

# FLAG

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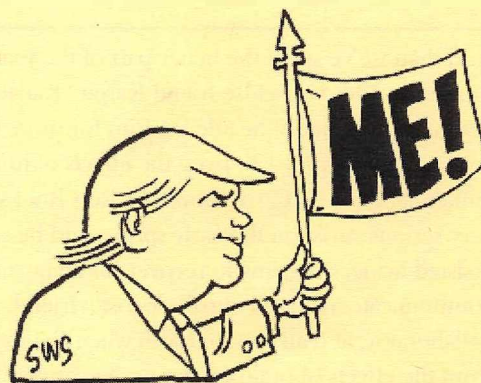
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**We're behaving like human beings, and as long as we continue to do so, we'll survive.**

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## Why This:

It's something of a cliché for a fanzine editor to begin by explaining why a given issue is late. Every fanzine feels late - if it is completed by the promised time, the editor always regrets the rush in which it was composed, all the mistakes they made and missed in the dash to that deadline. And if it appears any later than they anticipated, by a month, year or a decade, the urge to explain what one was doing instead of publishing can be difficult to resist. And FLAG #20 was supposed to appear in June of 2017, in the wave of new energy that would surely follow my late April trip to Corflu 34 in Los Angeles.



So what did I do instead? I invested many hours researching and writing the follow-up to Part I of "A Biographical Directory to the 1939 Worldcon," which we published in CHUNGA #25. Part I included all the "Pros" which I could identify and confirm as having attended the Nycon. Naturally, I missed a few who must be added to the final book; and Part II will include all the parties known to have attended and who either had no professional connection to science fiction, or who remained so closely identified with fandom as to make their inclusion essential, such as Forry Ackerman or Dave Kyle. At this writing, I've made it as far as Jack Robins (Rubinson), so the end is perhaps in sight. (And then I'm saving the pleasure of profiling the six targets of the Exclusion Act for last, as they were surely as important to the Worldcon's future as anyone who made it into the auditorium of Caravan Hall).

Several years ago, John D. Berry brought a few large boxes of his fanzines to our New Year's Eve party, with the idea that I would auction them on eBay, and share the profits equally with him. And of course, the boxes sat untouched for the better part of the subsequent year, and into the summer of the year afterwards before I made a really serious effort to sell them. I began to write more detailed descriptions than I had ever composed in the past, and I think that has helped to make fanzine auctions more profitable in 2016 and 2017. I wrote about this a bit in each of the last two issues, but things got even more intense since #19. For at least the past six months, I've composed well over 100 fanzine descriptions per month. It feels very much like a form of published fan activity, but the audience is even smaller than for a personal fanzine....

[Continued on page 2]

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**Freedom & Whiskey Go Together**

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**A Key to the linos published in FLAG #19:**

**Page 1: "So baby listen carefully/While I sing my comeback song."**

Lyrics from the song "Return of the Mack," recorded by Mark Morrison in 1996.

**Page 3: "I'm not Scottish, I'm just cross."**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Doctor (Peter Capaldi) explains the obvious, in "Smile," Season 10 (new), Episode 2 of *Dr. Who*.

**Page 4: "In the black church, homosexuality had taken over the music department."**

Hastily jotted line from a *Daily Show* story.

**Page 5: "Some things are rushing into existence, other hastening to dissolution."**

From the *Meditations* of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121 - 180 CE).

**Page 5: "I get paid for what most kids get punished for."**

Attributed to *comédien et réalisateur* Jerry Lewis, born Jerome or Joseph Levitch (1926-2017).

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And then we've spent the better part of the year in mourning. Our very close friend Karen "Karrie" Dunning, a stalwart member of Seattle fandom for more than 40 years, died on April 12<sup>th</sup>, from the effects of treatment for leukemia. My wife Carrie's brother Ron Root suffered a very serious stroke in the early spring, and he remains in assisted living, struggling to recover his ability to communicate. And of course, we lost a friend, a collaborator, and an eternal crush when Randy Byers died from the effects of brain cancer on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

I followed the incredibly open account of Randy's treatment, and his feelings about his life and his impending death as closely as hundreds of others on four continents. He remained incredibly generous across this last year; his work in CHUNGA #25 was humbly good, he made time for visitors from all corners of his life, and his random selection as Guest of Honor at Corflu in Los Angeles this past Spring was an amazingly sweet moment, which only became terribly sad in hindsight. He had another fine adventure still ahead of him then, a return to his childhood haunts in Micronesia, and his account of that experience will be the centerpiece of issue #26 of CHUNGA.

But after that, the terrible seizures began to recur, the therapies which had once been so effective lost the power to do anything but sicken him, and he discontinued treatment. But we continued to hear from him through social media, and he continued to receive visitors up to about four weeks before he died. His family took him home to Oregon, and he spent his last weeks with them.

The many other poisonous and absurd events of 2017 also distracted me, the idiocy of American politics amazed me, and the hot, dry summer threatened to asphyxiate us all. With the loss of so many other correspondents, like Dian Crayne, and Milt Stevens, who passed just months after

organizing the L.A. Corflu program, the idea of publishing something full of funny Ray Nelson cartoons and clever interlineations began to feel ridiculous.

It's the letter columns which have brought me back again. I wrote last time about the pile of SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES I was selling, and the deep dive into LASFS history that it prompted. (I also made a bunch of mistakes, for the pleasure of FLAG correspondents.) Reading through more of John's fanzines, I keep getting caught by letters of comment from true titans of correspondence, people like Walt Willis...Mike Glicksohn...Ethel Lindsay...Harry Andruschack....

While I admit it's hyperbole to claim I have been studying the epistles of Dr. Shack the Quack, there have been many fans who easily composed a novel-length manuscript entirely through letters of comment to fanzines, and who could easily sustain my interest throughout. I have more than a dozen replies to FLAG #19 waiting to be shared and at least one - the faithful Milt Stevens, who had lately requested the electronic version to help him read FLAG, has died while waiting for it to be published. Reading letters from 1960s fanzines by Robert Lichtman and Ted White, I realize that holding any of this back is really a shame. And reasoning that publishing six months late and theoretically skipping several issues allows me to exceed the usual allotment of pages, the Father of Letters shall flow unvexed to your eyes.

### WHAN THAT APRILLE

The last issue of FLAG was completed just a day or so before Corflu 34, the annual event which typically marks the climax of the faanish year for me. But I ended up distributing a relative handful of copies at the convention, which was well short of 50 attendees; and while there was a choice group present, much of the conversation on the

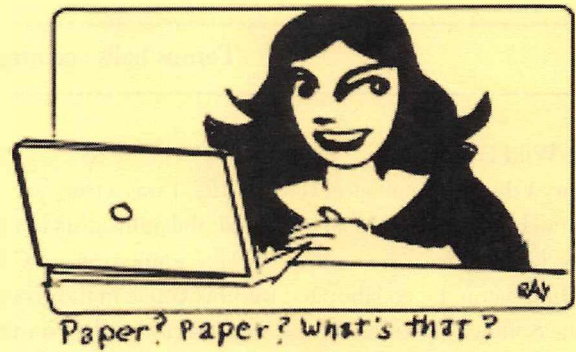


weekend still revolved around those fans not able to attend. It was not a particularly memorable example of the now 35-year-old institution, but there were some great moments. As I noted above, Randy Byers was selected in the Guest of Honor drawing, to the great satisfaction of all. Even Randy seemed not to mind it too much. The fanzine auction was fun and successful, with many treasures going to good new homes. The hotel was very nearly opulent, the Sunday brunch and other food service was much better than average, and only the unfortunate Saturday night fire alarms made us question our luck.

People seemed to enjoy my Friday night game, "What's My Derogation," which invited audience members to read selected quotes from famous fanzines, then asked two teams to answer trivia questions somehow connected to them. It seemed to go very well, with the players suitably stumped by some of the questions. At the end, the results were put in doubt by a dispute over the definition of the "initial" members of the Carl Brandon conspiracy, so what could be more fannish than that?

There was one pretty good panel discussion, titled "Beyond Numbered Fandoms," which meandered around a number of changes and highlights of the past 80 years, but also actually talked about some of the differing ideas that attended transitions in fannish history, something I've been hoping to get at for years. I also opened up my laptop and looked at the grid of fannish history that I published here several years ago, and got goosebumps as Ted White called out all the names of the editors and their focal point fanzines, just as they appeared on my list.

Murray Moore's well-managed return to the two-stage nomination/final ballot process originally used for the FAAn Awards in the 1970s added to the anticipation for those nominated, but did not produce an increase in voting totals, and the committee were unable to choose a recipient for a lifetime achievement award. I won the award for best writer once more, and it is again a most pleasing honor. BANANA WINGS and THE WHITE NOTEBOOKS were best genzine and personal fanzine; Steve Stiles was best artist, Paul Skelton best letterhack, Harry Bell's cover for BEAM #10 was best, Rob Hansen's THEN won best special publication, and efanzines.com won the efanzines.com award. There is a lot more to be said about this, but Nic Farey has made a kind of feature



around the topic of the awards in BEAM #12, and you can read our whole conversation there.

Corflu, the convention, often gets a bit lost in the travel and interaction with fans that happens immediately before and after it. To me, Corflu week began with a visit from Pat Virzi, in Seattle to visit her daughter the week before the convention, on the ludicrous grounds that she was starting a new job on Monday. We met in a noisy Seattle brewpub and had a famous time - I still want to collaborate on that Corflu history zine, Pat!

Then on Sunday at the convention, we awoke to see hundreds of American muscle cars and other General Motors-made vehicles displayed across the lawn in the huge park behind the hotel, once part of an even larger "movie ranch." After we'd heard Randy's humble and charming GoH speech, handed out the awards and gave the next Corflu to Toronto fans Catherine Crockett and Colin Hinz, a tour of the car show was a great antidote to the usual mopey indolence that comes on at Dead Dog time. There were Trump People there, but we walked among them without incident.

Because Carrie's daughter and her family live in Pasadena, we also lingered in the Los Angeles-area for a few days after the event, and celebrated Carrie's birthday with a playground picnic, complete with cake and wind-blown candles. And on Monday, we followed the tradition of hanging around with friends from home in distant cities, taking a tour of the Huntington Library and Gardens with Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins with ex-Angelena Ulrika O'Brien as our local guide.

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If there's one thing I learned from the week I was married, it's when to walk away.

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## Tennis balls accumulate filth, and wear through easily

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### The Wild Huntington

Henry Edward Huntington (1850 - 1927) was a true exemplar among American industrial philanthropists in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The nephew of railroading magnate Collis P. Huntington, he collaborated with his Uncle in the growth of the Southern Pacific Railway, was director of the Newport News Shipyards in Virginia, and ran the sprawling Pacific Electric Railway, which operated Los Angeles' famous "Red Car" interurban system. He also had passions that were worthy of a European princeling, including books, art and botanical gardens. He divorced his first wife, Mary Alice Prentice, who had raised four of his children, in order to marry his Uncle's widow Arabella. "Belle" Huntington, often referred to as the richest woman in America, was the driving force behind the impressive art collection that formed the nucleus of today's galleries and museum, while Henry was equally enthusiastic about the rare and historical books which are the jewel of the Library.

Their former mansion and its extensive gardens are located in San Marino, a pocket-sized city in the San Rafael hills, home to just over 13,000 of the wealthiest people in the country. The art on the site includes works by Gainsborough, Constable and Mary Cassatt, and the library collection includes the 1405 "Ellesmere" manuscript of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and so many rare and important scientific works that listing them would fill this page. (Astronomer Edwin Hubble had a house in San Marino for many years, and the President of the University of Southern California has their residence there as well. Science and Education are the local trade.)



It's also a very "white" place, if I can indulge in that much summary racism for a moment, and also profoundly "mundane" - some of the bathtub-sized succulents in the gardens had an unearthly quality to them, and the entire endeavor was the product of someone's fantasies - but it was still a very mannered, and slightly distant view of culture on display. There was nothing insurgent or speculative or very inventive about the place, for all that it celebrated creativity and invention. It was beautiful, restful, and comfortable, apart from the late springtime heat.

After looping around the hillside gardens for a while, we fled the sun inside the building which houses the Library collections. And then stepping into a side gallery, we were confronted by a photograph of a group of well-dressed young people gathered behind a seated Harlan Ellison, doing his best to look cool and conceal his evident delight at being in charge (for that week!) of the 1970 Clarion science fiction workshop. And tucked in shyly at the far right of the second row in the photo was the subject of the exhibit - Octavia Estelle Butler (1947-2004), the first African-American woman to become a major writer of science fiction.

"Telling My Stories," the exhibit which ran from April through August of 2017, was clearly a labor of love for Assistant Library Collections Curator Natalie Russell, who assembled a comprehensive museum of Octavia's life and career inside that room. There were notebooks executed in colorful markers, manuscripts studded with notes and revisions, college work, photos, covers, letters, reviews, and one of her several Nebula awards. (Scholars who have had access to the full archive marvel at Butler's compulsion to save *everything*, while fans immediately recognize a kindred spirit.) And then at the opposite end of the room from the Clarion photo (taken at a Pghlungecon where Suzle was positive she was present), I saw my own past put on display, in the program book for Wiscon 4, at which Octavia was a Guest of Honor in 1980.

That convention was a big one for me. I had attended Wiscon 2 and 3 as well, but had spent a majority of my time there in the *Dungeons & Dragons* room, playing in the brilliant "official" game supervised by Bill Hoffman, Carl Marrs, Kim and Lucy Nash, and Bill "Prune" Wickert, among others. I played in the game at Wiscon 4 as well (and in fact, after an aggregate 9 days of play, our characters



escaped from the pocket universe in which we had been trapped), but I also attended more programming and other events than I'd ever been to before. I asked questions after panel discussions. I went to the "mixer," in the appropriately-named Tripp Hall, and *danced* with other fans for the first time. I stayed for the benefit auction at the end of the weekend, and bought a signed set of galleys of Octavia Butler's novel *Mind of my Mind*. It was one of the first collectibles I ever bought; I kept it for about 20 years, before donating it to another auction to benefit one or more fan funds. I rather wish I still had it.

Wiscon 4 was held in several buildings on the University of Wisconsin campus, and a tiny 5-story motel, the Madison Inn. The weekend of March 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, 1980, was only slightly colder than average for the season, but the chill had a polar intensity to a California native like Octavia, and she found the weekend delightful, apart from the perpetual hypothermia. In spite of a chronic shyness that made her the antithesis of the gregarious, attention-seeking pro, she patiently endured every interview and panel discussion asked of her. Was she in fact the only person of color at the convention? In my mind's eye this was certainly true, but it may be an exaggeration. Bhim Nimgade has been part of the Madison group for nearly 40 years, but I'm not sure if he attended Wiscon 4. This was by no means a novel experience for her. A careful study of the photo of her Clarion West class reveals several other notable pros, including Glenn Cook, George Alec Effinger and Vonda McIntyre. But every other face in the photograph was white.

I'm sorry to say that the horror of the polar wilderness climaxed when Madison's own Richard S. Russell ran out of gas while driving Octavia to the airport for her flight home. In those pre cell-phone times, she had no choice but to walk the rest of the way or miss the flight. (She did not miss the flight.)

### The Devil Girl Story

Octavia was the only daughter of Launice James Butler and Octavia Margaret Guy. Launice worked shining shoes, but died when his daughter was only 7 years old. The younger Octavia was raised by her Mother, her maternal Grandmother and the Baptist church, where they were faithful members. Painfully shy from an early age, Octavia always found it difficult to socialize with other children, and turned to story-telling as a safe and solitary way to express herself.

Octavia's mother cleaned house for wealthy Pasadenans, who always requested she use the back door to enter their homes. Octavia often accompanied her mother to work when school

was out, and saw how poorly most employers treated her. Her mother wanted Octavia to get a job in secretarial or social work, for the simple reason that she wanted her daughter to be able to sit down at her job. But Octavia's ambition was always to write. At age 10, she begged her mother for a Remington typewriter, on which she tapped out stories two-fingered for years. At age 12, she watched a broadcast of an obscure 1954 British cult film, *Devil Girl from Mars*, and was inspired, as have been so many fans and pros alike, by the notion that she could certainly do better than that. She soon began roughing out the basic ideas that would become her novel *Patternmaster* and its sequels, the last of which, *Clay's Ark*, was not finished until 1984.

She graduated from John Muir High School, then worked a variety of menial jobs by day and attended classes at Pasadena City College at night. She would earn an Associate Degree in History in 1968. As a freshman, she won \$15 in a PCC short story contest, the first income ever earned from her writing. She characterized her early work as derivative of the white, male writers she had read, and very few of these stories were ever published. While attending an open door writing workshop set up by the Screenwriter's Guild to encourage "minority" writers, Octavia caught the attention of none other than Harlan Ellison. He urged her to attend the six-week workshop in Clarion, Pennsylvania in the summer of 1970. At the end of his week as instructor, Harlan summoned the class to travel to Pittsburgh for a convention that happened to be taking place that weekend, and the Jay Kay Klein photo that introduced us to the Huntington exhibit was the result.

Octavia made her first two sales at the workshop. The first, "Child Finder," was purchased by Ellison for *The Last Dangerous Visions*, and like most of the work intended for that anthology, remains unpublished to this day. The second, "Crossover," was published by Robin Scott Wilson in the 1971 Clarion Anthology.

In 1974, she returned to the series of ideas that had originally been inspired by *Devil Girl from Mars*, a saga of humanity split into three genetic populations by the influence of mutant psychic abilities and alien pathogens. The first novel, *Patternmaster*, was published in 1976, followed by *Mind of my Mind* in 1977, and *Survivor* in 1978. The success of these novels allowed her to stop working day jobs to support herself, and led to her single best-selling work, *Kindred*. In it, a young woman writer living in Los Angeles in 1976 is transported to early 19<sup>th</sup> Century Maryland, and meets her ancestors, including a vain, pretentious slave owner, and the former freedwoman he has forced to live as his concubine.

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**I never met anybody who said when they were a kid, I wanna grow up and be a critic.**

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## So you're mining stuff to craft with, and crafting stuff to mine with?

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As Dana's visits to the past become longer, she has to adapt repeatedly to survive life as a slave, with the unusual consequence that if she takes action to free herself or her ancestors, her future existence will be put in jeopardy. It's a meeting of a classic science fiction premise with a more nuanced view of history and humanity than the genre was or is accustomed to seeing.

*Kindred* has become a favorite work of instructors teaching Women's Studies and African-American Literature at the college and secondary levels. It's been selected several times by communities and colleges as a common reading or "Book of the Year." In 2003, 50,000 people in Rochester, New York read and attended programs on the novel, and in 2016, the students at Pasadena Community College also shared the work of their famous alumnus. In 2001, Seeing Ear Theatre adapted the novel as an audio play, starring Alfre Woodard, Lynn Whitfield and Ruby Dee, in a production that can still be heard online. And a graphic novel adapting *Kindred* appeared in January, 2017.

*Kindred* is much less "science-fictional" than the *Patternmaster* or later *Xenogenesis* series of novels, and Octavia characterized it as a "kind of grim fantasy," in which a modern descendant is called on to witness, endure and sometimes intervene in the lives of her ancestors. But I would still call *Kindred* firmly rooted in science fiction, with antecedents as hoary as Edgar Rice Burroughs' John Carter of Mars. Yet Butler is one of those rare writers who have developed a greater reputation among mainstream critics than they enjoy within the more limited precincts of science fiction and its fandom. Like Ray Bradbury or Philip K. Dick, Butler's critical stature seems to increase the farther you get from science fiction and its many formulae. She was, after all, the first and thus far only science fiction writer to receive a MacArthur Foundation "Genius Grant." Certainly much of this attention derived from the enduring popularity of *Kindred*, but her other works were equally rewarding in their exploration of human hierarchies, power and powerlessness, and the potential future evolution of our species.

And Octavia was also admired and honored repeatedly by her peers and readers in the science fiction community. The 1984 novelette "Bloodchild," her introduction to the *Xenogenesis* series, won Hugo, Locus and Nebula awards, and her short story "Speech Sounds" won the Hugo in the

same year. *Parable of the Talents* won a Nebula as Best Novel in 1999, after nominations for other works in 1994 and 1997. In 2012, she was inducted into the relatively little-known Science Fiction Hall of Fame, alongside Richard Matheson, Douglas Trumbull and Roger Zelazny.

After 1998, and the passing of her mother, Octavia moved to North Seattle, and became a beloved, if somewhat hermetic, member of the Seattle fan community centered around the Clarion West Writers' Workshop, where she was frequently an instructor. At certain Saturday night parties around the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Seattle fans had the opportunity to enjoy a conversation with Octavia, Joanna Russ and Vonda McIntyre in the same evening (and Nisi Shawl, Nicola Griffith, Amy Thomson...). As I recall we generally talked about gardening, the weather, local bus disasters and geopolitics – the things fans talk about. On the day Octavia died, a Sunday in February of 2006, many of her friends were gathered at a hotel in downtown Seattle for Potlatch, a convention heavily driven by the desire to support Clarion West. Octavia was a central figure in the Clarion community, and her death was a great loss to it – she should have taught for at least another decade.

As important as Octavia and her work were within my personal orbit of fandom, I can't shake the feeling that her books are seen as slightly esoteric or exotic by most old-timey sf critics and fans like me. She didn't write stories that offered adventure and escape, and they don't focus on princes or space pirates. There are no anti-gravity boots or transatlantic monorails. Her protagonists are so-called "marginal" people, usually women of color, and they are sexually, economically and biologically oppressed in ways that can be quite painful to read. Her characters do not always overcome; they do not always survive.

Caroline Mullan read or re-read all of Octavia's novels and wrote about them in issue #62 of BANANA WINGS, so I commend the reader to her eloquent survey for more on Butler's works. And far from being an esoteric or tangential writer, Octavia has been a profound influence on a contemporary generation of science fiction professionals, many of whom are working steadily to increase the visibility of women, people of color and other "marginals" in the narrative of science fiction. When asked about the general lack of black writers in science fiction, apart from herself



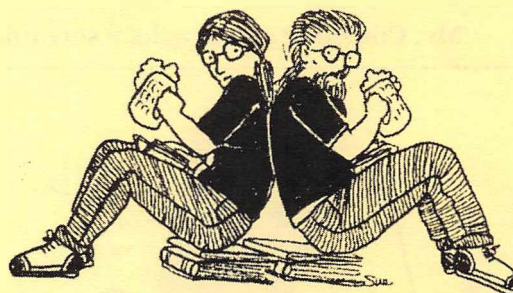
and Samuel R. Delany, Octavia replied that it was a mistake to think that this meant there *couldn't* be more such authors in the field, and time has proven her correct.

I was fully prepared to applaud the Huntington's seemingly progressive gesture of presenting an exhibit devoted to Butler, but then again, it is a very white place. When I went to look at reviews and remarks about the exhibit online, I found an account of a visit to the exhibit, by researcher and scholar Cecilia Caballero. In her blog "Mothering While Brown," Caballero reports how she was repeatedly warned to "supervise" her 5-year-old son, and shadowed by a white docent when they were in the exhibit. White visitors, who had no idea who Octavia was, were left unmolested. One wonders what sort of posterity it represents if Octavia's materials are only to be made available to the white and credentialed? Still, I hope the presence of Butler and her work made Hank and Collie Huntington shift uncomfortably in their graves.

And we, of course, faced no such "supervision" or scrutiny either. It was completely delightful to engage in this kind of timebinding in a "mundane" museum, and I found it risible how the event had served to reinforce my year-long obsession with the fannish past yet again. Thanks to Jerry, Suzle, Ulrika and Carrie for their patience and kindness in sharing this unique fan activity with me.

### You Can't Go Home Again

Seeing Octavia Butler as a pre-eminent voice in late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Science Fiction is a perspective largely shared by the generation of fans, writers, editors and critics that matter to me now. And they have certainly been at the forefront of the wider cultural movement to expel racist symbols and monuments from our public and memorial spaces. H.P. Lovecraft's batrachian likeness disappeared from the World Fantasy Awards a few years ago, deemed at last to be an unattractively bigoted face to represent the entire genre. Pablo Vasquez, young firebrand of my mailing list, recently asked when we would consider re-naming the John W. Campbell Jr. Award to recognize some less openly and horrifically racist character. I opined that this might lead to crowds of Trufans with tiki torches, but I'm equivocating into the hurricane. I think a movement to rename the award after David Hartwell or Ellen Datlow might have a good chance of success.



Hartwell, interestingly enough, was also present at Wiscon 4 in 1980; in addition to Octavia, the committee brought Hartwell, writer Joan D. Vinge and Milwaukee fan Beverly DeWeese to the convention as Guests of Honor. (Even then, Wiscon had too much programming; each event created such an animated discussion that it was difficult to get participants to give way to the next scheduled item.)

When I got home from California, I found a copy of the Wiscon 4 program book in my hopelessly disorganized files - it might be my original copy, or Anna Vargo's copy, as elements of her extensive collection are still entwined with mine. Leafing through its scratchy, twilly pages, I was struck by how closely it resembled an issue of a sercon fanzine. Editors/typists included Janice Bogstad, Paul Dutton, Laurence Gold, Hank Luttrell and Diane Martin; Jeanne Gomoll was responsible for the design and layout of the program. Robert Kellough drew the front cover illustration, which was impressive, but didn't really portray Joan or Octavia very accurately. Other artists familiar from issues of the Madison gazette JANUS were evident throughout, including Gomoll, Steven A. Fox and Joan Hanke-Woods.

Jan Bogstad, probably the single most dominant intellectual figure in the foundation of Wiscon, introduced Octavia with an extensive interview; she provided a similar set of queries to David Hartwell, who gave some great insights on his origins as a science fiction reader and editor. Juanita Coulson wrote an introduction to her friend Bev DeWeese, and she and Buck were there to enjoy Bev and Gene's company during her turn as Fan GoH. And then the introduction to Joan D. Vinge, author of *Fireship* and *The Snow Queen*, was written by her future husband, the editor Jim Frenkel.

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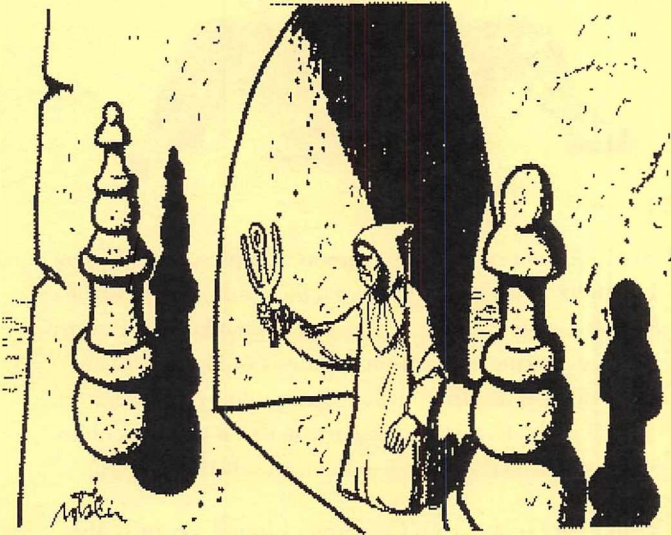
Did your Dad write this game?

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**Mr. Corleone never asks a second favor once he's refused the first, understand?**

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Jim and Joan were enthusiastic supporters of Wiscon, and moved to Madison in the early, 1990s. Their kids graduated from High School there, the same school I attended. Joan's output was typically long in gestation, while Jim edited and represented authors numerous enough to fill a city bus. Many of the anthologies edited by Dozois, Datlow and Windling in the 1980s and 1990s were packaged and organized by Frenkel. He was always working, and he worked with almost everyone.

Joan had a serious car accident in 2002, and I think I've seen her perhaps twice in the past 15 years. Acquiring a second home in Arizona, Joan began escaping from Wisconsin's winters over a decade ago. Jim continued to live in Madison for much of the year, represented Tor Books at Wiscon, and helped organize their long-running party suite there.

In 2013, Jim was accused of sexually harassing another longtime member of the convention. I was not privy to the many conversations which followed that event, but the end result was that Frenkel appeared as usual at the convention the following year. The person who had made the complaint against him was quite upset to see him there, carrying on as usual, and expressed her disappointment to a much larger group of fans. That's when the real fight began, of course; all the Wiscon committee heads would ultimately resign, and long-time members were eventually purged because of their support of Frenkel. In 2014,

several more women accused Frenkel of behavior that had made them uncomfortable. The scrutiny of his professional conduct that followed eventually led to the end of his direct relationship with Tor, for what both parties consider to be unrelated reasons.

This has had serious consequences for Wiscon - the expulsion of longtime organizers has led to a loss of continuity, and some basic functions, like hospitality, have unquestionably suffered. Jim Frenkel was ultimately banned for life, but the convention still remained essential to his business. At Wiscon 40 in 2016, I walked into a State St. pizza restaurant where Frenkel was giving final instructions to various assistants and associates gathered at a large island table. The assistants were, as I recall, all young women, as were most of the members of the convention. They broke up their meeting as we approached, and returned without him to the conv hotel.

The animus against Frenkel spilled into Odysseycon, Madison's "other" science fiction convention in 2017. Frenkel's presence on the program list led a number of authors to pull out of the event, some of whom cited bad personal experiences with him. Attendance was down too. In the wake of this, the committee decided not to hold a convention in 2018; they hope to return the following year.

I found this sequence of events quite remarkable. Firstly, the notion that Jim Frenkel was actually quite a powerful man had not particularly occurred to me. As I have come to appreciate the number of works in which he has been involved, I realize he's had a great deal of impact on my reading choices, and on the careers of the people who created those works. His self-deprecating manner had never suggested to me that he was likely to coerce anyone into anything. But to misquote Lord John Whorfin, character is what you show when you're alone with someone weaker than you. And I've reached the point where I wouldn't send a young writer to Jim for help, without warning them elaborately in advance.

I was reluctant to accept this, as were many of the people who had worked on Wiscon with him for thirty years. Some other fans in Madison were not as surprised. And the apparent ubiquity of sexual abuse means that it must have happened inside a nominally feminist institution like Wiscon as well. I feel like my own sexual behavior has



probably been equally or even more unacceptable at times in my life; but then, I've never had the power to decide if the object of my interest would be professionally published or relegated to the slush pile. It is difficult enough to be published, without wondering if you have to take your pants off as well. My impression is that Jim lost quite a bit, financially and professionally in the wake of his actions, and that those working with him now and in the future will be aware of this history.

Within the Wiscon community, the result was a nearly-complete change in the people doing the work of the convention. The watershed moment was the expulsion of the notoriously Libertarian Richard Russell – the same soul who stranded Octavia on the way to the airport in 1980 – both for his resistance to the expulsion of Jim Frenkel, and a long-standing opposition to gender and racial safe spaces within the convention, on the grounds that the whole con was intended to be such a space. When this happened, most of those who had been friends with Dick for three decades departed as well, and my impression was that no effort was expended to retain them. In a revolutionary organization like Wiscon, the eventual succession of the old guard and first wave partisans is inevitable, and it can be argued it had been delayed for far too long anyway.

I observed all of this from afar, but also had to interact with Jim on a monthly basis, as we were both members of the Turbo-Charged Party-Animal Amateur Press Association for over 25 years. It took a long time for the members to process the accusations against Jim; he was almost completely silent on the topic, and continued to submit his travelogues and family stories as he always had. But eventually, one longtime member decided that continuing to be in an APA with Jim was normalizing what he had been accused of, and announced their intention to resign; and to his great credit, Jim resigned immediately in response. It's another fannish cliché to report such events as if the fate of nations hang in the balance; in truth, I'm writing about the end of a group of friendships, or an era of friendship, as important to me as any numbered era of fandom. And another occasion to mourn.

Some of this seems a bit like something Octavia might have pointed out to us – that hierarchical relationships are inherently abusive, that people in power over others will inescapably exploit them, that only by building and

defending and openly examining your own community can you hope to feel whole and find safety from abuse and malign purposes. I think her sympathy would lie with the new leaders of the Wiscon community, but would also remember that there is always someone ready to rally the worst among us, no matter how many icons we pull down or send into exile.

### **Darling Billy**

A few years ago, at the Corflu in Richmond, Virginia, something led me to comment that changes in publishing technology and the customs of fanzine fandom were making it less likely that anyone will collect or anthologize our work, unless we choose to do it for ourselves. Fandom doesn't think of being fanthologized as the honor it once did, partly because fanzine production no longer involves the cutting of stencils and the turning of cranks. But I also had in mind the typical fan-writer's very specific opinions about their work, and how and what they would like to be remembered by; and it is so much easier to control these elements if you do the work yourself. And, I noted, if you do feel like you want to collect someone's work to honor them while they are still alive to enjoy it, time is running out on us all.

Jump forward to the spring of 2017, and a thick envelope arrives in my mailbox from William Breiding in Tucson, Arizona. Inside is a copy of *Rose Motel*, a very handsome trade paperback collection of Bill's writing, available online through Amazon.com and other vendors (It doesn't have a publishing house, but it does have an ISBN: 1542902819). A yellow post-it note attached to the title page credited my remarks in Richmond with having helped move him to the completion of the project. Thus pre-inclined to look favorably on the book, I devoured every word inside.

The book is sub-titled "Fanzine Pieces 1980-2014," so there is certainly no attempt to conceal the amateur origins of the work. But I think almost anyone with any familiarity with fandom would note how different Breiding's writing is from the typical fanzine composition. Fans excel at writing thousands of words about things of the most trivial nature – club and convention politics, where the group went for lunch on Saturday, and who threatens to end fandom's way of life as we know it. They say things to one another with their mouths, and study the reactions on their sensitive fannish faces.

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**I really hate to trip, but I got to loc**

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Bill Breiding doesn't do any of that. He writes about experiences, but they are always experiences that mean something significant to him, and they only occasionally have much of anything to do with science fiction or fandom. I'm sure I first encountered his work in the late Bill Bowers' fanzine *OUTWORLDS*, and Breiding dedicates *Rose Motel* to Bowers, in gratitude for that early encouragement. From those earliest appearances, he was without mercy for the reader; he plunged them directly into the turbulent narrative of a sometime violent, sometimes Bohemian childhood, a lifelong struggle for love and companionship extending to the places in which he has tried to live, and an enduring attraction to nature and the wilderness, which haunted and twined in his relationship with his dangerous father. His work can be plaintive without being whiny, and he can give a real voice to his sense of wonder without descending into treacle or madness, marking him as a true fannish asset in what are alternately wonder-challenged and wonder-saturated times.

His work has always had an arresting effect on me. Encountered in the pages of Gary Mattingly's underrated *SKUG* or Lichtman's gleaming *TRAP DOOR*, it always made me stop and go back over what I'd just read. Who is this guy? And why is he telling me about the fallout that the war between his mother and father precipitated into his life? And when it became clear that we had both spent some part of our childhood in the coal-mining college town of Morgantown, West Virginia, I began to feel a curious affinity with Bill, and watched carefully for his byline to appear in other places.

Submitted discreetly into fandom's conversation over a 34 year span, I'm not sure how many had noticed what a comprehensive and self-revelatory narrative Bill has shared with fandom. But when collected into a 210-page volume, the honesty of the work has little parallel in fandom. On the other hand, Bill assures me that there are "two pieces of hokum" in the collection; I honestly forgot to look for them, and have no idea which pieces are actually fictional. If I had to guess, I'd say it was one of the pieces about his relationships with women, which seem terribly dramatic for all that they have been, in sum, less than satisfying. Breiding has a kind of chronic ennui that could easily descend into crabbiness, but which never does so. His depiction of his father, a misanthropic alcoholic who assaulted William's mother, yet also helped preserve thousands of acres of West Virginia wilderness and pioneered the modern recreational extension programs of West Virginia University, is a masterwork. He writes with

such fond understanding of his father's love for nature that the reader quite forgets the fear and subversive resistance that his earlier behavior had inspired in his children.

This was so dire that William's mother eventually gathered most of the children and defected to San Francisco. Then they returned temporarily to a farm in rural West Virginia, before escaping again to California, one or two at a time. The moves reminded me of the fits and starts by which Ray Bradbury's family eventually relocated from Illinois to Los Angeles - they too had stops in Arizona, with relatives who lived in Tucson. Eventually, Bill decided that he would just as soon be neglected in San Francisco, and spent large chunks of the 1970s and 1980s there. I found the fact that two of William's older brothers were his gateway into fandom one of the few elements of his story that I envied - even in the let-it-all-hang-out 1970s, my parents were largely convinced that fandom represented some kind of child labor scam.

There are topical pieces here too, appreciations of musicians like Dave Alvin and Ronnie Dawson, a playful reaction to Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City*, and the disillusioning experience of trying to re-read Tolkien after having his work read aloud as a child. His overall view is skeptical, possibly insurgent; fandom has been letting him down for over 40 years now, and shows no sign of reversing its pattern. But there is something hopeful or at least cheerfully resigned in his narrative voice. His mode is one of perpetual flirtation: with human intimacy, with aesthetic and artistic satisfaction, with the very idea of home, or permanent roots and their comforts. I found myself wondering how much Breiding knows about his father and mother's ancestry; his ties to West Virginia are much deeper than mine, as I only lived there between the ages of 5 and 7. But even that exposure to its woodland slopes was enough to capture my imagination forever, and I still sometimes dream of hunting for yellow lady slippers in the abandoned seminary that lay farther up Tyrone Road from our home.

Breiding inspires that kind of reverie in me; he reminds me at times of Billy Wolfenbarger, alongside whom he has sometimes been published. Wolfenbarger also offers his personal experience without preamble or justification, and has also spent months of his life camping somewhere wild. Breiding wrote to me in the wake of the Richmond Conflu, expressing his disappointment that we had not had more opportunity to talk; I felt the same way, but also felt that a suburban hotel was a terrible place to get to know William



Breiding; by rights, we should take a long hike together, climbing to some scenic overlook, and letting silences settle between passages of conversation.

*Rose Motel* is an admirable substitute, however, an excellent map of Bill Breiding's mind, and some elegant clues to his heart. After reading all 30 pieces in it, I'm convinced his work was perfectly suited for the fanzines and alternative papers where it was first published, and that

it is writers like Bill that keep me fascinated by fanzines after all these years. The book's satin-finished covers were designed by Pat Virzi; the handsome package has me daydreaming what a collection of my own work would be like, and if anyone would be willing to give Amazon \$15.00 for a copy. I'm not sure very much of my work would warrant that treatment, while Bill seems to have spent 34 years composing material worthy of this collection. It's certainly my favorite "Special Publication" of the year.

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## P'raps there are more of them about, and we might make a pie.

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### The Way of the Tulpa II by Ray Nelson

You don't tell a child bedtime facts - you tell bedtime stories. Bill Gould

If you want to be a writer, the second most important decision you will ever make will be the decision to present your work in the form of a story. The one real mistake you can make is to bore your reader, and the best way to avoid this mistake is to present your message as if it were fiction. A factual story can still be a story. A poem can be a story. The one exception may be the newspaper report. In a newspaper report, you put the most important information at the beginning. This is to enable the reader to avoid reading the whole story. If you want to be read, put the most important information at the end.

Almost any story can be framed as a human story, and thus the first step in writing it must be the creation of the human involved, but primarily in those aspects that relate to the information you wish to convey. You will, in effect, be creating a tulpa by the process of elimination, without actually telling a lit. If, for example, you want to tell us about someone who has murdered a lot of people, then himself, we want to know what he was doing before he went berserk, not that some neighbor said he 'wasn't the type,' and only after we have heard about what led up to the crime do we want to know the bloody details.

Almost anyone can be the protagonist of a story, but especially in fiction not all persons are equally interesting. If our central figure solves a problem too easily, we may get bored and set the story aside unread. No, we want our tulpa to struggle, to face seemingly overwhelming odds, to come to the brink of despair, occasionally to fail but go down fighting. Edison's real story comes to mind, with the

hundreds of times he failed to invent the electric light before finally succeeding.

You may have noticed, as I have, how often obscure amateurs have made lasting contributions to the arts, to politics, and to science. Van Gogh, William Blake and Louis Armstrong are long gone, but their tulpas continue to haunt us. Their true life stories fit the pattern of a fictional hero, of someone who struggles against overwhelming odds to achieve a worthwhile goal.

They are all outsiders.

In 1957 French existentialist Albert Camus won the Nobel Prize for Literature with his novel *L'Étranger*. Translated into English, this title could be "The Outsider." The opening lines could be translated as "Today Mom died. Or perhaps yesterday. I don't know." The story begins with this man, known to us only as Meursault, becoming an orphan, and in the end he is convicted of murder in a case where he really acted in self-defense, and he is convicted solely because the jury does not like him.

Who better to personify the archetype of the outsider than an orphan?

Is it irrelevant that he is an orphan?

Harry Potter is an orphan.

Superman, Batman, Tarzan, Dorothy of Oz, and of course, Little Orphan Annie are all orphans. We all sometimes feel like motherless children a long way from home, as the song goes. Thus we feel an immediate kinship with these motherless children of fiction. We all sympathize with the outsider, and the more you present your protagonist as an outsider, the more likely you are to please a reader and more importantly, an editor.



## COLOR PARTY:

### Readers' Letters to FLAG

*[Having clearly abandoned the 5 sheets/1 stamp model that FLAG observed in earlier issues, I'm resolved to publish a major portion of ALL the comments received on issue #19. Your letters are presented in Baskerville Old Face, like this, while my comments are expressed in Monotype Corsiva, like this. We'll start with two of the great letters left over from 2016:]*

**Joseph Nicholas**

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Received the latest issue of *Flag* (number 19) through your usual agents (C Brialey and M Plummer of the Croydon Nexus). An interesting read, as always, especially of the history of the LASFS clubzine as revealed through copies passed on from John D Berry, although I was previously under the impression that *Shangri L'Affaires* had been published continuously (or near-continuously) since its founding before the Second World War. Thus I have learned otherwise, perhaps reinforcing the old saying that All Knowledge Is Contained In Fanzines.

I must nevertheless enter a mild complaint about the editing of my letter published in this issue, which has removed what I thought was an interesting fact about the percentage of our DNA which derives from other hominin species and has (mis)attributed to me a quote ("less about where we came from than who we slept with on the way") made by a third person. The first may of course be simply a matter of opinion (you perhaps don't find our DNA breakdown as fascinating as I do) but the second is the sort of thing that in other circles (particularly scientific circles) could give rise to accusations of plagiarism -- and I would certainly not wish to be thought of as plagiarising Professor Alice Roberts, noted anthropologist, anatomist and presenter of various television documentaries on archaeological and palaeontological issues. (The quote came from the same documentary from which I extracted the fact that we all contain 2-2.5% Neanderthal DNA.) But perhaps you had not previously heard of her, so would not have grasped the importance of the attribution.

(The same documentary programme also hinted at emerging evidence that, in addition to ourselves, the Neanderthals, the Denisovans and *Homo floresiensis*, there was a fifth hominin species extant in Africa at the same time. This could be *Homo naledi*, the most recent dating of whose discovered fossils places it at between 236,000 and 335,000 years old: this is older than archaic *Homo sapiens*, but it's possible that descendants of

these individuals could still have been alive at the time our species successfully exited from Africa, around 90,000 years ago ("successfully" because the first exit, around 135,000 years ago, was caught by a freeze in what is now the Middle East and died out). There's an interactive timeline of the spread of *Homo sapiens* around the world, based on Stephen Oppenheimer's work, at <http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/journey/> although you'll need Adobe's Flash Player to run it. But there I go again, enthusing about our species' ancient origins when others may not be as interested as I am....)

Yesterday evening we went to see John Boden play at Cecil Sharp House, home of the EFDSS, in Camden. A fantabulous two hours. Not that it has the slightest relevance to anything in this issue, but I just thought I'd mention it. Neither does the fact that on Monday this week we booked flights and accommodation (a self-catering apartment) for a week in Berlin next month (another place I can now tick off my list, although a week is too short to see everything and we'll probably make another visit there next year as well). Anyway, I think I just heard the thump of mail being delivered from downstairs, which should contain our subscription copy of this week's issue of *New Scientist*. More stuff to read!

*[Your text appears here gloriously unedited, down to the full presentation of the URL. For readers not initiated, Chicago-born Jon Boden is a 40-year-old singer/fiddler/composer working in the folk idiom. I bet it was a fun show. Now, I turn to more replies on my writing on the history of the LASFS clubzine SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES in issue #19. We begin with some indication that mine are not the only mistakes ever made in documenting this legendary title:]*

**Kim Huett**

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Kim.huett@gmail.com

Just the other day bookseller L.W. Currey sent me an email which listed a run of SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES for sale. His description includes a detail I wasn't aware of (the suppressed #13) and which you might not either: Of course it's also possible he might have his facts wrong and that there was never a suppressed issue. I've not delved into LA's fannish history enough to say one way or the other.

"SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES. December 1941 - November 1947 (numbers 1, 4-5, 7,10-38), plus supplement to SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES #38, with SHANGRI-LA. January-February 1948 - July 1949 (numbers 4-7, 12). Edited by Charles D. Homig, Forrest J. Ackerman, Arthur

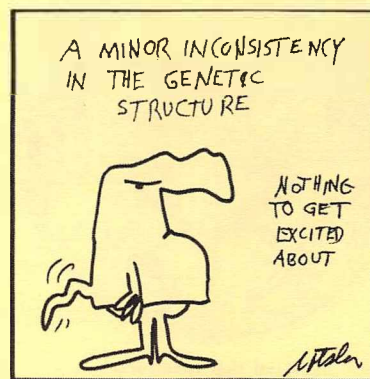


L. Joquel, and many others. Los Angeles, California: The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, December 1941 - November 1947 (numbers 1, 4-5, 7, 10-38), plus supplement to SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES #38, with SHANGRI-LA. January-February 1948 - July 1949 (numbers 4-7, 12).

"Large octavo (early issues 8 1/2 x 14 inches, but mostly 8 1/2 x 11 inches), 38 issues, mimeographed, self-wrappers or pictorial wrappers, all but the first number (a single sheet) stapled. The club magazine of The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. The first issue of SHANGRI-LA was dated March-April 1940. Following the third issue (dated July 1941), the magazine changed its name to SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES (38 issues were published under this title between December 1941 and November 1947). The name reverted to SHANGRI-LA with the issue dated January-February 1948 (as did the numbering of the issues). This long-running fanzine was revived in the late 1950s as SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES and was one of the most important of the amateur magazines published during the 1950s and 1960s.

"This run of 38 of the first 50 issues from December 1941 to July 1949, includes four of the rare early issues of SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, as well as the distributed number 13 and SHANGRI-LA INSIDE OUT, the suppressed number 13. "SHANGRI-LA had been started in 1940 in an effort to fill the vacuum that was left by the passing of IMAGINATION! -- it was the result of such a cooperative effort that nobody was listed as the editor of the first issue. By 1942, SHANGRI-LA vanished, claiming that its name had been changed to SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES. The club publication continued under the latter title until after the big blow up in Los Angeles fandom. SHANGRI-LA serenely resumed title ascendancy late in 1948. It's hard to think of a Los Angeles fan who didn't edit at least one issue of one title or the other. However, the editorship of Charles Burbee, which covered most editions from 1944 through 1947, saw the magazine's major triumphs. The geniality of its general atmosphere and the relaxed suavity of Burbee's editorial writings were something never quite duplicated in fanzine fandom." - Warner, *All Our Yesterdays*, pp. 285-86. Last leaves of several issues detached from staples, old mailing creases to some issues, but very good copies overall. An excellent group of scarce to rare issues."

*[Currey's listing confirms that my auction descriptions are in fact a model of brevity, but then, I'd never try to sell such a treasure trove in one lot, severely limiting the likely return from each issue.*



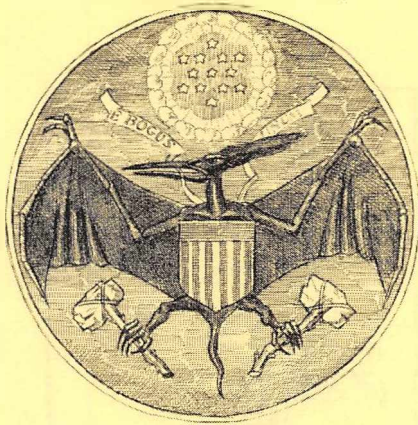
*And before we allow ourselves to be confused further by one antipodean antiquarian's view of history, let more sober knowledge prevail.]*

### Robert Lichtman

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I've left you hanging long enough waiting for more information about the Currey listing that included this misinformation: "This run of 38 of the first 50 issues from December 1941 to July 1949, includes four of the rare early issues of *Shangri-L'Affaires*, as well as the distributed number 13 and *Shangri-LA Inside Out*, the suppressed number 13." I've had some correspondence with Currey about this, and it turns out that there isn't a "suppressed" issue, but rather a variant of an article by that name. In the real #13 the article is credited to "jike and alojo" (Jim Kepner and A. L. Joquel II), runs only a little over two pages, and is primarily news and gossip about recent LASFS meetings. The "suppressed" article is only credited to Kepner, although in the Currey listing it's written that "the suppressed version of "Shangri-La Inside Out" by jiké (three leaves, stapled) ... includes lengthy commentary by L. Sprague de Camp under the heading 'Knavé is a Louise'." So far as it goes, it's exactly the same as what's in the real #13, but it's typed in elite rather than pica, with no spaces between paragraphs as in the published one, and comprises one and a half pages of the published version. I asked Currey several times if he would make me a copy or scan of the whole six pages, but he wasn't interested.

Moving on to your article focusing on *Shangri-L'Affaires* in *Flag* #19, there's an apparent typo in the information on the founding of the title: the first "issue" was March 1941, not 1940. It's *Shangri-LA* that started in March 1940, and although Ackerman and Daugherty are well-represented within its pages it was edited by T. Bruce Yerke (who did not credit himself, so the issue is attributed only to



the land that time forgot

LASFS). Oh, and in case there's any thought that the "Jimmy' Laney" who appears in that issue might be F. Towner, forget it - the latter didn't arrive on the Los Angeles scene until 1943. But as you say, it is "still absolutely recognizable by a contemporary reader as a well-organized science fiction fanzine" - a well above average one at that.

You are right that various people edited issues of *Shangri-L'Affaires* during the WW2 years. Burbee began doing it with #14, May 1944, and continued through #25, April 1945. He was then in service and three issues appeared in his absence, two edited by Hewett (including #26 as you note) and one by Joquel. Burbee resumed the editorship with #29, April 1946, and continued through and including #38, November 1947, after which he was fired by more conservative heads at the LASFS for publishing stuff that alluded to homosexuality, etc.

At that point the club organ's name reverted to *Shangri-LA*, beginning with #4 in January 1948, edited by Dale Hart. (Three earlier issues of this title came out in 1940 and 1941, one of which I note above.) It was published under a series of editors through 1957 (with the four-year gap between the final two issues that you note), and its final number was #38, same as the last Burbee issue of *Shangri-L'Affaires*. I think this coincidental numbering might account for the confusion between the two titles - also that when in 1958 the *Shangri-L'Affaires* title resumed, it appeared to continue the numbering of the other title. Confused? Clearly you're not alone.

Adding to the possible confusion, I should mention that there were actually *two* series of *Shangri-L'Affaires* numbered 1 through 13. The first run began as a page in Ackerman's *Voice of the Imagi-Nation* #12, March 1941, and subsequently six of the thirteen issues appeared in *VoM*'s pages, including the final issue, which was in the

November 1941 *VoM*. As you note, other issues appeared in various other Los Angeles area fanzines. A few also appeared in freestanding form. After the end of that run, the second series began, with #1 dated December 1941. The first half-dozen issues were edited by Ackerman and ranged from two to eight pages. After that, it went through various hands (Phil Bronson, Daugherty and Joquel) until Burbee's takeover with #14.

Near the end of your article, you write: "Was there an issue #76? Online sources suggest that Rudolph did not continue to edit the fanzine after 1968. My impression is that *Shangri L'Affaires* was tabled in favor of the more frequent and newsletter-like *De Profundis*, an issue of which Marty Cantor is probably editing even as I type this. I know there was a revival of *Shangri LA* in the late 1980s under editor Charles Lee Jackson, but my impression is that ran for only a few issues." Actually what Jackson revived was *Shangri-L'Affaires* with #79. Before that Marty Cantor coedited #76, #77 and #78 with Mike Gunderloy, Mike Glycer and Mark Sharpe respectively, this after a 12-year gap from Ken Rudolph's last issue. Those issues are good but far from great, while Jackson's issues were real crap. In the last one of them, he refers to having done eight issues, but I have only five of them.

And that's the whole story. Hope I haven't put you and the readers to sleep.

Nice to see a little piece by Ray Nelson, and thanks for the self-effacing review of *Trap Door* #33.

[Well, you hardly went on any longer than I did in the original article; and I always appreciate getting to publish the true story. Now, a slightly more personal perspective on SHAGGY:]

**Milt Stevens**

6325 Keystone St. Simi Valley, CA 93063  
(Deceased, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017)

After reading Flag #19, I was about to comment that SHAGGY was the first fanzine I had actually seen. I'd read about all sorts of fanzines in the fan columns in the prozines in the fifties, but I hadn't actually seen any. Then I recalled that wasn't quite true. In 1959, I bought a couple of items from Howard Devore, and he apparently gave my address to a couple of young fanzine publishers who were trying to expand their mailing lists. As a result, I received copies of "Grandma of Dracula," and "Fanview." Neither of them impressed me. However, Fanview had a letter from Bruce Pelz who was still living in Florida at the time.





I joined LASFS in June 1960 at age 17. I saw issues of Shaggy over the next couple of years. At one meeting of LASFS, John Trimble suggested members of the club should try submitting material to Shaggy. I'd won a few prizes for writing in high school journalism, so I figured I'd give Shaggy a try. I got a rejection out of the effort. John Trimble said Ed Cox had written something similar a couple of years earlier. I was never able to verify that statement. The truth of the matter was that the Trimble Shaggy was a closed shop. I have no idea why they tried to make it appear otherwise.

I don't think it was De Profundis that replaced Shaggy. It was Apa L. De Profundis is limited to notices and publication of the minutes of the weekly meetings and meetings of the board of directors. Apa L contains anything anyone wishes to contribute. At times, this has included the UCLA telephone directory and a biography of Barry Goldwater. Apa L first appeared in 1964. I didn't need permission from the Trimbles or anyone else to participate in Apa L. In retrospect, it was fortunate that I didn't become active in fandom before I did. In those days, fanac led to a number of fans flunking out of college. By 1964, I was almost out of college, and I didn't become really active immediately.

I recall the events surrounding Ted Johnstone not publishing any more issues of Shaggy. He had published a Coventry story in Shaggy, Bjo (who was not attending the club at the time) exploded and demanded the club establish a policy not to publish any more Coventry stories. The bullying effort was successful, and Ted didn't bother to publish any more issues.

Chares Lee Jackson II published about half a dozen issues of Shaggy in what he titled volume C. Charlie is a pretty good fan artist, and he can write well. His problem is that his work is so self-referential that most people can't understand it. I doubt it if any issues of volume C of Shaggy ever made it out of Los Angeles.

*[It saddens me that Milt won't get to see this letter published. He had been reading just the .pdf file of FLAG for several issues, but was clearly reading it carefully. I enjoyed seeing him at Corflu 34, where he was responsible for the convention's program, and I appreciated that he let me put on my Friday night program with little evidence it would occur. My recent reading of dozens of old fanzines has also given me a chance to appreciate just how prolific and long-lasting Milt's career as a writer of letters of comment was. Fanzine fandom will miss his contributions.]*

**Steve Stiles**

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Stevecartoon2001@gmail.com,

Thanks for sending me FLAG #19. Two days earlier, by a curious coincidence, I had decided to reread one of the only three issues of Shangri- L'Affaires that I sadly still have, #45, with a Gor-like cover highlighting Fritz Leiber and Bjo, and contents by Terry Carr, Ray Bradbury, Wally Weber, and Len Moffatt. I only have two other issues; #47, their Christmas issue, edited by Al Lewis, and #63, from 1963, and featuring a three color hand stenciled cover by yours truly referencing Walt Willis. I wonder why I only have three issues insomuch it was a favorite of mine when I was a youngster in fandom, perhaps second only to Cry Of The Nameless, but there have been times during my life when I've been foolishly seized by a loathing of my possession orientation. I probably donated some issues to a Corflu auction ages ago, or something like that: what a sap! Anyway, I've got my Shaggy file out and will now put it in the To Read pile.

If you are still willing to act as a fanzine-selling agent, some day in the future I'd like to unload a significant portion of my collection on you. We still keep on hoping to move to Albuquerque in the nebulous future (and still keep on meeting setbacks) before we get too feeble to do so, and wish to lighten various loads. Possession orientation or not, I still intend to keep a core fanzine collection, with a sampling of everything I appreciate. It will be interesting making those choices.

*[I think all any of us would ask is to be read – if anyone reading this is motivated to look at some issues of Shangri- L'Affaires as you did, I've done my job. And I'd be happy to help find new homes for your fanzine collection when you're ready to decide what won't go to Albuquerque with you.]*

**Greg Benford**

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xbenford@gmail.com

Subject: FLAG –always a fun zine. I forgot to ask you at Corflu if you could find issues of A BAS...I have only a few later ones now.

I like your keeping fmz moving to those who want them, with collections fading fast. Some pros I know read them

for the flavor of the Golden Ages we favor—'50s & 60s mostly. An odd inversion of the usual.

[I've not come across any copies of *A BAS*, but I have kept you in mind. Pros used to contribute some amazing things to fanzines in the period you reference and some fan editors were more than equal to the competition. I'm not surprised people want to have them.]

### John Purcell

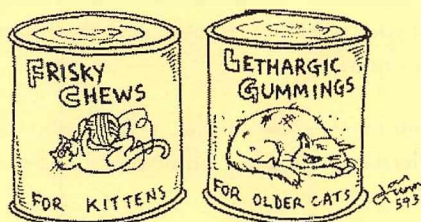
3744 Marielene Circle College Station, TX 77845  
Askance73@gmail.com

Well, it has been quite a while since I've written one of these to you, Andrew, but that won't stop me.

I definitely understand where you are coming from in terms of getting side-tracked from working on a fanzine. Your distractions sound like more fun than mine: I'd rather read zines than student essays and grading final exams any day. Add in the fact that the newest *ASKANCE* (#40, on efanazines now) is a whopper at 80 pages, so yeah, that took a while to assemble. But like you, perseverance saw me through to the bitter end.

Once in a great while - a couple times a year, at most - I peruse eBay for sf fanzines to see what's available and at what prices. I even spot some of my old fanzines, like the 11th issue of *This House* for \$20, which surprises me. Who'd be willing to shell out twenty bucks on that? Oh, wait... I did. Never mind.

Great history of *Shangri L'Affaires*, Andy! I enjoyed this a lot. Of course, I knew a good amount of this from other fan histories, like Harry Warner's books, but you did a fine job of tying all the decades and different editors together, and that made it even more interesting to me. When I lived in Los Angeles for one year - 1985 - I attended a handful of LASFS meetings, and don't remember *Shaggy* still being produced, but I believe that Marty Cantor was editing *De Profundis* at that time (I think; it might have been Charles Lee Jackson, but I'm not sure), Truth be told, I did not care much for how LASFS ran its meetings because I was spoiled by twelve years of Minn-stf meetings. Going from chaotic anarchy type Minn-stf meetings to the Hoyle's Rule of Order LASFS meetings was a shock to my sensitive fannish system. Still, I survived.



[John has done a remarkable job of continuing to publish both *ASKANCE* and *ASKEW* while serving as *TAFF* Delegate and Administrator. It's always hard to predict what will attract "big" bids among fanzines; One buyer paid \$64 apiece for two dittoed sheets a few weeks ago - issues #1 and #2 of Andy Porter's *ALGOL*. "Completing the set," I surmise.]

### Steve Jeffery

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Thanks for sending a copy of *Flag 19*, which acts as a reminder to a whole bunch of other fanzines I really ought to catch up on. I've still not read the latest issue *BEAM*. I ought to catch up with the *FAAN* award winners at least, or hand in my badge.

Having said which, many - and well-deserved - congratulations on your own win. Well done.

Someone else mentioned *LOFGEORNOST* (I can never spell that, let alone pronounce it) in an email a month or so back. I don't think I've seen a copy, and couldn't find it on efanazines.com so I assume it's one of the last remaining rare paper-only fanzines, along with *Banana Wings*. Actually, those are the only two I can think of. Even Bruce Gillespie, as traditional a publisher as you could shake a stick at (or maybe a curved stick anyway, like a boomerang) bowed a while ago to economic pressure of printing and mailing *SF Commentary* and *Treasure*.

That said, her indoors (actually, her sitting next to me at the computer desk) has reconfirmed the continued existence of *Prophecy* as a paper only-apa, maybe the only one left in the UK.

Partly that's because neither of us have smartphones, or any kind of phones come to that, other than the one plugged into a socket on the wall, or any other form of mobile digital technology. (OK, I have a cheap no-brand mp3 player which I use to listen to downloaded albums and podcasts from BBC Radio or stories from *Clarkesworld* or *Lightspeed*). And partly because neither of us are comfortable reading on a screen for any length of time and prefer paper. My mother said I'd develop square eyes from my habit of sitting too close to the TV, but in reality I think we have come to have A4 eyes.

I was reading your article about the history of *Shangri L'Affaires* and it occurred to me (just now as I was writing this, in fact) that that sort of mini biography would be a nice addition to efanazines.com.



The Ray Nelson article 'Way of the Tulpa' you reprinted in this issue gave me pause for thought. I have a fair idea who my tulpa is but probably only three people know her.

*[I've been even less up-to-date with current fanzines since the last time I published, and I'm frankly dreading the fanzine countdown, which still lies ahead.]*

**Steve Green**

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Askance73@gmail.com

I was intrigued by your comment in *Flag* #19 that Ron Ellik was the first TAFF winner not to run "at the climax of a fan career". That definitely isn't the case these days: I know of one recent candidate who considered editing a couple of issues of her fanzine and appearing on a handful of convention panels to be more than sufficient a qualification to stand. In my own case, I certainly didn't expect my 2009 TAFF trip to herald any kind of final chapter in a "career" stretching back to the mid-1970s, although that might perhaps be inferred from my relative retirement from fannish circles since chairing Novacon for a third time in 2014. Like most such absences, it wasn't intentional, just the coincidence of various financial, domestic and work pressures. Hopefully, the occasional loc will stave off rumours of my unnoticed demise.

*[Steve, a silence of a mere six years is hardly grounds to presume a fan editor has died. Meanwhile, you were not the only correspondent with thoughts on Ron Ellik:]*

**Jim Caughran**

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caughranjim@gmail.com

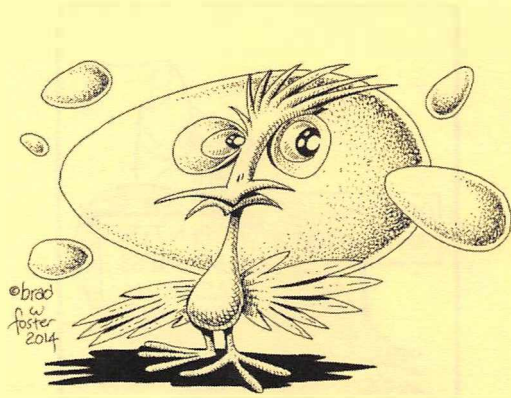
I've had a loc block for the last many years. So I decided to loc the most recent fanzine I received, which is *Flag* 19, before doing anything else. "Anything else" includes my US taxes, which will suffer a fine if I don't get them done before June 15.

And it was hard. I started to read *Flag* next to the computer so I could write as I read. Bad idea; there are too many distractions on the computer. (ADHD makes me very distractable.) So I read it in bed, I read it at meals. I mean, it's only 10 pages, but it took me forever. So that's some insight into my block.

So listen carefully while I sing my comeback song.

Fanzines: it's easier just to give them away than to sell them. I won't get rich selling fanzines. Or any other way. I've given fanzines to a couple of Toronto fans, requiring no more than a drive across town. But my fear is that my ex-wife may have given my fuz away – the good ones!

There seem to be a few false versions of how Ron Ellik died. The characters for *Fallen Angels* list has another



wrong version. Ellik didn't die crossing the street, nor was he hit by a drunken driver.

Ron grew up in southern California, and his opportunities to learn to drive on snow were limited. In January 1968, he flew to Wisconsin, rented a car, and started to drive to visit Dean Grennell. Along the way, he hit a patch of snow in an underpass, and lost control. He hit an unguarded abutment, fatally.

The police found some instructions to get to Grennell, and asked him whom they should notify. Dean called Terry Car (and probably other people). Terry called me (and probably other people).

I still mourn for him at times when I'm reminded. Like now.

Hope says, "The only time the cat was friendly was before I fed her." Our cats are friendly except before they are fed, apparently thinking a claw in the leg will hurry dinner. After dinner they just go to sleep, their usual state.

I remember bubble gum cards unfondly. The gum was so poor that I would simply throw it at the sidewalk, where it would shatter. Everyone got a bunch of cards, complete except for the same few. Finally the publishers would turn out the missing cards, presumably when sales were down.

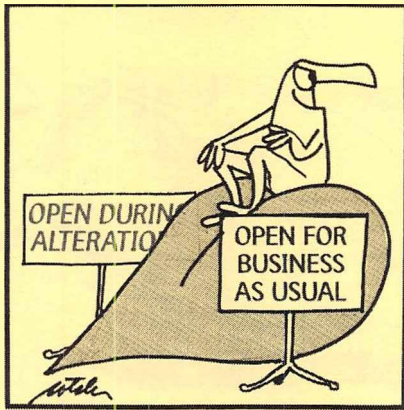
*[Jim, I'm honored to have you break your correspondence-free string with me. Ron was much-loved by many fans still active now, so I'm happy to correct misapprehensions about his end. Gum cards are still with us, but most lack gum, and cost about 25 cents apiece at a minimum. They still have "high numbers," too.]*

**Brad Foster**

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New issue 19 of *Flag* showed up in all of its in-actual-print-and-mailed-with-a-stamp glory in my mailbox a couple of weeks ago. Always nice to see.

Interesting walk down fanzine memory lane with your opening here. Much of that material is before my time. (Hard to believe, I feel like an old coot these days!) I still



have rows of zines on the shelves here, tried to keep a copy of everything that came my way that had something of mine in it. I've had to thin out the ranks of some of the old comics and minis in recent years to help cover bills. Have found a few collectors there. Not sure if there will be anybody interested in the sf fanzine stuff if/when I might need to move those along, too. Oh well.

I took the advice from Ray's piece on finding my "tulpa" by looking at the kinds of books on my shelves here. Trouble is, the subject matter / genres represented are all over the map, so hard to pin down one sort of book. Maybe just "novel"??

When got to this line from Joseph Nicholas' loc: "...once you get past the great-great-grandparents it's mostly guesswork and wish-fulfillment...", reminded me of my reaction to different stories of people spending huge amounts of effort to trace their ancestors, and then feeling "proud" of whatever they find. Always seemed kind of silly to me— I mean, would these same folks who tell us how proud they personally feel when they can point to someone who did something good in their family tree, also tell us how sad and unimportant they feel if someone in their past did something bad? Or is it more likely that, it really doesn't matter what anyone in the past of your family did, it's only what -you- do that has any bearing on you. Not sure I got that across right, but getting late, so going to have to let it stand. (Did I mention I'm starting to feel like an old coot these days?)

Oh, and I recall you mentioning in this issue once or twice about your falling behind on loccing other zines— yet the wonderful short reviews of so many zines in the back of the issue go a long way to make up for that, I think.

#### David Redd

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Hello Andy, many thanks for the paper FLAG via Mark the Heroic. (To whom also thanks.)

Maybe it's me, but I found your Fanzine Checklist even more amazingly interesting this month. It's a fanzine equivalent of the Thai Literary Supplement for its combination of highlights, discussion and character of the item. I can't read e-zines any more but was tempted by you to investigate FADEAWAY and RUBBER CRAB (what a nice discovery), both really worthwhile even though I have to leave it there.

How have I missed you not selling fanzines on ebay all these years? (Through not looking, I suppose.) The thought that I might have missed some 1934 zine discussing ASTOUNDING is best not thought.

Murray Moore interesting on genealogy - that book on Moore's ancestors/descendants sounds a proper worthwhile book, not like the "Book of the Redds" which was touted to me years ago and smelt like an internet/ phone book lashup. Various Greenslade relatives of mine emigrated to Canada, but one came home, one married an American and we lost touch with the rest. In another life might I have been Canadian and a cousin of Murray?

#### Lloyd Penney

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Another Flag has flown through my mailbox, and thank you for sending yet another one to me; it's much appreciated. Our Victoria Day weekend is coming to a happy close, so there's time for some fast, down and dirty from my keyboard. Thank you for issue 19, and in return...

Pubbing your ish, and other fair activities...I have had the incentive to promote the idea of a new fanzine across Canada in the past. As a journalism student, I wanted to create a national newszine for Canfandom, in the tradition of *Canadian Fandom*, *New Canadian Fandom* and *The Maple Leaf Rag*. The resulting wave of hostility to the idea, and some roasted me for even deigning to suggest such a topic... well, the idea died fast. I have stuck to the local ever since.

As with most of us in this fandom, we have collected and gathered our share of books, records, tapes, CDs, comics, etc. All those books on shelves against the wall provide a level of comfort, an immersion in what we have loved, and lived. It hurts to even consider it, but as we age, we consider retiring (Yvonne retires at the end of this year), and that often means reduced income with rising prices. We may have to be more mobile than we are, especially with the stuff we love. Some we must divest ourselves of so much of that stuff, and that includes a large fanzine collection. I am not doing it now, but soon, and soon usually comes along sooner than we think. Shall I give the clubs back all the clubzines they've given me all these years? Should I give them back to the editors who sent them, especially if they have lost their originals? I know there's nowhere in Toronto to donate them to...what about



giving them to friends here? Recycle? That's Plan D or E. In the long run, I don't even want to consider any of them, but I know I must.

Great Shaggy history, and thank you. I haven't seen the Trimbles in some time, not since John and I went plate wrangling while Bjo and Yvonne slung squares of birthday cake for the masses for Star Trek's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and that was at L.A.con IV, in 2006.

So much commented here seems to have a theme of achievement, so I will go along with that. On May 28, 2017, Yvonne and I will celebrate our 34<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. As we often say, with the wind chill, it feels more like 40. (Don't worry, we both say that and laugh.) On June 2, 2017, I will turn an ever-more creaking 58 years of age. And, sometime in December of this year, I will mark 40 years of fandom, from that first Star Trek club in Victoria, British Columbia, to school and a Trek dance in Toronto, where I met Yvonne, to apas and Worldcon masquerade entries, to working on and chairing local cons (30 years on the concon), to being in the local for more than 30 years, to becoming a steampunk vendor, and now to being an old fan and tired, and relatively pleased with all that I have done. I am not gafiating yet, but the time will soon be nigh.

*[One pleasure of letting this issue roll as long as it wants is that I am able to include a large chunk of your letter this time, Lloyd. I promise you can expect similar treatment if you reply again.]*

### John Hertz

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Top of the month to you. Thanks for FLAG 19 as ever.

In 1911, a man quoted John Muir, "People ought to saunter through the mountains - not hike! Do you know the origin of that word 'saunter'? It's a beautiful word....in the Middle Ages people used to go on pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and when people in the villages through which they passed asked where they were going, they would reply 'A la Sainte terre,' 'To the Holy Land.'" And so they became known as sainte-terre-ers or saunterers."

The quoter's name, wonderfully, was Palmer (*The Mountain Trail and its Message*).

Your leading the letter column with Jerry Kaufman seems to have used the Force. LITTLEBROOK 10 just arrived. Naturally, I by way of celebrating it write to you.

Some of life in the present is hurtful. Some is joyful. Fanzines celebrate both. A teacher of mine used to say we are unfair to the word celebrate; it may but needn't connote joy. We still celebrate a funeral. A man with whom I am oddly acquainted has recited this riddle:

I am the child of shape and time.  
I play with sound; I play in mime.  
Reach when I ask you to take hands,  
Or go alone, in other lands  
Laugh or weep your best with me,  
Slow or quick, constrained or free;  
Fit for a farmer, fit for a king,  
I will make your walking sing.  
(dance)

Once at filking, where I'm evidently known as a fellow who appears at two or three in the morning, sits listening, and sometimes dozes because not feeling quite ready for bed I'd rather hear what I can, I was allowed to recite it myself. It pleased Leslie Fish.

Ray Nelson is, as ever, also wonderful. I can't decide whether to cry mea maxima tulpa or hope we may have a better version of Tulpa Mania than the crash of 380 years ago. Long may he wave.

Thanks for your notes on SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES, another wonder, which in its fourth (I think) life had possibly the last fanart by Vaughn Bodé. Some years later I realized he had the same name as Tex Jarman's uncle, who surprised Matt Dodson by existing.

I gave up quarrelling with Dale Speirs a while back. But my argument to Rick Sneary in favor of big-tent sf conventions was printed in BUTTON-TACK.

*[As always, John, your correspondence is a source of information that I haven't found anywhere else. Now, as we tout the miraculous, I present correspondence from an eFanzines reader.]*

### Dave Haren

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Hi Andy. I see in reading the latest on efanazines that people are still responding to FLAG 12. This makes me feel better about failing to get something about Chunga into the Net etheric bit bucket in the sky.

Redd and Jennings will never get a consensus as to the lasting nature or value of cultures. Most humans are in the trap of the ancient Greeks thinking there was long ago a golden age better than the effete pansies of today. This is akin to the Big Bang in being a limit test for credulity. There's a lot of self-congratulatory back slapping in thinking we have finally achieved the perfect society that will last forever. Our inability to predict next week's weather should cast some doubt on that notion.

Everybody has a favorite dystopia looming on their horizon. In the 1960s it was the coming Ice Age, now it's the biological limits created by crapping in our own nest and having to sit in the mess we made. As a species we are remarkably short sighted, we consider the lack of vegetation around since grandpas day as strange since they were able to feed bigger herds of goats and sheep than we can now in this desert. The fact that nature doesn't allow goats and sheep to be together never crosses the mind of the traditionalist lamenting the golden age of abundant forage. Are we doomed, yes we are. Did we do it. That's much harder to say. Humans have always had fantasies of being in charge, conquering mother nature, ruling the world. Hasn't happened yet, probably never will. Surveillance state hubris being a wonderful example of how to defeat your purpose for being by ridiculous overreaching.

I was musing on HP Lovecraft the other day. There were folk around in his time who firmly believed that the world was created in 4004 BC at 6:30 AM. Every science revelation opened vistas of cosmic horror and gulfs of madness before them. They had barely mastered Bruno that the lights in the sky were stars instead of holes poked in the dome of the sky where heavens light shown through. Then here comes Hubble saying that the fuzzier ones were galaxies like our own but unimaginably far away. If you needed monsters the paleo boys were adig after bigger better more toothy than the last.

Assailed from every page of scientific inquiry the average cloddy found his only solace in the certainty of mathematics. Well except for Curt Godel who proved it was more of a possible tendency than a certainty.

That was the last straw for the average man of civilization reduced to gibbering in the corner fondling the tatters of sanity and certainty he retreated into a new dark age of the mind and clutched at politics for salvation.

Lovecraft documented the process for us and today's band of 'progressives' are more concerned that an American of that time might have been a racist unworthy of being honored by the holy literatis of science fiction. My father characterized my choice of literature as mind rotting trash. Maybe but I liked it when other folk were more interested in beliefs in Bronze Age tales or the maunderings of some boy buggerer wearing a sheet. Give me rockets, rayguns, and science instead.

I keep hoping science will fix the medical profession in time to save all of you out there in SF land from the

horrors documented in ezines. Some things are worth saving, others not so much.

I hope you all bask in the glow of mad science forever.

*[That tension between what is super and natural and the supernatural is indeed as old as Lovecraft himself. The evolving understanding of the way we are changing our planet doesn't mean that change is not occurring. But I'm on record as saying the end of the world will not release anyone from their obligation to reply to my fanzines. ]*

#### **Mark Plummer**

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Mark.fishlifter@googlemail.com

The second batch of UK Flags went in the mail yesterday, following on from the first batch on Friday. There's no good reason for the delay. It's simply that I, er, didn't actually leave the house on Saturday and so the envelopes simply sat in the hall, champing at the bit. Still, I figure it's a bank holiday weekend and so they'd probably just sit in a post box.

I say I didn't leave the house on Saturday, and that's true setting aside the time I spent in Woodland Hills, stalking You Lot as an unseen virtual presence at Corflu 34. It's remarkable how cheering it can be, sitting on the sofa in Croydon and watching Randy eat bacon five-and-a-half thousand miles away, although I suspect I won't mention it tomorrow when colleagues ask the inevitable, 'So, do anything good at the weekend?'

Thus even if we weren't present at Corflu I still feel slightly involved courtesy of what my computer has been telling me is 'Robert's iPad Event', and printing and mailing the UK Flags also helps make me feel a part of the Corflu process. It even seems appropriate that last Thursday the printer rebelled at the thought of address labels so I had to print the mailing list onto plain paper, then cut it up with scissors and apply sellotape. To me, this seems entirely in keeping with your evocative writing about old Shaggy's to the extent that I did briefly wonder whether I should hand-address all the envelopes, but I'm only prepared to go so far in the pursuit of false nostalgia.

On Flag #19 itself, interesting stuff about Ron Ellik and TAFF. I did wonder at first about the statement that he 'was the first TAFF winner who had entered fandom after its creation'. It's a bit of an edge case with Ron Bennett as it depends on when you date TAFF from. His first contact was a Leeds SFA meeting in August 1953, and arguably



TAFF dates from the May 1953 Coroncon although seemingly the first printed reference was in October. But I concede this feels like quibbling.

I hadn't realised that it was still being referred to as 'the Willis Fund' ten years in. And a useful prompt that the convention Ellik attended was the Ronvention in Harrogate, seeing as next year Eastercon returns to the town for the first time since 1962. I don't think I'd clocked before that several of those fifties and sixties eastbound races -- at a quick glance at least 1959, 1961, and 1963 -- are listed for the year in which the delegate was selected and not for the year in which they took the trip.

I will channel my inner Robert Lichtman and say that after Shangri-L'Affaires #75 in December 1968 there was a #76, but not until the title was revived by Marty Cantor and Mike Gunderloy in 1980. Marty then produced two more issues, the first with Mike Glycer and the second with Mark Sharp, before Charles Lee Jackson took over in December 1985 with #79. I will leave it to you to deduce whether this information is pouring out of my head or whether I am merely cribbing from a copy of Robert's fanzine catalogue.

Did we '... seem slightly surprised that Paul Skelton's call for the abolition of the FAAn Awards in [Banana Wings] #63 didn't quite plunge all fandom into war'? I certainly wasn't surprised, not least because there are so many other opportunities to plunge fandom into if not war then dark muttering about the FAAn Awards. It's pretty much a permanent condition, surely. Now if only somebody could find a way of plunging fandom into participation...

Anyway, nice to 'see' you at the weekend, and hopefully we'll see you properly in Toronto next year. Had we been physically present in Woodland Hills I'd have agreed with your comments about the last one and the lack of a firm date until so late in the process. So keep prodding those Torontonians...

Oh, and congrats on the fan writer award. I am proud to be 11.11% of the people who voted for you.

*[Mark, your vote has surely earned you 100% of a beer in Toronto next May at the Ramada Plaza from May 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. See Corflu.org for more details. ]*

**Ian Millstead**

ianmillsted@hotmail.com

Thanks for Flag 19 and thanks also to Mark Plummer for UK distribution.

The book on the 1989 WorldCon sounds interesting. Tell me more.

You mention Mort Weisinger on p5. His name frequently comes up in accounts and anecdotes by comics professionals in Roy Thomas magazine 'Alter Ego'. There was an issue last year in which Jim Shooter talked about how he came to work for Weisinger in the 60s when only 13 years old. Worth a look if you've not seen it.

*[The components of the 1939 book are appearing in fanzines like TRAP DOOR and CHUNGA, but I promise you'll have a chance to pay for it someday. ]*

**Jerry Kaufman**

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JAKaufman@aol.com

Regarding *Flag* #19, I find it enlightening to see that you learn so much from the objects and zines you auction on EBay. I can tell now where you got so many of the quotes and questions in your Corflu quiz. With my memory, even if I'd read those issues of *Shaggy* you sold, I still would not have known the answers to questions I obviously made wild guesses at. The one issue I can remember reading (and which may even be in my accumulation) featured material by (or about) Ron Ellik and included B'Jo's cartoons of Ron as a squirrel. (I met him once, briefly, but didn't have a conversation with him. He died only about two years after I got into fandom.)

I don't think I have a Tulpa, as Ray Nelson describes one. I think I imitated Edgar Rice Burroughs when I attempted to write a story in high school in which my characters slid down a slick obsidian ramp into the deep caverns of the earth, but I never got far enough to reach their destination. So that other self didn't become real. (Just as well - I could have studied someone better.)

Folks in the letter column revealed some of their action figures, playing off your description of Stu's collectibles. Funny, but I didn't think to talk about my Edna Mode action figure. Some might call her a doll, as she's a bit tall, has movable arms and legs, and a fine head of hair. However, if they say so to her face (and I have her little brain switched to "on"), she will talk back in the voice of Brad Bird. She's programmed to say a number of things in response to specific cues, although she's never been predictable about answering appropriately.

Thanks for the zine comments - there are a couple on your list that I haven't gotten round to.

*[Dealing in the analysis of material culture seems to encourage understanding more freely than looking right at the people who created it. It often tells truths which we are reluctant to explain. Next, the mysterious Mr. Waldrop, writing three different times, and spookily referencing stuff I had written about the director*

*Samuel Fuller on Facebook and had not shared anywhere else. Howard, are you secretly online now?]*

**Howard Waldrop**

5426 Manchaco Road #123 Austin TX 78745 (COA!)

I'm moving again - rents are terrible in this fargin' town.

I am next door to the library. I have a mail box built in this century!

Thanks for the FLAG. Once more your plumbing of the depths of fandom leaves everyone else in the dust. Are you publishing a book on the '39 Worldcon, or does it just seem that way?

(I did a 10,000 word con report "The Great American Novel" in the early 70s in a KC fanzine. It seemed like a novel at the time.)

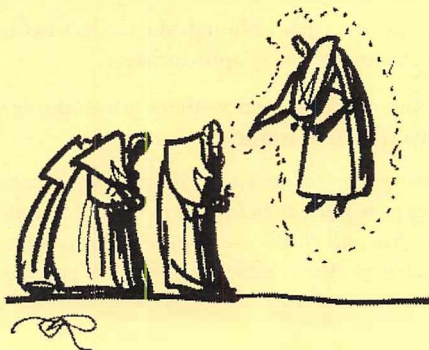
Lew Shiner, Bill Spencer AND Michael Bishop all have new short story collections coming out this year.

Just wrote an article on *The Rifleman* - might as well use my TV watching [while my eyes don't let me read] for good.

Besides *The Baron of Arizona*, the Samuel Fuller film w/ Vincent Price, there's an episode of *Death Valley Days* (in the last season, which were in color, hosted by Robert Taylor). This one stars Russell Johnson, later of *Gilligan's Island*, as a newspaperman coming to Reavis' trial. (Reavis is played by Robert Taylor.) The episode was directed by competent movie hack Jean Yarbrough. (Some of the color *D. V. Days* were directed by character actor Denver Pyle, the only directing he ever did that I know of.) Lots of familiar 60s Spanish character actors in the episode.

Yours for the wider diffusion of useless information, I remain

Your Pal,  
Howard



*[As the "1939 Book" gets larger, the farther away it appears to be from publication. I'm sure you are familiar with this phenomenon. But I promise to keep you apprised of my progress, even if I have to come read it to you aloud.]*

**William Breiding**

3507 Santa Rita #1 Tucson AZ 85719

WmBreiding@gmail.com

Six months? That's not too many. FLAG #19 sitting there, pulsing.

I finished Donald Sydney Fryer's autobiography, Hobgoblin Apollo, last night. A fey, good-natured man with a taste for romantic poetry, performance, Clark Ashton Smith and cute guys.

This morning I started Michael Moorcock's Behold the Man, one of those books I've been meaning to read for 40 years. The prose is a nice slap in the face, strong coffee for sleepy eyes.

My good friend J. D. Buhl died of colon cancer three days after my mother died, this past August. J. D. was a musician and performer. Two days before he died his church held a live memorial. I was unable to attend, not have I seen any reports (J.D.'s pals were all very different and he kept them separated), but I can guess that he sang a song or two. He left an album's worth of music in the hands of his producer that I need to get my ears around. My mom died at 97, no longer the woman that any of us knew. A long, slow decline of her body, which refused to give out, while her brain/mind was completely gone, transformed, mean, ugly, frightened. I could go on, but I won't.

I admire your aspirations, your insight, your beautiful prose.

P.S. Your overview of SHAGGY was evocative. It made me faunch. And anything you write about will be of interest in the long result.

*[You know that I enjoy your writing as well, William, so your compliments are particularly flattering. We all seem to have lost a number of people important to us this year, including the poor FLAG mailing list. This issue will go to about a dozen new correspondents found through social media and the even more dubious fanzine auction community, and I hope to add a similar number as we approach FLAG #21. It's part of the circle of egoboo.]*

**Other Correspondence Received From: Paul DiFilippo:**

[Dear Andy, Thanks so much for FLAG #19. was a lot of fun. The story of SHAGGY was catnip to me. Did such a Golden Age ever really exist?] **Martin Frenzel** [I look at what the Liberal Democrats are doing at their wild demonstrations and cringe.] All correspondence is appreciated equally, but hey, have I completely lost all appeal to female readers? 22 letters, all from male writers!



1.) **BEAM #12**, Nic Farey and Ulrika O'Brien, 3342 Cape Cod Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89122/418 Hazel Ave. N., Kent WA 98030 Email fareynic@gmail.com and/or ulrika.obrien@gmail.com. The mystery of this immense and inarguably lavish fanzine continues to haunt my soul. Now having added the wildly-underutilized editorial skills of Ulrika O'Brien, BEAM #12 is even more full of marvels than usual, with a Baedeker of Flann O'Brien, Randy Byers report on his last Corflu (the highlight was a visit to the Bradbury building), filkery, photography, beer reviews, even a FIVE-PAGE review of issue #20 of Charles Rector's happy trainwreck of a fanzine, FORNAX. It is a remarkable artifact, as well as a focal point for its large crowd of contributors. But one must ask, does anyone NEED to read five pages about FORNAX #20? "Because we can" is never a suitable rationale for editorial policy. And yet, it's so damn pretty....

2.) **THE WHITE NOTEBOOKS #9 - #10**, Pete Young, 136/200 Emerald Hill Village, Soi 6 Hua Him, Frachuap Khiri Khan 77110 Thailand. Email Peteyoung.uk@gmail.com. Issue #9 is an account of Pete's trip to Los Angeles for Corflu 34, sponsored by a grant from the Corflu 50. I and lots of my friends get mentioned. Issue #10 has some further thoughts on Pete's late Father, a bit of book and fanzine review, and lots of lovely locs from people clever enough to send them. Pete's still disturbingly good at all this, and the fanzine is bloody excellent, but the real news here is that the Corflu 50 has suddenly become the contemporary fannish charity scheme that actually means something to me. I probably ought to contribute....

3.) **LITTLEBROOK #36-#38**, Jerry Kaufman & Suzanne Tompkins, P.O. Box 25475. Seattle, WA 98165/Email littlebrooklocs@aol.com. Am I in a rut? Reviewing the same titles, favoring Seattle titles because their editors actually give me a paper copy to read? Too bad. Suzle's account of her 50<sup>th</sup> high school reunion told me stuff about her that I either did not know, or had forgotten, and it was a bit like meeting her again. Jerry writes an editorial on the nature of hallucination, and this is immediately followed by a chapter of Ulrika O'Brien's TAFF report, which deals with the first evening of fanac after getting off a transatlantic flight. It has an understandably hallucinatory quality that can't conceal the ferocious doses of high grade timebinding which her memoir of the dimly-recalled 1998 has to offer. Most of all, the inscrutable collision of American and British humor, which Ulrika (and yes, she's everywhere)

remarked upon in considerable detail; if the fund was created to enhance understanding between our fandoms, Ulrika took her responsibilities very seriously.

4.) **BANANA WINGS #66-#68**, Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 7ES United Kingdom. Email fishlifter@gmail.com. The pictures of themselves in 1987 which the editors shared in #67 were among the highlights of my year. Mark looked a bit like Phil Spector, just before he gets killed at the beginning of Easy Rider. Being able to laugh at their youthful appearance only slightly softens the fact that Mark and Claire are just better at this than most of us. I really enjoyed the excerpts from Frank Arnold's files, summarized by Rob Hansen (that man again) in #68, and the letter column is the envy of the Western Powers (that's me and Carl Juarez, these days). Roll on, Big River.

5.) **PAWZ #100**, Edd Vick, 1505 SW Alaska St. Seattle WA 98106 Email Edd@Speakeasy.net. To celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> issue of his contribution to ROWRBAZZLE, the "Funny Animal APA," Edd Vick asked a large number of friends to write about their "favorite" anthropomorphic animal character. The variety of characters which these writers chose is inspiring - Bugs Bunny and Pogo and Freddie the Pig and the rabbits of *Watership Down* and Scrooge and Felix and more magical cats, and even the Bactrian camels that paleontologist Roy Chapman Andrews used on his expeditions to the Gobi Desert. I expected a lot of familiar animated characters, but there were many choices from "literature," and many that were more noble or compelling than "funny." Completing 100 issues of a fanzine is an event worth noting, and this is a very worthy commemorative.

6.) **mdp #2**, Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 7ES United Kingdom. Email mark.fishlifter@gmail.com. Yes, it's true, I'm just logrolling the same six people for the entire column. But I have to acknowledge this amazing 14-page volunteer catalog of the contents of a box of fanzines which Mark recently unearthed. I've been doing the same kind of thing for many months now, but Mark found an amazing number of things that I have simply NEVER heard of before in that box, so many that I would suspect him of having a go at a bit of hokum, if not for the presence of some titles that I've run across in just the past few weeks. Oh wow - this isn't possibly a Borgesian Uqbar scenario, is it? Because Mark wrote about these fanzines so convincingly, they have actually come into existence? Alright, fine then, prove it

didn't happen. Prove to me that Algys Budrys and Larry Shaw published a one-shot called THUMP. Hell, prove that Algys Budrys actually existed. I'll wait.

7.) **LOFGEORNOST #127-#129**, Fred Lerner  
81 Worcester Avenue, White River Junction, VT 05001  
Email fred@fredlerner.org After I praised his letter-column in FLAG #19, Fred apparently never got an email letter which I sent earlier this year - a blow which led me to print virtually every word received from correspondents this time out, as it just thoroughly dismayed me not to join the conversation. I must try again; Fred's deconstruction of *Anne of Green Gables* in #128 was fascinating, and the entire ten-page length of #129 is dedicated to the educational background of Sherlock Holmes. Routinely the most literate ten pages of the season.

8.) **MY BACK PAGES #18**, Richard Lynch, P. O. Box 3120, Gaithersburg, MD 20885 Email rw\_lynch@yahoo.com. While explicitly presented as a collection of "Reprints," much of what appears in MBP has previously appeared in one of Lynch's apazines, and therefore completely new to me. Lynch has a fan's range of interests, and writes about subjects as fanciful as David Kyle and who really held the first science fiction convention, and as, um, mundane, as a biography of the composer Edward Elgar. I think he has an excellent sense of just how long an article ought to go on, something which I will obviously be struggling with until I die. Lots of cool color, with well-reproduced photos on most pages. But I wonder if I would ever publish quite so many pictures of myself as appear on the cover here - must be eye candy for Nicki Lynch!

9.) **THE ZINE DUMP #40**, Guy Lillian III, 1390 Holly Avenue, Merritt Island, FL 32952 Email GHLIII@yahoo.com. Guy is prolific, and he's been at this a long time, so you're going to find some good stuff in whatever he publishes. He sent me a glossy copy of CHALLENGER #41, which was beautiful, but also included something like a dozen duplicated pages, and I haven't yet gone online to read the full text. Nor have I printed an issue of his personal fanzine SPARTACUS lately. So by default, I want to praise Guy's latest collection of fanzine reviews, THE ZINE DUMP. While I think I've caught him in some very cursory reading in the past, the impulse to acknowledge every title you see is always laudable, and he's clearly reading a lot more zines than I am. If there are any neofans around, THE ZINE DUMP would be a perfect map for getting involved in fanzines.

10.) **INCA #13**, Rob Jackson, Chinthay, Nightingale Lane, Hambrook, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8UH United Kingdom Email robjackson60@gmail.com.

As ever, the problem with Rob's own writing is that he just can't bring himself to leave out any important incident or detail, not realizing that the reader just loses the will to live after four or five pages. However, as an editor, he has excellent taste. Sandra Bond's "Beer Run Diary," by contrast, is a piece of travel writing that actually felt like it was over too soon. Rob Hansen's "Little Big: A Tale of Two Cons" was also fun. But above all, the fanzine is just beautiful to look at, with amazing art by Venetia Jackson.

11.) **RANDOM JOTTINGS #12**, Michael Dobson, 8042 Overlook Park Drive, Bethesda MD 20817-2724. Email editor@timespinnerpress.com. Michael's latest effort to stretch the definition of the word "fanzine" is an analysis of a mass shooting in Wheaton, Maryland on April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1975. The event is of particular interest to Mike because he actually witnessed part of the crime. I share his conviction that the apparent historical anonymity of the event is troubling, and his effort to bring attention to the original newspaper reports is admirable. But I felt like the text was rather repetitive; and I was able to find some significant further information on several of the victims that Michael didn't know much about with just a few minutes on Ancestry.com. The line between what amateurs and professionals can uncover is becoming quite indistinct.

12.) **NOWHERE FAN #4**, Christina Lake, 4 West Rise, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 4HU Email Christina.l@virgin.net. I've secretly been in love with Christina Lake's Voice (her written Voice, not her speaking voice, which is admittedly a bit nasal at times) ever since she wrote "Drinking Kava in Fiji" for me at APAK over 20 years ago. This time she may have perfectly encapsulated the experience of Worldcon 75 in Helsinki this past summer. She begins with reasoned, if not actually restrained editorials, plunges into the bewildering thicket of Europe After Brexit, then plunges completely into chaos with her Worldcon report, which features things like someone who had an idea to do a new fanzine, but only accept LoCs on paper. Hand-written maybe. It's such a complete riot that I can't find my way out, and can't even write the brief review of VIBRATOR with which I planned to end. Graham's fanzine is very good too, very funny and full of pathos by turns, but honestly, I can't even find the floor. If I don't publish again by the next full eclipse, someone should file a missing faned report....