car with him. I don't regret having ridden the bus through Seattle—the constantly-changing scenery of Freeway Park was a magnificent pleasure to walk through all spring—but it is a proposition bordering on cruel and unusual punishment to ride the bus across Lake Washington to Bellevue. I did it once, and found that it added three hours to my travel time. One way. Pfah.

Also there is much chortling about how really, incredibly CHEAP it will be . . .

In the midst of still another car-repair adventure, though (a kid in a pickup backed into the Resistor, so that we now give the appearance of being in the habit of rear-ending those who irritate us; this can be an advantage in certain circumstances), I suspect that Randy would not agree with my praises of the beast. Of course, his relationship to it is the one you proposed: he walks to work most days, occasionally taking the bus in really bad weather, and uses the car for late-night excursions or out-of-town trips.

On a different subject, AP's contribution to the discussion of Smoking and Breathing areas at parties (do I betray my sympathies?) raised a standard defense: the smoking party is "where the folks I want to hang out with hang!" This liquidation of people with cross-over interests is structurally equivalent to the failure to see people who like super-hero comics *and* Vertigo titles, people who listen to Rosemary Clooney *and* Butthole Surfers, people who like boys *and* girls.

At Vanguard, there are really three party groups: imbibers in noxious weeds, those who cannot or will not be around such, and those who move freely between the areas. The latter are rarely noticed as such, except by breathers allergic to smoke who never fail to detect its aroma. The folks I want to hang out with hang in *both* areas of the party. I find it perversely intriguing that AP and many others on both sides of the fence will find someone interesting based on whether or not they indulge in certain drugs. I would never do such a thing, of course; I will cheerfully engage in conversation absolutely anyone with a cute button-nose who appears to be single"

[APH: I suspect that if you go back and look at the letter again, you won't find any statement of McQuiddy's that indicates that he makes the decision that a person is interesting based on their use of burning weeds. I think he stated that that was simply how things seemed to turn out. I personally try to make lengthy forays into the non-smoking areas of the party, but I always seem to get trapped in the kitchen listening to someone carry on about how books will shortly be replaced completely by writing on-line. Rather than pull their head off and use it for a soccer ball, I go back downstairs.

One thing I keep thinking as I read all these reasons for not using public transportation is that it's all well and good for those of you who happen to have a car to drive. We own a car, but it sits in a parking lot in Kirkland during the hours that I would generally want to go anywhere, and I am therefore forced to use public transportation. Getting across the lake on a bus is a nightmare (mostly because of all the cars in the way) but for my purposes, Seattle's bus service has been very satisfactory.

Well, of course I haven't read everything by my favorite authors; the point of the article is that my options seem to be shrinking all the time, and that I need to find some new favorite authors soon. There are some books that

I am saving in case I am ever laid up in traction for months at a time . . . doesn't everyone do that?

Now, a brief note from a new correspondent, DOUG FAUNT (6405 Regent St., Oakland, CA 94618, e-mail at faunt@netcom.com) who is also concerned with things automotive:]

"I have a comment on the whole automobile issue. Apparently, ABS systems, while inherently safer, are NOT reducing accident rates, probably because people are using up the margin that the better braking gives them. As a sometime driver of a pickup, I think it's a good idea for them.

I use public transport, and my bicycle, as much as possible, and sometimes will not drive anywhere for a week, but I also own a ex-USPS Jeep for running around in bad weather and with large parcels, and a pickup truck, for recreation (like driving to cons, and camping). Here in the Bay Area we have pretty good transportation, but what's needed more here, and other places, is the ability to carry a bicycle on mass transit. I have a full-size folding bicycle, so can cope most places, but it still costs \$45-\$50 to carry it on each leg of an airline flight, and it's only because it folds that I can carry it on most local buses, or Amtrak."

[APH: Lynne Anne Morse and Roelof Goudriaan visited here recently; they were extremely happy to see someone get off a bus they were riding and pull his bicycle off the rack that was attached to the front bumper. It's one of the reasons that they say they are now contemplating moving here . . .

Now, a note from the only fan on The Rock, CHUCK CONNOR (currently on Gibraltar, but always accepting mail at Sildan House, Chediston Rd., Wisset, Near Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 ONF U.K.) who doesn't know why we are feuding, but is still all for it:]

"Just got the Martin Tudor produced A#35 and was a little surprised to read from Don Fitch that we are supposedly feuding daggers drawn? Er, trouble is, dearheart, although I've now gotten A#35 I still don't have #32 - 34, so haven't the faintest ideas why I should even consider playing Caesar to your Brutus (and to use that Plinny-recounted famous quote of Caesar's 'Infamy, infamy! They've all got it in for me!') And I really should point out this odd fannish habit of just using surnames is a bit confusing. I mean, is the 'Connor' referred to in Don's letter one of the 3 Irish fans with that name, or one of the 2 Americans (the fanziner, Ed, used to do *Moebius Trip* (ps shot to hell there)), and there was also one in New Zealand who used to do zines as well (*Tanjent*, if memory serves me right) but I'm not sure if he's still in fandom or not . . . whatever, mon brave, I shall start brushing up on my Mickey Spillane writing styles -- well, one does like to keep up appearances, doesn't one?"

[APH: Actually, I can say that I was aware we were feuding either. Having differences over the relative quality of Bill Rotsler's art doesn't seem like sufficient grounds for a good snarl, let alone a real feud. Your failure to include a

The next day Y.A. went to the town junkyard and found the tire that would change his life.

return address on your cards, so that I could possibly have gotten the issues in question prior to your return to England is something that might set me off, however . . .

Now, a few more salvoes against the idea of a Vegas Worldcon from JOHN WESLEY "DADDY" HARDIN (1733 Yellow Rose, Las Vegas, NV 89108:)

"Greetings oh master of Shrimp.

"Cutting to the chase, Las Vegas hotel room occupancy runs at an average of 95% year round. On major holiday weekends (say, July 4th, Labor Day) occupancy is at a maximum. There's a reason that major commercial conventions like Comdex, CES and MAGIC aren't held during the peak tourist season.

"It's not a question of 'could the hotels accommodate a World/Westercon?'; of course they could. But why would they sell 6,000 room to non-gambling, non-tipping scifgeeks, who are looking for free food and drink from the convention, when they could fill those rooms with tourists who are eager to gamble and see shows? The answer: they wouldn't."

[APH: You nearly have me convinced here John, although a little voice in my head keeps saying "I thought that Vegas was eager to begin drawing regular people who don't necessarily gamble, and who used to go to Florida or California, into town for their vacations. If they still require every event to be chock-full of high-rollers and heavy drinkers, those two goals would seem to be in conflict. But hey; I'm not the one who needs to be convinced. I have zero impact on Worldcon bidding. It's those people in Chicago who want to bring the con to your doorstep who ought to be appraised of these issues.

Also weighing in, at least tangentially, is DALE SPIERS (P.O. Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E7, Canada:)

"Re: your remark about Las Vegas and Worldcons not having to be held on Labour Day. Indeed, it would be just as well for the event to be moved ahead one week into August. This would allow parents and teachers to attend more easily as part of their vacation instead of rushing back on the Monday because the kids are in school the next day. On the proverbial other hand, people complain that Worldcons are too big already, can never find your friends, et cetera, in which case it might be better to have it on the Christmas weekend and have a small con for sure.

"I think one reason why ConAdian was a success is because it was the biggest convention in Manitoba. Winnipeg really noticed the influx of free-spending SFers, and gave more than passing attention to the Worldcon. I stayed a night after the event, and while watching the late news on TV saw an extended and serious report on the economic impact of ConAdian. In Las Vegas or any large city used to holding megaconvention, a Worldcon would be lucky to be mentioned in the Community Events column. A matter of being a big frog in a small pond."

[APH: As a chronically irresponsible Worldcon voter, I have been known to base my vote on which community

really needs the event more, which was why I voted for Winnipeg way back at Chicon V (that and the walleye cheeks). I also frequently choose the city which I would be unlikely to visit under any other circumstance, or, most selfish of all, the city which most people will have difficulty reaching. Of course, I also subscribe to the theory that most Worldcon committees are equally unworthy of my money and support, an idea which will no doubt annoy GEORGE FLYNN (P.O. Box 1069 Kendall Square Station, Cambridge, MA 02142) who is kind enough to rise to the bait of my editorial from last ish:]

"Where is John Brunner? What happened to Ursula Le Guin? I'm not sure what happened to Brunner, but his last novel wasn't very good. Le Guin, however, has recently been publishing a flood of short fiction set in the Hainish universe; one collection is already out (*A Fisherman of the Inland Sea*), and another one should be out next month (*Four Ways to Forgiveness*). This is all genuine SF (including 'experimental FTL ships and first contact teams') and mostly very good.

"Some random responses as to your query as to what's good: Stephen Baxter may be writing the best hard sf nowadays (though his ideas are better than his style); most of his work hasn't appeared in the US yet, including the impressive *Ring*. Greg Egan (same problem with US appearances) and John Baxter are also good. In fantasy, I'm impressed with the prose of Elizabeth Willy (whose second novel I've just read in proof); her work is not Tolkeinesque, but can fairly be called Zelaznyesque. I thought the best SF novel of the year (and probably the best SF Baseball Novel ever) was Michael Bishop's *Brittle Innings* (though you can quibble over whether it's sf or fantasy). Well, that's a start.

"Actually, I don't mind pleonasms such as 'SAT test.' Redundancies of this sort often contribute to comprehension or improve the rhythm of the sentence. I am in fact a thorough latitudinarian on matters of usage (though I often alert people to the shibboleths that *others* will invoke), it's mostly outright errors of fact or sense that bother me. (I also like big words.)

"Aargh, you would have to print *that* paragraph. I retract my statement that the four issues required to qualify for the Best Fanzine Hugo '[do] not have to be out by the end of the year.' Further historical research has revealed that a rule setting a December 31 deadline was passed at the 1973 business meeting (with the interesting sponsorship of Andy Porter and Mike Glicksohn; I was there and should have remembered this stuff). So what became of it? Well, in the next couple of years, Weird Stuff happened (you really don't want to know), and the clause in question got lost. Literally. (Lost in the same way was the phrase 'in the previous year' in the definition of Best Fan Writer, which you may recall I got restored a couple of years ago. And assorted other stuff. I've been making line by line comparisons of several years worth of Constitutions, and *I'm* still confused.)

Bike messengers: mysterious and misunderstood.

"Evelyn Leeper's original report on Boskone 32 was indeed much longer. I got to copyedit it for *Proper Boskonian* . . ."

[APH: Hmmm . . . complicated stuff. I'm glad that it isn't anything I have to worry about; assuming anybody ever wanted to nominate APAK, there'd be no question about four issues having been published in the previous year. Thanks very much for the suggestions, too, George, I'll keep an eye out for those authors.

Now, another correspondent concerned with procedural issues is IRWIN HIRSH (33 Jessamine Road, Praharn, Victoria 3181 AUSTRALIA), who seeks to solve the mystery of Chuch Harris' appearance in two consecutive annual *Fanthologies*:]

"So the Chuch Harris piece appeared in *Fanthology's* 90 and 91? And it is all the fault of whatever fan told Mark that its inclusion would be appropriate for the 1990 edition? That's a heavy burden for me to shoulder. Yes, it was I who suggested the item to Mr. Loney. Chuch's piece appeared in *Pulp* 17, which was labeled as the, and I quote, July 1990 issue.' A chapter of Rob Hansen's TAFF trip report was first published in the same *Pulp*. If your copy of *P* 17 isn't handy you may wish to check the contents page of Rob's report. So, Mr. Hooper, fue to you. Same to you Mr. Katz You both owe me one.

[APH: And don't think you won't get it, Irwin. 1999 is only four years away. And now the question is, who told Arnie Katz to include it in *Fanthology* 1991? And what does "fue" mean?]

"Why is it that so many North Americans don't understand the way the Optional Preferential system of voting works? It is used in Hugo, Worldcon Site Selection and Fan Funds, and still I see misinformation spread around. In early June I was correcting Roger Sims on his misunderstanding and here in Apak you suggest that 'It isn't much of a stretch to imagine that if there had been one more person in the race, especially if that person had been one more candidate in the race, especially if that person had been known as a fanzine fan, (Samanda) would probably have won.' That's imaginative, I'll give you that . . .

"Let's say there was fourth candidate, Fred, a fanzine fan. And Fred received 50 first preference votes, of which 10 were from people who didn't vote in the '95 race. Conveniently Fred was the first candidate eliminated. (Though if Joe was the first candidate eliminated all that would happen be that this would take longer to explain. Otherwise nothing changes.) Now 40 of Fred's votes cam from people who otherwise voted. In voting for Fred all they would've done is give him their first preference and pushed the other candidates down one step. (That's to say that if someone voted Dan-Joe-Samanda, they would've voted Fred-Dan-Joe-Samanda.) With Fred eliminated the first redistribution of preferences would follow the actual vote. That just leaves 10 new voters, and even if they all preferred Samanda

ahead of Dan, their votes would not have been enough to bridge the majority Dan had at the end of the count.

"Alternatively, had all those 50 been people who hadn't voted in the 95 race, 39 would've had to prefer Samanda to Dan for the former to win. If Fred is a fanzine fan what would be the chance of that happening?"

[APH: Pretty good, actually, if my personal calculations are to be trusted. "Preferential ballot" cultists like yourself base their trust in the orderly progression between the voter's choices, but my experience in using the method is that people tend to be more fractious than that. Many voters do not complete their ballots; others list "no preference," or "no award," or "hold over funds" right after their first choice, in an effort to deny any votes to candidates which they consider to be unfit to win.

When I decided that I would not stand for TAFF after all, I got over a dozen calls and notes from people who wanted me to reconsider, and over half of them expressed concern that Dan would prove to be an unfit administrator of the fund. I didn't see more than two or three of those people in the list of those who had voted after the race was done; apparently, they declined to participate at all because they were so unmoved by the candidates present. And if they had had a third, fanzine oriented fan to cast a vote for, you can be sure that they would have voted Samanda or Joe ahead of Dan. Your scenario, in essence, presupposes a communal bent to prevent Samanda from winning based on the unity of fanzine fandom; my impression is that it is more likely that there would have been an effort to prevent Dan from winning, arising from events which occurred more than a decade ago and which do not bear repetition here.

Now, whether or not that would have given Samanda the victory is open to debate, but the idea that a preferential ballot cannot be split doesn't seem realistic to me. Give fans any means to pervert a process and it's even money that they will find it.

We're cookin' now -- let's move right on to LUKE MCGUFF (P.O. Box 31848, Seattle, WA 98103-1848, e-mail at a-lukem@microsoft.com), who appreciated making the top of the fanzine countdown last issue:]

"Thanks for the amazing review, probably the most accurate and insightful review I've ever read. Guess it primed the old pump, because here I sit at the keyboard. Hopefully, I'm moved to comment by something other than mere acclaim, like the contents of the zine itself.

"Well, in regards to the discussion of smoking/nonsmoking/and smoking. I agree with you that NSers and Sers can't be forced to hang out together by fiat, but there can be times -- outdoor decks, backyards or porches or decks, where people of all stripes can associate in peace and aerobic harmony. There have been times when I've tried to circulate more freely from zone to zone, but I just wind up feeling self-conscious in the upstairs because I feel like I reek of tobacco. Jane, who circulates most freely of all, says that the conversations in both crowds are more similar than

Who live only to serve the Dark King of Creel

anyone thinks. This is all strictly about Vanguard of course, but might have some bearing on other regular fannish parties or conversations.

"I liked your lead article. Walks, and the musings they inspire are one of the main themes of the essay, since Montaigne's day. The state of SF as exemplified in bookstore racks is something I've often contemplated. For one thing, one name I thought of as your looked at the used bookstore racks was Leigh Brackett. Although dated in many ways, her characterizations are pretty good. I've read a collection of her short stories (pretty heavy-handed in places) and a novel. The novel was better. I became curious about her work because I realized she had written the screenplays of some of my favorite movies: *The Long Goodbye*, the middle *Star Wars*, some others. I read a mystery of hers (*The Tiger Within Us*, I think) that was pretty good. Yeah!

"But that was about it, actually. I read very little SF these days. Mostly I've been reading essays (Robert Louis Stevenson, Lisa Jones, now William Hazlitt) and nonfiction. I read *Beggars in Spain* recently and liked it. I got two books by Iain Banks at Westercon (*Feersum Endjinn* and *Against a Dark Background*) and I enjoy his writing. He certainly has 'big' down pat; he can get more 'big' in a 100-word paragraph than one would think possible. There are plenty of writers I think I'd like if I read them (Greg Bear for instance; Kim Stanley Robinson, others), but it's the crush of time as much as anything else. I mean, there's plenty of writing in economics I'd like to be able to read and write about too, but I read slowly and have little time for books -- it's why I take the bus to work, in fact, just to get time to write in my notebook and read. Hah!

"I like the Vintage books, too, and I think it's largely the sensual feel of the covers, the heft of the book, the smoothness of the pages riffling. I feel very heavily marketed at when I buy a book because of the tropes or icons on the cover. I have no reason to sneer at the marketing of Piers Anthony, considering how the marketing of Jim Thompson had me snookered for a while. Of course, I would say that Jim Thompson is a better writer, but maybe it's all just tropes, turtles and tropes all the way down, and that's how we respond to anything.

"On the other hand, since I've discovered the Black Lizard crime and the Vintage Black Lizard series, I've thought that what science fiction could use is a good, cheap paperback reissue line. ('Cheap' is a relative term in this context.) We have enough ultrafine presses, I think they're part of the problem (even though I support my local fine press).

"Calling me 'the most honest person in all of fandom gives me my own tough act to follow. But it's especially debatable given the strength and honesty of Victor's essay in this issue. Yeah! I like his journalism stories and what he's written about so far. I hope he continues cranking them out for you. This is good stuff, even though putting

it that way doesn't do Victor's writing justice. I briefly daydreamed of a competition for 'most honest' between me and Victor, but it seemed to end in long discursions on bodily fluids. Hah! So we shan't get into that."

[APH: Well, not in here, anyway. Now, on to our last letter, from A.P. MCQUIDDY (824 NE 45th St., Suite 26, Seattle, WA 98105):]

"Your rumination on the current state of SF as lit was very welcome, not just for its content, but also because it's a new piece of Hooperist oration -- something sorely lacking of late . . .

"Yeah, one of the big things I like about Seattle is the 'proliferation of neighborhoods' of which you speak -- it's like the burrows of NYC. But not so clearly divided, nor distinct in flavor: lots of bleeding into each other at the edges. Prolly this is the very thing which saves us from the kind of macho-idiot antagonism found in NYC. They're nationalists, we're globalists. Ol' LA-stuck Rodney King laments, 'Can't we all just get along?' Seattle *does*.

"I've heard of following publishers, but really Hoop: chromatacizing?

"You haven't 'lost' your sense of wonder, Hoop -- it's just moved on to better things! One can keep a sense of wonder and develop a discerning literary palate. I sure as hellfire haven't lost mine, yet I believe I've made progress toward establishing what makes Good Writing, and what makes Bad. Don't berate yourself for loathing that umpteenth Xanth novel of the year -- applaud your keen sense of literary merit! The fault for the preponderance of shitty sf lies w/the industry. Tho I suppose a good argument could be made that the masses sending Piers Anthony soaring up the Bestseller lists (instead of Patricia Anthony), or that propel stagnant old farts like Heinlein unto Godhood (instead of interesting new talents like Liz Hand) . . . I suppose these scatological money bags are also to blame. But you, my dear Hoopster, *you* are not among them.

"Ah, now the meat of the 37th APAK -- Victor's piece.

"'So what did you think?' Victor asked at Vanguard when I volunteered I'd read it.

"I thought it was the best thing that you've ever written -- that I've read anyway.'

"Victor smirked his perpetual smirk. Like a child who knows he's been naughty, but knows equally well that he's gotten away with it.

"Tell Hooper that it's the best thing he's ever published in APAK,' Victor suggested, 'that should floor him.'

"And I did. I told you that as soon as you came out onto Laurie's patio.

"But you know, Andy -- on a second reading, I'm not so sure anymore.

"Sure, it's 'good.' Very solid stuff. I could quibble w/a clunky sentence here or there, but that's . . . well,

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, JUNE 29TH TO JULY 10TH:

#1: Crawdaddy! #8, Paul Williams. [Notwithstanding the general pathos of reading a zine whose editor recently cheated death, this issue of Paul's new series impressed me with its generally sunny tone and attractive presentation. I have also sufficiently forgiven Paul for his recent negative reviews of REM and Elvis Costello to be able to enjoy the current issue, which is most particularly focused on Paul's pleasure at the re-issue of Nico's 1967 album *Chelsea Girl*, and Carsten Baumann's glowing appreciation of Johnny Cash's recent CD *American Recordings* (Which is, by the way, a startlingly good and original record). Crawdaddy! always reads as though as it has arisen from passions so powerful that the editor has no choice but to publish, and I don't think I can come up with a better definition of a fanzine than that.]

#2: Thingumybob #13, Chuck Connor [Sounds kind of like a Roger Corman picture, doesn't it? I enjoyed this number, which could be called the "New World Issue" as it features an account of some adventures Chuck enjoyed in Belize a few years back, and a letter with an attached story from Mae Strelkov of Jujuy, Argentina, who I always think of as the fan most physically removed from the rest of fandom. Nice cover by Jim Gallagher too. Chuck continues to run his entire mailing list in every issue, a very useful and thoughtful service.]

#3: Critical Wave #40, Steve Green & Martin Tudor: [Certainly can't fault these fellows on production values; CW remains one of the more physically impressive fanzines available today. The only real question is whether or not I ought to call it a fanzine, since the only way Americans are likely to see it is by sending \$29.00 for an air-mail sub to Mary Burns at 23 Kensington Court, Hempstead, NY 11550. Some interesting stuff here, such as the text of a talk given by Stephen Baxter on "Exploration and Alienation in the SF of H.G. Wells," and an interview with Michael Moorcock which features a lengthy indictment of American censorship coupled with a defense of Andrea Dworkin. One can't read that just anywhere. Alas, one can find thumbnail synopses of Animé cassettes and 500-word book reviews in a lot of other places, and those featured here are not sufficiently riveting to overcome that fact. But let's be fair; these are not idiot exercises in log-rolling, and most of the books covered seem to be worth reading. I suspect your enjoyment of this zine depends on your opinion of sercon genzines. If you like them, this is a good choice. It will be nice when they get a regular fanzine reviewer on-line again]

#4: Quiipu #5, Vicki Rosenzweig: [Another installment of Vicki's personalzine, as engaging and disarming as ever. This issue contains a Corflu Vegas report (She liked the con, but she's never going back; my warning a few issues back about how Vegas is not designed with seizure disorders in mind seems to have reached her a trifle too late to help.), an appreciation of 90 years of the New York subway system and a very good book review on Lars Eighner's *Travels with Lizbeth: Three years on the road and on the streets*. Pretty cool stuff, and the first new Stu Shiffman illo I've seen in a fanzine for some time.]

#5: Situation Normal!??, July 1995, Joyce Katz for SNAFFU: [An affable clubzine, improving all the time. Fanzine reviews, fannish profiles, local and some national news, declarations of war, and the beginnings of a letter column. A nice way to keep posted on the doings of Fabulous Las Vegas Fandom.]

ALSO RECEIVED: Outhouse #12, b/w The Olaf Alternative #8, Ken Cheslin; Nine Lines Each, Corflu Special #4, Forman, Hardin, Springer & Wilson; BaggieCon 8: The Fanzine, Geri Sullivan & Karen Cooper.

quibbling.

"What lingers in the air after reheating this main dish, what tugs at the fringes of my critic's olfactory nerve, is the sense that Victor only wrote it at Randy's challenge last ish. I don't doubt he would have eventually penned some version of the story -- it's clearly meant to be part of 'Those Goddamn Cars', whether part three or part twenty-three.

"But it smacks of left-overs. From the 'I usually start the story this way' opening to the shrugging 'I usually trail off somewhere in here.' Victor's said it all before. We're getting nothing fresh here.

"Now before Victor throttles me, let me say this: it is very nicely written -- the multiple tellings have no doubt sharpened his ability to tell it well. And there is clearly a recognition of deep pain, pain that never goes away. Loss, and frustration, and the helplessness that goes with it.

"The emotion is real. The images are real. The events are real.

"But it's all held at arm's length. It's kept distant, safely tucked away where it can't hurt him.

"So, actually, my 'criticism' of the piece turns out not to be so, after all. What I think I'm sensing is an open wound, lightly bandaged. How the fuck do you deal with something like that? Maybe I'll know when my own mother dies. I hope not, tho. I hope there won't be so much unresolved feeling left unsaid, when the inevitability of parental death occurs in my own life.

"I wish you well, Victor."

[APH: Not much I can add to that. There's more in AP's letter but that's all I have room for now, so that and very fine letters from John Berry and Vicki Rosenzweig will have to wait to lead off the next issue. I also want to thank Randy Byers, Frank Lunney, Candi Strecker and Michael Waite for their letters, which were so full of sunny praise and appreciation for my writing that I couldn't possibly print them. But I really appreciate everyone who takes the time to write, and as always that APAK is so well-received. Don't forget to send in those final Hugo ballots!]

APPARATCHIK is the naviculo-cuboid of fandom; you may not notice it now, but wait until it's gone and your fore-limbs collapse under you! It's still available for the usual, or you can get APPARATCHIK for \$3.00 for a three month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a life-time subscription for \$19.73, or in exchange for 100 Thracian peltasts. Lifetime subscribers are Tom Becker, Richard Brandt and Michelle Lyons, Don Fitch, Lucy Huntzinger, Robert Lichtman, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Greg Pickersgill, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Geri Sullivan, Michael Waite, and Art Widner. Addresses of fanzines reviewed at left: Crawdaddy #8, Paul Williams, P.O. Box 231155, Encinitas, CA 92023; Critical Wave #40, Martin Tudor & Steve Green, 845 Alum Rock Rd., Ward End, Birmingham, B8 2AG, U.K.; Thingumybob #13, Chuck Connor, Sildan House, Chediston Rd., Wisset, Near Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0NF U.K.; Quiipu #5, Vicki Rosenzweig, 33 Indian Road, Apt. 6-R, New York, NY 10034; Situation Normal!??, July 1995, Joyce Katz for SNAFFU, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107. How much is that in Earth money?