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APPARATCHIK
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The fifty-second issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper and Victor Gonzalez, member & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. See the back page for availability and trade information. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 246. Apparatchiki: Steve Green, Carl Juarez, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor & Pam Wells (British Address: 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, UK). Hundreds of mummified cats lay in the Bubasteion.

Issue # 52, February 1st, 1996

APH here: We'll get to the easy stuff first. Some correspondents have expressed concern over an ambiguity in the tallying of this year's Fan Activity Achievement Awards; will votes be allotted a score of five, three and one points for first, second and third place on each ballot? Yes, according to Janice Murray, whom I spoke to by phone this evening. So, PLEASE be sure to indicate which of your choices is first, second and third, otherwise Janice will just have to assume that they should be counted in the order listed. Send your votes for best fanzine, fan writer, and fan artist of 1995 to Janice at P.O. Box 75684, Seattle, WA 98125-0684, e-mail at 73227.2641@compuserve.com, by the 29th of February.

We also discussed the issue of BLAT!'s eligibility for the award; the last issue of BLAT! was dated December of 1994, but it reached almost no one until the first few weeks of 1995. Still, there is a strong possibility that BLAT! will not be eligible for the Hugo award as a result. Janice says that she will accept votes for BLAT! in this year's FAAA balloting, and in fact, is not inclined to disqualify anyone's votes on such technical grounds. People interested in seeing rules for the conduct of the awards solidified should be prepared to discuss them at Corflu 13 in Nashville, or make their views known in this or other fan publications prior to that event.

Speaking of which, if you haven't made your hotel reservations for Corflu, you might be out of luck . . . the Clubhouse Inn is apparently almost totally booked for the weekend of the convention, March 15th to 17th. Corflu memberships are still \$40, available from Lucy Huntzinger, 2305 Bernard Drive, Nashville, TN 37212.

I have tried to avoid writing about TAF in these pages over the past few months, since we had devoted so many inches to it in Apak's first year that we have a reputation for talking about it "all the time." But over the past two months, there has been so much discussion of TAFF in various on-line forums that it seems important to make a few points.

The current wave of discussion has been driven by statements made by three major fannish players, Rich Brown, Arnie Katz and Mike Glycer. I referred to Arnie's comments on TAFF in Wild Heirs #11 as "superb" in my review of that issue; at the time, I thought they represented a good summation of the options open to fanzine fans as they faced the possibility that the fund would be lost or, far less likely, seized by power-hungry convention-running fans. I didn't mention the fact that I found the latter possibility quite unlikely, and Arnie's depiction of convention-runners as unfair, if not

imaginary, generalizations.

But Arnie was, in turn, reacting to comments made by Mike Glycer in an issue of his own fanzine, in which Mike decried the comments made about Samanda Jude by people like Ted White and Dan Steffan, and promised his readers that one of "them" would win some day.

Add to this mixture Rich Brown, whose on-line style is to shoot first and work toward understanding later. Rich is genuinely concerned about the possible dilution of the TAFF tradition, but more than anything else, he seems to have been concerned with counting coup on anyone — and I mean ANYONE — who chooses to disagree with him.

The result of this has been a remarkable argument, in which everyone involved has been eager to see acquisitive intent on the part of everyone around them, and in which no one has been willing to admit to being on either side — everyone has sensibly realized that almost everyone in organized fandom has experience in both fan publishing and con running (See Steve Green's column for more on this).

Actually, I found the whole thing pretty encouraging. Almost everyone figured out that the us/them thing was a rhetorical construct right away, and with only a few exceptions, I think the conduct of most people involved has been more rational than was the rule in the last major TAFF contretemps back in the mid-eighties. Harsh words were exchanged, but no one died, and I've seen far worse arguments on-line. As flame wars go, this was a mere skirmish.

Well, just as a little punctuation on this, Dan Steffan, the current TAFF administrator, wanted me to point out a few things. First, of all, there are no plans to change any aspect of the operation of TAFF at this time, and indeed, there is no official mechanism for making changes at any time. No matter how stridently they may agitate for one candidate or another, no one in fandom has more than one vote. Second, TAFF is open to anyone who has been involved in fandom for at least six months, no matter who they are, what they do in fandom, or what they may say about the fun. Third, people who have complaints about the way the fund is administered, or who want to register any sort of vote, contribution or opinion on TAFF are very welcome to write him at 3804 S. 9th St., Arlington VA 22204.

We'll be running the first installment of Dan's report on his trip to the UK last summer in the next issue of Apak.

Really, we will.



Auburn will be late and Burien will be late with no breakfast.

They're dead, Meyer

**Special to Apparatchik
By Arnie Katz**

"THEY'RE ON TO us, High One," Tom Springer said to me. "Victor Gonzalez spells it all out on the front page of the new Apparatchik."

"He knows about the stasis tube? The vita ray? The Lazarus Project?" I was incredulous. I knew that Apparatchik was the focal point of fanzine fandom, and that Andy Hooper was fandom's greatest Andy since Porter, but I had not expected this from a rank newcomer like Victor Gonzalez.

"No, no no," Tom assured. I let out my breath in a long, relieved sigh. "He hasn't penetrated that deeply, High One." He called me that as a token of respect — and because I often am. Also, I refused to answer to anything when engaged in Crifaancom (critical fannish communication).

"The Council will be pleased to hear that, at least," I said. I didn't relish facing Ted, rich, Robert and Dan with the news that a self-proclaimed hipster from Seattle had ripped the veil of secrecy on the most important, highest priority project of fanzine fandom. The Lazarus Project even took precedence over pissing and moaning about TAFF. It's *that* important.

"We'll have to be careful, High One," Tom counseled. "Victor has already noticed that all 23 editors don't work on Wild Heirs at the same time, and that there aren't many other fanzines coming from Las Vegas Fandom."

"I see," I said, pondering the potential consequences of such revelations reaching the wrong eyes as a result of Apparatchik. "This Gonzalez could be smarter than he looks," I conceded. "We may have to send in Nevenah with the Glove again."

"Throw the fear of Ghu into him, eh?" Tom seconded.

I nodded, which didn't do much good since I was on the telephone. "Tell her not to do anything... terminal."

"Will do, High One!" He cleared his throat. I sensed immediately that he had something more to tell me. Something worse.

"What is it, Tom?" Again I held my breath and braced for the bad news. "Victor noticed the deviation from the Rigid Monthly Schedule in December."

"That's terrible."

"He giggered WILD HEIRS for lack of timeliness, because the editorial was done in late November, and the issue went into the mail January 2nd. That's five weeks!" I wondered what Victor will make of the editorials in the next BLAT!, TRAP DOOR or Habakkuk.

"Well, we can't tell him that we had malfunction with the trans-dimensional gate, can we?" I chuckled. Tom laughed the hearty Springer laugh. I imagined casually dropping the information that the conduit between the Netherregional and Las Vegas was temporarily unreliable, so that our "ghost writers" couldn't make the journey to our plane of existence.

Not that it was all a lark. I shuddered at the thought of those worthy fans stuck in the Netherregional without the respite of a stay in Las Vegas. An uninterrupted month of hall costumes, silk dirges and lavender unicorns could do permanent mental injury to even the staunchly slannish.

"No, we can't tell him that," Tom echoed. "Could we convince him that we decided to ease up on the publishing for a month to better enjoy Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years?"

"It's worth a shot."

"As you command, High One," he said and hung up. I sat back in my chair, enjoying the satisfaction of knowing that fannish minions were already doing my bidding.

As I sat at the desk, peering into the chorp dimension, I thought of how it all began, that fateful day the e-mail summons arrived from the Council. I was nervous when I got the e-missive, countersigned as it was by all four members of the psychoactive group mind that makes all important decisions for fanzine fandom. It told me to report to the Council Chamber, hidden deep behind the fences and secrecy of Area 51.

I had not even known such a place existed. Now my presence was requested — or should I say demanded? Hell yes, I was jittery.

Nevertheless, I showed up at the proper gate at the appointed time. I recited the passcode. A guard blindfolded me and conducted me along Byzantine corridors to the Council room.

When someone removed the blindfold, I found myself standing in a seemingly empty room, quiet except for the hum of the Cone of Silence. I heard rustling in the darkness beyond the single bulb that illuminated the section of marble floor on which I stood uncomfortably.

Footsteps. My heart was in my throat as they approached. Then I recognized rich brown as he stepped forward out of the darkness. The half light drew ominous shadows on his craggy visage.

"All fandom may depend on you, neofan!" rich said. I started to protest the designation, but decided not to interrupt. Perhaps this was how the Council, as steeped in tradition as it was in mystery, addressed all under its benign stewardship. "The Lazarus Project is the only salvation fanzine fandom has left!"

I said nothing. I had never heard of the Lazarus Project. I stood there, shifting from foot to foot, as rich began to tell me about this desperate attempt to revive fanzine fandom in the wake of The Bergeron Wars/Topic A fanwar.

"And you want to bring the dead fans up from the Netherregional and have them assume new identities as heretofore unknown fans in Las Vegas?" The audaciousness of the scheme hypnotized me.

"Yes," rich said. "We'll have all the insurgents — Blmer, Vernon, Terry and even Laney are willing to give it a try."

"Laney?" I said. "There's no other way?"

"It's that, or we will have condemned our beloved fanzine fandom to a living hell of shrimp, Seattle and endless hunts for nitrous oxide."

I thought of another problem. "Won't people notice the distinctive styles and awesome depth of fannish knowledge possessed by these trufen?"

"Well, they don't have the same old zip they once did," rich conceded. "They're dead, Meyer."

"So we can pass them off as awkward new fans until continued contact with contemporary fandom restores their former powers?" I asked.

"That's the plan," rich replied. "They ought to be up to half speed by the end of the century."

And that's how it all began. And since the start of the Lazarus Project, these fan shades have shambled through the gate and into the sparkling light of Las Vegas. Death has erased their memory of fandom, and the dulling effect of the Netherregional has dimmed their brilliance, but their unquenchable fannish spirit forces them to press on with their flawed fanzine despite its failings and frustrations.

As I turned away from fanac and resumed work on a review due at FUSION the next day, I remembered rich's final admonition: "Treat them like neos," he had counseled. "And remember, never shake hands."

What is it that appeals to you about shopping cart racing?

**KNOW YOUR TAFF CANDIDATE,
#1: THE SIMO**

by Pam Wells

THE FIRST TIME I came across Simo was at Inconsequential, the first of the Incon series of conventions put on by

the humour fans (sometimes referred to as 'Croydon fandom', but that's only a subset). He was what I can only describe as a Presence. He's the sort of guy who can stand on a stage and auction anything. He has a great sense of humour — he even did stand-up for a while, and he did some stand-up stuff at one of the conventions. But he's not doing that any more. A bunch of us stayed up all night in the bar, something I've never managed to do at a regular SF con (though I have often grabbed less than an hour's sleep a few times, when I was a good bit younger!). It was one of those conventions with an atmosphere that just gels right. Simo was a big part of that. It was a con with great *community*, such as reminded me of some of the cons I first encountered, and that community has largely disappeared from the more general run of conventions here now.

Anyway, a long while before that, just after the first incon, we (being Bernie Evans, Steve Lawson and moi) started the annual Joint Birthday Parties (our birthdays being 30th and 31st August and 1st September respectively). The first one was in Sheffield, at Steve and Alice Lawson's. We were getting the invite list together, and I wanted to invite Simo, though I didn't have an address for him. Alice tracked it down, an invite was sent, and he showed up! It turned out that he was perfectly happy to come to a party in a town where he didn't live (he lived in Stoke-on-Trent at the time), and where he knew nobody (none of us actually *spoke* to him at the first Incon, and being from a different part of fandom the fame of some of us hadn't reached him at that point — and that was the year when I'd been FGoH at Eastercon, only weeks prior to the first Incon). And he had to be back in Stoke-on-Trent the next morning to go to work (yes, on a Sunday, though I can't remember what he was doing back then). So he came along with his cans of beer and his sleeping bag, and was wonderful company and quite the hit of the party. He and I were telling jokes and keeping the company entertained in the kitchen for hours: he's a generous jokester, never setting you up for a fall or hogging all the best lines for himself. He's a very quick thinker, on the humour front. People just watched us doing our quick-fire verbals. (But other people could get a word in too — it wasn't *just* a show!)

Ah, happy memories!

More prosaically, and more factually, though: Simo has edited *Tales From the Broken Drum*, the newsletter/fanzine of the Octarine SF/humour society, and *Mostly Harmless*, newsletter of the ZZ9 Plural Z Alpha (the Croydon lot). He now works as a staff writer on the new(ish) professional skiffy magazine *SFX*, and has moved to Bath (because that's where *SFX* is done). He has been on the committees of various conventions, including the three Incons (third and final one in May — they're every 2 years), and has done programming at other conventions, though not ones I'd been to. He's a collector of much really naff media memorabilia, and seriously knowledgeable about old TV series and other genre-related trivia. But he's also into books and fanzines and stuff: he's not hidebound or stereotyped.

As for his presence in this TAFF race, he was SMOfed into standing by one Martin Easterbrook, who asked me if I thought it would be a good idea. (Wow! SMOfs asking me first! Wow!) (Like, I care?) (Anyway.) I think it's better for TAFF to have a real race than for one person to stand against Hold Over Funds. It

makes the race more interesting that way, and raises the profile, and gives people a real choice, and raises more revenue, and allows for proper campaigning activities to take place, and so on. And anyway, Simo doesn't expect to win. He's actually likely to get a few votes in Britain, but knows no one in America.

All the more usual suspects have declined to run against Martin Tudor, practically the whole of British fannish fandom thinking that it's way past time for Martin to have the honour of something like this. Simo is happy for Martin to win — and will probably run for the next GUFF race in that case. (I told him that being a TAFF loser wouldn't hurt his GUFF chances, and would probably help.) Martin said he thinks Simo might win in Europe, but is confident of victory in America.

I could say loads more, but you probably get the idea from this. If Simo does win, you'll have a very entertaining guest who will represent a slightly different side of British fandom (though becoming more integrated with the traditional fanzine fans as time goes on — Simo has produced a couple of 'real' fanzines as well, as have Dop, Mark Plummer and Claire Brialey, all from the same 'stable' of humour fandom). (One of the great things about humour fandom was their own humour fanzines, totally brilliant and totally unconnected to the rest of fandom. The sort of fanzines Jim De Liscard reviewed in *Attitude 3*, and Walt Willis suspected were hoaxes in issue 4. Jim himself still resolutely refuses to produce a 'real' fanzine, though — but he did come along to Novacon for a bit....)

If Simo were seriously intending to win TAFF, this probably isn't the year he should have chosen to stand. He needs to build up his profile over on that side of the pond. But if even losing TAFF lets him build up some contacts over there, that will be a good thing. I'm sure you guys would love him. He'd be great at the convention, and he'd produce an entertaining trip report afterwards. His winning wouldn't remove TAFF from the fanzine fans, but it would broaden it out a little. The only objection to him winning is the presence in the race of a candidate who has been around for longer, achieved more (conventions run, fanzines published, etc.), and is better known generally. Martin deserves the *honour* more than Simo does. It probably depends what people want — a good performer at the con (Simo), a trip report (both equally probable, and both very likely), a good administrator afterwards (both have these skills, but my money's on Martin as being the better of the two), someone who's never met US fandom (Simo), or someone who most deserves the honour (Martin). Or any one of a hundred reasons why people vote!

~~xxx~~

[APH here: Pam wanted me to make it clear that although Simo is a wonderful person, she still feels that Martin Tudor is even more wonderful, and that she, in fact, supports his candidacy as fully as she ever did. Also, this particular piece began its life as a piece of hastily-written e-mail to inform a personal correspondent of some things that Pam knew about Simo (and, most assuredly, she knows far more than she is willing to tell at this sensitive juncture), and should not, therefore, be judged on grounds of polish or grammar. And, since Pam knows even more about Martin Tudor (quiet, you), perhaps she will favor us with a similar profile of him for a future issue of *Apparatchik*. Thank you for your attention to these details.]



To see her in sunlight was to see Marxism die.

FANNISH MEMORY SYNDROME

by Steve Green

THE TROUBLE WITH fannish disputes is that, amusing as they can often become on a purely absurdist level, the architecture of the respective

parties' internal logic tends to collapse rapidly under the growing weight of generalizations, irrelevancies and misconceptions.

Case in point: Mike Glycer's reported accusation in FILE 770 that "fanzine fandom" (or rather, as redelineated in subsequent exchanges, certain elements within that cultural group) is seeking to retain gift of the TransAtlantic Fan Fund for those amongst its own ranks in the wake of Samanda Jeude's near-victory last summer. Ignoring for a moment the irony (perhaps lost on Mike) of a polemicist using his own fanzine to ally himself to "conrunning fandom", the sheer wrongheadedness of this stance will probably be matched only by the gibberish already springing up in response.

Take, for example, Arnie Katz's commentary "Thots on TAFF", published in WILD HEIRS #11. Arnie's heart might be in the right place, but heaven knows where he left his brain when coming up with such apocalyptic tosh as "This may be fanzine fandom's last chance to determine (TAFF's) future direction" and "Favourable options will grow scarcer after militant con-fandom rallies to Mike Glycer's call-to-arms". And as for "(Conrunners) know that we believe that it is intrinsic to TAFF that the representative be a fanzine fan, and they wonder why they are 'good enough' to contribute money but not to make the journey" ...

Y'see, I just can't get my head round this version of the "we" that Arnie presumably imagines he and I belong to. I may not be one hundred per cent clued up on the minutiae of North American fannish anthropology, but his vision of a neatly segregated network of fans certainly bears no resemblance to life this side of the Atlantic. Like, right now I'm working on this feature for Andy and Victor, which I guess qualifies me one of "Us"; later

this week, I'll be chasing programme items for Intervention, the 1997 Eastercon, which no doubt reveals my true mission as a fifth columnist for the evil hordes of "Them". As for this year's TAFF contenders, Martin Tudor and Mike Simpson, both slip from camp to camp at whim: even Greg Pickersgill, one of those allegedly selfish souls pointed out in Mike Glycer's rant, has served on several convention committees over the past decade.

When I was approached in late 1994 to act as one of Samanda Jeude's TAFF nominators, I chose to decline politely not because I saw conrunners as a tribe unworthy of the honour, or even because my support for Dan Steffan's candidature was already well-known before she decided to stand (after all, the race would have been cancelled if no one else came forward), but rather because I felt certain Samanda would be better advised to hold fire until her achievements were more widely publicized in Britain and she stood a fair chance of passing the twenty per cent threshold in both halves of the ballot. I drew no satisfaction from being proven correct, and look forward to supporting her at a more appropriate later date.

TAFF should not be - and is not, despite the current nonsense - the sole preserve of any one fannish enclave on any one continent, and the current rules already do much to protect it against any attempt to subvert its traditional accessibility. Of course fanzine producers do have an advantage in terms of self-publicity, but the interchangeability of roles, on these shores at least, robs this of any real significance. When Arnie dangles rumours that the chairman of the Glasgow worldcon - actually, there were two - might stand for TAFF, any potential shock value is somewhat undermined by the fact that Martin Easterbrook has been an active fanzine fan since the late 1970s and Vince Docherty since the early 1980s. Them is Us, folks.



Turn your toothbrush into a lethal weapon

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS

[APH here: We've received over a dozen letters since the last issue, so let's get started with STEVE JEFFERY (allegedly e-mailable at JEFFERY_STEVE@ctc.cookson.cmail.com, although I never seem to be able to get through to him that way:]

'You dare foist a stuffed purple Fan Barney on us and the Brits might have to respond with an inflatable Mr Blobby in a propellor beanie. Tread warily. Have we forgotten the Smurf Wars already?

Has Victor looked at some of West's cartoons bringing "only a standard level of fannish background to an illo"? (apart from the fact that you can't, unless anyone is sad enough not to have any interest or life at all outside fandom). But if that's all you bring to them, there are things you miss - particularly with West: visual puns as much as style or technique. There are, for me anyway, different criteria of appreciation for an illo done straight to stencil, or using technical drawing pens, or using a computer. Not "better", or "worse", but quite different. Victor's assessment would suggest that the same "joke" done by artists as different as West, Cheslin, Harvia or Foster should be identical by a purely fannish assessment. I'm sure even he doesn't believe that.

'But Teddy's argument seems similarly confused. True, a cartoon is a stylised representation rather than an attempt at realist drawing. The minimum should suffice, but that minimum will differ markedly depending on the artist, the style and the

effect intended (old Punch cartoons now appear overly elaborate by today's standards). But that's not quite the same as saying they *ought* to be flat and lifeless. In fact, they should be livelier - the whole point of caricature is its compression and exaggeration.

'Fandom as a Gormenghast castle - "like a mutilated finger...pointed blasphemously at heaven." A crumbling, sprawling edifice, populated by grotesque caricatures living out pointless and arcane complex rituals. Hey Andy, are you trying to tell us something?

'Which way to the Hall of Bright Carvings?

I'm going to risk being summarily dropped off your mailing list here I suspect, but what is the big fuss about Samanda Jeude standing for TAFF? Is Samanda Jeude a fan? Is TAFF a fan fund? Is it perhaps that Samanda has the temerity not to be a fanzine fan? I'm obviously missing something, and I admit to not taking too much interest in either the mechanics or politics of TAFF, but it seems to have got some people very het up.'

[VMG: What I "seem" to have said is not what I in fact said. What I said was that when artists rely upon in-jokes — those only understood by the author in particular — they shouldn't be surprised, nor critical, that people don't get the joke. That's that.]

[APH: I really think the so-called controversy about Samanda Jeude's candidacy was much greater when reported second or third hand. Even taking the most negative comments

made about Samanda out of their context and lining them up together, the resultant indictment seems pretty weak. To sum up, one more time, the reasons why people chose not to support her: 1.) She was not known to many British fans, and thus lacked a major attribute which the fund has traditionally called for; 2.) She seemed most interested in using the trip to promote her work in improving handicapped-access in fandom; 3.) Her platform made her sound like a sap, but then, the same could be said for the other two candidates. All of this idiocy regarding convention-running vs. fanzine-fans came well after the fact.

Now, MARTIN TUDOR (24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX UK) clears up a few errors that have been published in this fanzine:]

'A couple of corrections in response to Robert Lichtman's letter in #50. I'm actually "happily cohabiting off Clarkes Lane" with Helena GOUGH not BOWLES: Helena Bowles, to my certain knowledge, is still "happily co-habiting off Cape Hill" with her partner Richard Standage and their son Danesh....

'As for Robert's comments regarding the forthcoming wedding of Helena GOUGH and myself, neither I nor Helena have ever "promised" to wed in Vegas, although it is one of several venues we have been considering. As I told you when I first mentioned Vegas, our original plan was to be married at Castle Rushen registry office in the Isle of Man some time in March this year - but it fell through due to the residency requirements there. At the moment Vegas is looking less and less likely as it would mean delaying the wedding until late August; postponing any definite plans until the TAFP result is announced in May; trying to sort everything out in a very short time if I win; arranging something else if I lose; pissing off most of our family and friends by marrying somewhere they will be unable to attend. So we are currently looking for somewhere nice (and cheap) locally.

'However, if I do win TAFP we fully intend to visit Vegas and attend Toner; so regardless of whether we marry there or not I'm sure any traditional tossing of pies can be adapted accordingly!

'Apologies to those who received copies of the rare collector's item, editions of miscollated APAK #49s. Like any poor workman I blame my tools - in this case our Canon NP1215 copier which has the annoying habit of 'flipping' over the occasional sheet of paper as it exits. I try to check as I'm collating but it is all too easy for my tired eyes to miss a few. (I blame the four to five hours of bus travel each day, to and from work; Helena blames the red wine; who's to say who's right!)

[APH: I'm glad we cleared that up about you and the Helenas; it struck me as weird when I read it, but it slipped my mind in the face of all the other madness that goes on at deadline time. And even if you don't decide to get married there, I can assure you that Las Vegas fandom will show you an elevated standard of entertainment and hospitality should your trip take you there.

Now, onto more consideration of plastic ephemera by one HOWARD WALDROP (Box 5103 Oso General Store, 30230 Oso Loop Road, Arlington, WA 98223), who explains:]

'So far as I know, APAK is the only fanzine to appear this month with the word "bricolage" in it. (This is the same kind of thing that led me to go up after a panel at WFCon in Baltimore and congratulate John Clute for using the word "misprized" correctly in a sentence . . .)

Zero. Centralia, Illinois:

'That's where the conglomerate sugar company that, at the time, put out Zero and Payday and God knows how many other

candy bars (no doubt now subsumed by General Mills, or Toyota or Edmond Scientific, since where else in those days could you sell 3 cents worth of sugar and peanuts for 10 cents?). Anyway, if you saved up 3 wrappers, and sent some ungodly out-of-budget figure like 15 cents in, after about three years (more like a month but it seemed like 3 years) you'd get back something wonderful. (They were one of the first companies to take out ads on TV for the *things you sent off for*, not the product.)

'Like, this plastic airplane, which looked like the cheesy balsa-wood gliders you bought for 5 cents at the Ben Franklin Store, *except* the wings folded back against the fuselage: you held it by the folded down wings; you launched it with a miniature slingshot thing (a plastic handle with a ring-sight and a big rubber band; the rubber band fitted into a notch, like a carrier-launched aircraft's tailhook, only under the nose and in reverse) and you shot it into the air. When it worked like it was supposed to, the sonofabitch shot 50 or 60 feet in the air before the wings unfolded and it began to glide; being fifty feet higher than the balsa-wood ones, it tended to glide a *long* way before coming down. (More were lost by going out of sight, over to mean Mr. Joe's orchard, or on top of the 3d Church O' Christ, etc., than were play-tested to destruction.)

'When they *didn't* work right, the wings unfolded during the launch and came off and the fuselage went through Tommy Lee's navel at 100 mph. But that's the chance you took — and before you lost it, you were, of course, King of Drummond Drive or Bowen Road or wherever you lived. They also made a spool-spindle flying saucer — a dowel with enclosed-circle helicopter blade vanes on top of it — like the Von Braun Mars ships from Disney's *Mars and Beyond* TV show. You wrapped about 20 miles of thick cord around the dowel below the blades, dropped it into the spool, and gave a big yank, like on a lawn mower starter cord. Thing became a blur, made noise like a banshee, and kissed Mother Earth goodbye; went straight up out of sight and onto the roof of the 3d Church O' Christ. Or through Tommy Lee's navel at 100 mph. (But he was used to things like that by then.)

'(Bill Wallace, of M. M. Moamrath fame, gave me one for Christmas about 15 years ago. It's in the box of my stuff in Brad and Barb Denton's garage awaiting shipment to me. His mom had found one, intact, including the instructions, at a garage sale in Houston. I don't think there's an intact version of the folding-wing plane, even at the U.S. Patent Office, anymore.)

'They also did the usual 16 page 4" x 6" single story comic books you could only get through the wrapper cartel; the baking soda submarines, and if I remember correctly, a baking soda frogman, etc. It was truly wonderful, and self-replicating in the case of the airplane and spindle/saucer — the Church O' Christ roof and Tommy Lee's navel; the frogman and the submarine, being probably 2" long each, were test-engineered to go down all but the smallest tub and sink drains in America. I could never afford the candy bars, much less the extra fifteen cents, but I had friends who had them (and, unlike them, I have one now)

'That's what: Zero. Centralia, Illinois meant.

'Was I the last person in America to learn of Lobster Lip Parasites?

'Yer pal, Howard.'

[APH: I think I had the submarine and frogman Mk. IIC, which were large enough to avoid being sucked down the drain, but so heavy as a result that the little CO₂ pellet barely lifted them off the bottom of the tub. The toy aircraft I recall most vividly was the XRG-I Re-Entry glider, part of Mattel's Major Matt Mason series. This was a huge plastic lifting body, with a

The threat of Martha Stewart

spot into which one of the luckless astronaut dolls could be bolted. It had a much larger proportion of wing area than the Space Shuttle does, and would float for a hundred yards with a tailwind. But the vehicle came with no launch package; there was just a handle with which you launched it by hand. For a seven-year-old, this was a difficult proposition. For a really successful flight, you had to con an adult into flinging the thing aloft for you, and even then, the pilot was often flung from the cockpit at the apex of the flight. Your account stirs so many memories of my own that I wonder if this might not be a kind of universal formative experience among male American fans: Getting cheap plastic airplanes and flying them until they die.

Now, GEORGE FLYNN (Box 1069 Kendall Sq. Station Cambridge, MA 02142) offers comment on Apak 50 & 51:]

'The revival of the fan awards sounds great, but I do see certain problems. In my experience, asking fans to vote on something without providing a ballot tends to evoke an abysmally low response; perhaps the e-mail age has changed this, but I wouldn't count on it. Of greater concern is that you say votes will be counted 5 - 3 - 1 for first through third places. Since Janice's own announcement didn't mention this, some (many?) voters may simply list their choices in, say, alphabetical order, thus distorting the results (not that an alphabetical list beginning with Ansible, Apparatchik, Attitude or BLAT! would be such a bad thing).

'Yes, Telos was great. But Izzard, I think, was better. (Or maybe it's just that I had more time to appreciate it; things were a little busy around here in 1980...).

'What the hell is a "soft light with no shadows" supposed to mean? Shadows, after all, are only produced by some thing getting in front of a light.

'"Apparatchik is the Honorary Consul of fandom..." Honorary consulships can be dangerous, you know. A few years back, about five blocks from where I live, the local Turkish honorary consul was assassinated by (presumably) an Armenian terrorist.

I think Victor's right about Wild Heirs' "lack [of] currency" being a problem. Observe how Arnie's TAFF piece in #11 triggered a massive brouhaha online, with one significant thread being whether any "fanzine fans" would respond/refute. And then #12 comes out, and lo, Robert Lichtman and I seem to have been the only ones to get in with *any* comment on #11 before the issues closed. This is no way to conduct a feud. (*joke*) Mind you, I haven't actually read this issue yet....

'On ships blowing up in harbor: Any decent conspiracy theory would come up with a far-reaching secret organization responsible for sinking both the *Novorossiysk* and the *Maine*.

I like "the revered R" in John Dallman's letter.

'Robert Lichtman... Space Patrol... We watched some tapes of it after a recent NESFA meeting; clunky, yes. (We have a local SP freak, who's also crazy about Howdy Doody; in fandom there are many mansions.)'

[VMG: You're absolutely right about Wild Heirs. I also noticed that the letter column is filled mostly with comments on issues before #11. Although Arnie says otherwise in this issue of Apak, I did not overlook anything in addressing the currency problem. While WH #12 may have come out later than usual because of the holiday, there is a similar several-week gap between the date the editorial was composed and the date Wild Heirs #11 was sent. Arnie has yet to really address this issue.]

[APH: See the front page, George, for further clarification of the Faan awards issue. Now, the return of GORDON EKLUND (15815 40th Place S. #103 Seattle, WA 98188) who has known the

pangs of Apak-deprivation:]

I wanted to thank both of you for the steady deluge of Apparatchiks which have been materializing in my mailbox the last several months as regular as a horse with a clock in its mouth.

I'd even write you a letter of comment except that the last time I did that — either for Apparatchik or maybe for Spent Brass or maybe for the horse with the clock in its mouth as alluded to above, I forget — I never got another fanzine from you for six months or more. And then one day — I think it was raining and the sky above as cruel as an angry banana — the Apparatchiks commenced again to appear and I kept quiet like a worm with a grudge and they kept appearing and it looked like a really good sign to me. A sign of what I'm not sure: the birth of a new messiah, the need for a good haircut, a fair deal on the price of oats. But a sign nevertheless.

'Anyway, the magazine reminds me of several others from fandoms deeper past and now that it's gone and acquired a co-editor, the White and Gerber Minac surges immediately to mind especially since the day before yesterday when it snowed and I was trying to find stuff in my closet heavy enough to stick in the trunk of the car to weigh down the rear I came across a couple issues from the summer of '63 at the bottom of a newer accumulation of diverse clutter. (I'd ended up with a 16-pound bowling ball, a full box of computer paper, and a couple ten-pound weights jammed in the trunk. Worked just fine.) Or Axe — my run of which I tend to stumble across more often than the Minacs because at one point when I was in high school I filed my fanzines alphabetically and the shell of that system still somewhat survives, like rain in a mud puddle — which started out (Axe, not the puddle) as a single sheet newsweekly and ended up a plump genzine publishing at least the early sections of Willis's second adventures in America. Actually, I'm not sure if the Breendoggle didn't kill off both zines but I could have my chronology confused.

I tend to pay next to no attention to UFO speculations on the whole but found your ruminations on the Roswell incident of considerable reading interest even though it's something I knew less than nothing about and had little interest in learning more. (The cold finitude of brain capacity, you know.) As far as the subject as a whole is concerned, I agree with Asimov that UFO phenomena clearly exist, that they represent something well worth studying, but almost certainly have nothing to do with aliens in spaceships. What UFO's have to do with I haven't the foggiest firm notion but if I were going to bet I'd lay my money in the realm of human psychology rather than physical reality. (Which would of course explain the total absence of physical evidence.) And that may be the most interesting possibility of all.

'Oddly, when I was nine and ten years old, I was a huge UFO enthusiast and devoured every book available (not many) and saw that full-length UFO documentary movie that came out right around that time (the precise title escapes me) at least twice. I saw a UFO of my own too of course, nothing exciting, just a small but brilliant light that darted real quick through the sky and then in a wink of an eye vanished. Probably a shooting star though I haven't thought about it in years.

I think there may have been a progression there in my life for me: from UFO's to monster movies to written science fiction to fanzine fandom. All in a five year rush. After that it's all been one long epilogue.'

[APH: I'm sorry about the gap in your receipt of Apak and other fanzines from me, Gordon; more than likely, your address was claimed in one or more address-software meltdowns that we have suffered over the years. Rest assured, you're firmly entrenched

Well, with Chinese goats it's hard to know.

ed now, so that I'll remember you even if such problems arise again.

I agree with you that the psychological implications of ufology are actually more compelling than any theory of actual alien visitation. But I think most people have a small degree of susceptibility to all sorts of things that have long logical odds against them, some part of their mind which looks at things which cannot be totally disproven and imagines them as true. That's the part of me which retains this interest in the weird, no matter how mortifying I may find it.

Now, MARK RICHARDS (P.O. Box 021831 Brooklyn, NY 11202) reveals that he too is a Telos fan:]

'Victor's reminiscences of Seattle Fandom (or, more specifically of Telos and Izzard) bring me back to when I really started to get interested in our little corner of the microcosm. The Nielsen Hayden's were among the first fanzines that Velma and I got. They stood out from the rest of the pack then, and not much of what has been published since compares. I agree with you about Teresa's writing being the high point of those 'zines. Patrick was no slouch either — in fact, his writing had more of a tendency to intimidate me when I started thinking of pubbing my own ish.

I agree with Ken Forman regarding the backwards "R" of the title. I would go farther, however; it is not merely art. It is slapstick. The title is a subtle example of what, for want of a better name, we can dub the "Comic Commie Alphabet" (or "Comic Russian" in this post-Soviet world). As previous letters illustrate, this tempts those of us who actually know the Cyrillic alphabet to see what we get if we try to transliterate the result. The Backwards "N" also is seen pretty frequently when this device is used.

'Anyone who quotes Lester Bangs is cool by me, but you already knew that. Here's to another 50 . . .'

[APH: Don't take this the wrong way, Mark, but that last paragraph reads like you were sniffing glue. Is there really a tradition of comic employment of cyrillic lettering that I have unwittingly tapped into? You must elaborate, or I'll pass your name on to the FBI.]

[VMG: Your experiences with the Nielsen Hayden zines is very similar to my own, except I was — and still am — intimidated by Teresa as well.

Forget about the FBI; unless this ridiculous and inaccurate speculation regarding the backwards R stops immediately we shall unleash the Toyo"R"Ama Polizei. You know what it's like to be a jack in the box if your lid never opens?

Crank up the theremin, and play one of those 3-d Insect Fear film themes for this letter from TED WHITE (1014 N. Tuckahoe, Falls Church, VA 22044), who confesses:]

'My job is mutating. A couple of weeks ago I had my Annual Review, which lasted two hours. (The previous year it lasted ten minutes.) The outcome of it all is that in one or two weeks — post the Las Vegas MAGIC show (MAGIC: Men's Apparel Guild International of California or somesuch; a major event for us, but not one I'll attend, *sigh* . . .) — I will move out of Accounts Payable and become the Inventory Control Manager of Logotel. A promotion, accompanied by a raise. I will miss my little windowless office with the HEAVY METAL and King Crimson posters on the walls, but I look forward to a less static, more dynamic job.

'Anyway, APAK #51 is here and calls out for comment.

'Steve Green's column is fascinating; I feel as if I'm watching the evolution of a parallel universe as he describes the media invasion of British convention-running. All this stuff happened here in the early seventies, as Trekcons evolved into for-profit conventions. I feel little affinity for media-oriented conventions of

any sort. They have nothing to do with those aspects of conventions which appeal to me. But my old (60's) buddy, Al Schuster (with whom I almost published STELLAR as a book-store-distributed prozine, circa 1968) got into Trekcons heavily in the 70's (this was just after he recouped the money he'd lost on STELLAR by publishing a bunch of "8-pagers" — "the kind Men like!") and I hung out with him at one he put on in D.C. There was a convention within a convention going on there, and I could see its appeal to the gofers and con-runners, but . . .

'Moving on to letters, I was interested to read Thayer's explanation that cartoons "are supposed to be minimalist, flat and lifeless." I guess that explains why I don't enjoy his work. He seems to be clueless in this regard. (Throughout my childhood, I trained as an artist and achieved professional skills, but realized in my late teens that I lacked the creativity to go with those skills, and gave it up in my early twenties — although my art has been professionally published. My training and my affinity for artists stood me well when I designed covers for AMAZING and FANTASTIC and edited HEAVY METAL, however.) While I don't argue with "minimalist," flat and lifeless is just Plain Wrong — as reference to any good cartoonist will reveal. Thayer ought to investigate ancient Chinese and (even more) Japanese art for minimalism — amazing what can be done with a single brush-stroke — that is anything but "flat and lifeless." Real cartoonists — from Rotsler to Stiles — can imbue even the barest of lines with depth and life. This, I am convinced, is what defines a Real Artist: his/her ability to evoke richness with minimal depiction.

'On the other hand, I agree with Thayer about Joseph Nicholas, whose writing I feel he summed up well. I point this out so that my earlier comments are not interpreted as some sort of escalation in a battle in which I have no interest. I don't dislike Thayer as a person or as a fan — just as an "artist" . . . And if the truth must be known, the root of my feelings about the man are contained in my deep dislike for the name "Teddy," which grows out of my youth and the people who thus addressed me in that fashion. I am amazed/nonplused/what-ever that anyone could create for himself the pseudonym "Teddy." But I do recognize that as a personal idiosyncrasy of my own and nothing Thayer should concern himself about.

'Hey, I used to listen to Buzz Corey/Space Patrol on the radio as a kid. I seem to remember hearing it on Saturday mornings (or maybe early afternoons — later than "Let's Pretend," a rather sappy Saturday morning radio show that inspired a wretched comic book in the 40s . . .) And despite the fact that I was reading SF at that point, I accepted it fairly uncritically. I doubt I could listen to it now. (I never saw the TV show — no TV in our house in the 50's — but I imagine it was, like Capt. Video, pretty poor in the set department, and probably not as rich in "visuals" as the radio show.)

'While I appreciate Robert Lichtman's comments about my recent lactivity I was thinking of the treatment I've been getting in CHALLENGER, in which That Grand Guy more or less charges me with responsibility for our nation's moral decay. As he sees it. Guy never sent me #2 or #3, but for some reason he sends his fanzine to Dan, so I see it, sooner or later. I wrote him a letter last fall, accusing him of cowardice for failing to send me the issues in which he attacked me, and pointed out that all I'd done was to criticize his fanzine, not bomb his home. His response was to return my letter to me (well, I knew he hadn't the guts to print it) with an appended handwritten note to the effect that a man is known by the enemies he keeps; he seemed proud to be my adversary and unaware that I don't rate him high enough to consider him an "enemy." *Sigh*

The Hootie album is featured in the Adult Alternative section.

What annoys me more than Guy's posturing is the approving comment he's evoked from his readers by identifying me as a Morally Repugnant Convicted Drug Dealer. One of them proffered a "review" of my first fanzine, ZIP #1 (1953) in which nearly all the "facts" were wrong and the zine was described in terms that made it appear I'd never done anything better. Sheesh!

I think Arthur Hlavaty is right that many Hugo voters vote for cartoonists who write amusing captions -- although I think this describes Gilliland better than Rotsler. (I'm not saying Bill's captions aren't amusing; just that Bill is more of an Artist than Alexis.) That's not the only reason, of course. Exposure is also crucial. (Appearance in LOCUS and SFR used to determine the winners in the 70's, for instance, leading to Tim Kirk's string of wins.) And having a sizable clique to block-vote for you worked for Foglio.'

[VMG: Re: Harvia, It sounds as though a comment made by Dorothy Parker about Katherine Hepburn's acting abilities fits into your view of Mr. Harvia.]

[APH: I certainly echo your dismay at the seemingly endless litany of condemnation that has echoed through the lettercolumns of Challenger #2 & 3; you never really know how many idiots there are until you see them all lined up at the same time. Personally, I think Guy Lillian's need to print so many responses to one review of his fanzine rather confirms most of the observations you made about him. And no, you didn't bomb his house, but you did make some comments on his personality which one could certainly anticipate seeing some response to. But the reflexive way he has undertaken an adversarial relationship with you does a lot to illuminate the negative personality traits you observed in him, and the rhetoric used in the fanzine's lettercol also seem to echo your observations of parochial and protective attitudes in Southern Fandom. It makes me glad to have received a few laudatory notes on David Thayer last month (and that cartoon about the penguins behind the whale at the fish counter in Thyme really made me laugh, David), to balance your view of his work. I might not always like it, but at least it seldom actually annoys me.

Now, we finish with MURRAY MOORE (e-mail at murray.moore@encode.com) :]

I thought the two of you would be interested in the enclosed clipping, distributed by Fan Press International news service:

"SEATTLE (FPI) Seattle Ayatollah Declares Fatwa On Indiana Fan— Ayatollah Andy Hooper, leader of the small group of Faans in Washington State, has declared a fatwa against Midwest Fan Buck Coulson. Coulson insulted, in the pages of his own fanzine, the leader of the largest, and most active, community of Faans in the United States. In the pages of WILD HEIRS 1.2, Coulson declared he preferred the company of Samantha Jeude over that of any Las Vegas Faan. The context was discussion of TAFF. TAFF is a sacred Faanish institution. TAFF is the pilgrimage over great distance which a selected Faan makes each year. Faans take TAFF very seriously. The selection of the Faan who makes the TAFF Trip each year can be complicated. Faans, a minority inside the growing Fan community, are sensitive to the danger of their traditions being eroded. TAFF is one of the holiest tenets of Faandom, as important as The Usual and Rotsler. Faandom was racked and weakened for years because of a civil war over TAFF.

"While some TAFF winners survive to report details of their journey, in recent years the trend is for the pilgrim to disappear. Their story is never told. Coulson is a long-time member of the more populous Fan community. Coulson shares some of the basic beliefs of Faandom —pubbing your ish, letterhacking— but he finds Fans as least as interesting as Faans. Coulson does not

hesitate to diss one of the High Priests of Faandom, Ted White. Hooper had removed Coulson from his mailing list before the WILD HEIRS affront. The Samantha Jeude slap in the face caused Hooper to make a Faandom-wide call to shun Coulson. Once again Faans are asking each other, "Will all fandom be plunged into war?"

I have had the pleasure of reading WH 10 through 12, and the supplements. That the WH crew is not making the best use of publishing monthly, of being current, never occurred to me. I see a group of fans pubbing monthly because there are enough of them to be able to publish a genzine every four weeks, and because they like to do it. As for everyone and their dog being an editor, why not? Seems like typical fan mindset at work to me.

I was surprised by Buck Coulson's last line in his loc in WH 12. The surprise was that he was directing it to Arnie Katz. My impression of Arnie's print persona is that as a youngster, his grade school teacher would have reported the young Arnie to be a child who plays well with others.

I also noted that Buck did not say, Drop me from your mailing list. My reading is that he was leaving the decision to Arnie to keep him or drop him.

'Arnie was miffed, evidence of which being the third and last line of his response, "Fresh evidence that fanzine fandom has grown older, but not necessarily more adult." Has Arnie exploded as spectacularly as this on other occasions?

'Andy, I won't be answering your call to shun Buck Coulson. He pubbed or co-pubbed his ish for many a year, writes interesting columns, and is a prolific and dependable loccer. To paraphrase a Canadian federalist slogan, My Fandom Includes Buck Coulson and Andy Hooper.'

[APH: Well, good for you, Murray. I hope that you can pursue that policy and have a good time with fandom. I realize now that the juxtaposition of my comments about Buck Coulson and his remarks to Arnie might seem to be TAFF-related. But the real reason I dropped Coulson was that over the past five years, I have received many letters like the one he wrote to WH #11, full of dismissal, if not outright contempt, for many of the things the people who appeared in our fanzines have written about. Finally, I'd had enough of that, and granted the wish which Buck seemed to long for me to grant: I removed him from the list. You may say that Buck has left the decision of whether to drop him or not up to Arnie, but his remarks seem like a pretty clear invitation to terminate their relationship to me. Anyway, I guess I shouldn't have said that bit about encouraging other people to follow suit; in these uneasy times, everything anyone says can be interpreted as a call to jihad. All I meant to say was: Buck used to drive me up the wall, but that's behind me now, and it could be for you too, pard.

Your observations in regard to Arnie, as well as your various suppositions in regard to TAFF, contain enough minor inaccuracies that it does not seem fruitful to address them in detail, while sadly, at least as far as TAFF is concerned, you manage to capture the dismal essence of the situation. What is this Fannish press service, and why have I never heard of it before? If there really was a kind of wire service for fandom, we'd want to carry it. I certainly wouldn't call Arnie's response an "explosion", and blowing one remark of mine up into a "fatwa" strikes me as fuggheaded hyperbole. Keep reading, Murray, we'll both see worse things before we're through.]

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Don Fitch, Teddy Harvia, Dale Speirs, and a dozen other fan responding to our initial efforts at online transmission. We'll keep trying, folks.



West Virginia is as truly weird as any sci-fi locale

More Than We'll Say

by Victor M. Gonzalez
Staff Writer

AS A RULE, journalists learn a lot more than they print. On any story, whether a wrap-up of the weather or a political assassination.

I'd say I use less than 10 percent of my notes in an average story.

Information is often left out for reasons of space. Newspapers have to fill the "news hole" created by the number of advertising pages purchased. So, even though my paper's news hole is fairly large — about 40 percent of the paper — there are rarely more than a 1000 words in which to report a story.

But there are a more complicated set of rules governing what *can* be printed that are much more agonizing to get used to than the fact I had to leave out the color of the murder victim's blouse because there wasn't enough space.

Some of this is just the stuff people give me "off the record." That information has to be left out unless it comes from a different source.

But the majority of the rules govern things that aren't printed because they can't be proven to a sufficient degree to convince the editors they should be printed. Unproven allegations lead to libel suits.

On the other hand, if a statement is made in a legal document — for example, a police report — we can print it, attributed to the document, without further proof.

On July 20, 1995, three-year-old Lenoria Jones was reported missing from a department store in South Tacoma. The girl hasn't been found, and the case is still open.

But it isn't an abduction case. The girl's great-aunt, who had custody, told police she had walked into the store with Lenoria following and last heard her speak in the swim wear department. The girl was gone a few moments later, and the woman, Berlean Williams, called 911.

But the police immediately looked at the department store's surveillance tapes and saw the 45-year-old great-aunt walk in alone.

In more than 30 hours of interviews over the next five days, Williams said she knew where the girl was and that she was safe; that the girl had been kidnapped behind the woman's home; and that she had disappeared while in the parking lot instead of when she was in the store.

She's stuck with the latter account since July 25. No charges have been filed. But no sign has been seen of Lenoria, and police believe she is dead and that Williams or one of the three daughters who live with her "know more than they've said."

Williams and her court-appointed lawyer say Lenoria might have been abducted by relatives in Spokane, Wash., or Star City, Ark. But those people say they don't have her.

Over the last six months, police have bolstered their story by releasing the surveillance video and the audio of Williams' call to police, in which she sounds lethargic and confused, not at all like a woman under great stress.

In mid-November I was working on a "four months since" story about Lenoria. I did the very first story when she was reported missing, and I've done about 18 stories to date. It's a

good position to be in as a reporter: I know more than anybody about the case except the police and maybe Williams and her family.

I interviewed residents in Williams' neighborhood, basically looking for quotes answering the question, "What's it like living next to someone who is the focus of a possible child killing?"

I went up to the next-door neighbor's house and talked to a lady there through the six inches she opened the front door. A seemingly infinite number of children screeched in the back-ground, and I could see one small girl running around naked.

The woman seemed to want to tell me something she hadn't mentioned to the media before, but she was very nervous. I put my notebook in my pocket and smiled at her.

"Say whatever you want," I said. "I'll listen, but I won't print it without your permission."

She told me that on July 16, four days before the reported kidnapping, she heard "a young female voice" speak to Williams as she walked toward the back door of the house.

"She's dead, Mama," the voice said. "I killed her."

If the story is true, it implies that a young female intentionally or accidentally killed Lenoria, and the family spent the next four days disposing of the body and other material evidence, and making up the story Williams would later tell police.

At the end of that interview with the neighbor, I told her I would return the next day, and that if she wanted to put her comments on the record then, I would do it. She agreed. After four months, she was stunned that the case wasn't solved. She was incensed that the police hadn't polygraphed her, and that they didn't even return her calls. She thought maybe getting the story out would help.

No one outside the family reports having seen Lenoria after the afternoon of the 16th, when she was in church. But police lend little credence to the neighbor's story, mostly because she didn't tell them until July 27, six days after they first interviewed her.

They refuse to polygraph her, and they won't release the deposition she gave them to me.

So that has left me in a terrible position. I trust the neighbor pretty well. I think she's telling me the truth. I don't know if it would solve the case, but it would certainly be the strongest type of pressure that could be brought to accomplish that goal.

I've written the article, all 20 inches of it, and it is sitting in my computer.

But because the police won't stand by it, I can't print it.



There is blood deep in the grout.

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, January 17th to 31st

1.) Platypus #5, written and edited by Simon Ounsley, 25 Park Villa Court, Leeds LS8 1EB UK: This is the more agile and upbeat side of Simon Ounsley, a pleasant aperitif while we wait for another shovel full of Lagoon. Like every other British 'zine of the past six months, this one features impression of Worldcon; I'll just say that even the upbeat and agile side of Simon is not that upbeat. Simon appreciated the Time Bytes Anthology as much as me, but that's about the only part of Worldcon which he regards as an unalloyed success. Tiny letter slices on toast finish off the text, and the whole thing is superbly illustrated by Dave Mooring and D. West. Cogent and darkly humorous, another entry in Simon's long list of superb fanzines.

2.) Thyme #107, edited by Alan Stewart, P.O. Box 222 World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria, 3005, Australia: Each issue seems to be slightly stronger than the last; Alan Stewart and his myriad contributors are solidifying their hold on the title of best sercon genzine currently in publication. An incredible variety of SF information, much of it of international interest, and now quite timely in appearance. Considering the rate at which mail seems to travel between Australia and the rest of the world, this is no small achievement. But the most exciting thing about the zine is the vast amount of Ian Gunn's output it contains. Very soon, we'll all have to admit that, fanartistically, this is Ian Gunn's world, and we just live in it. His time-traveling pirate comic-strip that I criticized about this time last year has improved so dramatically that I immediately turned to the back of the fanzine and read it first. It makes me wish we ran art in Apak so that I could show you what I'm talking about.

3.) Eyeballs in the Sky #10, edited by Tony Berry, 55 Seymour Rd., Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands, B69 4EP UK: Another Steve Stiles cover! Guess Steve did have one or two spare moments in 1995 after all. . . . Berry seems to take a slightly more cavalier attitude toward his "theme" issues than does his mate Martin Tudor; while all of the entries in this genzine were supposed to be about sex and/or relationships, the writers do not seem to have been much concerned with coloring inside the lines, and Berry accepts this with amiable fatalism. This is a welterweight contender fanzine, five columns and a lettercol; the sort of fanzine that can make it home on one good piece of writing, and the star of Eyeballs ten is Alison Freebairn's memories of her Egyptian relatives. Helena Bowles' "The Swing of the Pendulum" is also strong, but felt a trifle dated and long, while Vicki Rosenzweig's "City" is a heartfelt character study of New York that works best if you feel the same way she does. A good issue, which doesn't suffer from being three months old by the time I got it.

4.) FTT #19, edited by Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 15 Jansons Rd., South Tottenham, London, N15 4JU, UK: Three issues in one year -- one must certainly admire their industry. But then, 1995 was a year with a lot going on, especially in British fandom. Judith's account of the fortnight around the Worldcon, replete with overseas visitors and fans from decades past, is entertaining even after one has read a dozen other Worldcon reports. But Judith's has the singular virtue of not involving the Worldcon much at all, since she did not attend it, sensibly staying home to rest up for the round of post-convention parties. Christina Lake's dedication in helping set up an environment centre in Bath, as recounted in her piece "Local Action", is quite admirable, and happily features more action than theory. FTT's readers seem to have been much taken with #18's accounts of frog husbandry and close-up volcanism, and

offer many of their own stories in the lettercol. And finally, Joseph finishes with another installment of his Trajectories of History column, this time pulling in sources as diverse as Darwin and Frederick Jackson Turner in an effort to prove that western ideas about expansionism and progress are outmoded and dangerous. He supports his thesis well, but the belief that "We can now look forward to a long period of stasis in which we may attempt to uncover and celebrate our correct place in the natural order" strikes me as wishful thinking.

5.) Ansible # 102, edited by Dave Langford, 94 London Rd., Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU UK, e-mail at Ansible@cix.compulink.co.uk Here's my question; since everyone knows by now that these little literary festivals and weird public appearances which Dave keeps going on are uniformly horrific events, with cold hotel rooms, repressive bar policies, wonky equipment, dull-witted audiences, and arrangements whereby lithe, handsome scions of the dark blue like Dave are forced to compete for the public's ear with greasy little tradesmen like Terry Pratchett (who catch the eye of peasants and livestock alike with cheap gimcracks and pantomimes (you should see his "Captain Scarlet" walk)), how can such events continue to be sufficiently surprising as to warrant a half-column in Ansible? But I join Dave in saying farewell to Robertson Davies, a novelist of remarkable craft, who stood in the long, dark hallway that leads from SF to the real world and pitched pebbles against the doors at both ends.

Also Received:

From Sunday to Saturday (Electronic) Vol.1, No. 0, Don Fitch; Hobbier Than Thou, the Orycon 17 One-shot, edited by David Levine.



APPARATCHIK is the Chupacabra of fandom, a large and mysterious cat-like creature reputed to have supernatural powers, which allegedly preys on domestic animals in the Puerto Rican countryside. Cattle, goats, horses, dogs and cats and even parakeets have been found exsanguinated, sometimes still locked inside their cages. A creature with similar habits has been reported in Colorado. It's still available for the usual, but note that trades must now be sent to both Andy and Victor (Victor can be reached at 403½ Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and electronically at Gonzalez@tribnet.com), and/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 a copy of "Viene el Chupacabras" by the band Zona del Crepusculo, on the Macondo Inc. label, #29 on the Puerto Rican pop chart in December of last year. For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, see his address in the colophon on the front cover. Lifetime subscribers include Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Scott Custis, Don Fitch, Jill Flores, Ken Forman, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Dale Speirs Geri Sullivan, Steve Swartz, Michael Waite, and Art Widner. The pressure to grow here is enormous.