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APPARATCHIK



This is the sixty-seventh issue of a tri-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper, Carl Juarez and Victor Gonzalez, members & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starlitter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. Correspondence for Victor should be sent to 403 1/2 Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and at Gonzalez@beringa.tribnet.com. See the back page for availability and trade info, including the addresses of our British and Australian mailing agents. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #273. **Apparatchiki:** Greg Benford, Randy Byers, Steve Green, Irwin Hirsh, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor, Pam Wells, Ted White & Mark Whiten.

Issue #67, September 19th, 1996

Refugees in the Magic Kingdom

by Andy Hooper

I THINK IT WAS LATE ON Friday night that I turned to someone — possibly Robert Lichtman, but it could have been one of several people — and said, “You know, I’m

having an amazingly good time.”

The whole weekend was like that. Most of us, even fans who still fix our fannish interests on written science fiction, or costuming, or movies, go to the Worldcon suspecting that we might not have a particularly good time. The crowds, the huge facilities, the crowds, strange scheduling conflicts, the crowds, bad beer exorbitantly priced, all these things combine to create an experience that is often overwhelming to the individual fan.

But where were those crowds? The convention barely reached 6,000 in attendance, and in the enormous Anaheim convention center — “Un-utter-ably vast,” as I termed it throughout the weekend for anyone who would listen — this seemed like a pretty spotty turnout. The conventions’ planners had anticipated the level of attendance, so there was no reason to feel bad, but it was a far cry from the tales of bodies stacked like cordwood told by survivors of LACon II in 1984.

And aside from the relative ease in getting from place to place, and finding seats at programs, and so on, the convention also had a intangible sense of humanity, of friendship, and positive regard. Lots of little things went wrong or were different from what had been planned, but unlike some Worldcons I’ve been to, people just seemed to take them in stride, and went on enjoying themselves. This sense of goodwill is something you can’t buy for any amount of money, but it’s absolutely critical to a great convention. What a contrast from Intersection, where everyone I met went out of their way to bad-mouth the convention and express indignation at its very existence.

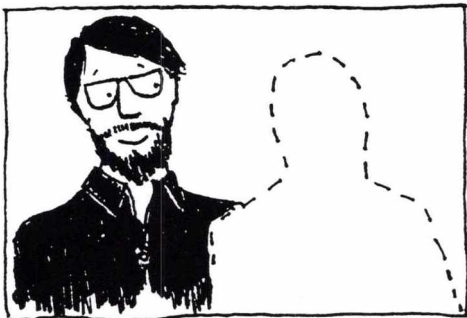
Of course, part of my satisfaction at the convention arose from the fact that I found out the whole thing was tax-deduct-

ible the first night I was there. Andy Porter had lined-up someone else to cover the convention for him when I had believed I would not be there, but it turned out that she was far too busy to do the job. I had phoned Andy sometime in June and told his machine that I was going after all, and that I would be happy to cover the event for SF Chronicle. This opportunity he seized upon eagerly; he just forgot to call me. So, when I saw Andy, it came as a surprise that he assumed I was there to work for him. But I certainly don’t mind. When I combine his modest rate of pay with the expenses I can now write off, my already-rosy memories of the event positively glow.

So, again, I’m recounting stuff that the readers of SFC don’t especially want to read. Which isn’t hard to do.

I had a lot of fun in the early days of the convention just riding up and down the escalators in the Hilton. As one ascended, one passed into increasingly powerful spheres of influence. After pressing through the lobby, one climbed to the bazaar of bid tables, low-level con-running functionaries hawking their wares. Beyond that was the fourth floor, where the operations office and daily newszine were located, as well as special-interest enclaves, like the fan lounge, filk-singing rooms and furry-fandom clubhouse. Above that was the party floor. But the actual nerve center of the convention was on the mezzanine level set slightly to the side of the fourth floor, with no signs to direct the uninitiated. Child care was protectively tucked away here, as were numerous little bolt-hole offices, where high-ranking con officials had their personal computers, and did essential work during the con. I was escorted into one of these by Janice Gelb, who had an extra Hugo rocket-pin for me to take back for Victor. We toyed with the idea of doing a one-shot in that little sanctum, but I knew she was merely being polite, and naturally I never saw the inside of that room again.

Still, I can’t shake the feeling that if I had returned twenty
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THE TUDORS: MARTIN + HELENA
(AKA “SHE WHO WILL NOT BE DRAWN”)

IN THIS ISSUE: After Andy finishes his Worldcon sketch, check out the list of this year’s Hugo awards, both the 1996 and 1946 varieties. Victor then submits his review of the latest issue of *Twink*. More con impressions follow, from the newly-reeducated Randy Byers. Ted White catches us up on doings at his job, followed by some thoughts on the pleasures and discontents of cartooning from Lesley Reece. Welcome also a new columnist, Dr. Gregory Benford, who reveals that he is no great fan of *Star Trek*. We’ve a few letters from our loyal readers, too. And Andy’s fanzine countdown, double-sized due to the number of fanzines received, completes the program. *Cartoons and art: page one and three by Lesley Reece.*

It’s mitochondria, and I say the hell with it!

minutes later, the door would have swung open to reveal empty tables and a few suspicious scuff marks on the floor. I know the big store con when I see it.

The fan lounge wasn't all that easy to find either, but it was well-worth the trip. Geri Sullivan, Don Fitch and the numerous party hosts truly outdid themselves. Given a large budget by the committee, they had laid hands on good food, great beer, and an unusually lavish selection of toys and decorations to play around with. And the fanzines! People brought fanzines by the boxful, some for sale, some for display, some for auction, and some that were just tossed out onto a freebie table in the hallway.

At some point on Sunday, Dick Lynch said that he felt that the fan lounge had just gotten too lavish, that it was too much work for Geri and Don, Jeff Schalles, and all the others who put their shoulders to the wheel. While it was true that they wished people might have been better about cleaning up after themselves, the most prevalent emotion I noted in the room's organizers was extreme satisfaction. Was it the best so far? It had all the room and comfort of the wonderful lounge at Magicon in 1992, but the ceilings were comfortably low, and allowed for conversation in a normal voice. I spent a lot of time there, and only occasionally went over to the exhibition center for programs or to shop for books. To me, it was the convention.

On the other hand, the facilities in the exhibition center were really very nice. The programming green room was one of the best I've ever seen, and had a sign five feet across outside so no one could miss it. The big hall that housed the dealer's area and exhibits was almost quiet; while there was a stage where musicians performed throughout the weekend, and studios showed clips of upcoming movie releases, no one made so much noise that people were bothered in other parts of the hall.

Really, the only complaint I had about the facilities was that they were so large that by the end of the weekend I was almost unable to walk. My motel was literally right next to the exhibition center loading dock, but I had to walk about a half mile around a massive parking lot and the huge performance hall (which had unsettling contours reminiscent of the Morlock sphinx in the George Pal production of *The Time Machine*) just to get into sight of the convention.

I actually went into that vast main hall twice, for the two Hugo ceremonies. The 1996 Hugos were mostly tiresome, and losing twice was not double the fun. Connie Willis was as tedious a toastmaster as she has been an award presenter, and even had the bad taste to make reference to the O.J. Simpson trial. The awards did not excite the audience, with the exception of Best Dramatic Presentation. When the *Babylon 5* episode in question was announced, the screaming and applause put one in mind of the Beatles at Shea stadium. (Actually, this seemed to be J. Michael Straczynski's weekend; he was fairly mobbed wherever he went, and seems to have taken on the us-against-the-powers-that-be mantle once worn by Gene Roddenberry at his most self-indulgent. One could sense the dealers in the room shifting in their seats as he recounted how he had been "forced" by extreme poverty to shoplift SF books in his youth.) I was much more pleased to see John Clute (resplendent in an utterly gorgeous beige silk suit, by far the best-dressed man there), Neal Stephenson, Maureen McHugh and James Patrick Kelly win their awards; not a single dead or near-dead white guy in the bunch.

The Retro-Hugos were actually a lot more fun. Bob Silverberg and Harlan Ellison reprised a small measure of the shtick that they used to make a regular feature of Hugo ceremonies, and the technical errors and amateurish presentation of the nominees seemed terribly fannish. This was also the site of

my single valuable service to the convention of the weekend. As I approached the hall, I noticed three people looking sort of lost outside; these were, of course, the children and widow of Charles Burbee, and the security guys did not intend to let them in. Asking them to wait for just a moment, I dashed inside the hall, thinking that I could find some minor functionary to vouch for them. But just as I entered, the lights went out. Groping blindly around the aisles, I ran into Frank Lunney; hearing my predicament, he replied, "What about Mike Glycer? He's right down there."

All I can say in my defense is that my brain seized, and I found myself incoherently accosting the convention chairman, demanding he come with me for reasons I could not seem to vocalize. Fortunately, an assistant of his came with me and got the Burbees in the door. Far from being offended by the incident, Mike presented me with one of the many "best supporting role" medallions handed out to friends of the convention: I was quite flattered and happy to be of service.

On the whole, it was a fine weekend. My new play "Fan-otchka" debuted to a small but enthusiastic audience, and I'll definitely arrange another performance. Martin and Helena Tudor and Perry Middlemiss were exemplary and hard-working fan-fund delegates. I met George Clayton Johnson, who wrote for the original *Twilight Zone*. Filmmaker Roger Corman was a gracious and enthusiastic guest of honor. And it was a supreme pleasure to talk with James White once more. At one point, James and I were standing in the fan lounge and he mentioned how remarkable it was that one small circle of fans in Northern Ireland should have produced three Worldcon guests of honor (himself, Walt Willis, and the late Bob Shaw). All I could do was smile and agree that it was a remarkable display of good taste on the part of the Worldcon.

THE 1996 HUGO AWARDS

Best Novel: *The Diamond Age*, by Neal Stephenson
Best Novella: "The Death of Captain Future," by Allen Steele
Best Novelette: "Think Like a Dinosaur," by James Patrick Kelly
Best Short Story: "The Lincoln Train," by Maureen F. McHugh
Best Non-Fiction Book: *Science Fiction: The Illustrated Encyclopedia*, by John Clute
Best Dramatic Presentation: "The Coming of Shadows" (*Babylon 5*)
Best Professional Editor: Gardner Dozois
Best Professional Artist: Bob Eggleton
Best Original Artwork: *Dinotopia: The World Beneath*, by James Gurney
Best Semi-Prozine: *Locus*, edited by Charles N. Brown
Best Fanzine: *Ansible*, edited by Dave Langford
Best Fan Writer: Dave Langford
Best Fan Artist: William Rotsler
John W. Campbell Award: David Feintuch

THE 1946 RETRO-HUGO AWARDS

Best Novel: "The Mule," by Isaac Asimov
Best Novella: *Animal Farm*, by George Orwell
Best Novelette: "First Contact," by Murray Leinster
Best Short Story: "Uncommon Sense," by Hal Clement
Best Dramatic Presentation: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
Best Professional Editor: John W. Campbell Jr.
Best Professional Artist: Virgil Finlay
Best Fanzine: *Voice of the Imagi-nation*, edited by Forrest J. Ackerman
Best Fan Writer: Forrest J. Ackerman
Best Fan Artist: William Rotsler

Don't Twink or you'll miss it

**by Victor M. Gonzalez
Staff Writer**

THE LATEST ISSUE OF TWINK is a study in learning to walk.

Twink is a small, roughly quarterly, zine by E.B. Frohvet, a fan who refuses to identify himself and hasn't previously been a fanzine fan. The third

issue looks a lot like the first two, but the zine has improved.

The cover, for example, is quite nice, with a cute pig and some nice lettering. By Sheryl Birkhead, it shows one stage of a fan's growth — getting material from other fans. And when it comes to things visual, Frohvet needs a lot of help. While Frohvet can write, his ability to draw appears limited to rough squid and bats. Forgive me; he'll probably win a Hugo. But dare he show up to get it?

The letter column is pretty good, and Frohvet even does capsule fanzine reviews, as well as reviews of science fiction and fantasy novels. Although I found his views on Chip Delany to be a little backward (“*Dhalgren* does not really contain any SF/Fantasy elements.”), if not anti-intellectual, the reviews aren't badly done.

I would be the last to tell Frohvet that he doesn't belong in fandom. But it is interesting to see the steps a new fan can take — those that propel him forward and those after which (we hope) he catches himself before he bops his nose.

What is badly done is the layout, which still has thick black lines down both sides of each column that Frohvet insists are needed to keep his typed copy straight on the page. Has he ever heard of a pencil (type the text, then erase the lines)? Or how about blue pencil, which need not be erased because most photocopiers won't show it? How about setting the margins on his typewriter? Unfortunately, my comments will probably elicit a detailed description of the process he actually uses, which no doubt rules out those options. God help us. Anyway, it's his right to let Twink look as bad as he wants, but it is a definite distraction from what is otherwise a decent zine.

The other thing that jumped out at me was a line inserted in what is supposed to be a space that had been left for art: “Editor's note: To the two artists whom we separately asked to illustrate this article, both of whom stiffed us (one at least condescended to respond), we say: Thanks a lot, and we'll remember you next spring when we fill out our Hugo nominat-

ing ballots.” The message continues, and later in the main text (a forensic mental evaluation of what seems to be a character in a string of fantasy novels I haven't read) is a blank spot, presumably meant to hold another undelivered illo.

“A bird in the hand” is a credo most editors learn through experience, but I was very surprised to see threats of this nature. What we get from our contributors is a gift. Plans are plans, and I also get uptight when the copy flow is stopped up. But I've got no one to fire, and little reason to make a ruckus. Fannish commitments are mostly built on love, not money or prestige; a person has to want to contribute, for motives unusual in other areas of life.

On the other hand, his measured response to Joseph Nicholas is a credit to Frohvet's abilities. The Maryland faneditor's pseudonym is not so much a problem right now (Joseph's subject: criticism of Apak's reaction), but in a time of discontent it will become more important. One reason everyone — I suspect — distrusts those who have hidden their identity is that reputation is based upon the past. We know nothing of that. Frohvet is a little different, too; rather than simply fooling us (which would have created far less comment in Apak, until the truth was revealed), he chose to let us know straight off that he wasn't who he said. More honest, I'd say, but a little strange.

And another good note (about *Mimosa 18*): “How does one get nostalgic about people you've never heard of and events decades before you got into fandom?” Here's an obstacle that must confront every prospective fan. While some, like the Vegrants, have met many of those who've created fandom's rich history, most new fans know none. To all new fans, I hope, the main goal of their fanac is to make something new, not study something old. It is particularly nice to hear this sentiment echoed by a neo.

Twink needs a little more heft. There's nothing here that made me sit up straight. But we must give it some grace: though Twink is kind of cute, wobbling on his hind hooves, three issues does not make a five-mile hike.



“Bah!” snapped the amoebus savagely.

Worldcon Snapshots

by Randy Byers

L.A. CON III GOT OFF TO A start when Tami and I went to check the message board located in the Marriott. Tami had to take a whizz, and as soon as she disap-

peared, the line for the Ice Cream Social materialized between us and the Women's Room. It was really more of a crowd than a line, and I didn't see Tami for the rest of the evening. Instead, I drank T n' T's in the Hilton bar, feeling lonely and unloved.

The next day, back at the message board, a woman shyly admired Tami's tattoos.

“Do you know where the ABS party is tonight?” she asked us, with just a trace of fear.

We both pretended we knew what she was talking about. In the context of the tattoo admiration, that B had to stand for something like Bondage or Branding.

“No, we haven't heard anything,” we told her. She looked disappointed.

“What's the ABS?” I asked Tami later.

“I don't know. The Association of Sadistic Bottoms?”

“That can't be right,” I said, not sure why.

Hooper didn't know either, when he smoked me out that evening. He thought it might have something to do with Butt-fucking.

“Oh, god,” I said. “Isn't it the Association of Book Sellers or American Book Sellers, or something like that?”

“That's it,” he said.

Disillusioned, we left my room, only to see Robert Lichtman, Steve Stiles, Paul Williams, Cindy Lee Berryhill, Frank Lunney, and Christina Lake disappear around a corner down the hall. We followed, but they kept turning corners just ahead of us.

“Guys? Guys!” Hooper called, with just the right note of the plaintive. “You can't ignore me! I'm a BNF!”

By this time I'd forgotten that I was lonely and unloved.

Saturday evening, Tami and I joined Robert, Paul, Cindy Lee, Art Widner, and Moshe Feder on an expedition to a sushi restaurant. Robert pumped me for information on how the Appatchik team works.

“I don't know,” I confessed. “They work in darkness and

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mystery, with only the occasional sound of shotgun blasts.”

He looked me askance.

“Well, okay, the frequent sound of shotgun blasts.”

Cindy Lee was trying to come up with a name for her newsletter. She had fastened on the word “glebe” and wanted to know what it meant. None of knew. Moshe thought it was a bird, but he was shouted down: “That’s ‘grebe!’” This led Art off into a questionable Chinese joke or two.

Art was intent on introducing me to green tea ice cream, but we had to hurry back to the con to catch the production of Hooper’s radio play, “Fanotchka,” in which both Paul and Cindy Lee had parts.

On the way back, Moshe and I gazed at the lights of Anaheim stadium, where the Yankees had been trounced the night before. I accused him of being a stinking Yankees fan, and he berated me for my allegiance to the Mariners. We spoke affectionately of baseball after that.

I parked myself in the smoking room of the Tor party that night and spoke to Art about Frankenstein, to Kathryn Cramer about the Web, and to Paul about his bike accident, the Sturgeon project, and the mythological importance of lead singers. The beer selection at the Tor party was second only to that of the Fan Lounge in quality.

Then there was that interesting semi-prozine editor who had spent three years in prison for dealing acid but who assured Art and me at great length that, *pace* Clinton, he’d never taken any of the stuff. Cindy Lee and John Skipp took turns playing their own songs, which were accompanied by Skipp (when he wasn’t playing) and Tami on found percussion, Lenny Bailes on harmonica, and Bob Brown and Kathryn on background vocals. After David Hartwell led the traditional 3:00 a.m. rendition of “Teen Angel,” the sing-along revved into full gear, highlighted by Skipp’s eccentric choice of “Why Don’t We Do It in the Road?” and the fortunate abortion of someone’s attempt to break out into the lyrics of the Gilligan’s Island theme song sung to the tune of “Stairway to Heaven.”

The highlight of the panels I attended came the next day was when David Brin crashed the “Gender Roles: What Makes a Tiptree Award Winner” session to ask why his *Glory Season* had not won the award and whether it was true that the Tiptree mafia had said nasty and despicable things about him behind his back. Spike, the moderator, told me that he later apologized to her, although only after he followed her to the bar, venting the whole way.

Tami and I went to the Hugos. I don’t believe I’d ever seen Hooper in a suit before.

The rest of the evening was spent in the Fan Lounge, where Spike entertained us with stories of her childhood days. She would derail the efforts of boys to play house with her by telling them, “Okay, you’re the wife and I’m the husband.”

Before the shouting was over on Monday, I got the chance to return Hooper’s gift of sercon. Still reeling from the sight of the snuffed ninth-inning rally in the Mariners’ loss on TV, he gave me a bunch of fanzines. Included were issues 2 and 3 of an LA zine called *Delineator*, from the mid-80’s.

“There’s lots of pictures,” he told me. “Fans, pros—a lot of media types.”

The cover of #2 features a drawing of the upper half of a naked woman with nipples the size of your thumbs. She’s wearing a jeweled collar. A sword blade hovers at her throat, and another at her belly. The cover of #3 features a black-and-white photo of a man bearing a woman in his arms. She’s challenging the camera with her eyes; he’s looking down. They are dressed in ornate and revealing leather-and-metal gear. (Mongol Warlord and Scythian Barbarian Mercenary, respectively, according to the credits.) She clutches the hilt of a sheathed dagger in the jeweled fingers of one fist.

“These guys were into the fetish scene ten years before it became generally popular,” Hooper said, his eyes gleaming with enthusiasm.

I showed them to Tami later.

“Look at the nipples on that one!” I said.

She didn’t seem impressed.

On the return trip, after stops in San Diego, Fresno, and the Bay Area (thanks again, Spike and Tom!), we made an unintended stop in Grants Pass, Oregon.

“My car broke down, and we need a room,” I explained to the woman at The Golden Inn motel.

“I hear that all the time,” she replied.

Tami and I visited an old friend of mine in Grants Pass. Her new housemate told us about a friend who lives in the nearby town of Wolf Creek, whence I’d called the tow truck the night before. Her friend is a 38-year-old man who likes to dress in drag.

“He’s okay in Wolf Creek, because they know him there,” she told us. “But he came to Grants Pass in drag once and got the shit beat out of him. So, now he carries a gun.

“I hate this fucking town.”

We stayed there for three-and-a-half days, while first the clutch and then the transmission were replaced.

The first day was an adventure.



Ooh! Look at all those Spirochetes!

The Airtight Garage of Dr. Fandom

by Ted White

A YEAR AGO, I WROTE, IN A portion of editorial intended for BLAT! #5, about all the changes that had occurred in my mundane employment, and in typical fashion, once I’d written about it, I

blithely assumed this information was known throughout fandom, disseminated through the Fannish Aether . . .

So, let me recap, for those of you less gifted at reading my mind.

In BLAT! #4, I mentioned that I was a couple of months into a New Job, at Logotel, Inc. Logotel is a T-shirt company, but not just any T-shirt company, y’understand — Logotel is the industry leader in upscale Ts. Logotel has world rights, for example, to the Far Side shirts (& sweats). When I started at Logotel, there were forty or fifty employees at the company, it

had relocated six months earlier to an industrial park in Columbia, Maryland where it occupied one-third of a large warehouse in a really parklike setting, and I worked in Accounting, handling accounts payable and the payroll.

At first I worked three days a week, but soon after the first of the year (1995), I was asked to work full-time and given a salaried (rather than hourly) position. And in order to do the five-days-a-week commute of almost 100 miles (roundtrip), the company “bought” me a new car. (Well, actually, they advanced me the down payment on a new Honda Accord coupe. But they didn’t make that an advance against my salary — they gave me an advance against my annual bonus!) I go into this in much greater detail in my BLAT! #5 editorial, and I commend it to you in the event that it is ever published . . .

When my Annual Review occurred in January, 1996, I was offered a new and different job, that of Inventory Control

Manager — a newly-created position. I took it (along with a raise), and set out to conquer “the company’s Number One Problem,” which was the failure of the inventory as it existed in our computer system to match up exactly (or even approximately) with the actual stock on hand. I had little guidance (I did take a “seminar” on the subject in June), but I managed to identify at least three problems with the system that were throwing the numbers (sometimes wildly) off, each of which was corrected. In the course of all this, Logotel was growing steadily — in sales and in size. First we took over the second third of the warehouse in mid-1995. By the end of 1995 we had the whole of the warehouse, and annual sales were grossing over \$30,000,000! And we had over 70 employees full time and another 20-30 temps as needed. (Now we’re talking about a second warehouse . . .)

After the Big Problems in Inventory Control were whipped, I found myself doing more routine tasks in inventory maintenance, and recently I was transferred to Production, where I perform those tasks and more — but Inventory is no longer my primary concern, and Inventory Control has been subsumed by Materials Management. One doesn’t get stuck in one job too long, here! A growing company means lots of opportunities for advancement.

What I want to do here — and management knows I am ideally qualified for it — is to start editing a monthly newsletter for our customer base (over 6,000), and to concurrently develop our website, which is presently Pretty Basic. This has yet to happen, but probably will, eventually.

In the meantime, Logotel has given me real, hands-on experience with computers, and provided me with access to The Net, via both e-mail and Microsoft’s web-access, allowing me to browse both fannish and non-fannish websites . . . when I have the time, which, these days, is seldom.

And that explains my Greater Participation here in this fanzine. This, like everything I’ve written in the past few months for APAK, is written and sent by e-mail, reaching

my editors in mere nanoseconds, and allowing for an amazing amount of editorial back-and-forthing and fine-tuning in a very short period of time. (I’m writing this on a Tuesday for Thursday publication.)

And, speaking of things written in the past few months, here’s a little item left over from earlier in the summer:

On a Friday in July, Lynda, Aaron and I went over to Terry Hughes’ to join with Steve & Elaine Stiles, rich brown, Dan & Lynn Steffan, Colleen & Leonard Stockman, and of course Terry Himself, in welcoming Leigh Edmonds & Valma Brown to the DC area.

We found ourselves following on the Stiles’s heels when we arrived, and were just in time to hear Steve querulously asking, “Lillian Edwards? I was told Lillian Edwards would be here!” She was not there, of course — a victim of bad communications, I guess — but it was a pleasure to see Leigh and Valma again, after 11 years. (Actually, I wonder about Steve’s hearing. Later that evening he overheard me telling Dan I’d gotten our tickets for the King Crimson concert here late the following month [August 25th, actually . . . we thought of all you guys at Toner while luxuriating in Crimson sounds], in the course of which I said that I was in “physical possession” of said tickets.

“What’s that?” Steve asked. “You had another physical?” I cut him off before he could pursue that line of thought any further, and told him we’d have to start calling him “Dave,” which didn’t seem to cheer him up much . . .)

It was a pleasant evening’s party. Leigh told us about their extended trip — destined for Budapest — and asked us when the next BLAT! would be coming out. (“We’re waiting for the columns,” was our reply. . . .)

Before the evening was over we’d half-talked Terry into utilizing his centralized location (middle of Arlington, a block from Metro) to host Fourth Friday get-togethers. I suspect he thinks we were just kidding, but won’t he be surprised when we all show up a week from this Friday!



23 editors? That’s more than there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet!

Drawing Conclusions

by Lesley Reece

MOST YOUNG CHILDREN, IF you give them paper and crayons, will draw. They all seem to like it. They’ll happily whip out pictures of houses, families,

animals, or whatever else you might ask for. The drawings will be at least recognizable, though often you’ll need a bit of explanation from the artist, especially when the subject is something like a monster eating the neighbor’s mean dog. Some kids are more artistically inclined than others, of course, but I’ve never heard a little kid say, “I can’t draw.”

Grownups are different. Obviously, anyone who has the necessary physical equipment can draw *something*, but I don’t know many adults who will claim the ability. In other words, what people mean when they say they can’t draw is they won’t draw. When pressed, many will admit the reason for that is they are unable to produce realistic representations of the things they see around them. Apparently, this is so frustrating that they refuse to put pen to paper, even though the invention of photography, well over a century ago, meant artistic realism was no longer necessary.

I’m not saying there’s anything wrong with realistic drawing; it’s just that it’s only one approach. By imposing the standards of realism on art, people deprive themselves and others of a chance for expression. I suspect there are a lot of closet artists out there, people who like drawing but are reluctant to indulge themselves. Otherwise — barring the

existence of marauding elves who sneak out at night and draw all over the first thing they can find — there would be no explanation for all the decorated margins and phonebook covers in the world.

Besides, until recently, I was one of those closet artists myself. In high school art classes, I’d learned calligraphy, silkscreening, color combination, the elements of design. All that was fun, but I wanted to write. A career in art would have meant giving that up, or at least pushing it to one side. So I never made time for drawing lessons, but I didn’t stop altogether. During meetings, I covered my tablets with unflattering caricatures of the boss, and later, I illustrated my lecture notes during question and answer sessions in college.

If you’d asked me whether I could draw, though, I would have denied it, and not just because of a fear of criticism. Once people know you are willing to draw, they start asking you to draw things for them. That isn’t a problem, unless your ability to draw realistically is limited. Since realism is what most people expect from someone who “can draw,” they will rarely be satisfied with an artist’s interpretation of what they asked for. After the fiftieth time I’d heard that one of my efforts didn’t “look like” a tank, or a lizard, or the Empire State Building with King Kong hanging from it, I decided not to take any more requests. If I couldn’t make my audience happy, why bother?

It was Victor who discovered my guilty secret. One day when I wasn’t around, he went in search of a piece of blank paper and found my school notebook. I had a long-winded, diagram-loving geology professor that quarter, so my notes were particularly

embellished.

"This is great," he said, pointing to a cartoon of aliens frozen into a glacier. "I didn't know you could draw."

"Um —" I said. I knew what was coming next.

"Why don't you draw something for the fanzine?" he said.

"Aaaagh!" I said, but it was too late. I'd been outed.

I managed to resist drawing anything for Apak for several months, but the editors kept reminding me of how fandom is a pretty small group with its own set of references. Using a large bearded bald figure to represent the concept of Hooper or glasses and a cigarette for "Victor" is therefore realistic enough, because fans are able to interpret those icons. Finally, I was convinced there wouldn't be too much pressure on my abilities, so I caved in.

My most ambitious effort to date was the four-panel cartoon I drew for Apak 66. That's four times as much as I usually draw, but I felt up to it, and Hooper and Victor helped me write

the dialogue. Several people told me they thought it was amusing, and encouraged me to do more.

Even Hugo-winning artist William Rotsler was moved to respond. He sent a stack of illos, with a note about how people always tell him what to draw too, and he ignores them just like I do. He even said the art was the best thing in the fanzine.

He closed the note, however, by saying that I was "obviously self-taught," and what I needed was lessons, not in what to draw, but in "how to draw" (*italics his*).

Thanks for the suggestion, Bill, but I don't think I'll be signing up for classes anytime soon. I'm no D. West; I'm certainly no Dan Steffan, and my lifetime output won't equal one ten-thousandth of Rotsler's. But as I told Victor and Hooper, I'm a writer who likes to draw, not an artist who likes to write. For me, drawing is fun. My goal is to keep it that way.



No more water in the pail! No more moon in the water!

Star Trek: SF Lite

by Greg Benford

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF *Star Trek* left me wry and sour. To be an sf fan and see the genre overrun in the public's eye by the astonishing persistence of a television series,

routinely launched with little fanfare thirty years ago, calls for explanation and rumination. Who among us does not view *Trek* with oblique bemusement, cousins eyeing a rich relative?

Hollywood and TV have always methodically harvested ripened fruit from genre vineyards. Cowboys and detectives are easy for a broad audience to fathom, but true, hard-core science fiction seemed, well, downright eerie. Its density and strangeness had made TV's job far harder than Hollywood's scare-'em-with-science, giant-bug formula evolved in the 1950s.

Gene Roddenberry's ever-growing profit center began with a single insight, when he casually referred to *Trek* as "*Wagon Train* in space." He saw that the genre needed translation into human terms, and so evolved the fundamental strategy that opened sf.

Trek became a huge multimedia phenom by imagining a shared experience: Our Gang visits the future. The *Enterprise* crew had well-defined roles lead by an affable captain. William Shatner saw that humor and a calm, everyday air aboard would be crucial. Spock was Sherlock Holmes in space, the series' most original notion. The crew/family's often whimsical efforts to convert him to emotion provided an amusing leitmotif against a background blend of the mildly fantastic and reassuringly familiar. Manageable exoticism sold.

Trek taught a generation of mundanes to seek that "sci-fi experience" in this associative way, far from the deliberate dislocations and strangeness sought by genre insiders.

Never did *Trek* challenge genre stereotypes. By harvesting fresh ideas and themes invented in print it loomed over most conventional TV. My friends wrote some of the best scripts in the first two seasons (Harlan Ellison, David Gerrold, Norman Spinrad, Theodore Sturgeon), only to be often rewritten and finally not invited back. The series now depends on writers who seem rather proud of their ignorance of written sf. I was just starting to write sf then and their experience frightened me away from TV and movies.

Roddenberry's favorite theme was flawed gods, usually alien superbeings or warped humans, often speaking to the problems of hubris. For me, *Trek*'s greatest sins lay in its general scientific incoherence. In the very first show, an alien "salt vampire" preferred to kill people for a few grams of salt in their bodies, rather than simply steal galaxy stores.

As it spawned offspring series and films, quickie technical solutions threw into question the entire physics and technology of the series. The early shows opted for the "transporter" to avoid expensive shots of rockets landing and lifting off. Thereafter the series dodged the problems of what a society looks like where everything can be quickly duplicated. Worse, plots often relied on telepathy and "mind science" for motivation and twists.

Sf studies the collision between our humanity and an indifferent universe. Many modern anxieties stem from our broadening awareness of our chilly loneliness. *Trek* dodged this deeper issue, inventing SF Lite, the sci-fi option. In *Trek*, human emotion and gut feeling is forever superior to cold logic: the galaxy is user-friendly.

The show pivoted around a desire to please everyone, with a token Russian, Asian and black woman in the crew. This apparently forgave its air of earnest moralizing, a trait we still see today in the frequent oracular pronouncements delivered *ex cathedra* from the *Enterprise* bridge. The films continued this; even in the perhaps-best, "*Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*," the most adventurous position taken is Save The Whales.

Trek's dazzling successes inspired over a hundred novels, a gold mine for Pocket Books and many starving print sf guys. Alas, the hoped-for transference of *Trek* book readers to main-line sf didn't happen. Perhaps this relates to the unusual popularity of older, Golden Age writers in sf — Heinlein, Asimov, Bradbury, Clarke, Herbert, with their time-honored approaches. Here, too, readers prefer to go to the strange future in the company of somebody they know: it's reassuring.

This suggests that whatever the medium, the way to reach this enormous audience is to find a shared, quasi-communal vehicle. Later, "*Star Wars*" made this strategy more explicit with an entire set of future family, its sons-and-fathers revelations played out over three films with three more in the pipeline.

I suppose it did take courage to show TV's first inter-racial kiss, to confront militarism during Vietnam on one hand and soon after to deplore counter-cultural excesses as well. Conventional liberal postures, in a liberal era. *Trek* did and does assume a world that works, though, surely a reassuring fresh breeze to anyone reading the newspapers.

In *Trek*'s future everyone cheerfully wears spandex and looks great, a remarkable prospect for a nation which, over the last three decades, has seen the average adult add a pound of weight in each passing year. Could this be the secret heart of our love for the show?



AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH: Victor's comments on the nature of feud in issue #65 struck a responsive chord with F.M. BUSBY (2852 14th Ave. W., Seattle, WA 98119):]

'Yes, it's easy for faneds to get hooked into feuds. One sneaky way to avoid these is don't Go Public unless/until you have to. Before printing the belligerent letter, respond to it, on the basis that two reasonable people should be able to clear things up without bloodshed. With no audience, no egos on the line, it's surprising how well and often the gimmick works.

'Yes, the other guy may cross you up and take you Public on his own nickel. Otherwise I could (and would) have spent the entire Breenigan largely on the sidelines. And there is the type who simply likes to fight and will have no part of Sweet Reason, so either you pass or else ignore him or her and address your case to the grandstand. (If you're odds-on sure you have the right of it. Should you find yourself overboard, there's no law against aborting an incipient feud with a sincere "Oops!")

'Good on Martin Tudor's plan to do his TAFF report en route. After John "Goon" Berry attended Detention in '59, he rode out here with some of the Crygang, and stenciled part of "The Goon Goes West" (from the trip's onset through most of his stay here) in our backyard, on my Olivetti Studio 44. ATom sent illos on stencil, and Cry began the epic in our Oct. issue. Not up to electronic capabilities, but still and all . . .'

[APH: So far I've seen four of six installments of Martin's report on paper, and the fifth part is on-line. I'm reasonably impressed with the quality of the writing, even moreso when you consider the frantic conditions under which it was produced. There is a slightly self-serving side to all this, however; by spending so much time lashed to his laptop, Martin has cut down on the amount of time he could have been doing things that he would later have to write up. I bet a lot of other fund-delegates wish they would have thought of that.

Now, STEVE JEFFERY (44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxfordshire OX5 2XA GB) brings us back to baseball, among other things:]

'I can't really come up with a proper response to much of the Apak 64 baseball issue. About my only sustained involvement in the game was being in Philadelphia for a few months around 1993 when it looked like the Phillies might actually take the final. I sort of underwent a crash course in baseball mania, before the entire city slumped into despondent post-game shock. I suppose when you're surrounded by fourteen-foot truckers yelling "Whoomp, there it is" in a bar, it's not the time to ask awkward and potentially embarrassing questions about the game.

'I still never have figured out American football, though.

'Kim Huett must be a fish if he thinks that Santiago Nudelman tops Gaston J. Feeblebunny as possible the finest name in the world. Why, that disingenuous J right in the middle conjures a host of amusing and improbable possibilities all of its own. What a wonderful book (it caused huge hilarity at work, even if we did once have a researcher who gloried under the name of Poopathy. I want a copy of this.

'I was going to write something to Victor about trying to entice people into fandom by showing them fanzines (Another Monthly Fanzine?, Apak 63) and that it was an approach that was as likely to succeed as turning them into engineers by showing them a book of stress calculations. But then I caught your footnote in Apak 64 about Wil Tenino referring to Lagoon

as "nearly gothic in its implications." Right, you cannot stop there now. You have a bounden duty to get at least an article out of Wil to expand on this wonderfully enigmatic statement. Definitely promising. Go to it, Victor.'

[VMG: One aspect of baseball new to most in Seattle is that playoff games can be agonizing. I get so wrapped up in every pitch that my stomach hurts. I have been know to curse Piniella (and more often Bobby Ayala) at the top of my lungs. Even now, with the Mariners likely out of the pennant race (but just close enough to make me nervous), I'm anticipating a painful four-game series with Texas. If they take all four, they've got a chance. By the time you read this it'll be over, and the world will be shy two bottles of Pepto-Bismol.

You know, I have a chapter of Faulkner's "As I Lay Dying" memorized: "My mother is a fish." But it means something different.

Now, another installment in my discussion with KATE SCHAEFER (4012 Interlake Avenue North Seattle, WA 98103, e-mail at kate@scn.org):]

'I don't know if it's the new tri-weekly schedule or the Shakespearian tone. It is not normal for me to loc a fanzine with this regularity, and I hope you bask in it as long as it lasts.

'TAFfBoy's story continues to be enthralling, even though he has expanded his repertoire from his earlier theme of travel. I was puzzled by the first two installments consisting entirely of travel horror stories, with next to no tales of interaction with British fen, and then I got into the idea of a trip report that was all trip. Getting there wasn't just half the fun; it would be all the fun in Dan's trip report. I had heard the story of the dinner that wouldn't arrive from hell before, but I don't think anyone ever bothered to mention before that the food would have been worth waiting for, only not that long. They just talked about the wait.

'I assume that Pam Wells thought carefully before writing, "We got Alison wet with sponges," and decided to write it anyway. Perhaps next time you can have Alison explain why she finds sponges so erotic.

'I'll be happy to feud with Victor, if you insist, but let's have a bheer instead. Taking Victor's serious answer to my (mostly) frivolous comment seriously, I'd say that being a co-editor of a fanzine gives you no more authority than being a columnist did, since the whole enterprise is a voluntary one. It does give you more recognition, but wherever you are able to convince Andy to go with your preferred version of the fanzine rather than his, it's because your aesthetic arguments are compelling in his eyes. Making you co-editor may be shorthand for finding your aesthetic arguments compelling much of the time, but in the long run, neither of you has any authority over the other that the other is not willing to grant. This is one of the many things I like about voluntary associations like friendship and fanzines and parties and Internet newsgroups. Co-operative anarchy rules, or rather it doesn't, you see.

'Oh, and Ted is mistaken about the Nielsen Haydens' professional graphics and design experience. They both had worked in the field, at Flying Buffalo in Phoenix and publishing Freedom Today, a libertarian magazine, in San Francisco, prior to publishing Izzard and Telos, though they were practically in their cradles at the time.'

[VMG: No need to feud, expect maybe for fun. I am coming to the realization that I take fandom, and fanzines rather more seriously than most, but I still don't see why a voluntary activity would naturally lack the concept of author-

In the mornings we had Scotch and arm wrestling; in the afternoons, Scotch and dominoes.

ity. In essence, though, I agree that the three of us have to cooperate to get the job done; becoming an editor was the consequence of needing more authority. The editorship does not confer me with greater abilities or powers, it is true.]

[APH: Actually, I accepted Victor's request to become an editor because he was already agonizing over the fanzine so much that it seemed the only kind thing to do.

Now, a note from ROBERT LICHTMAN (P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442), responding to Dan Steffan's Taffragment #5 with some memories of his own:]

'Apak LoC tonight, First, No. 66, in which Dan's latest TAFF installment continues to write the same sort of stuff I'd pen if I'd (blush, shame) written my own report already. His description of the neighborhood and its denizens around the Upton Park rail station, for instance, quite jibes with my own memories, with one minor correction. Rob and Avedon's house isn't at "the end of a long, curving street" — it's an "end terrace" house and the street and another row of connecting dwellings continue beyond it for another block or so. Having an end terrace means that Rob (and his neighbor on the other side of the driveway) have actual rear yard access, even a garage. As a former resident of San Francisco, I admit that I didn't find the narrowness of their house to be so confining. Most houses in S.E. are built on lots only 25 feet wide, and my recollection of Rob and Avedon's house is that it's not much narrower than that.

'I suspect that Victor will find there's rather more to writing up the government doings of Federal Way than he thinks. Anything he's assigned to write will, no doubt, be of interest to some of the paper's readers — and some of them will be Seriously Interested. If Federal Way is anything like the city for which I work, seemingly trivial things like the size and placement of, say, a speed limit sign can build themselves into Major Earthshaking Events for some of the locals. As the public's eyes and ears on such matters — at least to the readers of the paper he works for — Victor is in the position of influencing public opinion by how he reports such matters. Is he given leeway to work an angle on such stories, or must he toe some established line limiting his reportage?

'Your passing out this issue of Apak in Anaheim led to an interesting exchange early on in the fan lounge at the Worldcon between Benoit Girard and a fanzine fan whose identity I can't recall. Fan said, "Hey, Ben, how is it being a medium-grade fanzine publisher?" Bafflement. Seems Benoit hadn't seen the issue yet.

'It's good to see Ted writing semi-regularly for fanzines again. His mention of the founding of fwa reminds me that there were only three of founding we-was-there-Ted's-room members at LACON III: me, Paul Williams and Frank Lunney. Geri Sullivan set aside two hours on Sunday for a "fwa annish" in the fanzine lounge, but so far as I could detect there was little interest from the inhabitants of the room at the time. None of us originals made an effort to Give A Speech or anything like that and no one asked.

'Alison Scott's reference to not having "frito pie since leaving Houston in 1982" gave me pause. Is she an American who moved to Britain, or a Brit who spent time in America, much as I recall Steve Jeffery doing some years back?

'While it's true that using copy shops for fanzine production can provide the ability to have unsatisfactory pages run over again (I had to do that on my latest issue, on one page that inexplicably had a washed-out page running top to bottom on most copies of the first round), as Jae Leslie Adams mentions, but speaking for myself I don't feel "in visual competition with

the computer's greater precision" when the computer in question is churning out a hot DTP program. Instead, I think of all the money I'm not having to spend for a scanner and the software necessary to run it all to full potential. Every bit of Trap Door is pasted up, text included, since I don't have the ability to direct-print the booklet format. But with care and the use of a t-square, I think the results are damn close to DTP. And if an occasional glitch creeps in, as they do, what the hell, it's "only a fanzine."

[carl juarez says: Good for you! Many people who get involved with DTP succumb to the digital imperative — the urge to get the perfect just-slam-it-on-the-copier page coming straight out of the printer when pasteup will do and without the need to stand on yr head while doing it.]

[VMG: I hope there are things interesting enough to write about on my new beat. Yes, indeed, things like crosswalk placement do get plenty of attention from citizens. I can take any angle I wish so long as it's accurate and represents both sides of the issue. Often in daily papers, when it appears the writer has "taken a side," what really happened is that no one spoke for the other side. One rarely sees a quote like, say, "Who needs a new crosswalk? We got too many kids in the town."]

[APH: And I have a small correction to offer you: At least one other fan present at the founding of fwa was at Anaheim this year. Randy Byers, whose Worldcon impressions appear elsewhere in this issue, was there in 1984 as well.

Now, MARK MANNING (1709 S. Holgate, Seattle, WA 98144-4339, e-mail at TandMark@aol.com) has a correction — or perhaps a small travelogue — of his own:]

'Howdy! Just finished reading, yesterday, the latest Apparatchik, wherein my deathless prose resided, thankee kindly. Mentioned the Desert Fathers a couple hours later to my acupuncturist, who demanded to see the article. No idea how she'll react to your zine, she being rather into comparative religion of the mystical variety: Zen, Tibetan tantra, Hasidism, and the like. If she only could read Norwegian, I'd tell her about the Oslo stefnal apa, which has lots of burble on such topics.

'Anyway, nipple piercings seem to me somewhere between charmingly silly and vaguely baffling. So I Laughed Out Loud at Dan Steffan's discomfiture when confronted by a casual mention of labia-rings.

'But I howled, and felt compelled to write, at his casual mention of East London "Hindus" in their turbans. I mean, I hang out with those turban guys enough to know that around a million and a half were killed in Hindu pogroms over the past decade or so. They have their own religion, Sikhism, which isn't at all a form of Hinduism.

'Sure, there are Hindus who like wearing turbans. The Rajasthanis, for example. But it's worth a bet that Dan saw Sikhs from the Punjab.

'Here's what to look for: The turban, of course, called in Punjabi the "dostar." Underneath the turban will be hair that's never been cut, tied up around a little wooden comb. Dan might have seen "The Man with the X-ray Eyes," but doesn't have them himself to see that long hair or the combs. Bet he did notice the long beards, though. He might have even spotted a few very orthodox Sikhs openly wearing the dagger or sword required by their faith — most of them these days choose to carry concealed blades. And if Dan knew what to look for, he might have noticed steel bangles on the right wrists of his

Oneness with the universe was going to have to wait. I wanted this stuff on my toast.

turban-wearers (such bangles, called 'kara', are even worn by clean-shaven, non-religious Sikhs). Sikh women wear the kara, too, and can also be spotted when they wear brightly colored pant-suits instead of the typically Hindu saris.'

[APH: Once more I am moved to observe that all knowledge really is contained in fanzines. We'll finish with a note from KEVIN WELCH (P.O. Box 2195, Madison, WI 53701) who, like Lesley Reece, has a checkered history with watches and time-keeping:]

'I never wore a watch until I was in my thirties. I always relied on some kind of internal clock which was usually accurate, I'm not making this up, to within five minutes. Then I took up jogging. Being obsessive, I bought a cheap digital Timex to keep track of how long I ran. After a couple of years it gave out and I upgraded to a much bigger Timex with multiple calendar functions and alarms and buttons and a mouse port.

'Then my knees gave out, along with my internal clock through inactivity. I was forced to rely on my Pentium Timex to tell time and to cover up the little patch of white skin on my wrist. It is still running on the same battery, even though little screws and other pieces fell out when I opened the back in an experimental mood. I keep it buried inside a drawer under some papers because the hourly chime can't be tuned off and it drives me nuts.

'I have since replaced the Timex with an analog Bugs Bunny watch with two carrots in place of the hands. I wear it everywhere, even to job interviews with Fortune 500 companies. I didn't get either job, which is just as well; I really know nothing about selling breakfast cereal.'

[WAHF: Pamela Boal, George Flynn, Murray Moore and Walt Willis (who is happily feeling better after his surgery). Next time, the long-awaited list of fanthologies in print.]

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, August 27th to September 17th, 1996

1.) **The Incomplete Burbee, Vol.2**, edited by Terry Carr, and published by Jeff Schalles, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315: This is a project that has been about twenty years reaching completion, and it still isn't the mimeographed edition which Jeff had sought to produce (although that might yet happen). Even so, it's a glorious thing, full of history in the difficult path it took to publication (Terry Carr chose the material and typed all the text onto stencil in the early seventies, but never secured art or headings for it, and left the project incomplete at his death in 1986. Since then, the stencils passed from Dave Rike to Arnie Katz and then to Jeff), as well as the halcyon days and characters of LA Fandom which Burbee immortalized so famously. I love the blocky typewritten copy, and the art by Steffan, Kinney, Fletcher, Rotsler, Kunkel, Stiles and Reed Waller compliments that look superbly. Jeff was selling these for \$8.00 in LA; write to him for information on how to get your own.

2.) **Bento # 7**, edited by David Levine and Kate Yule, 1905 SE 43rd Ave., Portland, OR 97215: I really love this fanzine. It's like a brief and delightful visit from its editors — I can always hear Kate and David's voices in my heads while I'm reading it. They fill its tiny pages with little insights into their worldview and lifestyle, and accomplish more than many editors who publish ten times more material. The highlight this time is a piece called "Immigrants," which compares the experiences of Windows '95 users to that of people passing through Ellis Island. Someone (Geri Sullivan?) read it aloud on a panel at Worldcon, and it got big laughs. I also liked the interlineations, and was impressed that they got in about as many letters as we do in the average issue of Apak. A good choice at FAAA award time . . .

3.) **Oblong # 1 - 3**, edited by Bruce Townley, 1732 Washington St. #8, San Francisco, CA 94109-3625: The most recent of these fanzines was dated April of this year, but I'm grateful to Candi Strecker for suggesting that Bruce send them to me. There's only a very tenuous connection to fandom itself here, but Bruce exhibits such a fannish sensibility in his writing that it just feels right to include him in it. Many of the articles here are of the sort that make you feel like the writer is dogged by strange ideas that will not leave him alone until he has written them down — stuff about the Winchester Mystery House, Big Daddy Roth graphic software, weird film noir, and so forth. The latest issue has an atmospheric piece by William Breiding about being scared half to death by an owl while camping in

West Virginia, so perhaps Bruce is planning to open out the work into a genzine. Whatever, this is the sort of weird we need more of.

4.) **Have Bag, Will Travel # 1 - 4**, written and edited by Martin Tudor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX Great Britain: Well, I'm impressed. When Martin said that he would write and distribute his trip report during the TAFF trip, I thought that either the project would prove too much, or that it would come off as rather skimpy work. But this is interesting writing, and it's appeared just as he said it would. Given the banking nightmares Martin recounts in the first issue, I'm surprised people didn't come up and press five dollar bills into his pockets at odd intervals — he has my vote as the TAFF delegate who suffered the most inconvenience and plain stress in the course of his trip. My only complaint is that the breathless pace of the work has left Martin little time to reflect much on the events and people he has seen — just keeping up the narrative would be enough to daunt most fan writers — and there is very little sense of what Martin's opinion or feelings about these events are. On the other hand, Martin has never really reached Ounsley-like heights of self-examination in his work, so this may have been the best idea for him. And there is always the chance that we will eventually see an annotated version in the future. Two more chapters to go, so we'll see more of this next time.

5.) **Gotterdammerung #7 & 1/2**, edited by Tommy Ferguson, Mark McCann and James McKee, 42 Ava Drive, Belfast BT7 3DW Northern Ireland: If you want to see a copy of this, act quickly, as Tommy is still planning to move to Toronto at the end of November. This issue features a continuation of the two main articles from #7, hence the fractional number. Tommy tells the rest of the story on his trip to Cuba, and McCann continues his description of the impact which political unrest (and general hooliganism) has had on his life. Interesting stuff, as usual, and not the sort of thing which you'll find in every garden-variety fanzine. I don't know what they'll do with Tommy taking up residence in Canada, but here's hoping they continue to publish.

6.) **Wild Heirs #16**, edited by Arnie Katz, Tom Springer, and numerous others, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107: I think I must have gotten an especially bad copy this time out; numerous pages have big streaks of faded toner and terribly pale art. This is one of the problems with running your own Xerox; you can't hand back poor copies and ask the guy at

the counter to run them again. But such quibbling aside, this is the best issue of WH we've seen in a while. The best piece is Joyce Katz' "The Gafiate," fictionalizing her sad interaction with a former fannish friend who has gone irreparably sour on fandom. It's the best piece Joyce has done since her own return from Gafia, very moving writing. Also impressive is Marcie Waldie's account of some hiking mishaps, and Greg Benford's "Kollapse," which is another look at Burbee's "Big Name Fan". And Rob Hansen's secret "origin story" made me laugh out loud — how often do you see jokes about Dave Ish anyway? The type seems a little smaller here — I think the WH gang are gradually re-appraising and adapting their design, which is always a good way to keep things fresh. On the other hand, they still seem to feel that every single page needs to have art on it, often more than one piece. Well, these things take time. The zine is still like a direct jolt of fannishness jacked right into your forebrain, and people unable to find anything good about it are people to stay away from.

7.) **Proper Boskonian #37**, edited by Kenneth Knabbe for NESFA, P.O. Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203: Lumbering clubzines chock-full of con reports, book reviews and letters from such luminaries as Harry Andruschack and Joseph T. Major are not usually my sort of thing, but I have to give NESFA credit for putting out a very dedicated and polished product here. Production values — clever cartoons by Ian Gunn, clean fonts, simple and legible layout — are often an important compensation when the material isn't as strong or pointed at your interests as you might like. When I got to the fan lounge on Friday afternoon at Worldcon, I was told that the editor of this fanzine was incredibly keen to meet me for some reason. Mr. Knabbe turned out to be one of those terribly earnest fans who have a certain amount of trouble understanding why people like me aren't panting to read more reviews of Orson Scott Card novels, or Evelyn Leeper's excruciatingly detailed convention reports, and would prefer to tell funny stories or have a beer together. I'm not sure what benefit he could possibly derive from the copies of this fanzine which I handed off to him, nor how enthusiastic I am about trading with Proper Boskonian, but I do respect someone with a clear vision of what they want to do and the energy and dedication to do it. I'm sure the members of NESFA feel well-served by this fanzine, and any opportunity to see more of Ian Gunn's work is always welcome.

8.) **The Tudor Dynasty**, edited by Bernie Evans, et al, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 4SH GB: This is a nice collection of the aforementioned TAFF victim's writing, put together by his pal Bernie with the assistance of people like Tony Berry, Dave Hicks and Dave Mooring, and Spike Parsons. I've got a few copies to hand as well; if you'll send five dollars my way (to benefit TAFF, or course), I'll send you a copy. My favorite bit was "Hosepipes, Worldcons and Broken Doors," which details — no, I can't do it justice. You'll just have to buy a copy and read for yourself. If you dare.

9.) **Wild Patience #2**, written and edited by Berni Phillips, 1161 Huntigndon Dr., San Jose, CA 95129-3124: Personalzines require one of two things to be successful. Either the writer must be especially skilled in making the mundane details of their life seem interesting to the casual reader, or they must have a reasonably interesting life with details and incidents which can attract readers who are not particularly close friends or acquaintances of the author. Berni is a pretty good

writer to begin with, but she's had quite a lot happen to her since she handed round the first issue of this zine at ConFranco in 1993. Her job was pulled out from under her, various fannish events have had their way, and she and David Bratman got married. Interesting stuff. But what puts this ahead of the average personalzine is that Berni includes an interview with her mother, concerning her experiences with the US Navy Women's Reserve during WWII. This sort of thing is becoming rather popular in fanzines — another installment of Graeme Cameron's father's war memories came the same week — but this is the first one that I can recall seeing by a woman. Anyway, Berni, this is a really nice fanzine, and it would be great if you could find a way to publish in years when the Worldcon is not held in California . . .

10.) **Plokta #3**, edited by Steve Davies (52 Westbourne Terrace, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2RP GB) and Alison Scott (42 Tower Hamlets Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4RH GB: Hmmm. These folks seem to have taken it upon themselves to develop a definition of the word "ephemeral" as it applies to fanzines. Lots and lots of photos from Farber Day, for which I'm grateful, but as always it helps to know who you're looking at. The stuff about superfluous technology has ceased to hold my attention, and the articles about trying to eat at an Afghan restaurant and the finer points of running the alternative newzine at Eastercon were probably a lot more fun if you'd been there. The best thing here is a robust lettercol, which indicates that a lot of people are getting into the rather silly spirit behind the zine. Someone send them some articles!

Also Received: Muse 134, Steven desJardins; Farber World News # 1 & 2, Steve Davies, et al; Ethel the Aardvark #67, Paul Ewins for the Melbourne Science Fiction Club; VFD #3, Arnie Katz; Space Cadet Gazette #6, R. Graeme Cameron; Glamour #1, Aileen Forman; Opuntia #28.5, Dale Speirs; Hardwired #1, Gene Bostwick; Twink #3, E.B. Frohvet; MSFire Vol. 2, #3/4, Lisa Mason, for MSFS; NLE Letters, Forman/Springer/Wilson; PhiloSf#3, Alexander Slate; It Goes on the Shelf #16, Ned Brooks; Situation Normal?? Vol. 7, #9, Aileen Forman for SNAFFU; The Knarley Knews #59, Henry & Letha Welch.

— Andy Hooper

APPARATCHIK is the pachycephalosaurus reinheimeri of fandom, a puzzling and long-extinct herbivorous creature known only from one or two examples of its strangely knobbed and squamous skull. Little is known of its body, but scientists speculate that it looked a little like Clint Howard, or possibly Newt Gingrich. Apak is still available for the usual, but note that trades must be sent to both Andy and Victor (Carl just wants the good ones, sent care of Andy) (see the front colophon for our addresses), and/or you can get Apparatchik for \$3.00 for a 3 month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a lifetime subscription for \$19.73, or in exchange for thirty pieces of electrum. -/- For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, from 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, UK. Australian readers can subscribe through Irwin Hirsh, 26 Jessamine Ave. East Prahran, Victoria 3181 Australia, for \$4.50, \$17.00 and \$28.09 Australian. Lifetime subscribers: John Bangsund, Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Tracy Benton, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Chris Bzdawka, Vince Clarke, Scott Custis, John Dallman, Bruce Durocher, Don Fitch, Jill Flores, Ken Forman, Margaret Organ Kean, John Hertz, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Mark Plummer, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Dale Speirs, Geri Sullivan, Alva Svoboda, Steve Swartz, David Thayer, Tom Whitmore and Art Widner.

The right side of the skull is shattered.